EVERYBODY'S BIRTHRIGHT

by
Clara E.
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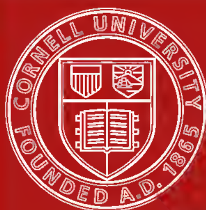

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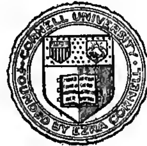

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A man was there close by Jean's Statue, as he had promised

Everybody's Birthright

A Vision of Jeanne d' Arc

By

CLARA E. LAUGHLIN

Author of "Everybody's Lonesome," etc., etc.

New York Chicago Toronto

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To One
Who Has Been at Chinon
And Has Gone to Rheims

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I

"SORROW IS A KIND OF HIGHWAY"

THE door-bell rang, and Jean buried her head deeper in the pillows of the big davenport in the library. Why, oh, why did people insist on making these dreadful calls of condolence? Endlessly, it seemed to her, they came and went—whispering to Hilda at the door; waiting, like spectres, in the drawing-room; tiptoeing up to her mother's chamber, and there going over with her, as she lay abed, all the details of Margaret's death. Jean hated them all. Yes, hated them. What did they know of the agony of Margaret's loss? They could go away—to their homes, to their amusements—and laugh and forget. Why did they come here and walk softly and talk sadly, as if they understood? Why did her mother see them and tell them each in turn about Margaret—just as if they cared? After each departure her mother was more inconsolable than before. Jean was impatient with her mother's weakness. Of course she grieved

for Margaret! But if she grieved as Jean did, could she talk about it to these people? Jean couldn't talk about her loss—hardly even to Dad. She couldn't feel that any one in all the world could understand. For Margaret was her twin. They two had been separated scarcely an hour in their lives—nearly seventeen years. From morning till night, and from night until another morning broke, everything that Jean did, or tried to do, deepened her sense of loss. Margaret, alive, was "half of everything"; but by the tragic arithmetic of death, Margaret, going away, did not leave half of anything. There are many precious things in life of which half is worth no more than half of a baby—as Solomon knew when he proposed that consolation.

Jean's slender figure, prostrate on the big brown davenport, shook with sobs. Everybody told her she must try to control herself, must try to keep from sobbing and crying, or she would break her health. They couldn't seem to realize that the one thing Jean did not dread was that her health would break. Nobody knew how many times her lithe, black-clad body had thrown itself, in a passion of agony, on Margaret's grave; nor how Jean had cried, with her face pressed against

the sod, "I want to come, too, Margaret! I want to come, too!"

The library was dark, and very still. The short autumn day had been a gray one; and the shadows, which had not been driven out of the corners of the big room all day, came trooping forth unchallenged, and swathed it in deep duskiness by four o'clock.

Some one came down the stairs, and back to the library door and looked in; then went away. Jean heard the footsteps, but did not raise her head.

Then Hilda came through the dining-room and into the hall, to light the electric lamps.

"Did Miss Jean go out?" a woman's voice asked.

"No, ma'am; I think she's in the lib'ry," Hilda answered.

In a minute, Jean knew, Hilda would switch on the library lights, to look for her. So she called out:

"I'm here. What is it?"

"A lady—Miss Binford—to see you, Miss Jean."

Jean clenched her hands and stiffened her slight body resentfully. Why couldn't they leave her alone—these people who thought they must "condole"?

But Jean had been bred to courtesy of man-

ner. She rose to her feet instantly and went towards the door.

"How do you do?" she said, politely. "Just a second—till I reach the light switch—so you can see—it's very dark ——"

"Don't turn on the lights, please—unless you want to," Miss Binford pleaded. "I can see."

"It was very good of you to come," Jean started to say, after her best formula for such occasions.

But she had scarcely got it out, in her automatically polite way, when she found herself enfolded in Miss Binford's arms.

"Dear little Jean!" Mary Binford said—and there was a catch in her voice, a sob, that made it very different from the voices of other persons who had tried to be kind.

Jean clung to her; she could not speak. She could feel sorrow in the heart of the woman who held her against her breast. This was, Jean knew by a flash of intuition, not a comfortably happy woman who had looked in to say, "You must try to bear up—for your parents' sake," and then would go on her way to some club or tea, to tell other comfortably happy women that she had been to see the Fahrlows and that "calls of condolence are so trying."

"I don't know that you remember me, Jean," Mary Binford began, when she could command herself—the sudden clinging of Jean's thin arms about her neck had shaken her soul's depths. "I went to school with your mother," she went on, checking Jean's effort to reply. "I haven't—we haven't seen a great deal of each other, latterly—we haven't—our paths haven't seemed to cross. But sorrow is a kind of highway—isn't it? On it we all meet. I wanted to come to your mother, to the girl I used to know, when I heard of her sorrow. But most of all, Jean, dear, I wanted to come to you. I haven't seen you in a long time—but I couldn't get the thought of you out of my mind. I think I know what this means to you, dear. I know what it means to have some one go away and leave life—no, not blank! we could bear that—but just packed with memories that taunt us, every minute of the day, and worst of all, in the long, crawling minutes of the night."

They sat down on the davenport, and for a few moments they just clung, one to the other—girl to woman, and woman to girl.

It was Jean who spoke first.

"Was it—your sister?"

"No, darling. I never had a sister. I al-

ways wanted one. When I was a little girl, I wanted a sister more than anything else in the world."

"And did you—get over wanting one?"

"I didn't just 'get over' it, dear; I want one yet. Every time I see two sisters happy in each other I seem to feel all I've missed. But when I grew up, and had learned how to get along in my sisterless way, I—something else came into my life, and filled it so full of glory and the most perfect comradeship I could think of only one happiness that could make life any more wonderful; and that was a little girl, whose name was to be Jean. Do you understand, dear?"

Jean tightened, for a moment, the clinging of her arms about Miss Mary. And Miss Mary knew that Jean understood.

"I'll tell you why her name was to have been Jean—that little girl who never came—and then perhaps you'll know why I wanted to come to you so much.

"When I was nineteen, I went abroad to study painting. I had wanted to go for more than a year. But my parents wouldn't listen to any suggestion that I go alone; and they couldn't go with me. Then, it all seemed arranged for me by Providence: two of our dearest friends were going over to

"I think I know what this means to you, dear"

spend a year or more. They were a childless couple, the most charming people imaginable. Professor Durland was a French-Swiss, from that neutral ground near Geneva which is neither Switzerland nor France. His wife was from the old duchy of Lorraine, in eastern France. They had been teaching over here for twelve years, and they were very homesick. They decided to go back for a year—maybe for two—and they offered to take me with them. It was a wonderful offer, for they were the kind of persons who make young folks very, very happy and who help them to find all the loveliest things in life. My parents knew them well, and were delighted to let me have this opportunity.

"We had a teeny-weeny apartment in Paris—not just in the Latin Quarter, but not far from it, on the left bank, as they call that side of the Seine where the schools and colleges are. Sometimes we ate in the restaurants for which the quarter is almost as famous as for its schools. And sometimes we went out to the little shops where one can buy all kinds of ready-cooked things (including the best, smoking-hot French fried potatoes, of which a fresh lot seems always to be just coming from the kettle of fat) or order things cooked especially; and then we'd set

the table in our little living-room and have a jolly meal at home. It was all like a continuous picnic."

Mary Binford could not see Jean's face, but something less fallible than sight told her that Jean was interested; that probably for the first time since Margaret went away, Jean was feeling something which did not remind her of her loss.

"In our leisure times," she continued, "we went on the most enchanting excursions, around Paris and out of Paris. The Durlands were the most wonderful guides and companions any girl could possibly wish for. And they were the dearest lovers! People who didn't know they had been married for twenty years used to think they were on their honeymoon. They were! Their honeymoon never waned.

"Those were the days when everybody rode bicycles. We each had our own wheel, and on them we went all over Paris, and to all the places near by. We saw pictures and studied architecture, and stood 'all thrilly and chilly' where historic things had happened. It was just like living in a most marvellous story-book, with splendid illustrations opposite every page.

"And then to make it more than ever like

a story-book, there came into it a—Prince. He was studying architecture, at the Beaux Arts. I was studying painting, under Boutet de Monvel. He was —— You want to know how he *looked*, don't you?"

"Yes," whispered Jean.

"He was quite tall and—well, sturdy without being at all stocky or stout. And he had fair hair, thick and fine, a great thatch of it; and gray-blue eyes; and the most beautiful mouth I have ever seen on a man. I used to study all the great statues that showed manly beauty, to see if one of them had a mouth at once so strong and so sweet as his. And it always seemed to me that none of them had.

"He was with us a great deal—a very great deal. The Durlands liked him, and he liked them, and we were all very happy together. We seemed to have a thousand tastes in common. And then we discovered —he and I—that we had ideals in common, too—ideals of what we hoped to be and of what we hoped to do. And my life was so full of happiness that I—well, when it all went away I——! But I want to tell you about Jean."

II

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF JEANNE D'ARC

"IN Paris, school vacation begins on the first of August. And for a long while before August came, we had been planning our vacation jaunt. I don't know whether you happen to know about it or not, but Boutet de Monvel, in whose studio I studied, was the painter who did such beautiful Jeanne d'Arc pictures—for mural decorations. I think you may have seen some of them when they were exhibited in this country—or perhaps you have the book in which they are reproduced in colour, with his own charming text accompanying them.

"Well, I studied them enthusiastically. I had always loved the story of Jeanne. And our plan for that August jaunt on our bicycles was to go over the Jeanne d'Arc country—all the places associated with her—from Domremy to Rouen. This was delightful for the Durlands, because it meant revisiting the neighbourhoods they had known and loved when they were young. And it was ideal for Laddie—that was what I always

called him, dear—because on our way he would see many of the cathedrals and châteaux he was eager to study.

"As I look back at it all, now, it doesn't seem to me that there can ever really have been so much happiness in the world as when we were swelling the sum total in those days. The way we studied road-maps and guide-books! The way we freshened up our history! And the way we planned our picnics by the roadside at noonday—our halts for the nights in little French inns."

An instinct tenderly wise had made Mary Binford preface the recital of this happiness by the simple statement that it did not last. A tale of radiant days would have been no better than a taunt to Jean. But a tale of golden days, from which all the gold vanished, gave her an opportunity to compare this sorrow with her own. And so she listened. And at times she almost forgot to compare.

"We left Paris, shortly after the early dawn, on the morning of the first of August," Mary continued, "and went by way of Fontainebleau and Sens and Troyes to Domremy, Jeanne's birthplace. And there we stood in the room where she was born, and in the other humble room that was hers; and went into the tiny village church where

she worshipped God; and into the fields where, when she was tending her father's flock, St. Margaret and St. Catherine, and St. Michael the archangel of battles, came to her in visions and spoke to her with Voices which she alone heard, and told her she must save France from the English who then held so much of it that the Dauphin durst not go to Rheims to have himself invested with his birthright, the crown. The Voices, you remember, told Jeanne, who was just your age, dear, that she must drive the English army away from Orleans, which they were besieging, and take the Dauphin to Rheims to be crowned King of France. And Jeanne, although she had no horse to ride, nor even any clothes for the journey, went unhesitatingly, and did as the Voices told her.

"When we were leaving Domremy, to go to Vaucouleurs whither Jeanne went to ask the Sire de Beaudricourt for an armed escort to take her to the Dauphin at Chinon, a company of French soldiers came marching by from the great military headquarters at Toul. And when they reached that lowly stone hut whence Jeanne had set forth to save France, the soldiers formed ranks and presented arms—to the memory of The Maid, as all France calls her.

"We followed her footsteps to Vaucouleurs, and thence to Chinon where she found the Dauphin Charles. That journey took The Maid twelve days. We covered the distance, and saw much by the way, in four days.

"We got there towards nightfall and stayed until morning at the little inn in the town square where the fountain plays and the girls and women fill their water-jugs and the old gossips sit in the shade of the market booths. And when morning came, we climbed the cobbled steps, between rows of dwellings—some of them dug out of the great rocks—to the splendid ruins of the castle on the hill-top. We stood in the roofless hall where Jeanne had singled out the Dauphin from amongst his courtiers in whose midst he tried to hide. We sat on the broad, stone window seats, in the deep embrasures, and looked far away over the beautiful valley of the Vienne. We peered down into the dungeons, and scrambled over crumbling walls. And by and by we came to the tower of Coudray where Jeanne was lodged.

"The stairs that wind and wind within the tower are narrow and steep. When we came to the foot of them and looked up into the dusk above, the Durlands declared they would not make the climb; that we who were

younger might go up and tell them how the chamber of Jeanne looks.

"They used to do things like that, at times. For they were lovers, and they knew that Laddie and I had things to say that—that may be said only when two who love can feel that there is nothing in the world but themselves and the glory 'round about them and within.

"We were gone a long time, I think. I don't know! All I know is that up there in the little tower-room where Jeanne had lodged until she rode forth at the head of her army, to Orleans and victory, we talked of her, but we thought of ourselves. No word of our love had been spoken, but I looked up and saw in my Laddie's face something—oh, Jean! I think the Home-lights, when we are drawing near to Heaven, cannot be so wonderful as the light that shines in the eyes of the man God made for your mate. He didn't speak—he just held out his arms to me, and I laid my face against his breast and sobbed in happiness. And it seemed as if The Maid and her three saints, and all the blessed ones, came and shone 'round us with their heavenly light. Our love was so pure. That first kiss was so holy.

"That made dear Jeanne our patron saint.

And as we followed her to Orleans, and to Rheims, and all the way through to Compiègne and to Rouen and the spot where she was burned by her English captors, she grew to be more and more a part of our lives.

"And as we talked of the future and of all the glory it was to hold, we used to say that if the gates of Heaven opened and sent down a little girl to us, some day, her name should be Jean."

The narrator's voice broke. There was silence for a minute—perhaps for longer. Jean felt a tear on her hair, then another. She pressed herself closer against Miss Mary, in silent sympathy.

"My Jean never came true," Miss Mary went on, presently. "But I have never ceased to yearn for her. And that is why, when I knew of your sorrow, I wanted so much to come to you. When your life was full of pleasantness, of happiness with Margaret, I couldn't have come to you and asked you to wind your arms about my neck as my Jean might have done; could I? You might have been sweet and kind and understanding; you might have done as I asked. But it wouldn't have been like *this*; would it? Sorrow makes many things possible."

"Did your Laddie go away—to Heaven?" Jean whispered.

"He went further than that, dear," Mary Binford answered, chokingly. "He went where I can never hope to find him. Heaven isn't far; and it keeps our loved ones safe for us."

"Did he go away so far you couldn't love him any more?" Jean asked, wonderingly.

"No, darling! There isn't any distance in the universe so great as that. He only went so far that I couldn't reach him with my love."

"I don't think I understand," Jean murmured.

"I pray God you never may understand!" Miss Mary said. "But I wanted to tell you about my Jean because—well, you see, there are the splendid things that I planned to do when my world was all alight with glory. Hardly any one lives up to those visions of life's morning. But most people comfort themselves by saying: 'My boy or my girl will do all that I hoped to do and failed of—yes, and more!' I can't say, 'My Jean will do those things,' because I haven't any Jean. And I thought it might be that ——"

"That *I* could do them?" Jean whispered.

