

poor little hamlet. A young shepherdess named Bernadette declared that the Virgin had appeared to her there. She was believed. A sanctuary was raised by the side of the grotto where the apparition was seen. This same grotto soon passed for miraculous. Pilgrimages were formed, and the reputation of Lourdes became European and even universal in the Christian world.

It is this manifestation of faith, extraordinary in our century of science, that M. Zola wished to study. He brings us in "Lourdes" into the presence of one of those organized pilgrimages which occur there every year through the efforts of the priests of the Assumption and which bring from Paris by special trains pilgrims of all classes that come from all the corners of France.

It is in one of these trains that he introduces his personages. They are first Mlle Marie de Guersaint and her father, the latter a ruined architect, having always in view chemical inventions destined to re-establish his fortune, a childish mind in the body of a well matured man. They are accompanied by a friend from childhood of Marie, the Abbe Pierre Froment, a sincere priest who is tormented by the painful feeling caused by the shattering of his faith by the assaults of modern thought. Mlle. de Guersaint is suffering from a nervous ataxy, and the plot of the book is the story of her cure through the shock which the approach to the sanctuary gave her in the midst of the Catholic ceremonies, so well adapted to excite, even to frenzy, the nervous system and the artistic sense, gross though it be, of the crowd.

Around them are personages that symbolize in M. Sabathier, a former Lyceum professor the intellectual invalid whose despair of all normal cure has turned into a believer, in Mme. Vincent, the mother, that a profound grief brings back to faith, in Mme. Maze, the women that a poorly recompensed love for her husband drives to religion, and in Elsie Ronquet, ignorance and naive faith.

Then comes the Sisters of Charity and the ecclesiastics.

But the real hero here, as in all the great romances of Zola is the crowd, because no one better than he can make it a living thing, and none more than he is able to comprehend its complicated and artless soul.

The hero, therefore, is the ignorant and credulous crowd, the suffering crowd, the crowd anxious for life at any cost, and that insists upon being happy even though it be deceived.

But let us hear Abbe Pierre:

"Yes, it was true. A breath passed that way, the sob of grief, the inextinguishable aspiration toward the infinite in hope. If the dream of a suffering child was sufficient to move the people, to rain down millions, and bring up from the soil another city, was it not because that dream came to appease in a small degree the hunger, the insatiable need of poor humanity, to be forever deceived and consoled? The child had opened up the unknown, no doubt, at a favorable social and historical moment, and the crowds rushed there to take refuge in mystery when reality seemed so hard, and to lean upon the miraculous since cruel nature seemed a long injustice. But it is vain to organize the unknown, to reduce it to dogmas, and convert it into revealed religions; all that we have after all is the appeal of the suffering, that wail of life calling for health and joy, the fraternal happiness, even to the point of being willing to accept it in another world, if it cannot be found on this earth."

Close to the crowd M. Zola introduces us by short sketches to those who live by it, those for whom the miracle is a source of commercial profit, priests and merchants of piety "who sell God at wholesale and retail."

M. Zola was recently interviewed by a newspaper correspondent in Paris:

"The anarchists!" said he. "Well, I think that society is perfect-

ly right in defending itself against them. We must give our policemen and our magistrates something to do. But," added M. Zola, after a moment's silence, "we must admit that this repression will be absolutely fruitless. The anarchists are a product of our social condition. What is necessary is, not to pull up the tare, that would be impossible; but to plow up the soil, so that the tare can no longer grow."

"You mean the anarchists in Paris?"

"Yes, certainly, and I have long ago commenced collecting documents, I have all the reports of their trials, including that of Caserio."

"And what do you think of the support which the young literature seems to give to the anarchistic doctrines?" (The question seems to surprise M. Zola.)

"Why do you ask me that question?" said he in a somewhat anxious tone.

I continued:

"Does it not appear to you strange that the literary men who for so many years seemed to despise politics, have suddenly found it sufficiently interesting to meddle with it in an active manner and to make it one of the principal literary preoccupations?"

"No, no that does not astonish me. Their predecessors sustained the theory of art for art's sake. It is quite natural that they should sustain the reverse. They have an instinctive need of doing the reverse of their elders. The search for originality, so necessary to success, drives them to struggle against their predecessors; that is easily explained. Literature is to-day a closed career. Everything has been written. The ground has been ploughed over and over again in every direction. What, for example, can a man do in a romance after Balzac and so many others, and after us? It is, moreover, the result of a certain cadence of ideas, a certain balance which makes the young always combat the old; and to a realistic epoch there will succeed always an idealistic epoch. And then with all that the career is blocked up, the works of the young are not sold. Success has become almost impossible. From this come bitterness and discontent. They try to be original, and they writhe in order to succeed.

"And yet a man of genius, even under such circumstances, I believe, will obtain a hearing.

"And then," says M. Zola, continuing his former remarks, "there are reasons still more profound. The young writers come socially discontented in the world. They have suffered. Their works are the product of stunted ideas. What did we not expect from the republic when we were under the empire? 'Ah when we have the republic?' Well, the republic came and failed in all its promises, and in all the ideas that engendered it. And now the people no longer believe in anything. The young literary men are disgusted, and some of them possess unquestionable talent; but they have drifted to skepticism.

"But this love of one's self; this excessive individualism, this egotism, in a word —

"Egotism, oh no! Say rather that there is in it a great deal of humanity.

I mentioned the name of Jean Grave, former shoemaker and anarchistic theorist convicted for his book, "Dying Society and Anarchy," and acquitted a few days ago at the Assizes Court of the Seine for association with an "unlawful assembly of evil-doers," together with Sebastian Faure, the anarchist lecturer, and a considerable number of others, to whom the Court wanted to apply the strange new laws voted by the Chamber with the scandalous haste of which we are aware.

"Jean Grave," said M. Zola. "I have read his 'Dying Society and Anarchy.' He is certainly a man of remarkable talent. He is the son of his works, but he has also all the defects of the workman who

Highest of all in Leavening Power.—Latest U. S. Gov't Report

Royal Baking Powder
ABSOLUTELY PURE