LOURDES.

BY EMILE ZOLA.

FIFTH DAY.

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RESUME OF LOURDES.

Brief Synopsis of the Portion of Zolo's Great Story Which Has Been Published.

FIRST DAY.

CHAPTER I.—The opening scene of "Lourdes," which was commenced in serial form in Sunday's Bee of April 15, is in a car of the "white train," which carries the very sick pilgrims from Paris to Lourdes. Among the pilgrims is Marie de Guersaint, a young woman, who, for years, has been bedridden. She is accompanied by her father and the Abbe Pierre Froment.

CHAPTER II.—The Abbe Pierre was the son of a chemist who lived at Neuilly. Living next them were M. de Guersaint and his family. Little Marie de Guersaint and Pierre played together, and finally fell in love with each other as they grew up. Marie received an injury which resulted in nearly total paralysis. As she could never be his wife, Pierre became a priest.

CHAPTER III.—The suffering in the train is intense when it stops at Poitiers half an hour for lunch.

CHAPTER IV.—Sophie Couteau tells the story of the cure accorded to her diseased foot by simply dipping it in the water of Lourdes.

CHAPTER V.—The Abbe reads the history of Bernadette, and describes the visions in the grotto. As the train rolls into the station at Lourdes an unknown man dies.

SECOND DAY.

CHAPTER I.—A vivid picture is given of the confusion when the invalids are landed and conveyed to the hospital.

CHAPTER II.—The hospital is greatly overcrowded. At 8 a. m. the procession to the grotto starts. Father Massais asks the vast congregation to pray for a great miracle, as the body of the man who died in the train is to be immersed in the pool in hopes that life will be restored.

CHAPTER III.—The Abbe meets his old friend, Dr. Chassaigne. The crowd forces the Abbe to the pool. The dead man is brought in and immersed. No miracle occurs. On going out the Abbe finds that Marie has been bathed without effect.

CHAPTER IV.—Dr. Chassaigne accompanies the Abbe to the Bureau of Certifications. La Grivotte, who had been in the last stages of consumption, comes rushing in, shouting, "I am cured!"

CHAPTER V.—The Abbe visits Marie, who is losing her faith. He reads to the invalids, continuing the story of Bernadette.

THIRD DAY.

CHAPTER I.—Pierre discovers that Mme. Volmar, a devout pilgrim, has come to Lourdes to meet her lover.

CHAPTER II.—Pierre and M. de Guersaint meet Mme. Desagneaux, Mlle. Raymonde and M. de Peyrelongue, to whom Raymonde is engaged. They visit places of interest.

CHAPTER III.—Marie, accompanied by her father and Pierre, watches the magnificent torchlight procession.

CHAPTER IV.—Pierre takes Marie to the grotto to remain throughout the night. Baron Suire shows Pierre the miraculous spring.

CHAPTER V.—Dr. Chassaigne tells about his interview with Bernadette, and describes the efforts of the Abbe Peyramale to build a church at Lourdes.

FOURTH DAY.

CHAPTER I.—The death of Mme. Vetu is vividly portrayed.

CHAPTER II.—There is great religious fervor shown during the services. In the midst of it Brother Isidore dies.

CHAPTER III.—As Pierre stands beside Marie's cart he remembers that one of the physicians called in consultation said she could be cured in a perfectly natural way. Suddenly Marie stands up in her cart. She walks to the Bureau, and her cure is put on record.

CHAPTER IV.—Marie drags her cart in the procession. Pierre has lost his faith, and by his vows has lost the right to love Marie now that she can be a wife.

CHAPTER V.—Dr. Chassaigne takes the Abbe to Bernadette's room. He also takes him to the church that the Abbe Peyramale started to build. The ambitious and dreams of the Abbe Peyramale are graphically described.

FIFTH DAY.

CHAPTER I.—The abbe is too agitated to sleep during the last night of the pilgrimage. He nervously awaits the return of M. de Guersaint from a pleasure trip. Early in the morning he is summoned to the next room, to find already dead an old lady whose fortune goes to a crippled boy, who has been brought to Lourdes to be cured. The father regards the old lady's death as a divine recompense for the lack of a miracle in healing the boy. Pierre meets Mme. Vulmar in the hall leaving her lover's room. She confesses all to him. She has no sooner left than Marie appears, full of life and health.

"Lourdes" will be continued in next Sunday's Bee.

CHAPTER II.

It was 8 o'clock and Marie could no longer contain her impatience, but roamed about the room, going constantly to the window, as though she would draw, in a single breath, all the wide, open space, the whole of the vast atmosphere of heaven. Ah, to go about in the streets, in the squares, everywhere, and still further, wherever her wishes inclined her to go! to show thus how strong she really was; longing with a certain vanity to demonstrate before the world how many miles she could walk, now that the Holy Virgin had cured her! It was an impulse, an irresistible restlessness of her entire nature, her heart and body.

