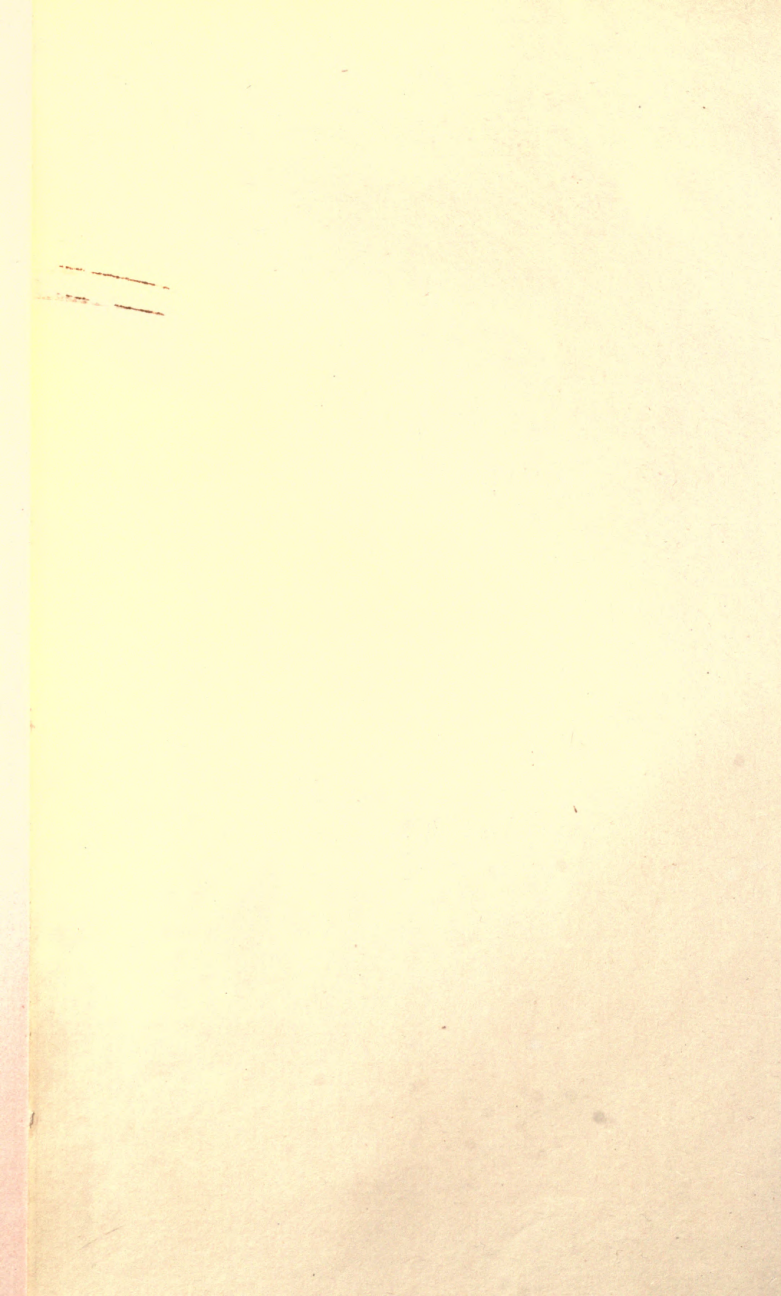


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J O A N,

THE

HEROIC MAIDEN.

BY

ALEXANDER DUMAS.

TRANSLATED BY

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E. FERRETT & Co.

NEW YORK—237 BROADWAY.

PHILADELPHIA—68 SOUTH FOURTH STREET.

1846.

JOAN, THE HEROIC MAIDEN.

CHAPTER I.

A FAMILY OF PEASANTS.

It was on the holy Epiphany in the year of our Lord, 1429, about ten o'clock in the morning, when a chevalier armed cap-a-pie, mounted upon a war-steed, and followed at some paces distant by his groom and page, entered the village of Domremy, which was then called Domremy-les-Greux, but has since lost this second appellation. Having arrived in front of the church and perceiving that the holy sacrifice of Mass was not yet finished, he drew in his rein, alighted from his horse, placed his helmet, sword and spurs in the hands of his page, and thus disarmed he ascended the four steps which conducted to the church-porch, passing on with the firm, bold step of a gentleman through the midst of the villagers, who thronged the sacred edifice to overflowing, so that those who came last were obliged to kneel upon the steps and even in the street. But those rustic worshippers knew well that the noble soldier was not one of those who should remain humbly at the door, and involuntarily at the sound of his echoing tread they fell back to give him passage, until he in his turn found himself kneeling at the little iron grate which separates the priest from the assistants, so that he was even before the singers, with none between him and the curate save the Sacristan and the Enfants de Chœur.

Unfortunately for the religious desires of the chevalier, the services were nearly over when he entered, and he scarcely had time to say one Pater, when the priest pronounced the sacramental words, and passed on to the vestry bearing the silver pyx from which he had just communed.

Upon the announcement that the services were ended, and the departure of the priest, each one rose, made the sign of the cross, and turned to leave the church, with the exception of the chevalier, who, not having finished his orisons, remained to the last, kneeling at the altar, and praying to God with a sincerity of devotion, which from that time began to be a rare quality among military men. Whether it was that the peasants were struck with so much appearance of piety, or seeing a man belonging to the nobility, they hoped to learn some news of the affairs of the times, which, at that epoch, were sufficiently disastrous to occupy the attention of all ranks, from the highest to the lowest, only a small portion of the worshippers retired to their homes; the majority, although the weather was cold, and snow of

three inches depth covered the ground, still remained standing in little groups about the church door, each one burning with impatience to interrogate the attendants of the chevalier, but not one of all those brave men could summon courage sufficient to attempt it.

Among these groups there was one, though there was nothing remarkable in its appearance to distinguish it from the others, to which, nevertheless, the attention of the reader must be directed.

This group was composed of a man about fifty years of age, a woman of forty or forty-five, three young men, and one young girl. The man and the woman, from the hard labour to which they had been accustomed, appeared somewhat older than they really were, but they seemed in excellent health, which contributed to maintain the serenity of sorrow which was visible in their countenances. As to the three young men, the two eldest might have been the one twenty-five, the other twenty-four, and the youngest about thirteen; they were all vigorous labourers, who, from their birth it was evident had been exempt from the thousand indispositions to which the delicate health of city children is so frequently a prey; they appeared also to support with vigour and cheerfulness the burden of hereditary toil to which God condemned man when he expelled him from the terrestrial Paradise. The young girl was a large, fresh looking peasant, and though but nineteen, her woman's form partook strongly of the powerful organization of her father and two elder brothers.

Although this group was nearest to that formed by the chevalier's attendants and the three horses, not one of them could decide upon making any interrogations, except occasionally casting upon them earnest inquiring glances; the page imposing upon them by his disdainful and decisive air, and the groom by a brutal expression of countenance amounting almost to ferocity. They contented themselves with looking silently upon each other, or in a low tone exchanging their suppositions, when a peasant, leaving one of the neighbouring groups, approached the one we have particularly indicated to the reader, and slapping the shoulder of the old man whom we have pointed out as the chief of the family:

"Well, brother Jacques," said he, "are you any wiser than the rest of us, and can you tell who this chevalier is, who prays so long and so devoutly in our church?"

"By my faith! brother Durand, you would do me a great favour by telling who he is yourself, for I do not recollect ever having seen his face before."

"Probably he is one of those captains who go to and fro through our unhappy country, looking after their own affairs, and seeking their own benefit, more than that of our poor king, Charles VIII., God bless him! and no doubt he has remained the last in the church to see if the vases and chandeliers are of silver, and worth the trouble of pillaging."

"Brother, brother," murmured Jacques, shaking his head, "age should

have corrected thee this fault, and taught thee prudence, but thou art rash and light in speech as a young man of twenty-five. It is not handsome or good to censure thus the conduct of another, especially when that conduct is irreproachable in appearance, and such as becomes an honest man and a pious chevalier."

"Indeed, if you are so sure of his courtesy," replied Durand, "why do you not step up to him boldly, and ask him who he is, and from whence he comes?"

"Oh! if Joannette were here," said the younger of the three brothers, "she could easily tell us who he is."

"Why do you think your sister would know any better than we, Pierre? Has she ever seen this chevalier?"

"No, my father," murmured the young man, "I do not think she has ever seen him."

"If she has never seen him," said Jacques, with a stern air, "how do you suppose she can tell who he is?"

"I have done wrong, my father," said the young man, from whom the first words had involuntarily escaped, "I acknowledge I ought not to have said what I did."

"Really, brother," said Durand, bursting into a coarse laugh, "if your daughter is a fanatic and sorceress, as they say, perhaps she may know."

"Silence, brother," said Jacques, with that patriarchal authoritative tone, which is still preserved by the heads of families beneath the peasant roof; "silence, if the words you have just spoken had fallen upon the ears of our enemies, it would have been sufficient to draw us into difficulty with the authorities at Toul. Wife," continued he, "where is Joan? why is she not here with us?"

"She must have remained in the church to pray," meekly replied she to whom this question was addressed.

"No, mother," said the young man, "she came out of the church with us, but she has gone to the house to get some grain for her birds."

"Oh! there she is," said the mother, pointing to the street where Joan was standing; then turning towards her husband: "Jacques, my good man," continued she, in a beseeching tone, "pray do not scold the poor child."

"There is no reason why I should scold her, she has done nothing wrong," replied Jacques.

"No; but sometimes you are harsher towards her than you ought to be. It is not her fault if her sister has twice her strength, besides, she is eighteen months younger than her sister, and at her age eighteen months make quite a difference; another thing, you know she passes whole nights in prayer sometimes, and she could not be blamed if occasionally she fall asleep during the day, or if, when she is apparently awake, it often seems that her mind is sleeping, and her body is ignorant of what is said to her. But believe me, Jacques, for all that, Joan is a good and pious girl."

"Well, with all that, wife, you see every body is laughing at her, even our brother, who is her own uncle. It is no blessing to a family to have one in it, that people are sometimes tempted to take for a mad person, and sometimes for a prophet."

"Saving your opinion, my father," remarked Pierre, "Joan is made to bring a blessing from the Lord to any family to which she might belong, even if it were to that of a king."

"Child," said Jacques, "be seen and not heard, follow the example of your elder brothers, who do not whisper a word, but leave those who are older to speak."

"My father, I will obey," said the young man, respectfully. Meanwhile, she who was the object of conversation, approached with a slow grave step. She was a beautiful young girl, scarcely seventeen years of age, tall, flexible, slender and well-formed, and there was something of tranquil assurance in her step, which seemed not to belong to earth. She was dressed in a long azure-coloured robe, like that in which Beato Angelico envelopes the celestial forms of his angels, and a girdle of the same colour encircled her waist; she wore upon her head a kind of blue cap, similar to the dress, the whole without any ornament of gold or silver, but simple as she was, with her large lustrous black eyes, fair hair, delicate complexion, she seemed the queen of all the village girls.