"Well, yes, dear! I even thought we

might do some of them together. I didn't know much about you—about what kinds of things you'd care for. But somehow I seem to feel that I know now. I haven't seen your face. I've hardly heard your voice. And yet something deep in my heart tells me that if my Jean had 'come true,' she would have been very, very much like you. There! I've made a poem, haven't I?"

Jean reached up and kissed Miss Mary—once for herself, she said, and once for the other Jean.

"I'm not worth much for doing things," she said. "I used to plan and dream when Margaret was here. We planned wonderful things. I wish you had known us then. But it breaks my heart, now, to remember them."

"I know it must. It is eighteen years since my heart broke. And I can't think, yet, of those dreams that we had together without agony as keen as if we had just been parted."

"I don't feel as if I could live eighteen years—without Margaret," Jean sobbed.

And because Miss Mary said neither, "Oh, yes, you will, dear!" nor, "You mustn't talk like that, dear," nor even "I thought so, too—but lived on," Jean knew that she was the kind of person who can help.

What she did say was, "Perhaps not, Jean. Dante called the time he must spend here after his Beatrice went away 'the time of my debt.' The time of your debt may not be long. But of course you don't want to go until your debt is paid."

"My debt?"

"Why, yes, dear. You know how Dante paid his—don't you? His great debt for the great love he had known? Perhaps you and I may read about it together, some day, and I can describe to you all the places I've been where Dante lived and loved and suffered, and where he went on writing book after deathless book in praise of his 'dear lady.'"

"I'd like to hear," Jean answered. "But I could never pay a debt like that. I'm only a young girl without any talents—I mean, for doing things."

"The Maid of France was only a girl, who didn't know her A. B. C. Yet think of the debt God laid on her! And how she paid! You see, dear Jean, I have had to remind myself of these things, and of many others. I have to keep reminding myself—so I shall not fail. And I thought perhaps it would help you—a little—if I told you how I—fought on—when the light went out of my life——"

III

"WE ALL OWE THE SAME DEBT—COURAGE"

MISS MARY'S voice thrilled Jean strangely; it was so full of pain and of loneliness, and yet it was so brave and tender; it didn't seem as if it sought to soothe, the way other voices seemed in their efforts to express sympathy; it didn't *lull*—it *called*—called Jean into a noble company, into the company of those who bear bravely.

"I want to—fight on," Jean sobbed. "I want to pay—my debt."

Miss Mary bent her head and kissed Jean on her brow.

"We all owe the same debt, dear. And we pay it as we can."

"The same debt?"

"Yes—courage! We all owe that to the rest in the ranks—to our fellows, fighting beside us. Life is a great big battle-field, Jean! Every one of us with our daily battles to fight. Every one of us with our wounds and our weariness and our hunger and thirst, and

our fainting hope. None of us could bear it alone. Some of us can't bear it because we have thought about ourselves so much that we've sort of wandered away out of sight and hearing of the others, and got to thinking that we alone are wounded and weary. We must keep close to the others, darling! It helps us when we see how brave they are. They need our help—need to see how brave *we* are. That's life!"

"It sounds so—hard," Jean murmured.

"It *is* hard! But it's splendid, too. It isn't hardship that makes life unbearable—it's the kind of spirit we put into it. The hard things are the things that make us thrill, that show us what we have in us. You play golf, don't you?"

"I—I used to," Jean answered.

"Well, what would you give to play golf on a course like a croquet-ground? Nothing! would you? You could get just as much exercise, just as much wholesome fresh air, if you stayed at it long enough. But you wouldn't stay! It wouldn't be 'any fun.' There must be bushes where the balls can hide, and brooks (if possible) or other 'natural hazards.' If not those, then bunkers. The more difficulties, the more fun. Isn't that right?"

"Yes," Jean admitted.

"And when you used to play croquet, didn't you put a double arch in the centre, so it would be harder to get through? Didn't you lay your first arches two mallet-lengths apart—because one length was 'too easy'?"

"Yes—we did."

"Of course you did! Everybody loves to set himself tasks and make himself do them—even in his play. But not everybody has learned what thrills are possible just in standing up to the tasks that are set for us—by the Teacher—who knows so well what we need—for our strengthening. The world is full of people doing bravely what was given them to do; bearing with courage what was given them to bear. It's wonderful! I often think God must be very proud of His children. Some of them fall very short, it's true. But others are so splendid!"

Again there was that note in Miss Mary's voice that thrilled; that called to Jean as the bugle calls to the soldier. The heart of youth is full of heroism, yearning to express itself in action. Mary Binford felt this; felt the general neglect of that desire. She knew that to ask Jean just to endure would be to deny that plan of Nature which made daring the courage of youth, and endurance the

courage of maturity. Jean must have something to *do!* The vision that came to her, the voices that called to her, must lay an active, not a passive, task upon her. She must pay her debt, her debt of courage, in things done—not just in things endured. But how?

"Did you—tell these things to Mother?" Jean asked. There was no irrelevance in the question. Mary Binford understood.

"No, dear, I didn't."

She was at a loss to know how to speak to Jean about her mother. Yet the question showed that, in some measure at least, Jean was aware of her mother's weakness.

Ida Fahrlow had never set herself any tasks. She had never accepted any that she could avoid. She had hardly even sought the easy, pleasant places in life, so much as she had drifted, effortlessly, into them. Once, and once only, had she braved suffering—to give life. Other than that, she had shirked everything that "looked hard." And until now she had seemed to escape the discipline that usually cannot be refused.

Mary Binford had found her, to-day, as she knew she should find her: in bed; tear-stained, but not dishevelled—looking pretty even as she wept. Ida explained, at length,

how much heavier the blow had fallen on her than on any one.

"Jim has his business to go to. Men get busy, and forget. And Jean has her school, her lessons. Then, too, she is young—and the young get over things so quickly. With me it's different. No one suffers as a mother does."

Mary had not spoken to Ida about her "debt"! Somehow, no one ever seemed to appeal to Ida, to call on her to be brave, unselfish. As well call on a jellyfish to stand erect. Yet no! God had made Ida vertebrate. But she had forgotten—and had caused others to forget—that she had a spine.

Jim had forgotten—or so it seemed to Mary. Perhaps he had never expected Ida to "stand erect, fare forward." Perhaps he had hoped—and then despaired. But he never wavered in his tenderness, his steadfastness. Jim was, Mary felt sure, one of those strong, simple souls whose own needs keep them loyal, irrespective of encouragement or the lack of it; who are sustained by filling their own ideals, rather than by finding others to fulfill them.

"If I could know," she thought as she listened to Ida, "that the love of my youth

was coming home to me—in an hour—his heart overflowing with tenderness for me, his arms outstretched to enfold me! If I could know that our Jean—his child and mine—was where I had only to call her and she would come!"

How much Jean realized her mother's weak selfishness, Mary could not know—and was loath to discover. And Jean had strong instincts of loyalty; but also, she was sore perplexed. She had tried, once or twice, to talk to Dad about Mother. But Dad only hugged Jean very hard, and said: "Poor little Mother! We must be very good to her—mustn't we?"

Jean felt that she must ask Miss Mary some things, yet she shrank from voicing any complaint.

"Mother doesn't—seem to—be able to get any—to find any way to bear it," she said. "I hoped you had helped her—too."

"Too!" The wee word filled Mary's heart with a great flood of gladness. To have been able to slip in here, in the dark, and comfort a stricken, sobbing child! Ah! that was sudden opulence to a woman whose maternity had been so long denied.

"Jean, dear," she answered, feeling her way prayerfully, "do you remember how, in the old fairy tales, there were many that told

about a wicked uncle or somebody else who plotted and did desperate things to get the throne or the fortune of the young prince or princess? Sometimes the villain hired robbers to carry the little prince off and sell him to a poor wood-chopper in the forest, to become his slave; sometimes the princess was spirited away and made to tend geese; and so on. Not only the fairy tales, but all the old folk tales and legends and hero stories, are full of this theme of stealing the birthright of the young. Well, the reason there were many such stories written, and the reason they have survived—that the world treasures them and won't let them die—is because they were and are so true. Always there are many people—and they don't even know they're wicked, half the time!—who steal away the birthrights of the young. I think that, when your mother was a little girl, somebody stole her birthright. I think she doesn't know, yet, the wrong that was done to her. There are beautiful things that she was born to be; brave things that she was born to do; and she doesn't know it! Do you—understand?"

"I think I do," Jean answered, her mind evidently intent upon following out the parable, but a little bewildered at the thought of

her mother as one whom anybody had ever ill-used.

"Everybody's debt is courage," Mary went on, "and everybody's birthright is—well, bravery—so we may pay our way in the world. Some of us need a great deal—for our debt. Some of us don't seem to need so much. But everybody needs some. And when we're young—the time that most people have their birthrights stolen—no one can foresee how much bravery we shall need to get us honourably through the world; so no one ought to cheat us out of the least little bit. Yet they do! Not only wicked uncles, but parents who think they're kind and good, cheat young souls of their birthright—let them grow up selfish and mean-spirited and cowardly, instead of strong and brave and true.

"I wonder if you've ever seen a picture of the little King of Rome playing with toy soldiers, and his father—the great Napoleon—looking on? At that time it seemed as if the boy would have to command great armies some day; and before he had ceased to be a baby, he was being taught to be a general. And the little Prince Imperial, who was to have been the fourth Napoleon, went to war with his father when he was only a tiny

laddie. As it happened, neither boy lived long, and neither of them reigned; but both of them needed great courage, even before their brief young lives were done; and we know they had it!—the 'eaglet' of Rome dying by inches in Austria, and the Prince Imperial quickly slain in a Zulu ambush.

"No one could foresee the kind of courage they would need. But it isn't necessary to foresee that. We just need to be helped, from the first, to meet the hard things unflinchingly, whatever they are; to fight a good fight; to keep the faith; to be brave and honourable and merciful and magnanimous. When we don't fight a brave fight, it's because we have lost our birthright. I think it is the first business of each of us to be sure we have our own birthright; and then our next business is to help some one else recover his, or hers. Jeanne d'Arc led a whole nation to victory, a king to his coronation. Our debt, we'll pray, is not so great. Perhaps we can each help one other soul to victory! Perhaps we can each lead one timid, uncrowned dauphin to Rheims, to become a king! Would you like to try?"

"I'd like to be brave," Jean answered; "as brave as God intended me to be. And of course I'd like to help others, too. But I—

it's hard to say just what I mean—I can make myself *bear* things, but I don't believe I could go to other people and try to get them to—to *do* things; I don't believe I could ever be brave in that way. The first time any one made fun of my attempt, or resented it, I'd just about *die!*"

"Not if you cared enough about your undertaking! Not if you believed with all your heart that it ought to be done and that you ought to do it. Remember Jeanne. When she first tried to tell people about the Voices, some laughed at her and others feared her as a witch. Then, when she went to the Sire de Beaudricourt at Vaucouleurs, and asked him to give her an armed escort so she could go to Chinon, where the Dauphin was, he said: 'The girl is crazy. Take her back to her parents and tell them to give her a good whipping.' (That is the way lots of people to-day evade having to help us do what is right.) But Jeanne said, 'I will go to Chinon if I have to wear my legs down to the knees.' So the poor folk of Vaucouleurs clothed her and armed her and bought her a horse; and a little company of men-at-arms, headed by two squires, set out with her to Chinon. The country between Vaucouleurs and Chinon was held by the English and

their allies, the Burgundians. And Jeanne's little company had to hide by day and travel by night. Their way was full of terrors. But Jeanne was never afraid.

" The Dauphin knew she was coming, but he didn't want to receive her. (Those whom we would serve are often unwilling to accept our service.) But Jeanne was there to help him, whether he would or no. People who most need help are usually most loath to take it.

" Charles knew he should be King of France. He knew his birthright. But he was too cowardly to demand it. He had a wicked mother—one of the wickedest queens of history, Isabeau of Bavaria—and his father had been an imbecile for years before he died. Isabeau neglected and ill-treated all her children, but there was one for whom she had a kind of she-wolf maternal pride, and that was the youngest, Katherine, married to the young warrior king of England, Henry V, who wrested so much of France from the French. When the mad King, Charles VI, died, Isabeau and Henry V made a treaty at Troyes (not far from Domremy) and plotted to defraud Dauphin Charles of his birthright, the crown of France, and to give the crown instead to the King of England. Isabeau

thought they could do this, because she knew that her son Charles had never been taught to fight. He was a coward. He loved an easy time better than being a king. All his life he had done the things he wanted to do, and they were never brave things, hard things, kingly things—they were weak and childish and unworthy things. So when Jeanne came to him and told him she was to take him to demand his birthright, to be crowned at Rheims where, even then, France had crowned her kings for six hundred years, Charles was afraid to accept her help. It took a long time to convince him. He wanted Jeanne to explain how she was going to lead armies and raise sieges. And Jeanne couldn't tell how—*she only knew that she was going to do it!*

"Just as I've been talking to you, dear, I've seen a vision—here in the dark. It's good to sit in the dark, sometimes—the dark of sorrow brings out the stars of sympathy; and in the dark, the realities—the hard-and-fast things that make us think, sometimes, we can't do as our Voices tell us—fade away, and we see—Visions. I see something that must be done ——"

"Am I—in it?" Jean whispered, eagerly.

"In it? Why, you *are* it! I'm just in it

to help you. And I think—no, I'm quite sure that Margaret is in it, too ——"

"*My* Saint Margaret! Like Jeanne's ——"

"Yes—but so much nearer, and dearer. And I know you'll feel her with you, every step of the way, as Jeanne felt the presences that led and sustained her. We lose only what we give up, darling. And you're holding fast to Margaret."

"Yes—oh, yes!"

"Well, then—I'll tell you what I see ——"

IV

"ALL TIMES ARE BRAVE TIMES"

JEAN stood outside her mother's room, hesitant. Now that she was here, close to the half-open door, she was afraid—afraid of ridicule. All our lives long, few hurts are harder to bear than ridicule; but when we are seventeen, and flushed with our first ecstasies of consecration to a great service, the fear of ridicule is stronger almost than the fear of death. It would be easier to die believing in ourselves as supremely necessary to the world, than to live on with that belief killed.

Then Jean remembered the peasant girl who did not know her A. B. C.; the girl with plain features, and toil-roughened hands, who left her sheep-tending and her field labour, to go to Vaucouleurs and tell the greatest soldier of her neighbourhood that she must take the Dauphin to be crowned at Rheims.

"I think," Miss Mary had said, "that going before Beaudricourt must have been the hardest of all the hard things Jeanne did. Afterwards, no matter how many there were who did not believe in her, there were always

some who did believe in her devoutly. But when she went before that burly soldier who thought he knew all there was to know about fighting and warfare and the strength of the English and the Burgundians, and the peril and the weakness of France——! Yes, I am quite sure that must have been harder for Jeanne even than going to the stake. And I believe the reason so many of us, who see Visions of splendid things we might do, hear Voices urging us to service, never accomplish anything, is because the beginning is so hard. We think of some bellowing Beaudricourt who'll shout at us that we're crazy—and we never start from Domremy."

