

University of Notre Dame  
Religious Bulletin  
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Bernadette of Lourdes.

Dear Father Gartland: I am sending with this a first edition copy of Bernadette of Lourdes by Margaret Gray Blanton for your Circulating Library. Its own splendid qualities, as well as its subject, make it a prized possession. By reading first the Foreword, then the last chapter, you will understand better both the writer and the direction of her thought.

A Psychologist's Discovery.

The author is a Psychologist of repute. Her husband, Dr. Smiley Blanton, is Professor of Clinical Psychiatry at Cornell University. They are not Catholics. He is doing a book on the scientific aspect of the cures and that brought them to Lourdes. She was no casual visitor. With the insight and detachment of the true professional she went beyond the impalpable tension that the moving spectacle of Lourdes begets, - and discovered Bernadette.

Bernadette Belongs to All.

Her interest lies in Bernadette as a human being who "by all the canons of human drama is universal." Step by step she follows her in the world that buffeted her and the convent that sheltered her; she recreates the eighteen apparitions Bernadette witnessed, and the circumstances surrounding them; she records the process of her canonization, and visits the convent at Nevers where her body reposes in a silver shrine. Skillfully she sketches the history of the region, its people, the family of Bernadette which was large, poor, bedraggled, but staunchly honest and devout. Dispassionately she scans all available sources based upon the records of the Episcopal Commission that examined under oath everyone even remotely connected with the events of the drama.

Realism with A Difference.

Like Bernadette herself, the story as told, is simple and straightforward, devoid of overstuffed sentimentality. Often in it there is stark realism, but it is a realism relieved by "the light that never was, on sea or land." The book is a human document become a spiritual odyssey. One shares the experience of Bernadette's nun companions in the convent at Nevers who saw in her "the mystery of the beauty of the supernatural."

The Grotto: A Deeper Meaning.

The volume is beautifully illustrated and pleasingly set up. (Longmans) It is a treasure to keep and to share. It will give your visits to the Grotto a new significance. Knowing Bernadette better will make your love deeper for her "pétit damizélo" of the Immaculate Conception.

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PRAYERS: Mrs. Blanton and a wide circulation of her book.

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Rev. L. V. Broughal, C.S.C.