But when ready to start she decided that her first visit must be to the grotto, where, with her father, they might both thank Our Lady of Lourdes. After that they would be free, with two whole hours before them, to ramble where they wanted, before going back to breakfast, and tie up her little bundle at the hospital.

"Come, come, are we ready?" repeated M. de Guersaint. "Let us start."

Pierre took his hat and all three went down, talking very loud and laughing on the stairs like schoolboys out on a holiday. As they reached the street Mme. Majeste rushed out from the porch. She had waited for them to go out.

"Ah, my dear gentleman and young lady, allow me to congratulate you. We have heard of the extraordinary blessing conferred on you, and we are so happy, so flattered, that the Holy Virgin should so distinguish by her favor one of our customers."

Her hard, dry face melted with good nature, and she gazed at the miraculously cured girl with tender eyes. Then she called quickly to her husband, who was passing: "Look here, my dear. It is the young lady. This is the young lady."

Majeste's smooth, greasy, yellow, fat face took on an expression of joy and gratitude.

"Indeed, miss, I cannot express how honored we feel. We shall never forget that your father stopped here. It has already made many feel envious."

All this time Mme. Majeste had been stopping the other travelers who were going out, and had beckoned to several families already installed in the dining room, and would gladly have asked in the whole street full if she might have received their praise for showing that there in her own house was the person upon whom the miracle had been performed the day before, about which the entire town was wondering. Quite a crowd gathered, little by little, while she whispered in each one's ear:

"Look at her; it is she—the young person. You know, the person—"

Suddenly she cried: "I must fetch Appoline from the shop. Appoline must see the young lady."

But Majeste kept her back, with a dignified air.

"No. Leave Appoline alone. She has three ladies to wait on now, and surely these gentlemen and the young lady will not go away from Lourdes without making some purchases. The small souvenirs that one carries off are so delightful to look at later. And our customers never buy anything outside of our shop, that adjoins the hotel."

"I have already made all offers to help them," insisted Mme. Majeste, "and I renew them now. Appoline will be so happy to show the young lady our prettiest things and at such cheap prices that it is almost incredible. Oh, such lovely things, beautiful things!"

Marie became very impatient at being thus detained, and Pierre was annoyed by the awakened curiosity that was increasing all about them. As for M. de Guersaint, he enjoyed the popularity immensely, through the triumph of his daughter. He promised to return. "Of course we will buy some little trifles, some souvenirs for ourselves, and several presents. But later, when we come back."

They finally escaped and went down the Avenue de la Grotto. Again the weather was superb, after the storms of the two preceding nights. The refreshing morning air smelled so in the widespread brilliancy of the clear sunshine. The sidewalks were already crowded with busy people, happy in the fact of being alive. And what an enchantment for Marie, to whom it was all new, charming, unappreciable! She had that morning borrowed a pair of boots from Raymonde, for she would not put a pair in her own valise on account of the superstition that it would bring her bad luck.

The boots fitted admirably, and she listened like a little child to the dainty tapping of the small heels on the paving stones. She never remembered having seen the houses look so white, or the trees so green, or the passersby so happy. With her each sense was in a state of joy, with a marvelous degree of delicacy. She heard distant music, smelled far away perfumes and tasted the air with greediness like some luscious fruit. But what pleased her above all was to hang on her father's arm—that was delicious! She had never done it before, and for years it had been one of those happy dreams that appear quite impossible when occupied with nothing but suffering. The dream was realized, and her heart beat with joy. She leaned closer against her father, and forced herself to walk very straight, very well, to do him honor. And how proud he was, happy as she, showing her off, overflowing with the joy of feeling her near him, his own flesh and blood, his daughter, radiant from henceforth with youth and health.

As all three were crossing the plain of La Merlasse, already filled with the band of candle and bouquet venders that rushed in pursuit of the pilgrims, M. de Guersaint cried:

"We surely must not go empty-handed to the grotto."

Pierre ,who was walking on the other side of Marie, completely won by her laughing gayety, stopped. They were at once surrounded by a horde of sellers, whose rapacious hands shoved their wares into their faces. "Beautiful young lady, kind gentleman, buy of me, of me, of me!" It ended by M. de Guersaint buying the biggest bouquet—a bouquet of white daisies, tied together as round and hard as a cabbage—from a very pretty, fat blonde girl, about 20 years old, whose rounded bust was plainly visible through her half open bodice, left thus uncovered in her bold neglect of decency. The bouquet cost only twenty sous, but he begrudged to take that sum from his slender purse, being rather upset by the girl's manners, and thinking to himself that she surely profited by another kind of commerce when the Holy Virgin no longer occupied her time. Meanwhile Pierre was paying for the three candles that Marie bought from an old woman—candles costing only two francs, and, as she said, very cheap and reasonable in price. The old dame, an angular figure, with hooked nose and dull eyes, showered down words of honeyed gratitude upon them. "May Our Lady of Lourdes bless you, beautiful lady; may she cure all your diseases of you and yours." That caused them fresh amusement, and they all three began to laugh, amused like so many children at the idea that the old woman's wish had already been fulfilled.