Jean thought she would rather have faced "bellowing Beaudricourt" than the pretty little lady in the big four-poster bed. After all, a burly fellow who shouted at you might get your fighting spirit up; but a Dresden-china parent in a shadow-lace boudoir cap (its pink chiffon rosebuds replaced by a black velvet bow), who wept softly and persistently, and said: "Darling, don't talk so! You frighten me—— You must have a fever——" Ah, well! the Dauphin had been of that Dresden sort. And he thought Jeanne might have a familiar spirit, and sent her to Poitiers to be examined by the doctors of theology.

Jean slipped through the half-open door and stood beside her mother.

A reading-light beneath a rose-silk shade burned on the stand at Ida's bedside. Save for that, there was no other light in the room. Everything was in deep shadow except the enormous bed and its slight occupant.

"Where have you been, Honey?" Ida asked, plaintively.

"In the library, talking to Miss Binford."

"All this time?"

"Yes, mother."

"You poor lamb! You must be worn out. People don't seem to realize how calls of condolence harrow the bereaved. I wonder why Mary kept you so long! She didn't stay here but a few minutes. I told her I appreciated her coming. But of course she can't understand my grief—she's never had a child."

"I think," Jean answered, "she understands wonderfully."

Her eyes were shining; her cheeks were flushed with excitement. Ida looked up at her anxiously.

"You look feverish," she said. "Does your head ache, or anything?"

"No, mother."

"Let me feel your hand."

Jean obeyed.

"It's hot, Lovey."

Jean's eyes flashed.

"I'm not sick!" she cried, hotly. "Please don't 'baby' me! I——"

Ida began to cry.

"You're all the baby I have left now," she wept. "I must 'baby' you! I can't give up both my babies at once."

Jean wavered; the Vision grew dim; she felt sick at heart. A bellowing Beaudricourt would have been so much easier! How could any one hold to an ideal in such an atmosphere as this?

Then Miss Mary's words came back to her: "The battle-ground will be very different from any that Jeanne knew; and I think it will often be tremendously difficult to fight on—because it'll be *soft!* Do you remember that sentence in our school readers, where they begin Victor Hugo's description of the battle of Waterloo: 'Had it not rained on the night of the 17th of June, 1815, the future of Europe would have been changed'? Napoleon couldn't get his artillery into the soft field, and without his big guns he was lost. I suspect that there'll be lots of times when you can't do the real fighting your soul longs to do, because you can't get your big

guns into a soft field. *But don't you retreat!* . . . Do I talk in riddles?"

And Jean (who like most young persons and those in whom the soul is still eager, grasped symbolisms far, far more readily than plain statements of the same truths) had answered quickly, "I understand."

"Mother," she said resolutely, "I could be something lots better than a baby to you if you'd let me."

"There isn't anything better than a baby," Ida declared, without waiting to hear what Jean had to suggest. "If mothers had their way, they'd never let their babies grow up. They'd keep them little and cuddlesome. I think the nicest time of all is before they even begin to walk. Then they're all yours. The more they grow up, the less they belong to you."

"But if nobody grew up, who'd be the fathers and mothers by and by? Who'd do the world's work?"

"Oh, I suppose there'd be parents who wanted their children to grow. And of course, none of us can keep our babies—so what's the use of talking about it?"

"Sometimes," Jean ventured, shyly, "it's ever so interesting to talk about what you would do if you could, even though you know you can't."

Ida received this cryptic utterance without comment; she was thinking about the days when her twin girls were "cuddlesome," and how tiny they had been—like dolls—and how "cute" they had looked, side by side on a big, lace-trimmed pillow when they were exhibited to gurgling visitors. When she could pick them up and lay them down at will, dress and undress them, show them off and play with them as she had with her inanimate dolls, they had more nearly satisfied her desires than at any other time. From the moment they began to develop wishes of their own, she had been lamenting the loss of her babies. She told Jim that when a woman had such intense love of her children as she had, nothing satisfied her except "being all in all" to them; when they began to have playmates, to go to school, to do things in which she could have no part, she was "pathetically lonesome."

Jim came in while Ida was lamenting her babies, and Jean was trying to think how not to retreat. He was one of those big men who all but infallibly marry little women and who practically never recognize the vanity that makes them do it. Ida's littleness emphasized Jim's bigness; her weakness emphasized his strength; her clinging de-

pendence was a constant reminder of his unfailing dependability. He liked to feel his strength. Instinctively, he preferred that feeling to any other; and in his marriage he had obeyed this instinct. The same soul qualities which made him content to be that kind of husband gave him satisfaction in being the same kind of father: a lavish "provider," a tender protector, a big, strong man who stood between his girls and everything that was harsh or difficult. Knowing himself to be all these things, which were his ideal of what a father should be, Jim was very happy in his fatherhood. If any one had suggested to him that he was using his fatherhood to humour his own emotions, he would have been deeply hurt, and more deeply mystified. Everybody said he was a man who lived for his family. He felt that he did live for them—to keep them happy and comfortable. That it might also be any part of his duty towards them to make them strong and efficient for life had not seriously occurred to him; and if it had, he would have shirked the task. Jim loved the "glow" of feeling that he was a purveyor of delights. His relish for this kept him perpetually "standing treat" to his family, as some men stand treat to crowds of

acquaintances or friends—prompted not by the recipients' needs, but by the giver's love of giving.

He bent to kiss Ida; to ask her how she had been all day; to listen to her detailed account of the day's length and sadness. All the while his left arm encircled Jean—Jean who was earnestly considering him for the first time in his possible relation to the Vision, and who—somehow—was not greatly encouraged thereby.

"And what has Jean been doing?" he asked, turning to her when Ida's narrative had reached a pause. "Seems to me you're looking brighter and better than I've seen you look for a—long time."

"I think she's feverish," her mother interposed. "I wanted to take her temperature. But she says she doesn't want to be 'baby-ed.' I tell her she's all the baby we have, now, and she must be patient with us if we give her double love and care."

Ida's voice quavered, broke. Jim bent all his energies to consoling her. Jean stood by and pondered—certain phrases ringing in her memory: "We all owe the same debt—courage." "We all have the same birthright—bravery."

"I'm not sick," she reiterated. "I'm just

interested in something—excited about it. It's something I want to do—to be! Miss Mary Binford told me about it, and she said the first thing I must do was to tell you."

Jean was as one trying to translate. The language, the imagery, the illustrations, in which this thing had come to her, must be rendered into some kind of speech intelligible to persons who would certainly receive any mention of Visions as a fever-symptom surer than the reading of the thermometer.

"Mary Binford!" Jim exclaimed. "Was she here? All sorts of people turn up when they know you're in sorrow—don't they?"

"I have hardly seen her in years," Ida murmured. "I hear she's quite successful."

"What does she do?" Jean asked, eagerly.

"She's a painter," her mother answered. "I believe she does mostly what they call mural painting—on walls, you know. Somebody told me she is considered very good—quite wonderful, in fact."

"Doesn't want to make a painter of you, dear, does she?" Jim asked Jean.

"No, sir. She didn't even tell me she was a painter. She said she had studied in Paris, years ago. But she didn't say if she kept it up. She was just trying to comfort me and help me to be brave."

"It's so easy to sit around and tell other people how brave they must be," Ida commented, plaintively. "People ought to realize how cruel it is."

"She wasn't cruel at all!" Jean cried, warmly. "She was very, very kind; and she helped me more than anybody has. She says it's hard to sit still and be brave—especially when you're young; that young people naturally want to do things—brave things."

"What does she want you to do, Honey?"

"It isn't what she wants me to do; it's what she made me want to do," Jean explained.

Jim laughed. "There's hair-splitting for you!" he cried.

Jean winced. In the dark library, sitting close to Miss Mary, whispering about The Maid of France, and about Dante's debt, it was easy to feel brave and strong. But here, on the edge of mother's bed, with jest in Dad's attitude and a thermomoter in Mother's, it was difficult to believe in anything, but most difficult of all things to believe in herself. Yet that, Miss Mary said, was what carried Jeanne The Maid to victory. She believed the Voices when they told her she must save France. Jean reminded herself of The Maid before bawling Beaudricourt; be-

fore ease-loving Charles and his slothful, sneering court; before the supercilious theologians at Poitiers to whom she replied: "I know not *A* from *B*, but I am commanded by the Lord of Heaven to deliver Orleans and to crown the King at Rheims."

"I want to do this," Jean said—and her voice had a ring of determination which caused both her parents to regard her in startled wonder—"I want to help some others—girls, like me, perhaps—to know what a brave thing life is. I didn't know until to-day. I've read it in books—but they were all about other days. I knew there used to be things in the world that a girl could do that made her feel as if she—well, as if the world needed her to do her very best. But I thought there wasn't much for a girl to do now. I know other girls who think the same way. We've often wished we had lived in the days the stories tell about, when things happened, and people were brave and daring. Margaret and I used to wish that most all the time. We used to choose which times we'd rather have lived in. To-day, Miss Mary showed me that the most wonderful times any girl ever lived in are right now. And she made me see that all times are brave times—for brave hearts."

V

"OUR BIRTHRIGHT IS BRAVERY"

IDA thought she understood. "I can't have you going in queer places, among queer people," she declared, with more decision than she usually showed about anything. "I hope Mary Binford didn't put ideas like that into your head. You are the only baby we have now—Daddy and I—and we can't let you do anything that might injure your health."

"No, Honey-lamb," Jim said, more pleadingly than commandingly. "You must be careful. I like you to be charitable, and all like that. You can get up bazaars, or make fancy work, or do things for the poor. But I wouldn't be willing for you to go in slums or tenements, or run any risks. It isn't necessary. There are plenty of people to do that."

Jean checked herself just as she was about to say, inwardly, "It's hopeless," and stood her ground.

"There are people in the world who need help besides those who live in the slums,"

she said, earnestly. "I don't believe any girl in the slums needed help as much as I needed it to-day, when Miss Mary came and showed it to me. Anyhow, no girl could have needed it any more than I did. I wanted to die. She made me want to live and to do something. The reason I didn't care to live, before, was because I didn't see anything for me to do. As soon as you see what you can do, you can hardly help wanting to live and do it. If it's something hard to do, you—well, you feel proud, somehow—if you believe you're the one who must do it; it's—it's like living in the days the splendid stories are about."

Jim and Ida exchanged apprehensive glances. Ida began to cry.

"What is it you want to do, Honey?" Jim inquired of Jean—so he could demonstrate to her its impossibility.

"It—it doesn't sound like much," Jean faltered, suddenly overcome by the littleness of her project when it was translated into this literal, matter-of-fact speech. "It was just that I want to tell the girls I know the things Miss Mary and I talked about so we could have a kind of league or something. We didn't know just how it would work out. We have to see that."

Her father laughed his big, good-natured, tolerant laugh.

"Bless her heart!" he cried. "Then why did she give her daddy and her mammy a scare like she was going to teach the little cannibals, or nurse the lepers, or something of that sort? Go ahead and have your club, Lovey. What is it you want Dad to do? Buy you a bunch of badges? Pay for the ice-cream? Get you a book of by-laws? You know I want to help you all I can. Perhaps I can be an honourary member."

Jean flung her arms around his neck and hugged him hard.

"You can be!" she cried, happily. "You are the first one. That's part of the plan—all fathers and mothers have to be in it. They don't have to give anything. They just have to be something. We all have to! I can't tell you, yet, much more about it—except this: it's for all of us, so we can keep closer than we ever were before. It's kind of like a crusade; only, instead of going far away from home to look for something holy and precious, you go home and look for it; and if you look, you can hardly help finding it."

"It sure does sound mysterious!" Jim declared—relieved rather than interested.

"It isn't mysterious at all!" Jean replied.

"But there isn't much to tell yet—until we get it planned."

"Well," her mother remarked with an air of gentle wonder at Jean's consolability, "if it's something you can take an interest in, I'm sure I'm very glad. You're young. It's only natural you should want to live, and to be interested in life. I shall never be interested in anything again except in you and Dad. But it's better for you not to feel that way. You have your life to live."

The next morning when Jim Fahrlow felt in his pocket where he kept his reading glasses, preparatory to unfolding his paper on the car, he found a note. He never put letters or other papers in that pocket, so he took this one out to examine. It was in Jean's writing, and it read:

"DEAREST FATHER IN THE WHOLE WORLD:

"Some things are so hard to explain. I didn't tell you half that I wanted to about the plan last night. I want to tell you more. There are times that help us to say certain things, and other times that make us feel we just can't say them. I've been trying to think how I could tell you more about this plan. It seems to be the kind of thing you can tell to only one at a time. I'm thinking

of a way to tell Mother, too. Some evening when you come home a little early, and you feel real confidential, will you come and peep into the library first thing of all? And if you find 'a certain girl' there, in the dark, will you sit down beside her where she can be awful close to you, and let her try to tell you some things that are kind of hard for her to say because she's so afraid you'll only smile at her. If you smile in the dark, she can't see you. So maybe she can go on telling you.

"With more love than I can put on paper,

"JEAN."

"Bless her darling heart!" he mused when he had finished reading the note. "What a queer little creature she is! I wonder if all girls are queer like that? Poor baby! I dare say since Margaret went away it has seemed to her that no one in the world quite understands her. Well, it's a cinch her daddy's going to try!"

Jean was in the library when he got home. The room was dark, and the idea of his Jean sitting there, bereft of her twin, lonesome, waiting for him, touched him infinitely. He gathered her into his arms and held her close. And there, sitting beside him on the big davenport, Jean tried to tell him, not the details but the gist of what Miss Mary had told

her, and what she had thought out in the twenty-four hours intervening.

"She said a great many people are cheated out of their birthright, and so they never can pay their debt. Our birthright is bravery—strength. And our debt is courage. She said those who cheat us don't often realize what they're doing. Often they think they're giving us things when they're only taking our best thing away. Suppose there was a king, she said, who ruled over a very turbulent kingdom. Suppose he had a little son—his heir. And suppose that, instead of training that little son to be sturdy and steadfast, the king coddled him and pampered him and let him grow up a weakling. When the son had to be king, the kingdom would probably rise up against him and overthrow him and perhaps murder him. She spoke of a lot of kings this had happened to. And it happens to commoners, too, she said. We all have a kingdom to come into, and it is life. And if we are not trained to rule it, it will overthrow us. It seemed a terrible thing to Jeanne d'Arc, Miss Mary said, that the Dauphin who was born to rule France couldn't claim his birthright, and so couldn't pay his debt to his poor country. So she went to help him. We don't care much, now, about

kings on their thrones, Miss Mary said. What we care about, now, is to have every soul come into its kingdom and reign, not be overthrown. And she saw how I might do a great service, like Jeanne, if I could help people of any kind, but principally girls like myself, to get their birthright, and to rule—rule themselves, and rule their kingdoms."

"Did she tell you how you were to do this, Honey?"