Each one of the interlocutors, as they saw the young girl approaching, wore a different expression of countenance; Master Durand regarded her with a mingled smile of curiosity and derision, so common to peasants; Jacques, with that manly impatience which seeks some cause of anger, and seeks in vain; the mother, with that silent protecting fear with which God has endowed the females of even inferior animals; the two elder brothers, with indifference; the sister, with a careless gaiety, which proved she had perceived nothing serious in the altercation which had just taken place; and Pierre, not only with the respect he owed to an elder sister, but with the veneration he would have regarded a saint.

"Welcome, niece Joan," said Master Durand, "we are all much perplexed about this chevalier, and here is your brother, who pretends that if you chose, you could tell who he is."

"What chevalier?" demanded Joan.

"He who came into the church to-day," replied Durand.

"I did not see him," said Joan.

"If you did not see him, I think you might have heard him, for he made such a noise, with his coat of mail and iron sandals, that the priest himself turned round to see who entered."

"I did not hear him, either."

"If you neither saw or heard him," interrupted Jacques, with impatience, "what were you doing, and of what were you thinking?"

"I was occupied with my prayers, and thinking of my salvation, my father," mildly replied Joan.

"Well, if you did not see him, look now, for there he is," said Durand, pointing to the chevalier, who just then appeared at the door of the church.

"That is he!" exclaimed Joan, becoming paler than usual, and leaning heavily upon the arm of her young brother, as if wanting strength to support herself.

"He, who?" demanded Jacques, with mingled surprise and trouble.

"Captain Robert de Beaudricourt."

"And who is Captain Robert de Beaudricourt?"

"A valiant chevalier, who heads the party of the gentle Dauphin Charles, in the town of Vaucoleurs."

"Silly child, who has told you all these fine things," cried Jacques, who could no longer restrain his anger.

"It is he, it is Captain Robert de Beaudricourt; that is all I can tell you, my father, and those who have told me cannot be deceived."

"By my faith," said Durand, "I will satisfy myself on this score, and if the child has said true, I will believe blind-folded whatever she may tell me after this."

Saying these words, he took his hat in his hand and marched towards the chevalier, who had just taken the bridle from the hands of his page, and was preparing to mount his horse, but seeing the peasant advance with the evident intention of speaking to him, he leaned his arm on the pommel of his saddle, crossed one leg over the other, and awaited his approach.

"Noble chevalier," said master Durand, assuming the blandest tone he could command, "if it is indeed true, as some one has just said, that you are that brave Captain Robert de Beaudricourt, of whom we have heard so much, I hope you will pardon a poor peasant who is Armagnac from the bottom of his heart, for asking you if you do not come from the Loire, and if you cannot give us some cheering news of our good king, Charles the Seventh."

"My friend," replied the chevalier, in a more affable tone than the nobility usually take with this class of people, "I am indeed Captain Robert de Beaudricourt, and whoever has told you my name has not deceived you. As to any news of the king I have not much to tell, for things have gone on from bad to worse in the poor kingdom of France ever since the affair at the bridge Montereau."

"Pardon, sire, if one so poor as I may speak of high personages," continued Durand, emboldened by the tone of the chevalier, "but it seems to me affairs began to mend after the Constable Arthur, of Richmond, had given sire Boileau his deserts, and placed near our beloved king, Lord George of Tremoille."

"Alas! my friend, quite to the contrary, and you have much need of news if you are of that opinion," said the chevalier, shaking his head; "why

the Lord of Tremoille has done much worse than ever the Lord of Boileau did ; hardly was he in favour, when he took advantage of it to remove the constable and circumvent the king, so that Charles, God forgive him ! could only see with the eyes of his favourite, and at last there remained to him only Tanneguy Duchâtel, the President Houret, and Master Michel le Masson, the devil's own trio, who are leading him straight to destruction."

"But I thought," replied Durand, who by degrees saw himself surrounded by all the villagers, and was quite proud of being familiarly spoken to by a chevalier, "I thought the king of Scotland had promised to send to France his cousin John Stuart with a good number of Scotchmen to assist those brave loyal captains, who like you, sire, have joined neither the English nor Burgundians, but have remained true to the country."

"Scotch, English, Irish," murmured Sir Robert, "are all hounds from the same kennel, and I fear in pursuit of the same prey. If the complete fall of the kingdom of France should happen, you will see how eagerly they will hasten to be in at the death, to secure their share. Besides, whatever diligence they make, supposing they do come to our assistance, I fear it will not be in time to save the good city of Orleans, which is the last strong-hold the king has upon the Loire, and which the Count of Salisbury is now besieging, in despite of the solemn promise which he made in England to the Duke of Orleans not to make war upon his domains so long as he was a prisoner, and unable to defend them."

"And as all perjury is a direct offence against Heaven," said a gentle voice, "so God has permitted the perfidious traitor to be punished for his crime."

"What does this young girl mean," said Robert de Beaudricourt, astonished to see so young a child mingle in conversation which few of those who were present were capable of supporting.

"I mean," said Joan, with the same tone of gentle assurance, "that it is now at least eighteen or twenty days since the Count of Salisbury was struck dead in mortal sin by the bursting of a cannon."

"Child, where did you get such rich news, which I myself have not yet heard?" said the chevalier, smiling.

"Oh, pay no attention to her," said Jacques, passing hastily between his daughter and Sir Robert, "she is a silly child, and knows not what she says."

"And if it were true that the Connt is dead, as your daughter says, brave man, for I suppose she is your daughter——"

"Alas ! yes, and she has caused us all much trouble."

"Ah ! well, if he were dead, as she says, for one dead body, are there not ten living ones as powerful as was the Count of Salisbury ? Are there not still remaining the Count of Suffolk, Sir William de la Poule, Sir Jehan Falstaff, Sir Robert Heron, the Lords Gray, Talbot, Seales, Lancelot de Lille, Gladesdale, William de Rochfort, and as many others?"

“And on our side,” replied Joan, brightening with animation, “are there not for the gentle Dauphin Charles, the Duke of Alençon, the Count of Clermont, the Count of Dunois, Vignoles de la Hire, Poton de Zandrailles, and many, many others, brave and loyal like you, and like you ready to sacrifice their lives for the good of the kingdom? Then, above all, is there not our Lord Jesus Christ, who loves France and will not permit her to fall into the hands of her enemies, the English and Burgundians?”

“Alas! sire, pardon the child for this contradiction,” cried Jacques, in painful agitation, “I have told you there are times when she says such strange things one would suppose her to be mad.”

“Yes,” replied the chevalier, in a melancholy tone, “she must be mad to preserve a hope which the king himself has not, and to believe that Orleans will be able to hold out resistance, when not only the capital, but the good strong cities of Nogent, Fargeau, Sully, Jaurille, Beaugency, Marchenois, Rambouillet, Montpipean, Thoury, Pithiviers, Rochefort, Chartres, and even Mans, have surrendered one after the other; when out of fourteen provinces, which the wise king, Charles V., bequeathed to Charles VI., there remain but three to his son, Charles VII. Non, non, good people, the kingdom of France is condemned for the enormity of her crimes.”

“The sins of men, both past and future, however great they may be, have been redeemed by our Lord Jesus Christ,” replied Joan, with extraordinary assurance, raising her eyes to heaven, beaming with inspiration; “the kingdom of France will not perish, God will preserve it, even were it by a miracle.”

“Amen,” responded the chevalier, mounting his horse and crossing himself; “meantime, good people,” added he, settling himself upon the saddle, “if the Burgundians should ever return to pillage the village of Domremy, let it be known in all haste to Robert de Beaudricourt, and, on the faith of a chevalier, he must be much occupied elsewhere, if he do not come to your assistance.”

Saying these words, the Captain, who had stopped longer at Domremy than he at first intended, put spurs to his horse, and galloped away by the road which led to Vaucouleurs, followed by his two servants, and accompanied by the blessings of all the peasants, who followed him with their eyes as long as they could see him.

When he had disappeared, Jacques turned to chide Joan for the great boldness she had shown; but he called and sought in vain; Joan was not there, and, as all the village had been occupied with the departure of the chevalier, none of the peasants observed which way she had gone.

CHAPTER II.

THE VOICES.

IN short, as soon as Joan perceived the preparations of the chevalier for his departure, she left the circle which had formed around him, and with the same slow tranquil step with which she came, she bent her way towards the road to Neuf Chateau, without appearing to observe the depth of snow which then covered the ground.

This remarkable young girl whose history we have undertaken to write was in nothing like her companions; her birth, her childhood, her youth had been preceded, accompanied or followed by all those prophetic signs which in the eyes of those who surrounded her clearly designated her to be the chosen of the Lord.

Joan, or Joanette as she was usually called, was born at Domremy, a charming valley watered by the Meuse, and situated between Neuf Chateau and Vaucoleurs. Her father, Jacques d'Arc, and her mother, Isabelle Komée, were both of well known integrity, and enjoyed a spotless reputation. The night in which Joan was born, and which was that of the Epiphany, in the year 1412, making her at the time our story commences just seventeen years of age, was one of those festal nights with which the heavens sometimes regale the earth: although the weather at this season was usually cold and rainy, yet at this time a gentle breeze sprang up towards evening, all embalmed with the delightful fragrances which we inhale at twilight in the blossoming month of May. As it was at the close of a holiday or day of repose that this unusual circumstance took place, each one wished to enjoy the unexpected blessing, and most of the inhabitants lingered about their doors until midnight, when a star seemed to fall from heaven, and leaving in its wake a brilliant train of light, it settled upon the house of Jacques d'Arc. At the same time the cocks began to crow, beat their wings and make an unusual clamour, the inhabitants without knowing the cause, felt themselves so fully imbued with a secret joy, that they began to run about the streets asking each other what could have happened in earth or heaven, to fill their hearts with so much gladness.

Among the rest was an old shepherd who was known to have made predictions that had been verified, and who enjoyed not only at Domremy but for ten leagues round a reputation for science; and the old shepherd being interrogated by some persons replied: "Three royal ladies have ruined France, but a virgin shall yet save it."* They paid so much the more

* The three Royal Ladies were: the first, Eleonore wife of Louis le Jenne, who, being repudiated by her husband, espoused in a second marriage Henry of Anjou, and brought to him in dowry the provinces of Aquitaine, Poitou, Touraine, and Maine, which united to

attention to these words as they accorded with a prophecy of Merlin conceived in these terms :

*Descendet virgo dorsum sagitari
Et flores virgineos obscultavit.*

and every one cried out Noël ! in the hope of some great event.

The next day they learned that precisely at the hour of midnight, Isabelle Komée, wife of Jacques d'Arc, had given birth to a daughter.