At the grotto Marie wished to stand at once in the line, to present herself the bouquet and the candle before she knelt to pray. There were not many people there yet, so they stood in file and passed by in about three or four minutes. With what an ecstatic gaze she examined it all, the organ-harmonium, the exvotos, the engraved silver altar, the candlesticks, streaming with wax, shining brightly even in the glare of daylight! This was the grotto that she had only seen from a distance, from her cart of misery, and she entered and drew in a breath, as if it were paradise itself, bathed divinely with its warm and sweet odor, that almost seemed to choke her. When she had placed the candles in the basket and had reached up to hang the bouquet on one of the points of the grating, she kissed the rock for a long time, just underneath the statute of the Holy Virgin, that so many million lips have already polished. And into that kiss, given to the stone, she put all the love and gratitude that affection promoted, a kiss in which her very soul melted away.

Then outside Marie knelt down, and lost herself in an endless prayer of thanksgiving. Her father had also knelt near her, mingling his fervent gratitude with that of his daughter. But he could not remain long at any one thing, and little by little he became uneasy, and, finally leaned over and whispered in her ear that he had an errand to do that he had only just remembered. It would certainly be best for her to remain there in prayer until he returned. While she finished her devotions he would do what he wished, and afterward they could walk about at ease, wherever they wanted to go. She did not understand, did not even hear him, but simply bowed her head, promising not to move, once more, so overcome by faint that her eyes were wet with tears, fixed on the white statute of the Virgin.

When M. de Guersaint rejoined Pierre, who had remained somewhat apart, he explained himself:

"My dear, it is a case of conscience, I made a solemn promise to our coachman at Gavarine to see his master, to tell the real causes for our delay. You know the barber in the Place du Marcadal—and then I must get shaved."

Pierre yielded unwillingly, and only when a promise was made to come back in a quarter of an hour. But as he thought the way rather long, he insisted upon taking a carriage that stood at the end of the plain of La Nurlasse. It was a sort of green cabriolet, and the driver, a large man about 30, wearing on his head a beret, was smoking a cigarette. Sitting sideways on the box, with knees spread apart, he drove with the quiet carelessness of a well cared for man, thorough master of the road.

"We will keep you," said Pierre, as they got out when they had reached the Place du Marcadal.

"All right, abbe, I will wait for you."

And leaving his thin horse to stand in the hot sun, he went to chat with a portly maid servant, who, disheveled and broad-chested, was washing a dog in the basin of the fountain near by.

Cazauban was just standing on the sill of his shop door, whose high mirrors and light green color brightened the doleful looking square, empty on a week day. When he was not busy he enjoyed standing thus, triumphant between the shop windows, that were decorated by pomatum pots, and highly colored bottles of perfumery. He instantly recognized the gentlemen.

"I feel most flattered, most honored. Will you please walk in, I pray you?"

From the very first words that M. de Guersaint spoke in excuse for the man who had driven them back to Garavine, he appeared good-natured. Of course, it could not have been the man's fault, he had no power to prevent wheels from breaking, or storms from bursting! So long as the travelers did not complain all was for the best.

"Oh!" cried M. de Guersaint, "it is a wonderful, never-to-be-forgotten country."

"Well, then, sir, since our country pleases you, you will come back again to see us, and we ask for nothing better."

When the architect sat down in one of the chairs to be shaved he hurried about. His boy was still absent, running errands for some pilgrims who were stopping there—an entire family, who were carrying off a trunk full of rosaries, Holy Vigins in plaster and engravings in frames. From the first floor came muffled footsteps and loud voices from a crowd of persons who were scurrying at the idea of their aproaching departure in order to get together a mass of purchases that had to be packed. Through the opening door of the neighboring dining room might be seen two children gobbling cups of chocolate and spilling it all over the dirty tablecloth. The entire house was let, given over, and there last hours of the invasion obliged the barber and his wife to take refuge in the basement, a narrow cellar, where they slept on a truckle bed.

While Cazauban was lathering his cheeks with barber's soap, M. de Guersaint questioned him:

"Well, are you satisfied with the season?"

"Certainly, sir. I cannot complain. You can hear my travelers are leaving today, but I expect others tomorrow, before we have time to more than give the rooms a sweeping, and it will go on until October."

Then, as he noticed that Pierre was standing or walking up and down the shop, looking impatiently at the walls, he turned and said politely:

"Sit down, abbe. Won't you have a newspaper? We shall not be long."

As the priest refused, by a gesture, to sit down, the barber continued, in his insatiable need for conversation:

"Oh, as for me, things go on. My house is well known for its clean beds and good cooking. But the people in the town are not satisfied. Oh, no! I may even say that I never saw so much dissatisfaction."

He was silent for a moment, shaved the left cheek, and then stopped again, declaring suddenly, with an exclamation, drawn forth by a sense of truth:

"Sir! The fathers of the grotto are playing with fire. That is all I have to say."

