

very slowly ; in some places it still trickles on the pale limbs, in others it only blackens round the wounds. Yet the scarcely moving streams blend with each other in many places and steal down to the feet. The Cross is wetted by blood and the wood is darkened. Mary's hands are red ; the dear Magdalen has a consciousness that the blood of her Love is upon her hair ; and the wells of the Sacred Heart drop as with pulses upon the disciple who pillowed himself upon that Heart the night before. Here and there a blade of grass is ruddy ; there are spots on the skulls of the dead ; the torturers and soldiers have gone down the hill with their garments and accoutrements discolored. Blood is life ; it was within him, now it is almost all outside him. How beautiful are his thoughts upon the Cross ! How beautiful are the seven words ! Now the Precious Blood has come within reach of its end ; it abandons the slowness of its oozing ; it will be precipitate once more ; it bids one cell of the heart to keep what it contains, dislodges all the rest of itself with a loud cry and leaps forth at once from every cavern of the body, and death accomplishes itself, so far as it was a natural death, by the shedding of the Blood.

THE WOUND OF THE HEART.

We often know men best by what they do when they come to die ; so it is with the Precious Blood ; or rather we know it best by what it did when it was dead. Death contents men ; hearts ask no further proof of love, but death does not content the Precious Blood. Once more it reveals its character in that wastefulness which is a secret of divine economy. As the head in the evening had been jealous of the body in the scourging, so now the heart was jealous of the hands and feet. It envies them their dripping wells of life ; it grudged them the beauty of their eternal stigmata. Even when dead the Sacred Heart has irresistible attractions ; the soul of Jesus beneath the earth felt the dear constraints of that grand heart, and so the heart wooed the lance of the centurion, and hidden blood sprang forth, baptised as if in gratitude its heathen liberator with all the cleansing graces of con-