The day after, she was baptized under the name of Joan. Nynet was the name of the priest who performed the office, and her two god-fathers were Jehan Barent and Jehan Lingue, and her two god-mothers Joan and Agnes.

Notwithstanding all the signs of predestination which had signalized her birth, the first years of Joan passed like those of other children ; when she was seven years of age, as is customary with labourers, her parents sent her to the fields to keep the sheep, and one thing to which they paid no attention at the time, but which they afterwards remarked, was that Joan had never to go in search of a lost sheep or lamb, but if she merely called it by its name it would return immediately, or if a wolf issued from the wood she had only to go towards it holding in her hand her shepherd's crook, a branch of a tree, or a simple flower, and it quickly returned to the wood from whence it came. In short no misfortune befell the hereditary cabin so long as Joan was beneath its roof, and thus she reached the age of twelve years, with the blessing of God continually attendant upon her steps, but without any manifestation of the extraordinary future to which she was destined.

One day as she was in a meadow keeping her flocks with several of her companions, the young girls proposed to assemble and make a bouquet, which when it was finished was to be the prize for a race between them ; Joan accepted the proposal and went to assist the others in making up the bouquet, then as they were on the point of starting she devoted it to St. Catharine, promising to lay the flowers upon her altar if she should win ; no sooner had she made this vow than the signal was given and away the young girls flew like a brood of turtle-doves ; Joan soon outran her companions, and with such rapidity that her feet scarcely seemed to touch the ground, so that she who followed the nearest for some distance, gave up

the Duchy of Normandy and the county of Anjou delivered the third part of France into the hands of the enemy.

The second was Isabella of France, wife of Edward II., who in transmitting to her son Edward III., the claims which she pretended to have to the throne, brought about that famous war in which the battles of Cressy, Poitiers and Agincourt, were the three most bloody episodes.

The third was Isabella of Bavaria, mother of Charles VII., who was at that time exciting the English and Burgundians against her own son.

The virgin who was to save the kingdom, so rudely compromised by these three royal ladies, was the humble peasant girl whose history we are now writing.

quite discouraged, crying out: "Joanette! Joanette! you do not run on the ground as we do, you fly through the air like a bird." In truth the young girl, without knowing how or why, felt herself elevated in the air as one does sometimes in a dream, and thus skimming along she reached the goal, and picked up the bouquet, but when she raised her head, a handsome youth whom she had never seen before was standing there, regarding her with a smile of approbation: "Joan," said he, "run quickly to the house, your mother wants you." Joan supposing it was some lad from Neufchateau that her mother or her brothers had charged with this commission for her, left her flock in the keeping of one of her companions and ran to the house; but when she entered the door, her mother asked why she returned before the usual hour, and why she had abandoned her flocks.—"Did you not call me?" asked Joan. "No," replied her mother. Then Joan went away to lay her bouquet upon the altar of St. Catharine, but in order to shorten the road she went through the garden, and in passing along, she heard a voice on the right, towards the side of the church, she raised her head and saw a luminous cloud; the voice issued from the cloud and said: "Joan, thou art born to accomplish wonderful things, for thou art the virgin chosen by the Lord for the re-establishment of king Charles; dressed as a man thou shalt take arms, thou shalt be chief of war, and the whole kingdom shall obey thy counsel."

After having pronounced these words the voice ceased, the cloud disappeared, and the young girl remained dumb and immovable with astonishment.

In later days, after Joan had accomplished her mission, it was remarked that this first vision had appeared to her on the 17th of August, 1424, the same day of the battle of Verneuil, in which perished so many noble and loyal chevaliers that this battle was estimated to have been as fatal to the nobility of France as were those of Cricy, Poitiers and Agincourt.

At length Joan recovered herself, and recollecting the flock she had left alone, she took the road to the meadow, and there she found her flock all assembled beneath a large spreading tree which they called the ladies' tree, or of the fairies' tree, because the peasants who sometimes passed by that way on their return home at night, affirmed to have seen long white figures dancing there on the grass under the tree, which when approached vanished in the air, or were lost in mist. One of Joan's aunts even pretended to have met with such apparitions in that place, but Joan, although she had often danced and sung there with her friends, had never seen any thing of the kind.

This tree was in front of a wood called "le bois Cheuu," and near a spring of water which was much frequented by poor people who were sick with fevers; this superb tree, which derived much celebrity from the associations connected with it, was the property of Pierre de Bolemont, Seigneur of Domremy.

Joan lingered all that day about this tree, weaving crowns of flowers in honour of St. Catharine and St. Margaret, for whom she cherished a strong devotion, and these wreaths she fastened upon the branches of the tree; then when evening came she led her flock to the house.

As Joan was now twelve years of age, and beginning to grow tall and slender, her parents decided not to send her to the fields any more, but to send her younger brother Pierre in her stead to watch the sheep: they then taught her the different kinds of needle-work suitable for girls, and she soon became more skilful with her needle than any in the village.

Meantime the recollection of her adventure in the garden recurred to her mind twenty times a day, and the sound of that miraculous voice was constantly murmuring in her ears. One Sunday as she remained in church after all the others had gone, being quite absorbed in prayer, she suddenly heard the same voice calling her by name; she raised her head and it seemed as if the roof of the church had been opened to give entrance to a beautiful golden cloud, in which she saw a young man whom she recognized to be the same who had spoken with her in the meadow; only at this time he had long shining wings upon his shoulders, and then she knew it was an angel, and being greatly rejoiced at the sight she said mildly:

“Sir, is it you who call me?”

“Yes Joan,” replied the angel, “it is I.”

“What would you with your servant?” demanded Joan.

“Joan,” said the youth, “I am the archangel Michael, and I am sent by the King of heaven to tell thee that thou art chosen from among all women to save the kingdom of France from the danger which threatens it.”

“And what can I do, I, a poor shepherdess?” demanded Joan.

“Be a wise, prudent child as you ever have been,” replied the angel, “and when the time comes we will tell you, St. Catharine, St. Margaret and I; for they have both conceived an extraordinary friendship for you, in recompense of the great veneration in which you hold them.”

“The will of God be done,” replied Joan, “and may he dispose of his servant according to his own good pleasure.”

“Amen!” said the angel; and the cloud enveloping him, passed through the vault of the church and disappeared.

From that moment Joan was fully convinced that it was neither a vision nor a dream, but a wonderful reality, and as the priest who had finished mass was just then crossing the church to go to his house, Joan begged him to hear her confession, and she related to him what she had just seen and heard. The priest, who was a simple, good old curate, was delighted with this confession of Joan, whom he had always loved for her modesty and devotion; so he recommended her to say nothing of these apparitions to any one, but to follow implicitly the orders that she might receive from heaven.

Three years passed away without any recurrence of the marvellous things which Joan had seen, but she continued to grow, blooming and modest as a wild-wood flower, and though nothing of that celestial protection was materially manifested to her, yet she had an internal conviction that she was in the favour of God; for often when she was alone she heard the choirs of angels, as she believed, and then she would raise her own soft voice and sing the strangest, sweetest airs, which when the heavenly music ceased she would no longer recall. Frequently in the middle of winter when the ground was all covered with snow, she would go out saying she was going to gather a bouquet for her saints: it was thus she called St. Marguerite and St. Catharine; and when they ridiculed her and pointed to the snowy ground, she only smiled sweetly, and went out of the village on the road towards Neufchâteau, and after a while returned with a beautiful chaplet of violets, primroses, and butter-cups, which she had gathered and woven under the ladies' tree. Then her companions looked upon her with astonishment, and as they in their turn went there and found nothing, they said it was the fairies who gave the chaplets to Joan. But there was one thing stranger than all, that was that the wildest, most timid animals had no fear of her, the little kids and fawns would gambol about her feet, and the linnets and goldfinches would light upon her shoulder and sing as sweetly as if they were perched on the topmost branches of a tree.

During these three years the affairs of the king and of France grew worse and worse; the kingdom as far as the Loire had become one vast solitude, the fields were deserted, the villages in ruins, and the only habitable places were the woods and the cities; the depths of the forest offered a retreat, and the walls of the city promised protection; there was no culture and consequently no harvests, with the exception of the harvest of arrows about the city walls; a sentinel was constantly on the watch, and as soon as he perceived the enemy he sounded the tocsin. At this sound the labourers left their flocks and fled to the city, and the herds themselves had learned so well to know the sound that as soon as they heard the tocsin, they ran bellowing to the gates combatting which should enter first, to put himself under the protection of man.

About this time, that is about the commencement of the year 1428, Thomas de Montaigne, Count of Salisbury, was deputed by the three states of England to go and make war upon France. It was then that the knowledge of this expedition reached the Duke of Orleans, who had been a prisoner in the city of London ever since the battle of Agincourt, because the English would not permit him to be ransomed, sought the Count of Salisbury and prayed him as a good and loyal enemy, not to make war upon his domains so long as he was not there to defend them; the Count promised him by an oath that he would not; and having crossed the sea

with an immense army, he disembarked at Calais, and immediately set off in the direction of the unconquered portion of France.

As the danger became more pressing than it ever had been, so the visions of Joan reappeared. The first time St. Michael reappeared to her, he was accompanied as he had promised, by St. Catherine and St. Marguerite; the two saints named themselves to Joan, thanking her for her devotion to them, and telling her that, as she had continued to be a pious, prudent, good girl, she was still the chosen of God to accomplish the delivery of France: they then ordered her to go to king Charles VII., and to tell him that she was sent from God to be a military chieftain, and to march the French against the English and Burgundians.

Joan was speechless at this order: for like a young girl she was weak and timid, and could not look upon suffering without sympathizing deeply, or see blood flow without weeping: why then was it that one so delicate and sensitive should be ordered to accomplish the rude task of a captain? No wonder then the poor child trembled in view of her impending destiny, and besought the Lord to let her remain in obscurity, and to cast upon some other more worthy than her, the weight of that sanguinary election.

But Joan was chosen; no mute uprisings of the heart, no prayers however earnest and audible, could change the decree of Providence. One day as she was kneeling in a little chapel dedicated to "Our Lady," and built in an opening of the Bois Chenu, the cloud again appeared to her, more luminous than it ever had been; like a dazzling golden mantle lined with silver and decked with pearls, it slowly unfolded and brought to view the three celestial envoys. Joan lowered her eye-lids, for the heavenly splendour was too radiant for mortal sight to bear; then one of the three celestials, but which it was she could not tell, addressed to her this reproach:

"Why dost thou delay, Joan? When the order is given why dost thou not hasten to obey? Suffering France requires it, the cities are overthrown, the good perish, the nobles are massacred, and precious blood flows over the ground as if it were but torrents of turbid water. Depart, Joan, depart with a rapid step, for the King of heaven sends thee!"

Then Joan went to seek her confessor, and related to him what she had seen and heard. The old priest advised her to obey.