After this the bond was loosened and he talked and talked and talked. His big eyes rolled round in his long face, with its shining cheek bones and freshly tinted skin, mottled over with red, while his nervous little body twisted, fairly shaken by the exuberance of words and gestures. He returned to his old accusations, and told of the endless grievances of the old town against the fathers. Hotel keepers complained; merchants of religious articles could not take in half the receipts that they should realize; in fact, the new town took in both pilgrims and money, and there was no longer any profit in furnished rooms, hotels or shops unless they were in the immediate vicinity of the grotto. It was a merciless battle, a murderous hostility, that increased every day; the old town losing some of its life every season, surely destined to disappear, to be choked, assassinated by the young, new town! Ah! their dirty grotto; he would rather cut his feet off than put them inside it! Was it not disgusting, that shop for the sale of mementos, that they had stuck right alongside? A real shame, over which a bishop had shown such indignation that, it was said, he wrote about it to the pope! He, who flattered himself that he was a liberal and a republican of advanced ideas, who even under the empire had voted for the opposition candidates, he surely had the right to declare that he did not believe in it, their dirty old grotto, and he would have nothing to do with it."

"Look here, sir, I will tell you a fact. My brother is in the municipal council, and he told me this thing. I must first explain that our present republican municipal council is very greatly exercised over the demoralized state of the town. One can no longer go out in the evening without meeting those girls in the streets—you know, those candle venders. They come here with the drivers that are attracted each season—a loose, floating population from no one knows where. And I must also explain the situation of the fathers in regard to the town. When they bought the grotto they signed an act by which all commerce was formally forbidden to them. Now they have opened a shop, in spite of their signing this paper. Is that not a disloyal rivalry, unworthy of honest people? So the new council decided to send them a delegation to exact the letter of the treaty and enjoined them to close their shop immediately. Do you know, sir, what they answered? Ah, what they have answered twenty times, what they always answer when reminded of their engagements! 'That is all right, we will keep our promises, but we are masters here, and we will close the grotto.'"

He had raised himself, his razor high in the air, and he repeated, punctuating the words, his eyes rounded by this enormity:

"We will close the grotto."

Pierre, who had continued his slow walk, stopped suddenly and said in his face:

"Well, it only remained for the municipal council to answer, 'Close it.'"

The shock nearly suffocated Cazauban. The blood rushed to his face and he was beside himself. He stammered:

"Close the grotto? Close the grotto?"

"Most certainly, if it irritates and disgusts you, this grotto! If it is a continual cause for war, for injustice and for corruption. It would all be ended and nothing more heard of it. Really, it would be an excellent solution, and if there was any authority to do it, it would be a real kindness to force the fathers to carry out their menace."

While Pierre was speaking Cazauban felt less and less angry. He became very calm and rather pale. But the priest could see a growing uneasiness in the corners of his eyes. Perhaps he had gone too far in his rage against the fathers. Many ecclesiastics did not like them, and perhaps this young priest had come to Lourdes to begin a campaign against them. So, who could tell? Perhaps it might mean the closing of the grotto later. They lived off it. If the old town did murmur, through rage at only picking up the crumbs, it was happy to have that pittance, and even the free thinkers, who coined money out of the pilgrims like the rest of the world, held their tongues, uneasy, fearful, as soon as there were too many of their opinion against the evil ways of New Lourdes. One must be prudent.

Cazauban came back to M. de Guersaint. He commenced to shave the other cheek, murmuring in an absent way:

"Oh, as for me—what I might say—about their grotto, it really does not displease me, in the end. And then every one must live!"

The children in the dining room had just succeeded in breaking one of the bowls, amid deafening screams. Pierre again noticed the holy pictures, the plaster Virgin, with which the barber had decorated the room, to be pleasant looking for his lodgers. A voice cried from the first story that the trunk was locked and that when the servant came in he would please put the rope on. But Cazauban remained defiant, uneasy, his brain filled with disquieting hypotheses, in the society of those two gentlemen, whom he did not know very well. He was in despair to have them go away without finding out anything about them, after having compromised himself. If he might only recall those quick words against the fathers! So, when M. de Guersaint got up to wash off his chin he yielded to the desire of opening up the subject once more:

"Have you heard about the miracle that took place yesterday? The town is filled with it, and twenty people, at least, have told me all about it. Yet, it seems that they got an extraordinary miracle performed. A young paralyzed lady got up and dragged her cart as far as the interior of the basilica."

M. de Guersaint, who was about to sit down again after "drying" his face, said, with a complacent smile:

"That young lady was my daughter."

Then Cazauban beamed beneath this sudden burst of fortunate light. Feeling reassured, he gave a magisterial twist with his comb, in the midst of the exuberance of gestures and words that returned to him:

"Oh! sir, I congratulate you! I am flattered to have had the care of you. From the moment that the young lady was cured your father's heart was satisfied. Eh?"

And he even spoke a good-natured word with Pierre; then, when he allowed them to go, he gazed at the priest with a quizzical air, and said, like a sensible man, who wished to speak his mind about miracles:

"There is happiness for everybody, abbe, in this world. From time to time we have to find this kind of satisfaction."