"No, sir. She said she didn't know how. She just saw the Vision of what might be done. She said she'd think hard and see what ideas came to her, but that probably I'd see the way clear myself. The principal thing is, not to wait until you can see the whole way, but to go forward over what you can see. So I began to-day."

"You did?"

"Yes, sir; I told Isabel Corrie and Adelaide Gerson about their birthright."

"Why those two?"

"Because it seemed as if they'd like to know—to-day. Isabel was crying about her geometry. She hates geometry—I guess most girls do. Isabel wants to be an artist, and she says it's a waste of time for her to study mathematics. She begged her parents to have her excused from mathematics, but

her father wouldn't; he said it's good for her because she doesn't like it—that life is full of things we don't like, but have to do, and school is the place to learn how to make ourselves do them. He said we don't need to go to school to learn how to make ourselves do the things that are agreeable. Isabel felt very bad. So I told her about her birthright, and how it was evident her father wanted her to have it. And she said she'd never thought about it that way. She's going to belong to the—whatever we call it; we haven't decided on a name yet. She's going to tackle geometry as if it were an English or Burgundian army blocking her way to Rheims, where her crown is. And she's going to tell her father that she's ever and ever so grateful to him because he wants her to be a good, brave fighter of life's battles, and not a weakling.

"Then I told Adelaide, because she was unhappy, too. Her mother has been sick a long time, and the doctor says she ought to go away to a sanitarium. The Gersons have a big family and a little house. If Mrs. Gerson goes away to get quiet and rest, so she can sleep and grow strong again, Adelaide will have to give up school and stay home and do the housework and take care

of the children. She feels terrible. She wants her mother to get well, but she hates like everything to stop school—she's so ambitious. It was hard for me to think what I could say to Adelaide, but I thought I'd try. I told her what Miss Mary said: how young souls naturally long to do brave things, hard things, but it isn't often they get half enough chance to try. She said that some of the wisest people to-day feel that schools are cheating young folks out of their birthright, because they give us so much to study and so little to do.

"'That's what Dad told me,' Adelaide said. 'He told me that what I'd learn at home, running the house and taking care of the children, would probably stand me in good stead a thousand times in my life where the school lessons I miss would help me once. I'm going to look at it that way.' So she got her courage up! And she and Isabel both promised to pass the word along, to tell anybody they knew that seemed to need it. You can't tell people, very well, until they seem to need it—you can't walk up to a girl when she's on her way to order her new suit or buy her new furs, or going to a matinée, and talk to her about courage." Jean laughed at her own picture. "You have to

wait until the time comes—and I guess it comes to everybody. Miss Mary said if she had come to me when I had Margaret and was happy, I wouldn't have felt the same as I do now about Jeanne and being like her. And I know I wouldn't have."

"And what is it your dad's to do for you, darling?"

"He's to help me to be a good fighter—please!" Jean answered gripping his hand hard. "He mustn't smile when I try to do things that look too big or too hard for me. I mean, he mustn't smile as if he thought me a foolish little baby. He must smile the other kind of a smile at me, and tell me to go ahead and tackle things and learn how to overcome and to rule—so when I come into my kingdom I won't be dethroned and trampled on. And he's to help me make Mother believe in me, and not say I have a fever because my eyes are bright with interest; and not 'baby' me, when I'm trying to —to learn to do what the Voices in me say I ought to do."

"Have you said anything more to her about it?"

"Not yet. I—don't you believe Mother would understand better if I didn't say much, but just went ahead and did what I could?

If she saw that I'm not a baby, she'd be—well, it would be better, I think, than anything I could say!"

"I believe you're right, Honey," Jim answered. "I—I feel like I'd love to do all your fighting for you, bear all your burdens, if I could. But I can't; and I reckon it's better so; better you should learn to rule your own kingdom, as you say. You go ahead and show your mother that you're something better than a baby. Perhaps you can comfort her. Anyhow, your dad'll stand by you the best he knows how. Someway, I never thought about you as fighting battles, let alone helping other people to fight theirs. But I reckon it's all right. If you feel that way, I don't see how there can be any question but that you should go ahead and try. I don't know much about Voices. But I know that other folks besides Jeanne d'Arc have heard 'em. And I know that when they tell you to do a thing—like this—you've got to do it—or hate yourself for refusing. You may fail. But at least you will have tried. That's right, Honey. That's life."

"Oh!" Jean cried, happily. "If only the other honourary members could be like you! It's like the loveliest kind of a story! Be-

fore, when you were always—well, just giving me things and petting me, I couldn't half appreciate you as I do now—after this talk. I feel we're comrades now, trudging along side by side. We'll build our camp-fires together—big you and little me!—and drink out of the same what-d'ye-call-it?—canteen? And you'll teach me to be a good soldier. Oh! I hope other girls can have father-comrades, too!"

VI

"A FORTUNE WAITING FOR YOU"

THEY could, it seemed! Isabel and Adelaide both reported honourary members who were glad to join. Adelaide's mother was too ill and nerve-racked to give much thought to the idea yet. But it was a tremendous help to her to find Adelaide reconciled to the household cares. Mrs. Corrie had more health and fewer anxieties, and she heartily approved any idea which might convert Isabel from her notion that life is a prolonged picnic.

"Father was so surprised when I told him how I was going to tackle geometry," Isabel reported next day. "'Fight it out along that line, and you'll *get* somewhere,' he said."

"I had a wonderful chance," Adelaide told the other two. "Dad came home last night looking worried to death. I could see him hide that look from Mother. Of course, the only way for her to have peace of mind and

get any benefit from the rest cure is to go away feeling that we'll manage all right at home while she's gone. Dad's been trying to make her feel that way. But I know he's had his doubts about what was going to happen to us all with me at the helm. He came into the kitchen when I was getting supper. I took one look at his face. And then, without even dropping my paring knife, I flung my arms around him and said, 'It's going to be all right, Old Dear! I'm going to make you proud to know me!' And—well! I've had him and he's had me for seventeen years; but we'd never really stood together till that minute. It was great! I've always loved those stories where they were defending the stockade, or the castle, or something-or-other. And the fight was going against them, when the fine young heroine jumped into the breach and grabbed a gun or a pike, and held the fort. I always felt I could do that if I had a chance—though I suppose, really, I'd have been under the bed, with my fingers in my ears! But here was my chance! I saw it when you showed it to me, Jean. 'Into the breach—quick!' I said to myself. And in I went. While Dad——! Well!"

Thus "The March to The Uncrowned"

was formed. It was Miss Mary who suggested the name.

"You want something to remind you of Jeanne d'Arc," she said, "and yet something to remind you how different your purpose is from hers. That miserable Charles whom she fought to crown was worth mighty little to France. And his son, Louis XI, was about the worst monster who ever sat on any throne. Jeanne saved her nation from English rule, but she wasn't able to deliver it from the horrors of war, from the oppression of taxes that left the people little to live on or to live for, nor to secure to the poor and downtrodden a single right that eased their lot or bettered their prospects. Your fight is as different as our day is different from Jeanne's. We know that no country can be made a happy country because one king instead of another wears its crown. We know that what makes national happiness is the greatest possible number of persons wearing their crowns—their birthrights. Your league is formed not to take one king to Rheims, but to take many; it is formed not to desolate homes by war, but to strengthen homes in peace. The Vision that comes to you could never have come to Jeanne. In her day, no one had dreamed of

the splendid things that are filling the great minds of the world to-day. If Jeanne were living, now, I think her Voices would lead her on some such crusade as this that you're starting on. But of course that's only my guess. What's sure is, that you girls have started on a big, brave, beautiful thing which, if it can spread far enough and strike deep enough, will do more for your country than all Jeanne's fighting did for hers. When she was reminded that the French were so terror-smitten, so hopeless, she could not rally them as fighters, she said: 'When they hear the drums, they will march.' And they did. When those you hope to win to your army see your colours flying, they will march. At first, you'll have to do as she did: talk and talk and talk—to Beaudricourt, to Charles, to the doctors at Poitiers; but by and by, when you get started and begin to move through the country, recruits will come hastening to you."

The meeting was in Jean's library—at twilight; and the lamps were not lighted. Only Jean and Isabel were present, one on either side of Miss Mary on the big brown davenport. Adelaide was "on duty" at home.

"Adelaide has a difficult post," Miss Mary

said. "She's holding a fort, but she mustn't feel that the army has forgotten her. It's so much easier to march than to stay on guard duty. You girls must keep her in touch with all that's going on, so she doesn't feel left behind."

They promised that they would do this.

"And now," said Miss Mary, "let me tell you what I've learned about the uncrowned, and how we may get to them. In a newspaper, the other day, I saw an advertisement which began: 'Perhaps there is a fortune waiting for you,' and went on to tell that the heirs to thousands of fortunes were being sought all over the world. It seems that there is something called 'The Book of Heirs,' which gives the names of many of those being sought. And I dare say it's a tremendously popular and well-read book! I've thought a great deal about it—how surprised to find their names there some persons would be; and how disappointed others would be because they were not in it. And then I got thinking about the kind of fortune every one is heir to, although not all know it. I thought of all the uncrowned who don't even suspect that they have a birthright awaiting them. And I wondered and wondered how we could begin to tell them."

"The hard thing is to get them to believe it," Jean interposed. "You tell them, and they think you're crazy."

"And they don't even send you to the learned doctors at Poitiers to find out if you're crazy—do they? They don't even give you a chance to defend the faith that is in you. That is one of the hard things in our way. But if we get to them when they are feeling their need, we'll get a hearing—at least. You, Jean, knew when to tell Isabel and Adelaide. And, you see, they were ready to hear and to believe. They had a fight to make, and they didn't know just how to make it until they heard of their birthright, their fortune."

"Mine was such a little, foolish fight," Isabel whispered, shamedly. "I don't feel as if I ought to be in the same army with dear, brave, wonderful Jean and Adelaide."

"It wasn't a little, foolish fight, dear," Miss Mary answered, "if in making it you learned that doing hard things, things you don't like to do, is splendid soldier-exercise. Why, of the little band of followers who went with Jeanne from Vaucouleurs to Chinon, most of them had to be taught to ride a horse and to use arms; they knew nothing about the first business of soldiery—yet they started off with

her to carry the Dauphin to be crowned at Rheims. It is said they suffered so from saddle-soreness, on those night rides towards Chinon, that it took all their pluck and perseverance and all their loyalty to Jeanne, to keep them on their way. The little battles, which sometimes seem almost ridiculous, usually come first, dear. Then we go on to Orleans!"

"I'm going on!" Isabel cried. "I've won the first real fight of my life, and I know how splendid it is to struggle and make yourself do things and feel that you are the—the ——"

"The captain of your soul?"

"Yes."

"We must all learn those verses of Henley's," Miss Mary said. "And there are some other things with power to cheer that we'll take with us instead of script in our purses. I'll write them out, so we can memorize them—they'll be our battle songs. And when we march with the spirit and fervour they put into us, people who 'hear our drums,' as Jeanne said, will march with us. But at first we shall have to pick recruits and try to enlist them—later, they will come to us. At first we'll go to those whose needs we know. Some we shall find in great need, and some we shall find in less. The great

needs that make souls cry out for fortitude are death, and sore-suffering, and dire poverty, and despairing weariness, and shame, and separation from those they love. Every hour of every day, all about us, there are people doing battle with despair. Some of them are fighting so bravely that we can only, as we think of them, thrill with wonder and with gratefulness—for their courage. Others are losing ground—yielding inch by inch; they need reinforcement. To them we can go. Some of them are in hospitals, and some are in houses of mourning; and some are in what most people call 'the slums,' and some are in prisons or other places where society shuts away folk who have ill-used their liberty. I don't want to suggest too specifically. You'll know, better than I could tell you, where you feel as if you could do most service. But I did think I might suggest this: the field is so vast, I'm inclined to believe you would get less discouraged if you tried to cover only a part of it—only girls of somewhere near your own ages. We read a great deal, now, about 'the difficult years,' 'the wasted years,' 'the dangerous years,' of youth, and particularly of girls—by which most people mean the years between fourteen and eighteen. In those years, girls—very

many of them, at any rate—determine what kind of a fight they're going to make. And to some of us who love girls very tenderly and who think there is hardly anything else in all the world more important than the ideals which girls develop in those years when our ideals mean more to us than anything else in life, it seems that there isn't half enough—no, not one hundredth part enough! —being done to help girls realize their birth-right and their debt. Why!" Miss Mary's voice had a ring in it that thrilled Jean and Isabel clear through. "Do you girls know that the reason so many, many girls are un-happy in those years that we speak of, is be-cause those are the years when Nature is fill-ing them full of the capacity for heroism; and people—not wicked old uncles, but parents and teachers who don't even know they are unkind—are not letting the girls do anything heroic. The most splendid thing Nature ever gives to any creature to do or be is to be a mother. You girls know that it takes bravery—great bravery—to bring life into the world?"

The girls nodded, gravely.

"And you know that we are made ready for bravery in a wonderful way—taught and inspired and thrilled? At least that is Na-

ture's plan. She reckons that girls are getting ready to be mothers, to risk their lives and to endure great agony, that they may bring forth the children of men. She knows, too, that not many girls could face that task unless their hearts were full of love. So she's teaching them how to love. The reason those years are dangerous years for so many girls is because they don't realize the tremendous importance of the lessons they must learn—so they don't half learn them. Some girls know they want to do heroic things, but they think they have nothing heroic to do, and they fret and are unhappy. They don't know how to find the heroic things their souls long to do. And some girls don't know what it is that makes them restless and discontented. Nobody tells them about their birthright. So some of them drift into very great unhappiness, and every fight seems to go against them, and they grow sullen or careless, dispirited or reckless. If any one could find a way to reach the hearts of girls who do not know about their birthright, and rouse them to fight their way to Rheims for their inheritance, it would be one of the most glorious things ever undertaken. That is what, in my Vision, I seemed to see you doing. The call of need is louder, stronger, than the call of

France to Jeanne. I don't suppose you can hear it—yet. But you may! And if you want to, I'll try to take you where you can realize what I mean."

"When can we go?" asked Isabel.

"To-morrow," said Miss Mary.

VII

"SOME OF THE UNCROWNED"

"I AM going to take you," Miss Mary said, next day, "to see some of the girls I know who are uncrowned—who don't even suspect that they have a birthright. Perhaps it will occur to you that you can tell these girls about their inheritance. Perhaps you won't feel that you can tell them—it isn't always possible to do things just because our hearts are full of the desire to do them; there are some persons we never can talk to!—but you'll each think of other girls you might go to, and start towards their coronation."

The first girl they called on was Althea Barbour. Jean and Isabel had heard a great deal about Althea, but they did not know that Miss Mary was acquainted with her.

