

Vraie Bernadette de Lourdes," which has received the approbation of Leo XIII. himself. Up to this time the Vatican has never pronounced definitely if the "Miracles" of Lourdes were to be regarded as supernatural or not, but in consequence of the French novelist daring to deal with these faith-cures from a scientific point of view, Mgr. Ricard has received a letter from Cardinal Rampola, written with the approval of the Pope, commenting and congratulating him on his vindication of the Miracles to which it is evident His Holiness now gives his official sanction. I wish I had space to sketch the wonderful pilgrimage that M. Zola relates of the group of hopeless, helpless and hysterical invalids from Paris to the miracle working shrine. The respective, and in some cases repulsive, illnesses of these people are faithfully described; too faithfully, many people will think, for we are not spared one repulsive detail, and in consequence Zola has succeeded in depicting a perfectly night-marish picture of this awful *train de misère*, where no medical care, scientific nursing or soothing narcotics help the unfortunates to endure their terrible sufferings, but with whom, in spite of their tortures, faith is so triumphant that they join at constant intervals in Litanies, Psalms, and prayers to the Virgin. This terrible train is filled to overflowing with miserable and moribund men and women. They bathe at Lourdes—some of them die—some of them return to Paris worse than when they started upon their piteous pilgrimage; but one of the invalids, who had long suffered from an affection of the spine, is triumphantly cured. Marie Guersaint, the miracle saved woman, and the friend of her childhood, a young priest, are the principal characters of the novel, but round these central personages are a crowd of nurses, priests, railway porters, hotel-keepers, etc., etc., all of whom are described with life-like touches of individualisation. Here is a picture of one of the Sisters of Mercy who accompanied the pilgrims to Lourdes, not so much for the purpose of giving them medical aid as to direct and lead their prayers and litanies of intercession.

"Sister Hyacinthe, in her black dress of a Sister of the Assumption, enlivened by her white cap and large white apron, smiled with a courageous activity. Her youth sparkled round her pretty fresh lips, and in the depth of her lovely and tender blue eyes. She was not perhaps exactly beautiful, but she was adorable, exquisite, with a chest like a boy's under the front of her apron—of a really nice boy full of health, of gaiety and of innocence."

M. Zola tells the story of Bernadette and her visions. I have just finished reading Mgr. Ricard's "La Vraie Bernadette de Lourdes," which, as I explained above, is intended as a counterblast to the French novelist's story. Mgr. Ricard writes with a sort of querulous reticence that deserves a note of commendation from the reader, but with no nobility of thought or language which would make his book a worthy answer to M. Zola's novel, which throbs throughout with the profoundest and deepest sympathy for poor and suffering humanity. The pathos with which the return journey of the pilgrimage is described must needs sink deep into all hearts, while the dispassionate accuracy with which he examines and weighs every detail of the faith cures at Lourdes, must strike all readers of this masterpiece of modern French realistic literature.

A. M. G.

## Inventions, Preparations, &c.

### ARTISTIC WALL PAPERS.

Our attention has recently been directed to the excellent wall papers manufactured by Messrs. Essex & Co., of 114, Victoria Street, S.W. Even in these days in which no one has any excuse for ugly surroundings considering the cheapness and beauty with which artistic back-grounds can be provided, Messrs. Essex & Co. have achieved a well deserved success by the variety and superiority of their productions. The new offices of this Journal have been decorated with a wall paper provided by this firm, which perhaps is sufficient testimony as to our appreciation of their manufactures. Those of our readers who require to purchase such papers would find themselves well repaid by a visit to the show rooms of this Company because, not only are the designs which are there exhibited in wall papers and hangings, of the best material and most artistic patterns, but their prices compare very favourably with those charged for much inferior productions by many other firms.

### NEIGELINE.

A sample of this preparation has been submitted to us by Mr. Edward Aspinall of the Gresse Street Works, Rathbone Place, W. It appears to thoroughly deserve the commendation which it has already received from many who have employed it, because it is not only most fragrant in perfume but is also very pleasant in use. As it is a patent preparation we do not consider it right to explain our estimate of its composition, but it is evidently so prepared as to be perfectly harmless to the most delicate skin, and should have a very beneficial effect in cases of roughness caused either by wind or frost, or of irritation from other causes. Nurses will find it specially valuable for use after their hands have been much in carbolic acid and other antiseptics, and those who can afford it will find it will keep the skin smooth and supple, as the hands of every Nurse ought to be. For this purpose indeed it is one of the very best, and most fragrant preparations which we have met with. Our readers can obtain further particulars by writing to the manufacturer.

CALLARD'S IVORY JELLY for INVALIDS. This jelly is made from pulverized IVORY; is rich in phosphates, and bone salts. Very delicate in flavour, cooling, refreshing, strengthening. No sick room should be without it. In half-pint jars, 1s. 6d. each; post free, 1s. 10½d. Callard & Callard, 1, Queen's Terrace, St. John's Wood, N.W.

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