"But," said Joan, "although I wished to go, how can I? for I do not know the road, the people, or the king; they will not believe me; every body will laugh at me, and with good reason too, for what can be more foolish than to say to the great ones of the kingdom: 'a child shall deliver France, she shall direct military expeditions by her skill, she shall win victory by her courage; and besides, my father, what can be more strange and improper than for a young girl to wear men's clothes?'"

To this very sensible discourse, the good old priest knew not what to reply, only that God was very powerful and must be obeyed.

Meantime, whether the voices, as Joan called them, were displeased at her hesitation, or whether the time of action was not yet come, she saw nothing more for some months. Then she began to be very much troubled; the poor child thought she had fallen from the favour of God; and seeing herself abandoned by her patron saints, she composed a prayer beseeching them to return to her, and kneeling down before the altar of St. Catherine, she recited it from the very depths of her heart. The prayer was conceived in these terms:

“I beseech our Lord Jesus Christ, and our Lady the blessed Virgin, to send me comfort and counsel upon what I must do, by the mediation of the blessed St. Michael, the blessed St. Catherine, and the blessed St. Marguerite.”

Hardly had she finished the words, when the luminous cloud and the celestial envoys appeared. Only, this time it was the angel Gabriel who accompanied the two saints. Then Joan bowed her head, and the voice addressed her thus:

“Joan! from whence comes it that you doubt and hesitate? Why do you ask how the things which you are required to do, shall be accomplished? You say, you know not the road which conducts to the king; neither did the Hebrews know the way that led to the promised land, nevertheless, they departed and were guided on their way by the pillar of fire.”

“Well,” said Joan, emboldened by the gentleness of that voice which she had feared would be stern, “where is the enemy that I must combat, and what is the mission that I must accomplish?”

“The enemy which you are to combat,” replied the voice, “is near Orleans, and that you may no longer doubt the truth of what we say, we tell you that this day the Count of Salisbury, chief of the English army has been slain; the mission which you are to fulfil is to raise the siege of the good city of the Duke of Orleans, who is a prisoner in England, and to lead Charles VII. to Reims to be crowned; for so long as he is not crowned, he is only a Dauphin, and not a king.”

“But,” said Joan, “I cannot go alone. To whom must I address myself for assistance?”

“You are right, Joan,” replied the voice; “go then to the neighbouring town of Vaucouleurs, which is the only one in the region of Champagne that has preserved its fidelity to the king, and there, ask to speak with the good chevalier Robert de Beaudricourt; tell him boldly by whom you are commissioned, and he will believe you. And for fear that some may try to deceive you, or that you may address yourself to the wrong person, look now, and you will see the true resemblance of this chevalier.”

Joan looked and saw a chevalier without helmet, without sword and without spurs: she regarded him some time in order to engrave his fea-

tures well upon her memory; then by degrees the vision disappeared. Joan turned about to look at the saints, but they had gone back to heaven.

From that time Joan hesitated no more, and heartily set about preparing herself for her departure.

It was a momentous resolution for a young girl to take, that of leaving her parents and her home; and day after day she could do nothing but weep. One day when she was all in tears, she was surprised by her brother Pierre, whom she loved much, and by whom she was equally beloved. He asked her what the matter was, and she told him all. The poor lad offered to go with her, that was all he could do.

Some days passed by, when the news of the siege of Orleans, and of the imminent danger which threatened that city, spread abroad in every direction, and redoubled the consternation of the loyalists. It was during this time that the holy day of the Epiphany arrived, and the events took place at Domremy which we have related in our first chapter.

These events signified to Joan that the hour of her departure was come; for, she had seen the chevalier de Beaudricourt so precisely like the image that had appeared to her, that she knew him at the first glance. She decided then to seek solitude in order to consult her 'voices' once more, and if her voices ordered her to depart, even were it instantly, she was resolved this time to obey.

CHAPTER III.

CAPTAIN BEAUDRICOURT.

WHEN Joan had gone a few paces on the road, the birds from the fields and woods, being deprived of their nourishment by the snow which had fallen the evening before, came fluttering about her as if they knew she had brought them grain. The young girl then recollected that it was her first intention to feed the birds, so as she walked along she scattered the wheat and hemp-seed, which Pierre had said she went to the house to get. She went on thus till she reached the "Fairies tree," which, at that time, was all shorn of its beautiful foliage, accompanied still by her winged escort, which covered the branches of the sturdy old tree, and began to warble the praises of the Lord, in a language which, though unintelligible to man, is not the less understood by God. At that moment the village bell rang for noon; Joan had observed that it was particularly when the bells rang that her visions had appeared to her, so she knelt down, as she usually did when she heard that brazen voice which speaks to men in the name of the

Lord, and full of hope and faith she made to the saints her accustomed petition. Joan's faith was not vain, for hardly had she finished her prayer when the birds that covered the branches of the tree were silent, the cloud descended, and her celestial protectors appeared before her.

"Blessed art thou, Joan!" said they, "for thou hast had faith in God and in us; do as thou hast been commanded; march on boldly, without fear of being lost, and be not discouraged by a first refusal: the great King of Heaven will give thee the power of persuasion."

"But," demanded Joan, "ought I to expose myself alone on the roads, or hazard myself in towns without any visible protection? Shall I not be taken for some lost child, or perhaps for some wicked adventurer?"

"The protection of God is sufficient for those who put their trust in him, Joan; but since thou desirest a protector, before thou art risen from thy knees the Lord will send thee one. Thus, Joan, no more hesitation, no more delay: depart! depart instantly, for the moment is come."

"The will of God be done!" said Joan. "I am but the humblest of his servants, and I will obey."

As Joan finished these words the cloud disappeared, and the birds renewed their songs. As for Joan, she was finishing a mental prayer, a pious, filial prayer, in which she besought her parents to pardon her for leaving them thus, without bidding them adieu or asking their blessing. But Joan knew her father: he was a man of a stern, unyielding temper, and she knew well he would never permit her to hazard herself in the midst of armed men, or upon the field of battle.

Joan was still upon her knees when she heard some one calling her; she turned around and saw her uncle Durand Haxart. She knew then that he was the protector that her "voices" had promised her, and rising quickly she walked straight towards him, with an air of perfect confidence and serenity, although the farewell tears involuntarily trembled upon her long eye-lashes.

"Is it thou, Joannette," said Master Durand; "what art thou doing here my child, whilst thy father and thy mother are every where seeking for thee?"

"Alas! my uncle," replied the young girl, with a mournful shake of her head, "they will call me and seek for me a long time, for I have now left them perhaps for ever."

"Why, where are you going, Joannette?"

"I am going where God sends me, my uncle, and my voices have just told me that I may rely upon you to accompany me wherever I go."

"Listen, Joannette," replied Master Durand; "if you had made such a proposition to me this morning, I would have taken you by the arm and led you to your father, telling him to keep stricter watch over you than he ever had done; but after what I have seen with my own eyes, and heard

with my own ears, I feel disposed to aid you, even were it to commit some folly. Relate to me now what has happened, and tell me wherein I can be useful to you, and rely upon me."

Joan and her uncle took to the road to Neufchâteau, where her uncle lived, and all along the way Joan related to him those things which we have just narrated ourselves; so that, by a reaction so natural to incredulous people, by the time they arrived at Durand's door, it was he who supported and comforted Joan. Meantime he judged it proper to make a little change in the project adopted by the young girl; his plan was, to precede her to Vaucouleurs and to apprise Captain Beaudricourt of Joan's intended visit; and as the idea of presenting herself alone was repulsive to Joan, she gladly accepted the offer of her uncle.

Durand set off the next day; but the reception of Captain Beaudricourt was far from being what he expected; already a woman, named Marie Davignon, supporting herself upon the prophecy of Merlin, had demanded to be presented to the king, affirming that she had important things to reveal to him, but when admitted to his presence she had nothing to say, except that an angel had appeared to her once and presented her with arms, at the sight of which she was so much frightened that the angel hastened to tell her they were not for her but for another woman, to whom was reserved the glory of rescuing France from her perilous situation.

Now as Captain Beaudricourt thought this might perhaps be an adventurer of the same kind, he replied to Master Durand that his niece was a silly madcap, and advised him to box her ears and send her back to her father and mother.

Durand related this reply to his niece, who went away and began to pray, invoking her "voices" in her accustomed terms. Now, as before, the archangel and saints appeared; Joan interrogated them concerning the rebuff she had received, and the voice said, "Thou hast doubted, Joan, whereas God requires perfect faith; God directed thee to go there thyself, and thou hast sent another, and that other has not succeeded: for it is to thee alone that God has given the gift of persuasion. Depart then, instantly, for all may yet be repaired."

Joan set out for Vaucouleurs the Friday after the Epiphany. She arrived there in the night, and her uncle, who accompanied her, knocked at the door of a wheelwright, who gave them hospitality. The wheelwright's wife wished to share her bed with Joan, but Joan refused her kind offer, and disposing herself for prayer she remained absorbed in her devotions until dawn of day.

The fervent and continued prayer of Joan had given her so much assurance, that when she thought the hour was come to present herself to the chevalier she refused the aid of her uncle, telling him that her "voices" had commanded her to go alone. About nine o'clock in the morning she presented herself at the residence of the captain, and as it was still quite

early the visit rather diverted the officers, who introduced her immediately to their master, although he was at that moment in conference with a brave chevalier named John de Novelompont, who had just arrived from Gien, upon the Loire, and brought the news of the death of the Count of Salisbury.

Joan entered, and advancing towards the captain :

“ Sir Robert,” said she, “ know that my Lord has long since ordered me to go to the gentle Dauphin, who must, who is, and who will be the sole true King of France.”

“ And who is this Lord, my friend ?” said the captain, smiling.

“ The King of Heaven,” replied Joan.

“ And when you are once near the Dauphin, what will happen then ?”

“ The Dauphin will give me soldiers ; I shall raise the siege of Orleans, and after I have done that I shall take the Dauphin to Reims to be crowned.”

The two chevaliers looked at each other and burst into a laugh.

“ Do not doubt,” said Joan, with her usual calm serious air, “ for by my faith I tell you the exact truth.”

“ It seems to me this is not the first time I have seen you,” said the Chevalier Beaudricourt, looking attentively at Joan.

“ It was I,” replied the young girl, “ who, on the day of the Epiphany, announced to you at Domremy the death of the Count of Salisbury, which this noble chevalier,” added she, turning to John de Novelompont, “ has just confirmed to you.”

The chevalier was startled, for he had arrived in the night, and had spoken to no person of the news he brought ; the captain himself was somewhat shaken in his doubt.

“ But,” said he to Joan, “ if you knew of the death of the noble count before any one else, doubtless you can tell us in what manner he died.”

“ Certainly, I can,” replied Joan ; “ he was standing near a window in a turret, from whence he looked out upon the good and loyal city of Orleans, when God, who knows, treats, and recompenses men according to their merit, permitted him to be struck by a stone, which hit him in the eye, and two days after he passed from life to death.”