"I did the 'Idylls of a King' paintings for the Barbours' library," Miss Mary explained. "And I was more or less at the house while I was studying the wall spaces and draughting my cartoons; and later, when the canvases were being put in place. And I used

to see something of this pathetic child. My heart has always ached for her. But I never could get close to her. In order, I suppose, to ward off pity, she has assumed an air of hauteur which must make life trebly hard for her by holding off much friendliness that would otherwise reach her. I have asked permission to take you there to see my paintings. Once or twice before, I have taken friends there to see them, and each time, as I talked about the pictures and the stories they illustrate, I've been conscious of the hovering nearness of that poor child who cannot see and who tries to make listening serve her instead of sight. She seems to love the tales of Arthur and Guinivere and Lancėlot and Elaine and Merlin and Vivien, and the rest. She may come down to-day when we are there, or she may not. She is very capricious. No one ever tries to induce her to do anything. They all seem to feel that her misfortune entitles her to do just as she pleases, and that only. No one seems to realize that her soul, which was made for heroism, like all souls, is sick with pampering and self-pity."

"How long has she been blind?" Isabel asked.

"Since she was twelve. She is about six-

teen now, I fancy. Her blindness developed after she had measles. I've heard that the poor child practically brought this affliction on herself by her willfulness about using her eyes when they were weak. No one had ever taught her self-government. She always did what she wanted at that moment to do—even if it were sure to hurt her. Being an only child and a great heiress, she has been terribly conspired against to keep her from the one birthright which could make her really happy. No one seems to realize how she's being defrauded. Every one who comes athwart her path tries to give her commiseration in some form, either openly or by yielding to her wishes, her whims. And yet, having eyes that see not, doesn't alter the fact that her soul, like every soul, was created that it might learn courage and know the happiness of heroism. I don't know whether any of us will ever get an opportunity to lead Althea to her Rheims. But we'll see what we can do."

The Barbour house was very splendid. Miss Mary explained her errand to the butler and he conducted them at once to the library.

"For a long time," she said to the girls, "I had wanted to paint some pictures which might illustrate a phase of the Idylls that

other artists have not chosen to paint. It seemed to me that for a home it would be highly appropriate to set forth some of the so-different types of womanhood that Tennyson describes in the 'Idylls.' Of course he had allegorical significances in his mind as he wrote, but to most persons the poems are stories, and not allegories; and we love them because we read our own hearts into the tales they tell; because the human nature they describe is the human nature we know. So I took from them four types of woman's love, and made these pictures. Here is Vivien, the enchantress, of whose charms, because they were only superficial charms, all men tired in a short time. She heard that Merlin, the wizard, knew a charm,

> " 'The which if any wrought on any one
> With woven paces and with waving arms,
> The man so wrought on ever seem'd to lie
> Closed in the four walls of a hollow tower,
> From which was no escape for evermore;
> And none could find that man for evermore,
> Nor could he see but him who wrought the charm
> Coming and going, and he lay as dead
> And lost to life and use and name and fame.'

"Vivien wanted Merlin to teach her that charm; and when, yielding to her bewitchment, he did as she desired, she used it against him till 'he lay as dead, and lost to

life and use and name and fame.' Vivien was the lowest type of woman of which Tennyson could conceive. But I know—we all know—women who are not base, except as selfishness is always debasing, yet their desire is to close the object of their love 'in the four walls of a hollow tower from which is no escape' and whence he can see none but her who wrought the charm. I am afraid that nearly all of us, at times, have to struggle more or less against the temptation to wish for that power to 'wall in' those we are wistful to keep. So I painted Vivien, here, weaving her paces and waving her arms to make Merlin prisoner in the hollow oak.

"Then, here is Enid who, because she so greatly loved, realized that the love her husband, Geraint, was giving her, was not uplifting him. Geraint, a mighty man of valor, a great prince, became so absorbed in his devotion to his lovely young wife, Enid, that he forgot every other obligation. His might, his valour, were becoming as nothing to him. He took Enid away from the court of King Arthur and Queen Guinivere, lest her friendship with the Queen—who loved Lancelot—move Enid to look lightly on such things; and kept her, not quite in 'a hollow tower,' but in a remote castle where she could see

none but him, and where he could spend his nights and days adoring her. But Enid knew that such love cannot make a man happy, nor truly crown a woman. She knew that love is not an end, but a means towards an end ; that it is given us to help us live more perfectly, and aspire more yearningly towards heaven. She knew that the more we love, the more our lives, in all their obligations, ought to bear glorious witness to the power of our love. Emerson said, 'our friends are those who make us do what we can.' And I think our belovéd are those who make us do what we couldn't do except for them. Enid feared that she was 'no true wife' because the love she inspired in her husband did not make him do what he could. So far from being a greater prince because of his love, he was not even so good a prince as he had been before. And Enid was unhappy —as every one of us ought to be when we realize that the love we feel and the love we inspire is not fruitful of brave deeds. Only the brave are happy. If we truly love any one, we want that one to be happy—and there is no happiness possible apart from a sense of using the best that is in us, and bettering it by usage."

There was a slight rustle as of some one

moving, in the adjoining room. Miss Mary signed to the girls to pay no heed to it, and went on with her talk about the pictures, and about Jeanne. Somehow, the themes interblended quite wonderfully, and the girls found themselves drawn into an eager discussion of love and valour and birthrights and the debt-universal. They almost forgot about Althea Barbour—forgot that she was listening. But when Miss Mary said that they must not impose on Mrs. Barbour's courtesy by tarrying longer in her library, and they all moved towards the door, the girls suddenly remembered that they had come to see Althea; and they were going without seeing her.

They could ask no questions until they were outside; but they felt quite defeated as they passed out—as if they had gone to Vaucouleurs and come away without facing Beaudricourt.

Miss Mary, however, did not appear downcast.

"Wait!" she urged. "And try to think what you would have done had you been in Althea's place; try to think what you would probably do when you got to reflecting on all you'd heard. If your soul were sick of pampering, and of self-pity, and you wanted

to hear more about courage, about your birthright and your debt, you'd manage to hear—wouldn't you? Althea will manage!"

She did. Twenty-four hours had not elapsed before Miss Mary received a note from Mrs. Barbour who said that her daughter had "chanced to overhear parts of the conversation between you and two young ladies who accompanied you to see the pictures. She was much interested, and was sorry not to have been able to participate; but you know her affliction makes her shy. However, I have promised her that I would ask you if you and the young ladies would not come and take tea with her on Friday afternoon. I do hope you can come."

"Now," reminded Miss Mary when the girls had agreed to go, "Jeanne d'Arc had great valour; but she had also great measure of something else without which her valour could not have saved France—she had astounding discretion, and profound strategy of warfare. She said her Voices counselled her in all things. And her wisdom was very great. Sometimes the seasoned generals under her thought they knew more about ways to fight than she could possibly know; but whenever they opposed their way to hers, they invariably found that she was right and

they were wrong. The Voices that speak to the heart—especially to the pure heart, like Jeanne's—are likely to be good guides. I want you girls to listen to the Voices in your hearts, and see if they don't tell you how you may best help Althea—whether by telling her you have come to take her to Rheims, or by telling her of the others you hope to start after their crowns.

"Something inside—in your hearts—will tell you what to do. You see, we don't know whether Althea realizes that she is uncrowned. In the meantime, you will have met one or two others who may, perhaps, help you to interest Althea. This afternoon I'm going to take you to see a girl who has just learned about her birthright—not all about it, but just that she has one and that she wants to wear it. She's only fifteen, and about two weeks ago she was arrested for throwing a butcher-knife at her father. She missed him by about a quarter of an inch. But for fear she'd come closer next time, he had her arrested. She's quite a pretty girl, with flaxen hair and pink cheeks and deep-blue eyes. But when the officer took her to the Juvenile Detention Home where young persons under eighteen are kept pending their hearings in court, she cursed

so horribly and used such frightful language, and showed such violence to everybody, that they were afraid to keep her—used as they are to some very naughty girls and boys. So she had to be taken to one of the regular jails for grown-up offenders, and locked in a cell by herself. Everybody was afraid of her. Nobody could make any impression on her.

"Well, at last she was brought into court—I was there when she came—before the dear little 'lady judge' as the delinquent girls she hears call her. The officer who made the arrest told what a terrible girl Sophie was; and Sophie's father told what a terrible girl she was; and Sophie bawled curses at them, and yelled defiance, and wouldn't stand up before the judge, and acted—altogether—like an infuriated young beast.

"The judge listened to the officer, and to Sophie's father, and then she made them both go to the farthest corner of that little room where she hears each girl's case privately, and began to talk to Sophie—speaking very low, and very pleadingly. At first Sophie wouldn't answer; then she began to bawl out her defiant replies. The soft, sweet voice never changed its tone—it was very, very

tender, but even Sophie could feel the strength behind its tenderness. Presently Sophie began to sob and cry. She had no handkerchief, and the judge unfolded a fresh, sweet one and put it into Sophie's dirty hand. She laid an arm about Sophie's shaking shoulders—and Sophie didn't draw away.

"They had a long talk, and Sophie talked as low as the judge. She admitted that she had thrown the knife, hoping to kill. She admitted that she had been so violent that she had to be sent away from the Detention Home and locked in a cell. Asked why she did such dreadful things, she said she had a 'terrible temper.' The judge asked her how she came to let her temper ruin her life that way—and Sophie told!

"Her mother had died so long ago that Sophie couldn't remember anything about her. Sophie's father was 'always drunk,' she said. There were twin boys a year younger than Sophie, and another boy a year younger than they. Sophie had 'kept house' for her pa and the three brothers since she was six. They lived in two rooms. Her father was drunk so much of the time that it seemed to Sophie he was never sober. Sometimes he drove the children out of the house and kept them out all night. Often

he beat them. They never had enough to eat, and their clothing was assembled from all kinds of places except shops. The youngsters brought themselves up, and they made a pretty poor job of it. The boys, who were 'in with' one of the worst gangs of their very bad neighbourhood, tormented Sophie with the same zest they showed in torturing cats or 'baiting' Jews or breaking up the Mission of the pale young Rector who wanted to 'uplift' them. That was the atmosphere in which Sophie grew; except for her very intermittent and half-hearted schooling, it was the only atmosphere she knew.

"Bit by bit this all came out, as Sophie sobbed her answers to the judge's questions. And then ——! How I wish you could have been there to see and hear. After a long talk, Sophie said she could realize that she was getting nothing but unhappiness out of life and that she could not hope to get anything else until she had learned how to govern her temper and to make herself seek and do the right things. And she agreed to go back to the Detention Home and ask the superintendent to forgive her and try her again and give her a chance to show that she meant to 'make good.'

"The superintendent welcomed Sophie and told her never to doubt that she'd make good. And when I asked, this morning, how Sophie was getting on, the superintendent's voice broke, with the strength of her feeling, as she told me of the brave big fight Sophie's making. 'She doesn't win every battle, by any means,' the superintendent said. 'But when she loses, she flings herself into my arms and sobs out her contrition and her fresh resolve. And I count that a triumph for Sophie, as great as Waterloo was for Wellington.'

"I told the superintendent about our idea, and how we want to pass it on to others whom it may help as much as it has helped us. And she said we might go to see Sophie—though we couldn't hope to rouse in her much interest in Jeanne d'Arc. I said we didn't expect to talk to Sophie about going to Rheims ——"

The girls smiled.

"—— but that I thought she might like to know that she's an heiress—that she has 'a fortune' waiting for her to claim it. And do you know, girls, I've been kind of wishful that we had a little 'Book of Heirs.' I don't know what it should be like, except that I'd wish it to be so phrased that even poor little

Sophie could comprehend that it meant her."

"Oh, Miss Mary!" Jean cried, eagerly. "Did you happen to see that last will and testament of the man who died recently in the poorhouse at Dunning?"

"No, dear, I didn't. Tell us about it."

"Well, I can't remember it all, and I'm afraid I can't repeat any of it in the beautiful language he used; but it was that he bequeathed to good fathers and mothers, in trust for their children, all quaint pet names and pretty words of praise. And to children he gave the right to play in the flowering fields and on the yellow shores of creeks. He gave them the stars and the moon, too, and directed that each child should choose a particular star for his very own. And he bequeathed all sorts of sports to boys, and left them lots of lovely things, including pictures in the fire at night. He left gifts to lovers, too—and to young men. And the last item was what he gave to those who are no longer children or youths or lovers; he gave them memory, and the poets, and—I remember the exact words of the last sentence—he left them, too, 'the knowledge what a rare, rare world it is.' I cut the will out of the paper. And the other evening a

friend of Dad's who was calling at our house said that this pauper's will left greater treasure to mankind than Morgan's or Altman's or any will he'd ever read. 'But not all his heirs,' this gentleman said, 'will learn of their inheritance; thousands of them will die poor in spirit though perhaps rich in purse, never knowing "what a rare, rare world it is"!'"

"Why, Jean!" Miss Mary cried. "Thank you 'the most that ever was'! I wouldn't have missed that for anything. Perhaps we can get the whole text of that wonderful will, and add some things to it, and make a 'Book of Heirs.' Now let us go and see Sophie."

VIII

THE FIRST "GALLANT COMPANY"

IT was the first time Jean or Isabel had ever called on any one behind bars. Every effort was made, at the Home, to keep the children from thinking about the bars; but the bars were there—they had to be, for the children's protection. Society seeks its own protection when it puts certain adult offenders behind bars; but when it locks up unfortunate children, the safety of the children is the main consideration—there are so many forces in the world that "offend these little ones."

Once past the down-stairs gratings, however, there was not a great deal to remind one of a place of detention. Miss Mary and the girls were taken up to the superintendent's private parlour; and into that pretty homelike room Sophie was brought to meet them. She wore a white duck "middy blouse" with dark red tie and trimmings on the sailor collar, and a white duck skirt; and her flaxen hair, in two tight braids, looped up, was tied with bright pink

ribbons—scarcely pinker, though, than Sophie's cheeks. She clung close to the superintendent, her arm about that fine, big-sisterly young woman's waist. It seemed incredible that this little girl had terrorized the police!

"Miss Binford and these young ladies, Sophie," the superintendent said after her introductions had been made, "know what a great, big, splendid fight you are making, and how proud of you I am; and they wanted to meet you. They feel this way, Sophie; they know you've got a lot of hard things to do, and they thought perhaps they might be able to help you, some, by being friends with you. And they have their own hard things to do; and sometimes, when they feel they are not doing as well as they ought to, it will be a big help to them to remember you and what an awfully plucky fight you are making. Not many girls have such hard things to do as you are doing. And you know how I've been telling you that your making good and winning out is going to be more real help to other girls than almost anything else could possibly be. Now, these two girls each have something hard to do, to bear, to overcome. And how do you suppose they're getting the most

help in doing it? By trying to get all the brave girls together, so they can encourage one another. And I believe you're the very first girl they've asked to belong. They want you to be a kind of captain, here, and pick out some of the other girls you think are making a good fight, or ought to make one. And we'll have a company, or society, or whatever you decide to call it. Do you think you'd like that?"

"Maybe I would—I don't know," Sophie answered. But when she had heard more about it, from Jean and Isabel, she decided that she would like it very much indeed, although she wasn't sure that she "would know how to do."

"We don't, either!" Jean declared. "We know what we'd like to do, but we don't know how we are going to do it. We're trying to find out. You may learn a good way before we do. And if you do, you'll tell us; won't you?"

"Sure I will," Sophie said.

They told her about Althea, and how they were going to try to get her started.