M. de Guersaint had gone outside to find the coachman, who was still chatting with the servant, whose dog, soaking wet, was shaking himself in the sun. In about five minutes the cab took them back to the foot of the Place de la Merlasse. The errand had taken them a good half-hour, so Pierre wished to keep the carriage, with the idea of showing Marie the town without too much fatigue. While the father went to the grotto to fetch his daughter he waited there under the trees. The coachman at once entered into conversation with the priest. He had lighted another cigarette, and became very familiar. He came from the environs of Toulouse, and did not complain—he earned fat gains at Lourdes. One ate well there and amused one's self—in fact, it might be called a good sort of place. He told all these things with the abandon of a man unhindered by any religious scruples, yet not unmindful of the respect he owed an ecclesiastic. Finally, from his box, half lying down, one of his legs hanging over, he let these words fall slowly: "Oh, yes, abbe; Lourdes has taken very, very well, but the thing is to know if it will last long!"

Pierre was greatly struck by the saying, that sounded so involuntarily deep, when M. de Guersaint reappeared, bringing Marie. He had found her kneeling in the same spot, in the same state of faith and thankfulness, at the feet of the Holy Virgin; and she seemed to have brought away in her eyes the brilliancy of the flaming grotto, they were shining with such divine joy at her own cure. She did not wish to keep the carriage. No! No! She preferred to walk; it little mattered whether she saw the town, if she might have her father's arm for another hour while walking through the gardens, streets, squares—wherever she wanted! So when Pierre had paid the driver she wanted to go down the path of the Garden of the Esplanade, enchanted to walk slowly along, looking at the lawns covered with flower beds underneath the great trees. It was so lovely, so fresh, all the grasses and leaves, those shady paths, solitary, where one could hear the eternal rippling of the Gave. Then she wished to return by way of the streets, among the crowds, to see again the excitement, the noise of life, the need of which was filling her whole being.

In the Rue St. Joseph, where they saw the panorama in which might be seen the ancient grotto, with Bernadette kneeling, on the day of the miracle of the taper, Pierre wished to go in and see it. Marie was as pleased as a child, and M. de Guersaint himself showed a most innocent joy, above all, when he remarked that among the crowds of pilgrims that were pushed with them into the dark hallway several had recognized his daughter as the young woman so miraculously cured the day before, whose name was passing from mouth to mouth. Up on the ground platform, when they emerged into the diffused light that descended from the reflectors, Marie had a sort of ovation, and tender whispers, loving looks, an ecstatic delight at seeing her, to follow her, to touch her. Now came the period of glory. She would be loved thus wherever she went. It was necessary, in order to forget about her for awhile, for the man who explained the panorama to go ahead of the little flock of visitors and make the rounds, telling of the episode that was represented on the immense circular canvas, one hundred and twenty-six yards long. It represented the seventeenth apparition of the Holy Virgin to Bernadette. That morning, when kneeling before the grotto, she had carelessly allowed her hand during the vision to fall into the flame of the candle, and it was not burned. All the former scenery of the primitive grotto was delineated there; the whole scene reconstructed, with the historical personages, the doctor about to certify to the miracle, with his watch in his hand; the mayor, the commissioners of police, the imperial lawyer, whose names were all told by the men in charge to the admiring public that followed him around.

Then, by some inconcient train of thought, Pierre recalled the words that the coachman had just said, "Lourdes has taken well, but the thing is to see how long it will last." That was, in fact, the question. How many venerated sanctuaries had already been built like this one, raised by the innocent voice of a child, all of the elect to whom the Holy Virgin had revealed herself! The same story invariably commenced—an apparition, a persecuted shepherdess, who was treated as a liar; then the sullen breath of human misery, famishing for some illusion; then the propaganda, the triumph of the sanctuary, shining forth as a beacon, to be followed by the decline and oblivion when another sanctuary was created elsewhere by the ecstatic dream of another seer. It would seem as though the power of the illusion was exhausted, as though it was necessary throughout all ages to displace it, to put up fresh decorations, with some new adventure, in order to restore the might and power. La Salette had overthrown those ancient virgins of wood and stone who formerly healed. Lourdes had come and dethroned La Salette, and was waiting to be dethroned herself by Our Lady of Tomorrow, whose self-consolatory face was to be shown to some child as yet unborn.

Lourdes had succeeded so rapidly, so prodigiously, that it certainly owed it to the sincere little soul, to the delicious charm of Bernadette. There was no superstition here, no falsehood; this sole blossom of suffering, a small, invalid girl brought to a suffering people her dreams of justice and equality in those miracles. She was an eternal hope, eternal consolation. In fact, all the historical and social circumstances seem to have emphasized the need of this mystical flight of fancy at the end of a century of terrible and positive inquiry; and that is why Lourdes will endure perhaps for a long time in its triumph, before it becomes a mere legend, one of the dead religions, whose powerful perfume has evaporated.