The two chevaliers looked at each other with astonishment, for all the details were minutely exact. However, as these revelations might come from the infernal regions as well as from Heaven, Sir Robert, in order to have time for reflection upon the subject, dismissed Joan without promising her anything.

Joan returned to the wheelwright's without being very much disheartened by the cool reception she had met with, for her “ voices” had told her that she would be doubted for some time, but at last God would bestow upon her the gift of persuasion. There she established herself, occupying as little space as possible among these good people, passing her days in the

church, confessing, fasting, and communing, constantly repeating that she must be conducted to the Dauphin, and that once there she would lead him to Reims to be crowned, after having raised the siege of Orleans; she was so young, so beautiful, and such gentle, chaste words fell from her lips, that the poor people, always more credulous than the great, because more miserable, followed her whenever she went out, making her an escort of their prayers, and saying that she was really a holy woman, and if she was repulsed the misfortunes that threatened France would fall on those who repulsed her.

This universal concert of praises reached the ear of Captain Beaudricourt, who, from what had passed, was already excited on the subject, so that he sought out the curate of Vaucouleurs, and related to him what he knew. The curate reflected a moment, then partaking of the fears of the captain he said there was but one way of ascertaining if the divination was from God or from Satan, and that was by exorcism.

The chevalier concurred in the proposition: the curate put on his robe, took a crucifix, and they both set out for the house where Joan lodged.

They found Joan in prayer; the curate and captain went into her room and left the door open so that every one might see what was passing; Joan remained in the attitude of prayer, and the curate presented to her the crucifix, and adjured her if she was evil to depart from them; but Joan, on the contrary, crept humbly to the priest, kissed the hem of his robe and the crucifix with so much faith and fervour, that the priest declared that she might be mad but that she certainly was not possessed.

Sir Robert went away fully convinced of the source of Joan's inspiration, but this assurance was not sufficient to determine him to grant her request. She was not possessed, it was true, but, as the curate said, she might be mad; besides, what would be said if an officer bearing lance and sword, should send to his king a woman to defend him? Thus Joan had conquered doubt, but she had still to combat with pride.

The next day, as the fame of her piety spread through the town of Vaucouleurs and the surrounding villages, René of Anjou, Duke of Bar, who had been sick for a long time, and whom the physicians could not cure, sent for her to come and consult upon his malady. Joan hastened to obey the summons, as her sympathy always inclined her to heed the voice of suffering, but when she arrived there she declared to him that she had but one mission from Heaven and that was to raise the siege of Orleans, and lead Charles VII. to Reims to be crowned. She told him to take good courage, and not to give his subjects cause of scandal by living on bad terms with his wife, as he had done; then recommending to him the fear of God she took leave of him, promising to pray for his recovery. The duke gave her four francs which she distributed to some poor people as she went out.

As she was entering Vaucouleurs she met the Chevalier Novelompont,

who was promenading the street with another gentleman named Bertrand de Poulangy. John de Novelompont recognized her, for she had made a strong impression upon him, and as the news of the siege became every day more melancholy, he stopped and accosted her: "Ah! Joan," said he, "shall we be forced to see our king driven from France, and ourselves obliged to submit to the English!"

"Ah! well," replied Joan, "this need not be, if they would believe me; but, unfortunately, Sir Robert heeds neither me or my words, and so much precious time is lost: however, I must go to the Dauphin before mid-Lent, even though I should walk my feet off, for no person in the world, neither emperor, king, duke, daughter of Scottish king, or any other, can relieve the kingdom of France: there is no succour but in me. Nevertheless, I would rather stay at home and spin beside my mother, but I must go and do what my Lord commands."

Then the Chevalier Novelompont, looking steadily at Joan and perceiving the faith and confidence which sparkled in her eyes, said:

"Listen, Joan, I know not from whence it comes, and wo be to you if it is from the evil one, but I feel persuaded of the truth of what you say; and I pledge you my faith, if Beaudricourt continues unyielding to your request, I myself, God willing, will conduct you to the king."

And he gave her his hand in pledge of his agreement.

"Oh!" said Joan, pressing that loyal hand, "in God's name do so, and pray do it quickly; for this day, at Orleans, the gentle Dauphin has suffered great loss, and a still greater one threatens him, if you do not send or take me to him immediately."

Sir Bertrand de Poulangy, who had heard all the conversation, and who participated in the feelings of his friend, extended his hand also to Joan, and swore that he would not abandon her, but would accompany her wherever she wished to go.

Joan was so delighted, she thanked them both again and again, and wished to depart instantly; but they told her, that by courtesy they ought first to ask permission of Sir Robert.

"And what if Sir Robert refuse?" said the young girl, trembling.

"If he refuse," replied the two chevaliers, "we shall nevertheless act our own pleasure, but at least we will perform our duty by consulting him."

"Adieu, then, and God be with you!" said Joan; and returning to the wheelwright's, she sought confidence and strength in prayer.

As we have said, Sir Robert was more than half persuaded, but he was restrained by the fear of ridicule; he was highly gratified that two such brave chevaliers as John de Novelompont and Bertrand de Poulangy should take the responsibility upon themselves: he partly gave his consent, and told them to bring Joan to him, that they might arrange together the preparations for her departure.

The two chevaliers then went to the wheelwright's for Joan, who heard

with great joy the decision which had been made with regard to her. She rose immediately, and accompanied them to Sir Robert. The Captain asked her what things were necessary for her journey.

Joan replied that her voices had ordered her to wear the dress of a man, and that for the rest, she referred herself to him. They ordered a dress for her, which was ready the next day : Joan dressed herself in it, adjusted her cap, put on her spatterdashes and spurs, with as much ease and facility as if she had never worn any thing else. Sir Robert wished to give her a sword ; but she refused it, saying that, *that* was not the sword she was to use. The chevaliers then asked her what road they should take to go to the king, who was at Chinon.

“The shortest,” replied Joan.

“But by the shortest way we shall encounter many English, who will obstruct our passage,” said the chevalier.

“In the name of God !” exclaimed Joan, “do as I say ; and provided you conduct me to the Dauphin, be assured we shall meet with no obstacle in the way.

The chevaliers, overcome by her tone of assurance, made no further observations, but followed her in perfect faith and confidence.

At the door, she took leave of her uncle, embracing him affectionately, and begging him to excuse her conduct to her parents ; and to tell them she could depart with entire satisfaction if she only had their blessing ; but that she hoped the time would come when they would commend her for having obeyed her heavenly Father.

A superb black horse, which Sir Robert had purchased, stood in readiness for Joan ; she essayed to mount him, but the horse careered so violently, that it was impossible. Then Joan said : “Lead him to the cross which is before the church near the road.”

The servant who held the bridle obeyed, and as soon as the noble courser was before the cross it became as gentle as a lamb, and Joan mounted it without any difficulty. Then all the people, being astonished at the courage and address of the young girl cried out : “Bravo ! Bravo !”

Sir Robert then received the oath of the two chevaliers to conduct Joan to the king, and turning towards Joan, whom he saluted with the hand for the last time.

“Go on your way,” said he, “let come what may.”

Then Joan, turning herself towards the priests and churchmen, who were gazing at her from the portals of the church, said : “You priests and churchmen ! make a procession and offer up prayers to God.”

Then gathering up her reins and putting spurs to her horse, like the boldest cavalier :

“Forward ! forward !” said she.

And she set off at a brisk trot, accompanied by the two chevaliers, and followed by their servants, an archer, and a messenger of the king.

CHAPTER IV.

THE GENTLE DAUPHIN.

NOTWITHSTANDING the firm confidence which Joan exhibited, Sir John and Sir Bertrand had still some misgivings; they had a hundred and fifty leagues to travel from Vaucouleurs to Chinon, that is to say, half the extent of France, and nearly two-thirds of the way were in the power of the English and Burgundians. But when, after three or four days' journey, they encountered no hostile parties, when they saw the young girl plunge boldly into the forests, and take her road as if by instinct; when on arriving at the banks of broad deep rivers, they saw her horse find out unfrequented fording places, and reach the opposite shore in safety, then they began to have entire faith in Joan, abandoning themselves completely to her, permitting her to stop whenever she chose to pay her devotions in the churches, a thing they had not allowed her to do before, for fear of being recognized as Armagnacs, in which case they would have been denounced by the people and attacked by the garrison. In short, they relied so entirely upon the guidance of the inspired maiden, that she conducted them as the star did the wise men of the east. At length, after fourteen days' travel, they arrived at Gien upon the Loire, where they heard of the famous defeat of Thouvray, which is called the "battle of the Herrings," because the English had been attacked by the French as they were conducting to the Count of Suffolk, who commanded the siege, a convoy of provisions, composed mostly of salt fish. In this battle, when John Falstaff, commander of the convoy, bravely maintained his reputation of a great captain, as he was, John Stuart, Constable of Scotland, Lords Dorval, Lesquot, and Chateaubrun were slain, besides three or four hundred of the bravest soldiers, who had preserved their loyalty and attachment to France; the Count of Dunois was also wounded, so that terror and consternation were greater than ever; but, on the other hand, this news greatly heightened the credit of Joan in the minds of her two companions, for John de Novelompont recollected that this defeat had taken place the very day that Joan announced at Vaucouleurs the news of the recent loss of the Dauphin.

When our travellers reached Gien, they had finished the hardest part of their journey, for they were then upon French ground, and the journey had been accomplished as Joan had predicted, without the slightest accident happening to the chevaliers, their servants, or even to their horses. At Gien, the report was noised abroad that the prophecy of Merlin was about to be fulfilled, and that the young girl who was to be the miraculous deliverer of France had been found; so that all the inhabitants hastened eagerly to see her. Joan then appeared at the window of the hotel, and proclaimed to

them that the desolation of the land was near its close, for that she was sent by God for the delivery of France, and the coronation of the king.

There was so much of gentle but firm assurance in Joan's manner, she appeared so much like an instrument of Providence, and in her conversation she mingled so much humility and faith, that at Gien, as well as at Vaucouleurs, the people began to rejoice in the prospect of a speedy relief by the instrumentality of Joan.

The next day they again set forward on their journey, and fatiguing as it was for a young girl who had never been on horse back before, Joan betrayed no appearance of weariness or suffering, and insisted upon urging forward as fast as possible on their way to Chinon. No king of France had ever been in so deplorable a condition as the Dauphin was at that time. The misery of the people had ascended to the throne, and that misery was so great that there was no more money in the king's purse nor in the royal treasury, and Kenaut de Boulogny, purser to the king, declared there were but four crowns ready money at his command, so that Zandrilles and La Hire being on a visit to the king, and the king having invited them to dine with them, he had to offer them but two chickens and a loin of mutton.