"There are a good many ways that parents can make things hard for their children, Sophie," the superintendent said. "They can drink, and abuse them and starve them

and lock them out and not give them clothes or teach them anything. Or they can pet them and spoil them and let them have their own way in everything, and make them just as unhappy as the beaten and abused children. But the children who are kicked and cuffed are really better off than the ones who are coddled and made selfish, silly fools of. For it often happens that hard treatment makes us strong to endure, brings out the good, fighting stuff in us; but the other extreme makes weak, wishy-washy, no-account, selfish creatures that are no good to themselves or anybody. If Althea Barbour manages to be brave and helpful, she'll have to make every bit as big a fight as you're going to make. And it's going to be harder for her—because she's never been taught to struggle. You have! You're a fighter from 'way back.' The kind of fighting you've been doing is a bad kind. But just as soon as you get all that fighting energy of yours into a good fight, you're going to amount to something, I can tell you."

Sophie and the superintendent started the first "gallant company" of Jean's army. They had plenty of material to recruit from, there in the Juvenile Home. The superin-

tendent said she had never seen more eager enlistment, nor more immediate results. And when the company was enrolled, and officered, Miss Mary went over, accompanied by Jean and Isabel and Adelaide, and gave a talk on Jeanne d'Arc. She took a lot of photographs and post-cards and small copies of the du Monvel pictures, and a copy of Bastien Lepage's wonderful canvas, "Jeanne listening to the Voices;" and showed the pictures on a sheet, by means of a photo-lantern; and found that the story was loved as a story, and also that it was appreciated as a symbol.

Some of the girls stayed in the Home only a few days; others were there for weeks; but each one pledged, as she left, to remain a member of the "gallant company" and to do all she could to recruit other companies.

Progress was more rapid there than anywhere else. The conditions favoured it.

"The girls here," their superintendent said, "have been taken out of their ordinary courses of life, and brought here because they must make a decided change. Most of them learn to realize what was wrong in their former behaviour, and to know the better way. The great pity of nearly all of their cases, though, is that their parents haven't

learned anything! These poor little girls must either be separated from their families who neglected or abused them, or else they must go back to make their struggle, single-handed, against the same old conditions of neglect or abuse which caused them to come here. Either way is hard. But I think the sense of belonging to a 'gallant company' will help tremendously. We must have frequent rallies. We must help the girls think up ways of keeping up the spirit of this thing. They'll be able to endure ten times as much, and fight sturdily on, if they can feel that they're marching in brave company and keeping the others inspired."

Althea heard about Sophie, and, through Sophie's story, about the gallant company. When the question of Sophie's future was raised, it was Althea's suggestion that she would pay for a year's schooling for Sophie in any school that the judge might choose. And this offer was gratefully accepted, because the only schools to which Sophie could be sent by the court were schools that did not seem well equipped to give her the kind of training she needed. The girls sent to correctional and training schools at public expense are nearly all girls who have been

morally delinquent. And it seemed to those who cared so much about Sophie's brave fight that she ought not to be asked to make it in association with girls who were not able easily to forget things which they had learned and which Sophie had not.

"There are no 'ungovernable' tempers," said the judge, "but there are many, many *ungoverned* tempers. Sophie's has been terribly aggravated, and no one has ever helped her to control it. We want a school for her where the principal study is self-discipline, and the next-most-important study is how to earn a living at some kind of work in which she can be interested and happy. These are the great blessings: self-government—the will and the strength to do what is right—and work that we can grow in, and feel ourselves useful to the world. I want Sophie to have those blessings. I want every girl to have them!"

IX

THOSE WHO LINGER AT CHINON

ALTHEA was drawn to the judge as instinctively as were the girls who went before her. She lost her hauteur, under the spell of that sweet voice, as Sophie had lost her fury, and as other girls had lost their fear or their resentment or their bravado. She could not hear enough of the stories of those other girls, and of their needs. Not once did Althea admit, though—even to the judge—her own needs.

"Never mind," Miss Mary counselled Jean. "Let her get what help she can in her own way. If she gets courage by forgetting her sorrow and remembering others, help her to do it. It doesn't matter whether she joins a gallant company or not, if the sound of our marching feet cheers and fortifies her and moves her to express her courage in some way."

"She's a good deal like the Dauphin; isn't she?" Jean remarked.

"Yes; like him, she's persuaded by her courtiers that the only thing for her to do is

to stay at Chinon; to forget the enemy and the crown—neither to fight nor to triumph; neither to seek her birthright nor to pay her debt."

Jean and Miss Mary were in the library of Jean's home, side by side on the big, brown davenport which was to them, they said, like Jeanne d'Arc's fairy tree at Domremy; they could see their Vision here more wonderfully than elsewhere because here they had first seen it.

"Is Chinon very beautiful?" Jean asked.

"Very, very beautiful. One can understand how a dauphin might be persuaded to believe himself better off in that magnificent old castle, looking down that glorious valley of the Vienne, with his relatives and friends around him, than he could be by going to war against the English and Burgundians. To go after that crown at Rheims meant to fight his way against overwhelming odds; to leave his family behind—perhaps never to see them more; to risk death; to endure hardship. If he stayed at Chinon, he might live and die unmolested. France would be lost. But Charles of Valois would be safe and comfortable."

"Did you—ever go there—to Chinon—more than—once?" Jean whispered.

"No."

Jean had been thinking a great deal, even in all her absorption in the great project, of the story Miss Mary had told her; of those golden days when all the beauty and the romance and the splendid tradition of France seemed to have been created to be a fitting background and atmosphere for the most perfect young love. She wondered how the man Miss Mary loved could go so far away that her love couldn't reach him. She wondered if he knew that Miss Mary had never stopped loving him. She wondered many things. But she did not like to ask any question that might make Miss Mary unhappy.

"Dad says," Jean went on, "that if nothing happens to prevent he will take Mother and me to France in July; and we'll motor; and if I want to, we'll go over the Jeanne d'Arc country. I think he's getting pretty interested in her himself. We have some fine talks about her."

"Won't that be a treat to you?" Miss Mary cried. "And how you will glory in it! I do hope nothing will prevent it! I feel that it will be just the thing you need most of all to give you that final touch of inspiration, of confidence, that will make you assume real

generalship. This year you are just feeling your way, slowly—spying out the land—seeing what's to be done. Almost every day you are becoming acquainted with new needs, with new conditions of life where people need to remember their birthright and their debt. If, after six months or so of learning this, you can go over to Domremy, and Vaucouleurs, and Chinon and Poitiers and Blois, and Tours, and Orleans, and Rheims, and on—to Compiègne and to Rouen—I believe you'll easily get so imbued with the spirit of The Maid that you'll come back full of power to lead girls in loving to do the brave thing. These first months I'm trying to counsel you all I can. Perhaps—who knows?—I'm speaking for your Margaret. Perhaps my Jean who never came out of the world of visions and dreams is at my other ear, telling me some things to say to you. But by and by you will be better able to hear them than I am—because your heart is younger and purer and more unafraid. Oh, Jean! I want you to have that journey!"

"I wish you could go!" Jean whispered, drawing Miss Mary closer to her with a "mothering" caress.

"Darling, I couldn't," Miss Mary murmured. "And it is better so. If I went, you

might feel my impressions—even my recollections. It is much better that you should go with some one to whom you will endeavour to explain what each place means to you—its relation to Jeanne and history, and its symbolism in the lives of us all. It is best of all that you should go with your parents; for you to have that close comradeship with them which people can have so much more easily in travel than at home, where each has his separate and separating interests. If you begin such a comradeship over there, where you three are together all day and every day, enjoying the same things, I'm sure you'll have a stronger bond to hold you together when you come home. And you know how great a part of the Vision it is that parents and children shall be brought closer together than they are now; that they shall feel a comradeship most of them don't feel now. We want parents to realize the great need of teaching their children to be brave; to meet life heroically, to struggle, not doggedly, but splendidly; to know their birthright, and to get it; to acknowledge their debt, and to pay it. And we want the children to understand what the parents are trying to help them to, and to appreciate it, and to feel all the thrills of making a brave adventure to win a crown of

great honour. . . . The thing that Jeanne had to do took her away from her home, her parents. We hope that the thing you are to do will make your home dearer to you than it ever could have been otherwise, and make you and your parents comrades of the same cause. It's heart-breaking to have to go on a mission, a crusade, however glorious, and leave your nearest and dearest behind. There is too much separation in this world now. There has always been too much of it! We want to help people be brave and strong *together*."

Miss Mary's parents were both dead. She had two brothers, but they were married, and their lives were full of their own interests. They loved and deeply admired Miss Mary; but their lives were complete without her, and she knew it even better than they did. She loved them so tenderly that she gave them of herself whenever she could, but too unselfishly to ask of them anything that might take them from the other allegiances to which they owed themselves first and chiefly. It was her battle in life to be brave alone; to touch other lives where she could, not to draw them close to hers, except for a while, but to strengthen their natural ties. She was happy with Jean, but she never lost sight of

the fact that when she had done her best by Jean, Jean would have no real need of her, and would be intent upon the fullest possible realization of her relationship to her parents and to her work in the world.

Jean had tried not to say much, latterly, about the ache in her own lonely heart; but she knew that Miss Mary understood it was still there. And so she, though Miss Mary did not once mention after that first time her sense of loneliness in the great, busy world, knew that the ache for "what might have been" grew stronger and not less strong as time went by.

"Nothing in all the world can bring my Margaret back to me," Jean reflected agonizingly. "But somewhere in the world—not gone beyond recall, only just separated from her perhaps by a misunderstanding—is the man Miss Mary loved so much. I wish I knew how to find him!"

She thought about this a good deal, partly because she loved Miss Mary so dearly, and partly because she was at an age when nothing in the world seems quite so real or so important as Romance. Most of us appear to outgrow that age—some of us sooner and some of us later. But I often wonder what would happen if to the men and women most

preoccupied with affairs great or small could come an opportunity of a real romance. I wonder if, in many of them, it would be found that the heart of youth had withered away and its longings could not be revived. I wonder if, in many of them, the "substantial realities," the rewards of toil, the zest of labour, the reflexive warmth of kindly deeds, have entirely supplanted youth's longing for dreams and sighs and kisses and ecstasy—for the magic of life, and for its dear illusions; its dancing will-o'-the-wisp lights, and its song of the "time-devouring nightingale." I often wonder how much nearer we come to rendering the spirit of the world's unending epic—Life—when we translate it literally, in terms of the actualities, than when we interpret it liberally, in the terms of hearts' desires.

Jean, however, had no such wonder. To her it was all very simple: Life is Love, and the things Love makes us do. And all the while she was thinking of recruiting gallant companies and helping straggling souls into the column marching to Rheims to get their crowns, she was intensely conscious of two things: of her own loneliness, her longing for Margaret; and of her eagerness to see Miss Mary's loneliness and longing dispelled by the return of that lover who had gone so

far away she couldn't reach him with her love.

Probably it was because she knew so much about loneliness and believed so much in Love that she was so effective in her undertaking. There could hardly be two more perfect qualifications for fellowship with other hearts.

And so the days and weeks went by, and the gallant company grew and grew. By the time July came 'round, Jean felt as if she could hardly leave—things were moving forward so steadily. But Miss Mary said the journey to the Jeanne d'Arc country would do more for the movement than anything Jean could possibly do by staying at home.

"It will be like a baptism," she said; "a touching of your spirit with hers, in those dear places which her spirit particularly haunts. You'll bring back a greatly intensified sense of all that she was and all that she symbolizes."

So Jean went eagerly—the more so as she hoped to meet Miss Mary in Paris after her return from the motor trip.

"At least we can stand together," Miss Mary said, "beside Jeanne's shining gold-bronze statue on the Rue de Rivoli, near where she fell wounded outside the walls of Paris which

she vainly tried to take from its English usurpers. And we can go together to Notre Dame where, twenty-five years after the French had allowed Jeanne to be burned as a witch, they solemnly, in the presence of her poor mother and brothers, acclaimed her as the saviour of her country. 'Of whom the world was not worthy!' When we grow weary in well-doing, as we all do at times, we have only to remember how defeated they must have felt who did the most for humanity, and whose own received them not. That is one of the things we get so richly in Europe: almost everywhere we go we find ourselves in places made sacred by the struggles of those who put the whole world in their debt, but who were, in their lifetime, despised and rejected by the men they sought to serve and save. It keeps our courage up to be reminded of them; because we know how poor the world would be, to-day and always, if those brave souls had not gone on and on, doing the things they felt they ought to do."

"You know 'what a rare, rare world it is,'" Jean whispered, lovingly. "And you make others feel it, too. You make us feel that struggle doesn't spoil it—only gives us our opportunity to be brave and fine. I think it is the most wonderful thing anybody

could possibly do for others—just what you do!"

"Dear Jean! do you, really? So often it seems to me that I'm not amounting to anything at all."

"Why, Miss Mary!" Jean cried, reproachfully. "You ought to know better! I believe you put all the people you meet on their mettle—make them want to be braver and better than they ever were before. Just think of what you've done for us girls! I don't know how we can ever thank you——"

"You've more than thanked me, darling, in the beautiful things you've done. I don't know when anything has made me so happy."

Jean longed to ask Miss Mary if she knew where he was who had once made her life so radiant, but somehow she did not quite dare. Then she bethought her to ask about the Durlands.

"Do you ever see the nice professor and his wife any more?" she inquired.

"Oh, yes; often. Sometimes I see them over there, too. But we don't go bicycling any more. They're teaching in Philadelphia now. I haven't written them about our Jeanne d'Arc movement—it's such a long story to write. But when I see them I'll

tell them about it; and I know how they'll love it. They'll be glad of it for their young students, too. They do so much for the girls they teach; but I think this organization will be a help to them."

Still, Jean could not bring herself to ask about "him." Instead, she threw her arms around Miss Mary's neck and with her face close to Miss Mary's ear she whispered:

"When I'm at Chinon—I'll—think of you."

It wasn't what she had wanted to say, but Miss Mary understood.

"I know you will, dear! And I want you to do more: In the high-up tower room where Jeanne lodged, I want you to say a little prayer; I want you to say: 'Dear Father of us all, bless him, wherever he is, and send some one to him who can take him to Rheims.'"

"I will," Jean promised.

X

"PLACES WHERE THINGS HAPPENED"

LONG before spring time, Adelaide Gerson's mother was back in her home, so rested and refreshed, so steadied in nerves and upbuilt in strength, that Adelaide was repaid ten thousandfold for her labour and what she could no longer call her "sacrifice" of a few months' schooling.