Ah, that ancient town of Lourdes! that peaceful and believing town, the only possible cradle in which the legend might be born! And thus Pierre reconstructed it for himself as he looked around the great canvas of the panorama. That told all and was the best object lesson that could be imagined. The monotonous, stupid explications of the employe were no longer heard—the scene spoke for itself. First there was the grotto, the hole in the rocks on the edge of the Gave—a wild, dreary place; with its wooded crags and rolling stones, with no pathway marked out and as yet nothing there, no ornamentations, no monumental quays, no paths in the English garden winding about, hedges carefully trimmed, no nicely arranged grotto, deformed, enclosed by a grating; above all, no shops for the sale of religious articles—that shop of simony that was the scandal of all pious souls. The Virgin could not have selected in a desert a more charming spot in which to reveal herself to the elect of her heart—the poor little girl who walked there in the dreamy reveries of her suffering nights, picking up bits of dead wood. Then came the other side of the Gave, behind the rock of the castle, where ancient Lourdes slept confident.

Another age was invoked, a small town, with narrow streets paved with cobble stones, its dark houses with the marble facings, the old church, half Spanish, filled with ancient sculptures, peopled with visions of gold and painted flesh. Twice a day there passed only the diligences from Bagueres and Cauterets, going across to Lapaca and then up the steep road of the Rue Basse. The spirit of this century had not breathed on its peaceful roofs, that sheltered a belated population, that remained childlike, all crowded in the narrow bands of a strong religious discipline. No debauchery, but a slow, secular commerce was sufficient for the daily life; a poor life, whose rudeness preserved all morals. And Pierre never understood better than now how Bernadette, born in that land of faith and honesty, had flourished there as a natural rose, opened out on the briars that lined the roadside.

"It is very curious," declared M. de Guersaint when the were once more in the street. "I am not sorry to have seen it."

Marie also laughed easily.

"Father, one would say they had been there, would they not? At times it seems as though the personages moved. And how charming she is, Bernadette, kneeling in ecstasy, while the flame of the candle licks her fingers without burning them!"

"Let us see," continued the architect. "We only have an hour more. We must think about our purchases, if we wish to buy anything. Would you like to look about the shops? We have promised Majeste to give her the preference, only that does not prevent us to find out about things a little. Hein, Pierre, what do you think?"

"Of course, just as you like," answered the priest. "At any rate, we will walk on."

So he followed the young girl and her father, and came back on the Plateah de la Merlasse. Ever since he had come out from the panorama he felt a most singular sensation of being somewhere else. It was as though all at once he had been carried from one town to the other, centuries ahead. He had left the place of ancient Lourdes, the sleepy solitude, augmented by the dead lights of the reflectors, to fall suddenly into the new Lourdes, shining with light and noisy with its crowds.

Ten o'clock had just struck, and the animation in the streets was extraordinary, the whole concourse appearing to be in a hurry to finish their purchases before breakfast so as to have nothing but their departure to think about after they had eaten. The thousands of pilgrims of the national pilgrimage, in a final scurrying, overran the streets and laid seige to the shops. One would have thought it some public fairing from the cries, the knocks, the rustling about in the midst of the uninterrupted rolling past of carriages. Many were laying in provisions for the journey, and invaded the open air booths where bread, ham and sausages were sold. They bought fruit, they bought wine; baskets were filled with bottles and greasy papers without end. An itinerant vender, who pushed his cheeses on a small wagon in front of him, saw his wares carried off as though swept by a whirlwind. But the crowd bought religious articles more than anything else, and other wandering merchants, who had push carts filled with statuettes and holy prints, realized a shower of gold. The customers in the actual shops stood in line on the sidewalk, the women arrayed in immense rosaries, and held Holy Virgins under their arms, while many carried cans to be filled with water from the miraculous fountain.

These cans, holding from one to ten quarts, were some of them decorated with blue pictures of Our Lady of Lourdes, others were plain, but all added to the gay aspect of the masses, with their bright, new tins strung out and the noise they made, dangling either in the hand or held on the elbow. The fever of selling, the pleasure of spending, to go away with pockets protruding with photographs and medals, changed this overwrought crowd in the masses of a kermess or fair, their overflowing appetites being once satisfied.

On the Square de la Merlasse M. de Guersaint was tempted for an instant to go into one of the finest and most patronized of the shops, whose signboard bore in large letters these words, "Soubirons, Brother to Bernadette."

"Look; suppose we make our purchase there? It would be more local, and our little souvenirs would have a fresh interest."

Then he passed on, saying that it would be better to look at everything first.