It was then high time for the arrival of Joan. However, she wished to stop at the church of St. Catharine de Fierbois, which was a holy place of pilgrimage, there to pay her devotions. While she was there she dictated a letter by the chevaliers, to be sent to the king, announcing to him that she had come from a great distance to aid him, and to tell him things of the highest importance. Joan received an immediate reply, inviting her to Chinon. The travellers put themselves "en route," and arriving at the royal residence, Joan alighted at a hotel, while the two travelling companions repaired to Charles VII.

But Charles, like an unfortunate king, was distrustful: often deceived by those whom he regarded as his best friends, and abandoned by those upon whom he relied as his most faithful adherents, he could not believe in the disinterested devotion of a stranger. Consequently, he made some difficulty about receiving Joan, and contented himself with sending three of his counsellors. At first, Joan would not reply to them, saying that her business was with the Dauphin, and not with them. But at last she consented to repeat to them what she had so many times before without being believed; namely, that she had come to raise the siege of Orleans, and to conduct the Dauphin to Reims; and the counsellors being thoroughly instructed by her, returned to the king with the news.

Joan remained two days without receiving any further attention from the king. Nevertheless she had good courage, comforting the two chevaliers who had brought her, and asserting, with wonderful assurance, that she was certain the king would hear her at last. And truly enough, on the third day the Count of Vendome presented himself at the hotel, and announced to Joan that he had come to conduct her to the Dauphin. Joan appeared

neither confused nor surprised: she had expected this interview for a long time, and was prepared for it. She observed to the Count that his visit did not surprise her, because her voices had told her he would come, adding that she was ready to follow him, and begging him to hasten, for that too much time had been lost already.

The king, still distrustful, after the departure of the count of Vendome, had proposed to his counsel to prove Joan, and the test that he suggested was to mingle himself among the chevaliers of his suite, and to put another in his place, to see if Joan would not be deceived. This test was adopted, and the king placed upon the throne a young nobleman of his own age, and who was even more richly clad than himself, whilst he took his place behind the others. Hardly was the substitution made when the door opened, and Joan entered.

Then it was that the truth of her mission shone forth in its most convincing light, for without regarding appearances, Joan walked straight to Charles, and kneeling before him, said:

“God grant you a long and happy life, noble and gentle Dauphin!”

“You are mistaken, Joan,” replied Charles; “I am not the king; that is he who is seated upon the throne.”

“In Heaven’s name, my prince,” said Joan, “do not seek to deceive me, for you are indeed the Dauphin and no other.”

Then a murmur of astonishment ran round the assembly.

“Gentle Dauphin,” said she, “why will you not believe me? I tell you, my prince, and rely upon my words, God has pity upon you, and upon your kingdom and your people; for St. Louis and Charlemagne are on their knees before him, making prayers for you. Besides, I will tell you something by which you will be convinced that you ought to believe me, if you will have the goodness to hear me.”

Then king Charles led her into an oratory which was beside the council-hall: “Now, Joan,” said he, “we are alone; let me hear what you have to say.”

“I desire nothing better,” replied Joan, “but if I tell you of things known only to God and yourself, will you have confidence in me, and believe that I am sent by divine command?”

“Yes, Joan, I will,” said the king.

“Well,” said the young girl, “do you not remember that last All-Saints, when you were all alone in your chapel at Castle Loches, you made three requests to God?”

“Nothing is more true,” said the king, “I remember it well.”

“Sire,” demanded Joan, “have you never revealed these requests to your confessor nor to any one else?”

“Never,” said the king.

“Well, then, I will tell you what these three requests were. The first that you addressed to God was, that if you were not the veritable heir to the

kingdom of France, he would deprive you of the courage to continue this dreadful war which costs you so much blood and treasure to your kingdom. The second was, that if the terrible scourge which was desolating France proceeded from your sins, you besought God to relieve your poor people from a fault not their own, and to let the whole chastisement fall upon your head, were that chastisement eternal penance, or even death. Finally, the third was, that if, on the contrary, the sin proceeded from the people, you besought him to have pity on them for his mercy's sake, so that the kingdom might cease from the tribulations which had been desolating the land for more than twelve years."

After hearing these words, the king bowed his head, and remained a long time absorbed in thought; then he fastened his eyes upon the fair young girl with the most serious attention, and at length he said:

"Joan, all that you have related is true; but it is not sufficient that I alone am convinced that you are sent from God; my counsellors must also participate in my belief, otherwise you will cause dissension between us, and we are already unhappy and divided enough as we are."

"Very well," said Joan, "to-morrow assemble three or four of your most faithful, and if possible some churchmen, and I will give you a sign after which no person will doubt me: for my voices have promised to grant me this sign, and I am certain that at my request I shall receive it from them."

Then the king and Joan returned to the council, where they were awaiting their reappearance with great impatience. When the door was opened all eyes turned towards the king, and they saw by his grave thoughtful countenance, that the young girl had made a deep impression upon him.

"Gentlemen," said the king, "it is sufficient for to-day; this is a subject for reflection, and we must take the advice of our most intimate counsellors upon so extraordinary an event. As for you, Joan, you may now retire, for you must be fatigued with your long journey, and do not forget what you have promised us for to-morrow."

"By the help of God, not only what I have promised for to-morrow, but what I have promised for the future, shall be accomplished!" Then bending one knee before the king, she kissed his hand, and retired with the same tranquil, modest manner with which she came.

At the moment when Joan reached the street door a cavalier came by, who was riding his horse to the Loire to water. As the report of Joan's arrival had spread through the town, the cavalier, who was very incredulous in these matters, stopped before Joan and insulted her with coarse language mingled with blasphemies. Joan perceiving that it was to her he addressed himself, raised her head and looking at him with more melancholy than anger: "Alas!" said she, "miserable man, can you thus blaspheme your Maker when you are so near death!"

The horseman paid no attention to this prophecy, but went on uttering

blasphemies till he came to the river; just as his horse raised his head after having drank, he took fright by some noise, and plunged into the water; the man tried to rein him towards the shore, but the horse dashed violently forward into the stream and lost his footing. The cavalier then sprang from his saddle and tried to swim ashore; but whether he was seized with the cramp, or the words of Joan recurring to him had paralyzed his mind, he had barely time to say: "God have mercy on my soul!" when he disappeared. Two hours after they found his body in a mill-slauce.

As several persons had heard what the cavalier said to Joan and the reply she made him, this event was regarded as a miracle, and the reputation of the inspired maiden was so much augmented by it that in the evening crowds of people assembled under the windows of her hotel and asked to see her. Joan soon appeared upon a balcony, and repeated to the people in her mild earnest tone, that she was sent from God for the deliverance of France and her rightful sovereign Charles VII. The poor people more encouraged by the words of this young girl than they would have been by an army of twenty thousand men, rent the air with their shouts of joy. That evening a part of the town was illuminated.

The next day at ten o'clock in the morning the king sent for Joan. Joan, who anticipated this summons, immediately followed the royal messenger to castle Chinon, where the king awaited their arrival. They were accompanied by a multitude of people who had followed closely upon the steps of Joan, and who remained outside the door, so eager were they to hear the news of this interview. Joan courageously ascended the stairs and entered the apartment of the king; there she found Charles VII., with the archbishop of Reims, prince Charles of Bourbon, and the Lord of Tremoille.

Then the archbishop of Reims began to interrogate Joan, asking her from whence she came, what her father's name was, and in what manner the inspiration had been revealed to her. Joan then related as much of her history as she could recollect, and in so simple and modest a manner that the auditors felt themselves irresistibly imbued with the faith which animated the youthful heroine. When Joan had finished her recital, the archbishop asked her if there was not a wood near her father's house, and what the name of that wood was. Joan replied that there was indeed a forest there which they could see from the door of her father's house, and that the name of the forest was "Le Bois Chenu."

Then the archbishop turned to the king and the noblemen, saying: "It is even so." In fact, the prophecy of Merlin had declared that the young girl who was to save France would come *e nemore canuto*. The king and his counsellors appeared almost convinced, however, they wished to sift the matter thoroughly, so the archbishop returned to Joan and renewed his interrogations.

“Joan,” said he, “you have promised to the king to make known the truth of your mission by an indisputable sign; what is this sign? we wait for its manifestation; and if it be such as you have promised us, we are prepared to believe that you are the true envoy of God.”

“Await my return,” said Joan, “and meantime devote yourselves to prayer.”

As she said this she passed into the chapel, where she found herself alone; and when she reached the altar she knelt down and with a voice full of that faith which can remove mountains, she prayed thus:

“Most blessed Lord and Saviour, I beseech thee in honour of thy holy passion to permit the blessed archangel Michael, and the blessed St. Catharine and St. Marguerite, to manifest themselves to thy humble servant, if it be still thy will that I, a poor peasant girl, should go in thy name to aid the kingdom of France!”

Hardly had Joan pronounced the words when the cloud descended, and she saw not only the archangel and the two saints, but also in the distance a shining host of angels, who waved their light wings and chanted the praises of the Lord. Joan was so dazzled with the splendour that she could not look upon it.

“Thou hast called us, Joan,” said the voice, “what dost thou desire of us?”

“Blessed St. Michael, and you my patron saints,” replied Joan, “I have called you to give me a sign by the aid of which I may make known to the Dauphin that I am the true envoy of our Lord.”

“Thou hast had faith in us, Joan,” said the voice, “and we will keep the promise we have made thee.”

At these words St. Michael made a signal, and an angel parted from the celestial choir, and descended with one wave of his wing from the height of heaven to the surface of the earth: the angel held in his hand a crown of jewels so resplendently dazzling that human orbs could scarcely support their brilliancy.

“Behold the promised sign,” said the voice, “and when the most incredulous have seen it, they will cease to doubt.”

The cloud ascended to heaven, but the angel who held the crown remained, and when Joan raised her eyes she saw him standing before her.

The angel then, without uttering a word, but with a benign smile, taking Joan by the hand, walked or rather glided towards the door of the chapel, which opened into the apartment of the king: there, they found Charles VII., and his counsellors, still upon their knees in prayer, but as soon as they saw the young girl and her celestial conductor, they started to their feet in the greatest astonishment. The angel then released the hand of Joan, and advancing towards the king who was about a sword's length from the door, he bowed before him, and placing the crown in the hands of the archbishop who was at his side, he said:

“Sire, I come to announce to you that you are in the favour of the Lord, who sends you this young girl for the delivery of France; put her boldly to the task, give her as many soldiers as you can assemble, and in token that she will cause you to be crowned at Reims, here is the celestial crown which is sent to you by the Lord your God. Doubt no longer, sire; for if you doubt still, it will be an offence against the great King of heaven.”

Saying these words, the angel let go the crown which he had kept his hand upon till then, and gliding again over the floor he entered the chapel, from whence Joan saw him gently ascend through the vault and disappear.

At this sight the poor child began to cry, for her soul, which was filled with gloomy presentiments of what her body would suffer on earth, had a longing desire to wing its way to heaven with the beautiful angel: but for her, the moment of eternal happiness was not yet come, and the angel left her with her hands clasped, and the prayer which she so fervently breathed was not granted.