"I never got so much out of a similar length of time in my life!" she declared. "Never learned such a lot about life, and about things, and about my family, and about myself. I wouldn't take anything for my discovery of the fun it is to tackle a great big old hard proposition, and put it through! I'm going to get after all the girls I can reach who are mourning and having fits because something in their family circumstances keeps them from the kinds of self-improvement they want. I feel as if I know more about that battle than any other. I want to pass along the word that it's a good fight to get into—you find out how many ways there

are of being improved besides the way you were 'sot' upon! Miss Mary has helped me to lay out a course of reading about the people who got the big things out of life, and did the big things, because they learned to do what was given them to do, rather than what they felt like doing. I'm going to recruit my company from among the girls I know who feel affronted every time they meet an obstacle in their way. I want to tell them a few things! The other evening Dad and I went to a 'Movie.' There were pictures of Italian cavalry officers practicing hard riding. The mountainsides they came scrambling down! The almost perpendicular places they went scrambling up! The deep, swift streams they dashed into and forded! It was hair-raising. Some women in the audience screamed. The man who explained the pictures said that these officers, many of whom are the sons of great Italian nobles, have this kind of practice nearly every day. They must be so bold and so skillful that they'll gallop anywhere, and make any kind of a charge that the fearless leaders want to make. If a man on a horse has gone over that precipice, or into that torrent, other men on other horses mustn't hesitate—they must tackle it no matter

whether it looks to them as if they'd never make it or not. Dad and I had such a fine talk about it coming home. 'What man has done, man can do,' he said. 'It's bad for any of us to think too much about the size of our obstacles, and the peculiarities of our limitations. We ought to spend more time reading and thinking about the people who faced bigger difficulties, and conquered them.' He is so interested in our idea. 'Courage!' he says, 'courage! That's the great, big thing that every one can get out of life, no matter what's against him. Courage! We all need it—all the time. If we have it, life's worth all it costs and more. If we haven't got courage, life's a treadmill—a galley—a chain-gang.' "

"I've kind of settled on my company, too," Isabel said. "I'm going to recruit in another quarter. At first I was discouraged about getting anything started. Most of the girls I know have such easy times, and no trials to speak of except how to get finer clothes or more matinée money, and no ambition for anything except fun. The more I thought about them the less I felt like telling them about their birthright and their debt and all that. They aren't even like Althea—with her great affliction. They don't seem to have

anything about them that might make them care for being gallant. I told Miss Mary, and she said: 'All girls have some capacity for heroism. They may not know it or want to know it—but it's there! And I think most of them long to test it. I know the kind of girls you mean, and I'm sorrier for them than for any other kind—lots sorrier than I am for Sophie! They are the hardest to do anything for. If you can get any of them to march against her Orleans—whatever it is—and on to her Rheims, you'll be a captain after Jeanne's own heart and pattern. I think you've picked out one of the most difficult and important undertakings you could have found.' Well! After that, I made up my mind I was going to stick. But I can tell you I get terribly discouraged—because most of the girls I know haven't got any sense of need. They think of nothing but having a good time."

It wasn't very long since Isabel had been of one mind with them; but it seemed a long, long time to her because she had become interested in so many new and wonderful things.

"You are like that monk in Stevenson's fable," Adelaide declared—"the one who strayed deep into the wood one day, and

heard a bird sing; and when he returned to the monastery, none of his fellow monks knew him—it was as if he had been gone fifty years. He had learned a rapture of which they were ignorant. When he tried to tell about it they couldn't understand."

"I don't know how I could get along if I didn't have some one to talk to who can understand!" Isabel cried. "That's the lovely thing about belonging to this gallant army; it's such a comfort to talk things over, to hear how somebody else is getting on, and to feel that you've got comrades who know what you're trying to do—comrades who are trying to do the same thing. I wouldn't give up what I've got out of this for anything! And I've only begun!"

The girls wrote in this strain to Jean—wrote her steamer letters, which seemed to her the most beautiful and precious letters ever written; and each of them kept for her a little "record of progress" which was mailed to her so that she heard, either from Isabel or from Adelaide, each week. She had to content herself, for the most part, with post-card bulletins in reply, because continuous travelling does not leave much leisure for letters; but she looked eagerly forward to all that she would have to tell when she got home.

Ida Fahrlow was intent on Paris shopping. After a fortnight of that she had no choice of places to go; she opined that "most anywhere would be nice in the motor." Jim was glad of the Paris fortnight for the cafés and the races, the aviation fields with their frequent flights, the thousand-and-one diversions that the playground of the world offers to the hard-working man from communities where play has hardly begun to be considered one of the essential parts of life. He had, too, a long-dormant feeling for the historic, and Jean's eagerness to visit "places where things happened" woke in him some of the old enthusiasms of his boyhood. He found that hero-worship was doing him great good. The sensations he had at Napoleon's tomb seemed to recall from out the limbo of all-but-forgotten things that dear, eager, "per-aspera-ad-astra" lad he used to be; and Jim was glad to meet that boy again.

By the time the Paris fortnight was over he had grown so intimate with this youth of five-and-twenty years ago that he and Jean were like lad and lass together as they roamed the narrow, crooked streets of the Marais, and sought out Roman remains on the left bank, and penetrated courtyards, public and private, looking for the Dagobert tower and the wall

of Philip Auguste, and the site of that St. Pol palace where Charles VII had spent his so-neglected boyhood, and for the gateway beneath which his uncle of Orleans had been killed by the Duke of Burgundy.

When they were ready to start on their motor trip, Jim was thoroughly interested in all the details of it, and enjoying the comradeship of his daughter more than he had ever enjoyed any other company in his life.

Following Jeanne's footsteps from Domremy to Rouen necessitated some "roundabout" going; the natural geographical sequences were not the chronological ones. But the Fahrlows were not intent principally on time saving.

"Let's do it the way you want it, Honey," Jim said to Jean.

Accordingly they planned their first day's run to end at Troyes, the ancient and exceedingly picturesque city where King "Harry Hotspur" of England was married to the sister of Dauphin Charles, and where wicked Queen Isabeau signed the treaty by which she hoped to defraud Charles of his crown and give France to the English.

From Troyes it was a run of only about three hours to Domremy.

Some historians accept the house now

standing as the veritable one in which the Maid of France came into the world, grew to maidenhood, and from which she set forth on that great mission whence she was never to return. Others declare this house was built after Jeanne's death, replacing the older structure identified with her. There seems to be no incontrovertible proof of either contention. Those who like to believe—as the most genial travellers have ever liked to do—may thrill with the thought of Jeanne seeing her saints in the red embers of that identical old fireplace, hearing her Voices beneath the rafters of that identical low room she is said to have occupied. And those who like to doubt may indulge their liking.

Jean had no disposition towards doubt. She was so full of the spirit of The Maid, so ecstatic in approaching the scenes of that life, regarded by many of its profoundest students as "the most wonderful life ever lived, save only One," that she was untroubled by quibbles as to whether this cottage was built by Jeanne's parents before her birth or after her death. Hereabouts she had had her little girlhood until she went hence to save France. Hither she came no more after she had set her face towards Vaucouleurs and Chinon and Orleans and Rheims. These

were the hills she had loved; these the tiny rivers whose rippling waters she had known. The village that gave her to the world is as small and as poor and as quiet now as it can have been five hundred years ago; the church where she worshipped God is as humble as when she knelt there.

Up on the hill where Jeanne first heard the Voices there is a great new basilica and monument to her; at Vaucouleurs, twenty miles away, the national Memorial to her is building, close to the ruins of Beaudricourt's château; but in Domremy is little to mark the flight of centuries since Jeanne knew it. If the great white sculptured group (representing Jeanne, led by the genius of France, quitting her home to save her country) could be removed from the garden; if a touch of genuine inspiration should clear the cottage of all that makes it a museum, and restore to it furnishings such as Jeanne knew, the place might easily bridge the five centuries which tend to put Jeanne in the long ago, and give the pilgrim a feeling almost as of standing side by side with the peasant maid who went to take her king to Rheims.

Jean cared but moderately for the basilica on the hilltop. The thrill was not there. The tremendousness of Jeanne's accomplish-

ment is not suggested by any piling up of stone and embellishment with marbles. Nothing so emphasizes her greatness as the littleness and humbleness of the village and of the home from which she went to lead the armies of France. Much that we do to memorialize the great, tends to set them apart from us, to singularize their achievements. Yet many of the things for which they fought are part of a vanished past, like the Kingdom of France; that which does not change, for which we do not lose our need, is the spirit which made them victorious. We do the most honour to our great when we find in their lives, not their singular fitness nor their singular opportunity, but that which might also be in our lives,—if we would!

Never, never would Jean forget Domremy! Never again, while she lived, could she hear Voices calling her to duty, and plead that she was too young or too untaught or too unequipped. Always, always she would remember Jeanne going from Domremy to save France. No wonder Miss Mary had wanted Jean to make this journey!

At Vaucouleurs they climbed the hill Jeanne had so often climbed to present herself before Beaudricourt, and sought the site of that tiny chapel where she had spent so

many hours in prayer ; they pictured her riding forth, at last, through the Gate of France, equipped by the poor folk of the village and escorted by the two squires she had won to her service.

Then they went on to Nancy to spend the night. Jeanne went thither too, on command of the Duke of Lorraine. He wanted to see her. Some say he believed in her and would have sent her to the Dauphin, but that Jeanne told him he must first make his services acceptable unto God by putting away his mistress—whereupon the Duke allowed Jeanne to depart unaided.

Next day the pilgrims started from Nancy back to Vaucouleurs (they had gone to Nancy less because of Jeanne's connection with it than because of its having the only good hotel accommodation anywhere around) and thence over Jeanne's route towards Chinon. Their destination that night was Auxerre, a long day's run from Nancy, and a town so full of interest that they were glad to make a day's stop there.

At Salbris, where Jeanne made one of her halts, the Fahrlows turned from her course towards Chinon, to spend a night at Bourges, which was the capital of Charles VII's kingdom until Jeanne delivered to him his larger

inheritance. Then, after seeing the cathedral and the many old houses, including that of Charles VII's goldsmith and money-lender, Jacques Cœur, they went back to Salbris and "picked up the trail" again, as Jim said: Romorantin, Selles, St. Aignan, Loches—where beautiful Agnes Sorel whom Charles loved was buried, and where Charles' son, Louis XI, kept good and great men for years in iron cages—and then to St. Catherine-de-Fierbois, where Jeanne miraculously directed the finding of the ancient sword that had lain forgotten since Charles Martel drove the Saracens from Tours, nearly seven hundred years before.

It was nearing six o'clock of a perfect August evening when they came to a village named Trogues and had their first sight of the Vienne, whose bank they followed to Chinon.

XI

GETTING TO WHERE THE DAUPHIN WAS

JEAN was more excited, going to Chinon, than she had ever been about anything in all her life. She thought that Jeanne herself could hardly have felt more thrill when she looked up, for the first time, at the great castle on the high hill's crest, and realized that she was come at last to Chinon, whither she had said she must come if she had to wear her legs off to the knees.

What were The Maid's thoughts as she gazed up at the towers and battlements silhouetted against the sky? Did she ever doubt if the Dauphin would receive her? Jean wondered. As for herself, her thoughts were an inextricable commingling of Jeanne's coming here, and of Miss Mary's coming, and of her own.

It had been market day in Chinon, and the small square was still strewn with litter of vegetable stalks and straw and other refuse, while some of the older gossips lingered over the business of packing their unsold wares or truck and volubly discussed the day's events.

There were pretty shade trees in the old square, and there was the fountain Miss Mary had told Jean about, and the girls, and women, and children filling their big bottles or jars or jugs with water for the cooking of the evening meal. Yes, and back of the square rose the steep, cobbled street of steps, flanked by old houses, up which Jeanne had toiled to see the Dauphin. And here was the little hotel Miss Mary had told about, where one could lie abed and listen to the plashing of the fountain and to the shrill voices of the gossips, and look up at the great clock tower beneath which had passed so many interesting persons, so many dear to romance.

After dinner the Fahrlows went for a walk along the beautiful wide quay, overarched by splendid trees, and sat on a bench there by the riverside and talked of Jeanne.

"I don't see how she could have left her parents the way she did," Ida commented—for the hundredth time. "Going off, goodness knew where, with a lot of strange soldiers."

"And they say she was a great 'mother's girl,'" Jean answered; "that she loved working with her mother at the home tasks. She was very, very homesick for Domremy and her old life, and when she had crowned the King at Rheims she begged him to let her go

back and be as she was before. But he wouldn't listen to her. I am glad I live in a time when a girl can go to the uncrowned and take them to Rheims without having to leave her home and her parents and all her dear friends. That's one of the beautiful things about our gallant army—nobody needs to be left behind! We can all march together!"

Jim's arm was about Jean's waist, and he drew her to him with a straining tenderness which expressed his gladness in this marching "together." He had been wont to think that he got as much happiness out of his family as it was possible for a man to get. Now he knew that he had never before realized what family ties may mean. He had been content to feel himself a bounteous provider of material comforts and luxuries. He had never dreamed what a relationship might be wherein he should be the soldier-comrade of his daughter, marching along the same highway, with the same guerdon in view. When they were back home again, their days would be filled with different interests—not with common ones, as they were here—but the same great general interest would remain, and their understanding of each other would grow and grow, and between them they might

even make a soldier out of Ida—at any rate, they would try!

The heart has few desires so intense as the desire for comradeship, the yearning to feel a common cause with another soul, and to share with another some of the great experiences. Jim had been less conscious of heart-hunger than many are; but now that he was realizing deep satisfactions of which, heretofore, he had not even dreamed, he was often moved to wonder how he had got on in the days when Jean and he were living in separate worlds, as it were, and meeting, like most fathers and daughters, chiefly at the dinner table.

The morning was a glorious one. Jean had stayed awake until near midnight listening to the music of the fountain and to the voices in the little square, and thinking of many things; but she was awake very early, rejoicing in the brilliant sunshine and in the chattering of the girls and women come to fetch water just as, without doubt, they had done when Jeanne tarried here at the foot of the hill—before she was quartered, as the Dauphin's guest, in the castle.

The country around Chinon is famed for its cliff dwellings. The sides of the hills are hollowed out, in innumerable places, to make

rude homes. In some of these caverns in the rocks families have been living, generation after generation of them, for centuries. The street which Jeanne climbed to the castle gate had, in her day, and still has, several of these hewn-out houses, in the doorways of which stood women and children regarding the Fahrlows with curious interest. In front of one of them a particularly bewitching small kitten played, rolling over and over in a kitten-fashion which has certainly not changed while kingdoms have waxed and waned. It can hardly have been otherwise than that Jeanne passed at least one frolicking kitten on her way up that street of cobbled steps. Nor is it probable that the women and children framed in the doorways looked very different in 1429 than in 1913; there are some French styles (in costuming, too!) which alter little as the centuries roll by; and the peasantry, who suffer from so many kinds of tyranny, are spared the tyranny of rapidly-changing modes.

But no men-at-arms go up and down the steep street now; no courtiers pass and repass the rude cavern dwellings. Wars and splendours have alike deserted Chinon; but babies and kittens persist.

Of the castle, once so swarmingly alive

with soldiers and favourites and servants, so full of plot and counterplot, there is naught now but crumbling ruins : roofless great halls carpeted with grass ; untenanted deep dungeons ; some few turret chambers, like the one in which Jeanne slept.

The Fahrlows crossed what had once been the drawbridge, and pulled the bell-chain on the great gate beneath the clock tower. An aged warder, accompanied by a very young granddaughter and a still younger kitten, opened the small doorway in the gate and the Fahrlows passed in.