Pierre looked at the shop of Bernadette's brother with a slight sensation at his heart. It distressed him to think of the brother selling that Holy Virgin who had been seen by the sister. But one had to live, and he wondered if the seeress' family, side by side with the resplendent golden basilica, made their living, for the competition was so tremendous. If the pilgrims left millions behind them at Lourdes, the merchants of holy articles numbered more than 200, without counting hotel keepers and lodging house keepers, who took the largest share, so that the profits so sharply discussed ended by being mediocre enough. All along the street, to the right and left of Bernadette's brother, were other shops, an uninterrupted row of shops, squeezed one against the other, occupying wooden sheds, a kind of gallery, constructed by the town that yielded some 60,000 francs to its coffers. There were regular bazars, open booths, filling the whole sidewalk and barring the way of the pedestrian. For more than 200 yards there was no other kind of commerce—a river of rosaries, medals, statuettes, pouring through the window panes unceasingly. And the signs contained the most reverend names in enormous letters—St. Roch, St. Joseph, Jerusalem, the Immaculate Virgin, the Sacred Heart of Mary—all that paradise contains to touch and attract the hearts of the customers.

"By Jove!" declared M. de Guersaint, "I think that it is about the same everywhere. Let us go into any shop."

He had had enough of it. This interminable line of booths was breaking his legs.

"But if you promised to buy up there," said Marie, who did not get at all tired, "it will be best to go back again."

"That's so. Let's go back to Majeste's."

But even at the Avenue de la Grotto the shops began again. On both sides they pressed forward anew, and there was a mixture of jewelers, venders of novelties, sellers of umbrellas as a religious article; there was even a confectioner, who sold boxes of pastes made with water from Lourdes, whose covers bore a picture of the Virgin. The show case of a photographer fairly ran over with views of the grotto and the basilica, portraits of bishops, reverend fathers of every order, mixed with celebrated places in the neighboring mountains. A library posted the latest Catholic works, volumes of titles of devotees among books published on Lourdes for the last twenty years, some of them having sold with prodigious success, and which were still much talked about. In this great populous street the crowd floated along in a growing flood, the cans tinkled, and it was all most joyous under the bright sun that flooded the street from one end to the other. The statuettes, the medals, the strings of beads seemed unending; one booth came after another, and kilometers stretched away, filling the streets of the entire town with the same kind of bazar, selling the same articles. In front of the Hotel des Apparitions M. de Guersaint hesitated once more.

"Then it is decided we are to make our purchases here?"

"Why, certainly," said Marie. "Look how lovely the shop is!"

And she entered first into the shop that was in fact one of the largest in the street, and occupied the ground floor of the hotel on the left side. M. de Guersaint and Pierre followed her.

Appoline, Mrs. Majeste's niece, who was in charge of the sales, was standing upon a step ladder, about taking out some holy water basins to show a young man, a very elegant looking stretcher bearer, who wore most fetching yellow gaiters. She laughed like a cooing dove, very charmingly with her thick black hair, her superb black eyes set in rather a square face, with straight forehead, large cheeks and thick red lips. Pierre clearly saw the young man's hand on the edge of her skirt, tickling one of her legs that seemed to be most willingly in that position. But it was no more than the vision of a second. The young girl had already jumped lightly to the ground and was asking:

"Then you do not think this kind of a holy water basin will suit your aunt?"

"No, no," answered the litter bearer, as he went off. "Get another sample. I am not going before tomorrow, and I will come back."

As soon as Appoline knew that Marie was the miraculously cured girl of whom Mme. Majeste had been talking since the previous day, she showed great interest. She looked at her with a gay smile, in which there was a sort of surprise, a discreet credulity, as though she experienced the suppressed mockery of a beautiful woman, loose in her morals, in the presence of such tardy and childlike virginity. But the clever saleswoman expressed herself in good natured words:

"Ah, miss, I shall be so happy to sell anyto you; it was so beautiful, your miracle. Come, now, the whole shop is for you to choose from. We have the largest selection."

Marie felt embarrassed.

"Thanks, thank you; you are very kind. We have only come to buy a few trifles."

"If you will permit us," said M. de Guersaint, "we will make our own selection."

"Oh! yes, sir; that is the way; choose and then we will see."

Then as other customers entered Appoline forgot about them and took up her part of the pretty saleswoman with caressing voice, seductive gestures for men, above all, whom she seldom allowed to go without filing their pockets with purchases. M. de Guersaint had two francs left out of the louis that Blanche, his eldest daughter, had slipped into his hand as he was leaving, to use for pocket money, so his choice was very limited. But Pierre declared that it would give him great pain unless he were permitted to offer some objects to his friends to take away from Lourdes. At any rate it was agreed that a present for Blanche must be selected first. Then Marie and her father might each choose the souvenir that pleased them best.

"Do not hurry us," repeated M. de Guersaint, very gayly. "Now, Marie, look well; what will give Blanche the greatest pleasure?"

They all three looked, poked about and searched. But their indecision increased as they passed from one object to another. The large shop, with its counters, its showcases, its boxes that filled it from top to bottom, was like a vast sea with innumerable waves, an overflowing of every imaginable religious article. There were rosaries, strings of beads all along the walls, heaps of rosaries in drawers, as well as rosaries for 20 sous the dozen, and even rosaries of perfumed woods, of agate, of lapis, chains of gold or silver, and some of them, immense, made to go twice around the waist or throat, were formed of worked or carved beads as long as nuts, separated by small skulls. There were medals, a whole shower of medals; medals in boxfuls of every size and material, the most humble as well as the most precious; some with diverse inscriptions, representing the basilica, the grotto, the Immaculate Conception; engraved, raised, enamelled, very choice or made by the gross to suit all persons. There were holy virgins, small, large, in tin, in wood, in ivory, but most in plaster, some of them entirely white, others painted in vivid colors, reproducing indefinitely the description given by Bernadette of the amiable face, the very long veil, the blue scarf, the golden roses on the feet, but with slight modifications with each model, so as to guarantee the proprietorship of the author.