Then Joan arose, and with a deep sigh approaching the king:

“Gentle Dauphin,” said she, pointing to the crown, “there is your sign, take it.”

Charles VII. then bowed before the archbishop, who placed the crown upon his head.

To date from this moment, it was nearly decided that they should give full credence to Joan; however, the counsellors desired of the king, that Joan should first be sent to Poitiers, at which place were the court of parliament and several learned doctors in theology. The king declared he would conduct her himself to this city, and sent her a message to hold herself in readiness to set off the next day. Joan asked where they were going to take her, and they replied to her that it was to Poitiers. “By my faith!” said she, “I shall have enough to do there; but no matter, God will aid me. I wait the king’s pleasure.”

The next day Joan departed for the city of Poitiers. There she found all the scholars and doctors for twenty leagues round waiting her arrival: they had heard already of the great confidence which the king had in this young girl, and as he had suffered himself to be influenced without consulting them, they were so much annoyed by it that they wished above all things to make her fall into some contradiction; and as Joan had said before, she had enough to do with them; but her presence of mind did not abandon her for a moment, so that every one wondered how such a poor young girl who had never learned anything of human sciences, could reply so prudently. Although the king, the archbishop of Reims, and the two counsellors affirmed that Joan had given them an indisputable sign of her mission, the learned assembly did not choose to rely upon their word for it, and a Carmelite said very contemptuously that since Joan had given one sign, it would not cost her much more to give two.

"I will do it," replied Joan, "and the sign that I will give you will be the raising of the siege of Orleans, and the coronation of the king at Reims. Give me soldiers, however few in numbers, and come with me, and you shall have two signs instead of one."

"But," said a doctor in theology, "if it be the pleasure of God that the English should be driven from France, God has no need of soldiers to operate this miracle, for if he but wills it, he can destroy them from first to last."

"The soldiers will fight," replied Joan, "and God will give the victory."

"Pray," said brother Seguin with a strong Limosin accent, "tell us, my friend, what language your voices speak?"

"Better than your language," replied Joan. Another cited to her books of theology which said, they ought not to believe in visions, nor in those who pretended to have them.

"Indeed," said Joan, "I do not know what there is in your books, but I know there is more in the book of God than in all yours put together."

At Poitiers, as well as at Chinon and Vaucouleurs, her daily walk was an edifying example to all around her. She lodged in the hotel of John Rabateau, whose wife was a good worthy woman, to whom she had been given in charge, and as Joan passed almost all her time in prayers and religious exercises, the brave hostess went about saying she had never seen such a prudent, pious girl as the one who was lodging in her house.

Those who came to see her, after they had conversed with her, went away saying that she was truly a being from God, and that her words were as true as the gospel; in fine, "the voice of the people," which this time they might truly call "the voice of God," reached the doctors themselves, who, with all their subtleties, had not been able to make Joan fall into any contradiction or heresy, and were obliged, at length, to declare unanimously that it was expedient to trust to her and to endeavour to execute what she proposed.

The king joyfully re-conducted Joan to Chinon, and it was decided that her first expedition should be to enter the town of Orleans with a convoy of provisions, which had been collected at Blois for fifteen days, and of which they knew the good and loyal city of Orleans to be in pressing need.

CHAPTER V.

THE CONVOY.

DURING their absence, the Duke of Alençon had arrived at Chinon. This Duke had been a prisoner of the English ever since the battle of Verneuil,

and for whose ransom they demanded the sum of 200,000 crowns, part of which he had paid in ready money, leaving seven of his noblemen as hostages for the payment of the remainder. The Duke did not return directly to the king after his release, but occupied himself with disposing of his lands and seignior of Gougers, from the sale of which he realized 140,000 crowns; appropriating 100,000 of it for the liberation of the hostages, he had returned to devote the rest to the prosecution of the war.

The Duke of Alençon found the whole town of Chinon in ecstasies; for the report had spread abroad that Joan had been acknowledged to be a sainted virgin. The Duke, though not participating in this joy, was nevertheless not entirely insensible to it; the moral influence of the inspired maiden had already commenced its operation, and every one spoke of marching against the English with as much animation as if it had been of a holiday procession.

The Duke had so strong a desire to avenge upon the English the captivity he had endured, that any means, tending directly to this aim, appeared to him excellent. Thus he received Joan, if not with entire faith, at least with a great show of confidence. The king, after having, like a good relation, embraced the Duke of Alençon, knowing his great impatience to return to battle, commanded him to precede Joan to Blois, in order to arrange matters so that the convoy might be ready at the expiration of eight days.

The Duke set off immediately; the Duchess, who had been with her husband scarcely one week, wept much at his precipitate departure; but Joan comforted her, saying: "In the name of God, madam, I promise to restore your husband, to you, safe and sound." The Duchess, who was a pious woman, consoled herself with this promise, for she was one of those who believed firmly in the inspiration of Joan.

When the Duke of Alençon was gone, they immediately commenced making preparations for the departure of Joan. They gave her all the appointments appertaining to a chief of war, viz. a squire, a page, two heralds, and a chaplain. The name of the squire was John Daulon, the page, Louis de Comtes; the heralds, Guyenne and Ambleville, and lastly, the chaplain, brother Pasquerel.

This being arranged, the king sent her a complete suit of armour; but Joan returned the sword, saying that the one she was to use, they would find upon the tomb of an old chevalier in one of the chapels of the church of St. Catharine de Fierbois. They asked her how they might recognize this sword; she replied there were five flower-de-luces upon the blade near the hilt by which it might be distinguished. They asked her if she knew this sword from having seen it; she said she had never seen it, and knew nothing of it, except that her voices had directed her to use that, and no other. The king's armourer was sent to St. Catharine de Fierbois, and found the sword according to Joan's direction. It was rubbed and burnished brightly, and Charles VII. had a beautiful velvet scabbard made for it, all wrought in flower-de-luces of gold.

It was now about the end of April; there was no more time to be lost, the city of Orleans being supported in its courage and fidelity only by the expectation of this miraculous assistance. The king bade adieu to Joan, and she set out for Blois, accompanied by Marshal Rayz, La Maison, Laval, Poton, La Hire, Ambroise de Loré, Admiral Ceilant, and nearly three hundred armed men.

Arriving at Blois, she was forced to remain there some days, waiting for recruits; for, although Joan constantly repeated that it was immaterial about the number of soldiers, the other chiefs did not wish to continue their march with so slender a force. Joan was then obliged to sojourn at Blois nearly a week, which time she put to profit by getting made a white silk banner, all wrought in flower-de-luces of gold, with the representation of our Saviour in the middle, holding the world in his hand, and on his right and left, two angels on their knees in prayer; then on the other side in large letters were these two words, "*Jhesus Maria.*" Besides this banner, she ordered one something similar to be made for brother Pasquerel, her chaplain, which he was to carry in marches, festivals and processions. The two standards were then consecrated in the church Saint Sauveur at Blois. This was not all. During her stay there, Joan dictated a letter to brother Pasquerel, which, not knowing how to write, she signed with a cross. This letter was conceived in these terms, and we copy it word for word from a contemporaneous manuscript.

"Jesus Maria,"

"King of England, make justice to the King of heaven; restore to La Pucelle the keys of all the good cities you have seized: she is come from God in behalf of the royal blood, and is ready to make peace if you will do justly; but king of England if you will not be just, and restore to our king his lawful rights, know that I am chief of war; in whatever place I overtake your people in France, I will drive them out 'nolens volens;' and if they obey I will be merciful, but if not, they shall know that La Pucelle comes to slay; and I promise you that if you do not render justice I will make greater havoc than has been seen in France for a thousand years. La Pucelle is sent from the King of heaven to dispute with you every inch of ground sword to sword; in God is the strength of La Pucelle and her soldiers. You archers, soldiers, gentles and valiants who are before Orleans, return to your own country; if you do not, remember La Pucelle. Do not suppose you hold France from the King of heaven, the son of the blessed Virgin Mary. King Charles, to whom God gave it, is the true heir, and he shall yet enter Paris in fine company. If you will not believe the words of God and La Pucelle, in whatever place we find you we will make most woful havoc, and we will see who has the best right, God or you, Duke of Bedford, self-styled regent of the kingdom of France.

"If you will make peace send your reply to the city of Orleans; if not,

remember the damages, Duke of Bedford, you who style yourself regent of France, for the king of England. La Pucelle begs you will not destroy yourself. If you will not render justice, La Pucelle will lead the French to perform the finest feat that was ever accomplished in Christendom.

“Written Tuesday in the Passion week.”

On the back of the letter was this superscription :

“Hear the news of God and La Pucelle.

“To the Duke of Bedford, who styles himself regent of the kingdom of France, for the king of England.”

This letter being finished, she gave it to Guyenne, one of her heralds, and charged him to carry it to the chief of the siege of Orleans.

The day of departure at length arrived. The army, during the week it remained at Blois, had been joined by Marshal Saint-Sévère, Chevalier de Gaucourt, and a great number of other nobles, who had hastened thither upon hearing the report of the expedition they were about to undertake, so that the company, as it was, presented quite a formidable aspect. As to the convoy, it was very considerable, being composed of vast numbers of cattle, sheep, and swine, and a great many carts and wagons laden with grain, which would be a great relief to the poor city, if it could only gain admittance.

At the moment of departure, Joan ordered all her soldiers to confess ; this religious duty being performed, they put themselves “en route” for Orleans.

Before setting out, the chiefs had held a counsel by themselves. Joan, always confident in her mission, had given orders to follow the right bank, upon which lay the whole power of the English, saying that it was immaterial about their numbers or position, since the Lord had decided that the convoy should enter the town unimpeded by any obstacle. But whatever faith the chiefs had in Joan, they thought, to act thus would be tempting Providence, so they said nothing to her, permitting her to believe they were following her directions, but they took the left bank, where they only risked the danger of meeting now and then a courier.

At length the convoy was fairly under way, crossing the Sologne instead of the Beauce ; brother Pasquerel led the van, bearing aloft his banner, and singing hymns with the other priests who accompanied the army. Joan followed, riding in the midst of the chiefs, whom she reprimanded every moment for the freedom of their speech ; she frequently rode side by side by La Hire, for whom, in spite of his eternal oaths, she had a great predilection. La Hire would swear sometimes purposely to vex her, and he would persist morning and evening in saying the same prayer, although the young girl tried much to make him change it. The prayer was this : “Good God ! do for La Hire as La Hire would do for you, if he were the good God and you were La Hire.” As for Joan, her deportment and conversation were so exemplary as finally to produce an imposing effect even upon

the soldiers, who at first had either ridiculed or murmured at the idea of being commanded by a poor peasant girl, accustomed, as they had been, to march under the conduct of the bravest and noblest chevaliers.