One of the trials of visiting castles and other like places of historic interest is that usually one must go through them in a crowd, herded along with all possible haste by a caretaker or guide unable to conceal the contempt he feels for sightseers. The singsong spiritless explanations offered are curiously alike ; a guard who has served at Compiègne might almost be transferred to Fontainebleau without having to learn a new chant ; one who has shown the Trianons would do as well at any other place where the mantel-vases are from Sevres, and the inlaid centre tables were presents from Czars, and the tapestries are Gobelins and the carpets are Aubussons, and the chairs are examples of the art of

Beauvais. If, while one is trying not to heai this recitative about "pendules" and "tapisserie," he would fain know what great scenes of history were enacted here, he must supply that out of his own memory of things read. In castles, as in Rome, one finds what he takes thither. Nor should he be slow in assembling his recollections, for the narrative of the chairs and tables is brief, and when it has been delivered, to the accompaniment of many shuffling feet, the whole flock must move on after its bell-wether.

Chinon, having no tables from Czars, nor vases from Sevres, is left free to the fancy of visitors. They may roam where they like among the ruins, and linger where they will. A few tablets mark spots associated with Jeanne's stay there; but whatever else is memorable of the château's nine centuries, or of the Roman fort which preceded it, the pilgrim must remind himself. The history of this place bristles with great names; but so completely does one of them overshadow all the rest that few of the tourists who wander amid the ruins think of the castle in any other connection than with the peasant girl who came hither to tell Charles of Valois she must take him to be crowned King of France.

Jean was so full of thrills she could hardly

contain herself. Her eyes were brimming and there was a great big aching lump in her throat. She was reliving the events she had read so much about. It was not a brilliant August morning with sunshine flooding the beautiful valley of the Vienne; it was January, and bitter cold. It was not a roofless, floorless ruin of a room she stood in; it was a great audience chamber, crowded with courtiers and servants and men-at-arms, all full of mockery for The Maid whose errand was well known to them. Jean could feel their scorn for The Maid's presumption; but she could feel, too, Jeanne's indifference to them, her intense concentration on the thing she had come to do, the prince she had come to see.

Jeanne's audience with Charles was in the Middle Château of the three which, in one vast enclosure, constituted the castle of Chinon. The château in which she was lodged was the furthest from the main entrance, and a very deep moat separated it from the Middle Château. Jean and her parents crossed the stone bridge spanning this moat, and came to the Coudray Tower where Jeanne lived.

Ida took one look up the steeply-winding stone steps, as she had given one glance at

the descents into the dungeons, and declined to venture.

"You want to go, don't you, Comrade?" Jim said to Jean.

"Yes—oh, yes! I wouldn't miss it for the world."

"Shall I go up with you, or shall I stay with Mother? Isn't it—wasn't there something special about it for you—something that made you feel as if you and the other Maid were to get closer there than anywhere? Wouldn't she come closer if you were alone?"

"Maybe she would," Jean whispered. And at the foot of the winding stair she lifted up her face for a specially precious kiss from this dear father who was so rapidly forgetting the things that had made his girl an enigma to him, and relearning the things of his own idealistic youth which made him his daughter's comprehending comrade.

XII

"WHERE KINGS WERE CROWNED"

JEAN had never felt so intensely, quietly excited. If she had known she was to meet, at the top of the stairs, The Maid embodied, she could not have felt more awed, more expectant. It was a bitter disappointment, a severe shock, to find, when she stepped into Jeanne's chamber, another visitor, a man. And he looked as if her coming were anything but agreeable to him.

"I hope he'll go soon," she thought.

He must have hoped she would go soon, for he showed surprise and a little impatience when, instead of the hasty glance he had expected would suffice, she lingered and seemed waiting for him to leave.

Jean thought he should have gone first, because he had had the place to himself before she came. Then she reminded herself that if she had been in the midst of her reflections there she would have resented his intrusion upon them; so she decided to go, and come back here after he had gone. She turned

towards the stairs. The gentleman was regarding her curiously. Jean's apologetic feeling expressed itself involuntarily.

"I beg your pardon," she said, in English, without thinking whether the gentleman might understand her.

He flushed.

"I—why, don't go, mademoiselle; you have as good right here—you have a right here as well as I."

"I'll come back later," she murmured. "It is a place where—where one likes to be alone. I'm sorry I disturbed you."

He stared at her.

"You—care a great deal about The Maid?" he asked.

She nodded. "And you?"

"I—why, yes; I care about her, too."

"Do you feel that when you come here you are—nearer to her than you are anywhere else?"

The gentleman looked startled—as if Jean had read his thoughts.

"Nearer to whom?" he demanded.

"Why, to The Maid."

"I—I don't know. Do you?"

"I've never been here before," Jean answered. "But I felt as if her presence would be here more than almost any other place.

When you love and reverence some one very, very much it helps you, to be in a place where you know they've been—doesn't it?"

He did not reply immediately, and Jean, looking up at him, expectantly, saw that his eyes were full of tears. Then her own eyes filled.

"He's sad, too," she said to herself. "I think he has lost some one he loved. I wonder if I ought to tell him about how Jeanne helps me to be brave?"

"Yes," he said, while Jean was wondering. "When you love some one very, very much it helps you, to be in a place where you know they've been—but it hurts you too. It must help more than it hurts, though—or one wouldn't keep coming."

He was reflecting audibly rather than addressing Jean.

"Do you—keep coming here?" she whispered.

"I come here every year—on the eighth of August."

"She wasn't here in August."

"Who wasn't?"

"Jeanne."

"Wasn't she?"

"No, sir. She came in January, and she went away in April or May—to Orleans."

"You know her story well. Do all young ladies in America—I presume you're from America—know so much about the Maid of France?"

"I don't believe so. I didn't—until a few months ago I just knew a little about her—like most people do. I didn't know how she can help—to-day—to take the uncrowned to their inheritance."

"Can she?"

"Yes, sir. That's why I study her so closely. She's meant so much to me, and I'm trying to help others realize what her story means to us all—to everybody."

"Does it?"

"Maybe not if you just read about it in books. But if you think of it as Miss Mary has taught me to, it does."

"Is Miss Mary your governess?"

"No, sir; she is a lady who knew my mother when they were both girls. And when my sister died—my twin—and I wanted to die too, Miss Mary came to see us, and told me the most wonderful things about The Maid—things which make her life not just a story of what happened once, long ago, but a story of what can happen any time to any one. It has changed all the world for me—knowing Miss Mary and The Maid."

"She meant that I had gone where nothing kept me safe"

"And this is your first visit to Chinon?"

"Yes, sir. My father and mother brought me over so I could visit the places where Jeanne lived. We went to Domremy first, and Vaucouleurs. Next we're going to Poitiers, and then back to Blois and Orleans, and on to Rheims, and all the way through to Rouen. Miss Mary planned our trip for us. We're making it in a motor, but she made it, years ago, on a bicycle."

"With the Durlands?"

It was Jean's turn to stare.

"Yes, sir; how did you—are you—Laddie?"

"I—was. How did you know?"

"Miss Mary told me, just a little. She was trying to comfort me. She was trying very hard, because she said I was like the Jean who—never came—to her—you know. She told me how she could understand the feeling when some one goes out of life and leaves it so much worse than empty—all full of memories that taunt. I asked her if you had gone to Heaven, and she said, 'No; Heaven isn't far, and it keeps our beloved safe for us.' She said you had gone much further—I didn't understand."

"I do," he answered. "She meant that I had gone where nothing kept me safe."

"I don't know. I asked her if you had gone so far away she couldn't love you any more, and she said there wasn't any place in the universe that far away."

"She said that?"

"I—perhaps she wouldn't want me to tell. I didn't think! I don't understand at all. I only know—but I mustn't tell what I know; she might not want me to."

"No," he agreed. "She might not. But I don't believe she'd mind your telling me if she is well and happy."

"She is well," Jean answered; "and she is happy in the way people can learn to be by living in others instead of in themselves. I think she's the most wonderful person in the whole world ——"

"She always was," he interposed, reverently.

"May I—tell her that I saw you here?"

"If you think she'd care to know."

"I know she would. I'm only a very young girl, but I realize that—the ground whereon I stand is—is holy. I mean—not The Maid, though she makes it holy, too, but what—whatever it is that makes you come here, and that makes Miss Mary feel that she couldn't bear to come here. It's something very great and very sacred, I know.

Does she know you come here every year?"

"I don't think so; I don't see how she could know. I've never told any one before."

"Would you mind if I told her that? You see, she has done so much for me, to help me and make me understand 'what a rare, rare world it is,' that there's nothing I want to do so much as to be of some help to her. And though I don't know why it is that—that she cares so much and you don't know it, and you—you seem to care and she doesn't know it, I'm sure it would mean, oh! ever so much to her to hear that you come to Chinon on the —— Is this the day, the eighth of August, that you were here with her?"

He nodded.

"I—I think," Jean ventured shyly, "that you might like to know something, too. Because if Miss Mary had never been here, and if this place hadn't been so precious to her, and if she hadn't loved The Maid in a way different from the way anybody else has loved and understood her, she couldn't have thought out the things she did to make Chinon a—a place in everybody's life."

She told him about the uncrowned and their birthright and their debt; and about

some of those she had found at Chinon and started towards Rheims. And she was so earnest, so sweet, so radiant with great purpose, that it seemed to him who listened as if the tower room were once more suffused with the purity and ardour of a maid's spirit; as if not the lingering memories of Jeanne herself were more potent than the presence of this dear young girl who also had glimpsed how the uncrowned, of whom the world is ever full, may be helped by the pure faith of maidenhood, to their coronation, their kingship over life. And Mary had taught her this! Mary, whose memory had brought him so many times to Chinon, but had never led him to Rheims. By what miracle had her spirit, so insufficiently realized by him all these years, reached him at last through this exquisite girl—this Jean to whom she had tried to give what she had not been permitted to give to the Jean-who-might-have-been!

"I think your coming here is as wonderful as the other Maid's," he said, brokenly. "I think Heaven must have sent you to me, here at Chinon, as surely as it sent Jeanne to the Dauphin. And I want you to lead me to Rheims. This is what happened: I was a poor and struggling student when Miss Mary and I met—full of ideals and great venera-

tions and all sorts of splendid visions and purposes. Then, most unexpectedly, a young cousin of mine died; his father was my mother's brother; this cousin was the only child, and there was a lot of money. Uncle offered to make me his heir if I would go into business with him and learn to carry it on after his death. I gave up architecture. I gave up poverty and struggle and visions and venerations. I went into my uncle's business. I had a lot of money to spend. I had a good deal of leisure and indulgence. The kind of people I lived my new life among were not at all like the Durlands and Miss Binford and others I had known and—and loved—before. I—I lost sight of my—my greater inheritance. I lived in a world where—where she had no part nor lot. I tried to get her to live there too, but she wouldn't—and she was right. It's a world of mean hopes and cheap desires, as Stevenson says. Yet, in all these years, I've had some citizenship in the other world where she lives, because I—well, because I carried her in my heart all the time. I come abroad every summer. Often the only thing about the trip that I find myself really caring about is coming here, to stand once more in this tower room where I stood when—when life

was so different to me. You wonder why I never tried to—to get back to her and her world! You're too young and steadfast to understand. Perhaps you'll never understand how much weaker some folks are than their best selves, their purest desires—but if you don't learn that, you won't learn, either, the humbleness that goes with it. I've come here, year after year, and mourned the kingdom that I almost had—and lost. I didn't see any possible way of getting through my foes—to Rheims. But you've come and told me your Vision, and now—I think I see. I—I thank God for you, Miss Jean!"

That day when the Fahrlows left Chinon for Poitiers a letter went to Miss Mary's Paris address to be forwarded to her wherever she might be, urging her to meet Jean at Rheims—"for a very, very special reason, dear Miss Mary; I wouldn't ask you if it were not for something which has come to me—something we could never have foreseen."

Miss Mary was at St. Quentin when the letter reached her, and she telegraphed to Jean, at Orleans, that she would be at Rheims on the day appointed.

It was very late when the Fahrlows got in, and Jean was glad bedtime was near, partly because she thought Miss Mary would

not expect an explanation that night, and partly because, when there are hours of waiting to be got through, sleep is a great help towards shortening them.

She had talked over and over with her father and mother all the possible ways of breaking the news to Miss Mary. And after a great deal of discussion they had agreed that they ought not to break it at all. No one, however loving and sympathetic, could presume to do more than to arrange an opportunity for these two, so long separated, to meet; no one could presume to say first to Miss Mary what it was the sacred right, and debt, of her lover to say to her for himself.

So Jean, on arriving, pleaded—truthfully enough—her tiredness and sleepiness, and whispered in Miss Mary's ear:

"It's quite a long story—why I asked you to come. Can you wait till morning?"

And, of course, Miss Mary said she could.

At breakfast—Jim Fahrlow always liberally supplemented the Continental breakfast of coffee and rolls, with fruit and bacon and eggs and toast and even fried potatoes—Jean tried to tell all she could about the trip; about every part of it except the meeting in the Coudray Tower at Chinon. And when breakfast was over she slipped her arm

through Miss Mary's, and they went over to the Cathedral.

The vast bulk of it, looming up in the star-lighted night, had impressed the Fahrlows as they drove up to the hotel, a stone's throw distant from the great west front. But in the morning sunshine the majesty of the grand old edifice was all but overpowering.

The possession of that sacred vessel in which a dove is said to have brought from heaven holy oil for the baptism of Clovis in Rheims in 496, and the belief that the holy oil was inexhaustible, brought Kings of France to Rheims for their anointing for more than eight hundred years—thirty-one of them in all. Charles VII was the eighteenth of his line to come. And when Jeanne brought him thither, the Cathedral as we know it now was even then a venerable pile, with two hundred years of history behind it, including nine coronation pageants.

Miss Mary and Jean stood a long time in the square gazing in awe at that façade which has been called "perhaps the most beautiful structure produced in the Middle Ages," and looking from it up into the face of Jeanne as she perpetually reins her bronze horse before the portals and summons France to acclaim its sovereign.

The early masses were over, and they had the interior practically to themselves. Miss Mary showed a disposition to linger before the priceless and very ancient tapestries which hang on the walls of the aisles, but Jean whispered that she was anxious to get up into the choir where the coronation ceremonies had taken place. A statue of The Maid now marks the spot where she stood, banner in hand, to see her King crowned. Jean peered through the iron grills at the side entrance to the choir and saw that a man was there, close by Jeanne's statue, as he had promised he would be.

Then she drew Miss Mary towards her, and whispered in her ear:

"Please wait inside for me. I'll be back in a few minutes."

. . . "I know it will seem to them that the 'few minutes' are awfully few," she told her parents more than an hour later when she and they had made a tour of the exterior, and were in the nave wondering if they ought to intrude upon what they felt sure was another coronation.

But as she spoke, the anointed came towards them, walking in the south aisle, their faces full of divine ecstasy.

Jean's eyes filled with joyful, grateful tears. She laid her face against her father's arm, and when he bent his head to kiss her, she murmured, with a happy sob in her voice:

"God lead us all to where our crowns are waiting."

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