There was a flood of other religious things, a hundred varieties of scapulars, a thousand negatives of picture cards, fine engravings, chromo-lithographs in loud colors, that quite drowned a swarm of little pictures that were colored, gilded, varnished, surrounded by roses or ornamented with paper lace. There was jewelry, too—rings, brooches and bracelets, ornamented with stars and crosses, decorated with holy tracings. But Parisian things dominated over all—that submerged the rest—pencil cases, purses, cigar holders, paper weights, paper cutters, even tobacco cases, and innumerable articles on which might be found reproductions of the basilica, the grotto and the Holy Virgin without end and in every possible manner. In one case of articles for 50 centimes there were heaped up, pell mell, napkin rings, egg dishes and wooden pipes, on all of which was carved the apparition of Our Lady of Lourdes in all her smiles.

(To Be Continued Next Sunday.)

COMPARED TO SANDOW

A Professional Gentleman Who is Conceded to Be More Perfectly Modeled.

He is Well Known in Society and Has Been the Subject of Much Favorable Comment—How He Became Strong and Graceful.

SAN FRANCISCO, Cal., June.—It has been a matter of remark ever since Sandow made his appearance in the ring at Central park with the lion Commodore, that he did not appear to the untutored eye to be quite so "perfect" as he has been described.

Whilst Sandow claims that his great muscular development is due to his own system of training, which it may be, a well known physician pointed out the other day that the muscles were not the only part of a man which needed developing in order that he might be considered perfect.

"I have a personal friend in my own profession," said this physician to a reporter a few days ago, "whom I am certain is a better specimen of perfect manhood than is the strong fellow." The reporter declined to believe the statement, and suggested that a comparison be made. "My friend would never consent to any such arrangement, for he is a scholar and a distinguished gentleman," was the reply, "but," he continued, "we can see him by a little strategy."

It was then arranged to invite half a dozen well known men—athletes and medical men, as well as a representative of the press, to meet the gentleman who was said to be so near "a perfect man." "Mind you," said the doctor, "I mean mentally and morally as well as physically, and I assert that his mentality and morality are as well developed as his physical nature."

Last Saturday the selected coterie joined in a social game of whist, and it was left to the noted physician spoken of above to introduce his friend in his own way. The game had not proceeded far when there was a sharp wrap at the door, followed by the intrusion of a head.

"Doctor, there is a man seriously hurt outside," said the voice. The doctor hastened to the scene of the accident and the game was suspended to await his return. Presently a stretcher came in carried by four men and followed by the doctor.

"Excuse me, gentlemen," he said, "but this man is seriously hurt and must be attended to at once." Then saying he wanted to consult another physician he rang for a messenger boy and dispatched him with an urgent note. No sooner had the boy gone than the injured man was taken up stairs by the stretcher men. "Now," said the doctor, "my perfect man will come in response to my note."

In a few moments the door opened and a gentleman just about six feet tall, with dignified bearing and a most graceful carriage, entered. His quiet but handsome face bore a slight trace of surprise as he viewed the company, but recognizing a couple of the members of the little party he shook hands with them heartily. His frame was massive to a degree, but his step was light, his broad shoulders showed not the slightest sign of stoop, and his face was aflame with the glow of perfect health.

"I wanted to consult you about a case which has just been brought here," said his friend, and with wonderful ingenuity he compelled the stranger to move every part of his body whilst explaining the accident. It could plainly be seen how perfectly all the muscles of the dark bearded stranger were developed, and he talked so readily and clearly about the case that the rapidity with which he had grasped the details amazed every one. He was evidently master of his profession, and the other medical man spoke with an air of deference to his opinion, which showed that he knew he was consulting a superior.

The conference came to an end in half an hour or so, and the stranger retired as quietly as he had come.

"What is your verdict, gentlemen?" said the doctor who had brought about the meeting. It was unanimously agreed that the stranger was a learned, polished gentleman, and that his physical development was as perfect as could be.

"But who is he?" said the newspaper man.

"That, sir, is the chief consulting physician of that great white building, "The Hudson Medical Institute," 1032 Market street. He is one of the cleverest men of San Francisco, California. He is the discoverer of 'The Great Hudyan,' that grand specific for nervous debility, impaired manhood, etc., the cures by the means of which have astonished the civilized world."

"But has this 'Great Hudyan' done so much as is claimed for it?" asked the scribe.

"You should drop in there or write them for testimonials and you will see," was the reply. They will send you a bat