On the third day they arrived at Orleans, and not till then did Joan discover that they had deceived her, for she then saw that the river lay between her and the town. She was much vexed at this deception, and would have been very angry if the fear of sinning had not restrained her: however, she concluded to draw what advantage she could from her position, and as some English people, on their approach, had fled from their villa in terror, Joan gave orders to take possession of it, which was easily executed, without any resistance. At the same time, the Bastard of Orleans, who had been apprised of the arrival of the convoy, had just landed upon the left bank, from a small boat. When Joan heard it, she hastened to the place pointed out to her, and there she saw the Bastard of Orleans in the midst of the chiefs, gaily welcoming each one, and consulting upon the best means of conveying the convoy into town.

“Are you the Bastard of Orleans?” demanded Joan, advancing towards him.

“I am,” replied he, “and your arrival gives me great pleasure.”

“Was it you,” continued Joan, “who gave advice to cross the Sologne instead of the Beauce?”

“I did give that advice, because it was not only mine, but that of the most experienced captains.”

“Well, it was wrong,” said Joan, “for the counsel of the Most High is wiser than that of men, and if we had followed his counsel we should now be in Orleans, while, as it is, we have the river yet to cross.”

“Well,” replied the Bastard, “there is one way of crossing the river without being molested, that is first go up the river as far as Castle Checy, which is about two leagues above, and where there is a French garrison: the boats from Orleans will go up at the same time, and we can have them laden there under the protection of the fortress.”

“In the name of God, let us do so,” replied Joan, and she was the first to move forward, although she had been heavily clad in armour and mounted on horseback since early in the morning. The Bastard of Orleans, on his part, returned to the town to direct in person the vessels which were to ascend the river to Castle Checy.

The convoy again set forward, and about three o'clock in the afternoon arrived at Castle Checy; but the sky had been overcast for an hour, and the rain began to pour in torrents; the wind blew from the east so violently that it was not possible for the boats to ascend against the strong current of the river, and every thing wore a discouraging aspect.

Joan, perceiving the effect it had upon her escort, turning to the chiefs she said:

“Did I not assure you that it was the will of the Most High that we

should convey our provisions into Orleans at our ease, and that the English would not even attempt to prevent us?"

"Very true, you did assure us of that," replied the Duke of Alençon, "but this is not a proper time to recall to us that promise."

"In the name of God, have patience then," said Joan, "for the wind will change in a quarter of an hour."

Saying these words, Joan dismounted from her horse, and retiring a few steps, she kneeled down and began to pray with her accustomed faith and ardour, and, in fact, before she had finished her prayer, the wind changed round from east to west: the soldiers looked at each other, and could scarcely believe their own eyes; to doubt any longer was impossible, the predictions of Joan had been verified, and the most incredulous were then convinced.

About an hour after, the boats came gliding up as lightly as if propelled by the hand of God: in the first boat was the Bastard of Orleans with several other armed noblemen, and the principal citizens of the town. After depositing the grain, cattle, and ammunitions upon the boats, they had only to abandon them to the current of the stream; during this time the garrison made a sortie, and occupied the English on the right bank, so that nothing prevented the convoy from directly reaching its destination. In the last boat came Joan, between Count Dunois and La Hire; two hundred lancers followed them, whilst the rest of the company returned to Blois to prepare a second convoy.

The whole population, being apprised by Dunois, had assembled upon the shore to welcome the arrival of Joan; when the young girl set foot upon land, a superb milk-white steed, magnificently caparisoned, was led before her, upon which she mounted, and at the head of the admiring multitude, she made her triumphal entrée into Orleans; the inhabitants, anticipating her brilliant future career, regarded her already as their liberatress.

Joan repaired first to the church, where they all chanted the *Te Deum*, after which she lighted at the mansion of the treasurer of the Duke of Orleans: he was a brave man, named Jacques Boucher, very much devoted to his master, from whom he had asked and obtained the favour of entertaining Joan as his guest. It was not until then, that she disarmed herself, and asked for a little wine; they brought her a silver cup, partly filled with wine, to which she added as much water, and taking a slice or two of bread, she desired nothing more for her supper. When she had finished her simple repast, she retired immediately to her chamber, attended by the wife and daughter of her host; the daughter, at Joan's request, stayed with her, and shared her bed.

Thus, Joan of Arc made her entrée into the city of Orleans, the 29th of April, 1429, and (as the chronicle of the siege relates) in the midst of as wild enthusiasm among the citizens and soldiers as if an angel from God had descended amongst them. !

CHAPTER VI.

THE SIEGE OF ORLEANS.

THE entrance of Joan into Orleans did not operate with a less extraordinary influence upon the minds of the besiegers than the besieged: only with this difference, that to the latter her presence brought comfort, and to the former disquietude. The English laughed heartily when they first heard that a woman had presented herself to Charles VII., saying she had a mission to drive them out of France; but afterwards the report was circulated that this woman was truly inspired. They spoke of miracles wrought by her; and, let us recollect, that this was an era of credulity and superstition, when the most extraordinary things easily gained credence, whether they were performed in the name of God or of Satan. However this may be, Joan had said that the convoy should enter unmolested into Orleans, and twice, once in ascending and once in descending the Loire, the convoy had actually passed within bow-shot of the bastions of the English, without either of them making the slightest attempt to oppose their passage; thus the first prophecy of La Pucelle had been fully accomplished; and there was, as we have said, much apprehension and disquietude in the English army.

Whether Joan divined the effect that she had produced, or whether the inspiration of God urged her to pursue the course she had decided upon, at all events, she was determined to attack the works of the English the day after her arrival; but Count Dunois, the Seigneur of Gamache, and several other brave captains, whose names alone are sufficient to indicate that it was not through fear they opposed her project, were of a different opinion. Joan, who believed the king had given her the chief command of the army, insisted with all the obstinacy of conscious superiority, and in fact she was very near losing her temper, when Gamache, irritated by her tone of command, which he thought humiliating coming from a woman, arose and addressed himself to La Hire and to Chevalier D'Illiers, whom Joan had persuaded into her measures.

"Since you prefer," said he, "to listen to the advice of a silly peasant girl, rather than to that of a Chevalier like myself, I will waste no more words on the subject, but in proper time and place my good sword shall speak for me. At present it is due to my king and to my honour to renounce my banner, and to regard myself only as a simple squire. I prefer for my master a nobleman, and not a girl who may have been—I know not what." And at these words, folding his banner, he resigned it into the hands of Count Dunois.

Dunois was, as we have said, of a different opinion from Joan; it is

probable that he himself had no great faith in her, but he comprehended the advantage that might be drawn from the faith with which she inspired others; thus he immediately interposed between Joan and Gamache, saying to the latter, that of course he was free to combat when and how he chose, and that he was one of that class who had no orders to receive except from God and the king; saying also to Joan, that it was only a slight delay, and that they would commence the attack as soon as the reinforcement, which he expected from Blois, should arrive. In short, he managed so well that Joan and Gamache extended to each other the hand, not very cordially to be sure, but the ceremony of good will was performed, which was all Dunois desired, hoping that this misintelligence would be dispelled upon the field of battle.

What especially pacified Joan, was the promise that Dunois had made to her, that he would depart in person the next day for Blois, in order to hasten the arrival of the reinforcement: Joan meantime wishing to employ profitably her leisure, dictated a second letter addressed to the English chiefs, which comprised pretty much the same sum and substance as the first; then, when the letter was written and signed with her cross, she summoned Ambleville, her second herald, and ordered him to carry it to the Count of Suffolk. Ambleville appeared very reluctant, and observed to Joan that Guyenne, the bearer of her first letter, had not yet returned, and that the English, contrary to the rights of nations, had retained him prisoner, and threatened to burn him as a heretic; but Joan endeavoured to remove his fears.

“In the name of God,” said she, with her usual confidence, “depart in all safety, for they will do no harm, either to you or to him; furthermore, be assured that you will bring back your companion with you, and say to Talbot that if he arms himself, I will arm myself also, and if he can take me, he is at liberty to have me burned; but if I defeat him, the revenge I shall take will be, to make him return to his own country with the English.”

All this, however, only partially reassured poor Ambleville, but Count Dunois gave him a letter to the Count of Suffolk, in which he announced to the English general that the life of all the prisoners, as well as of the heralds sent to treat upon ransoms, should answer for the lives of the two armed messengers of La Pucelle: in effect, as Joan had predicted, Ambleville and Guyenne were both sent back the same evening, but without bringing any reply from the English chiefs to Joan's two letters.

The next day, after having, with La Hire and a good part of the garrison, escorted the Count of Dunois—who was on his way to Blois—about a league beyond the town, Joan wished to repeat with a loud voice to the English what she had already written to them. Accordingly she mounted upon one of the bulwarks of the besieged, which was opposite the English bastion of the Turrets, and openly approaching them within the distance of

sixty paces, she ordered them, under pain of misery and shame, to withdraw not only from the town but from the kingdom. But instead of obtemperating this requisition, Sir William Gladsdale, and the Bastard of Granville, who commanded the bastion of the Turrets, replied to Joan only by gross insults, telling her she had better go back home and tend cows, and abusing the French as heretics and miscreants. Joan listened patiently enough to all the injuries that were personal, gross as they were; but when she heard them insult the French:

“You lie,” cried she, “and since you will not go away peaceably, you shall be driven away by force; but those of you who insult me will never live to take their departure.”

Meantime Dunois, accompanied by Rayz and Loré, drew towards Blois, where they arrived on the evening of the next day. They presented themselves to the counsel of the king, to show the great necessity that the town had of a new convoy of provisions and a new reinforcement of men; both were granted to them, and this time they decided to cross the Beauce instead of the Sologne, and that in defiance of the English; for since the happy success of Joan, the French army had so much renewed their courage that, says the chronicle of La Pucelle, whereas, before her arrival, two hundred English were sufficient in their skirmishes to put to flight four hundred French, the case was now reversed, and two hundred French were sufficient for twice that number of English.

They made such diligence in collecting provisions and soldiers, that on the third day of May the second convoy was in complete readiness. They started about nine o'clock in the morning, and the same evening slept half way between Blois and Orleans at a village which the chronicler does not name, but which must have been Beaugency or Saint Ay. On the fourth they continued their march towards the town, determined to force the passage, although if they had come to blows, the English would have been more than three against one; but as the Bastard arrived in sight of the town, he descried La Pucelle, with La Hire and most of the other captains, coming to meet him, in fine array with all their banners waving gaily in the air. Soon the two troops joined, and thus united they passed before the English, who dared not sally out upon them, and thus they allowed the second convoy to pass with as little opposition as the first.

Dunois found the garrison reinforced by a great number of armed men, who had arrived the day before from Montargis, Gien, Château-Renard, from the region of Gatinois and from Châteaudun, so that it was agreed between him and Joan, that on the next day they would undertake an offensive attack.

Joan was very much fatigued; for the two preceding days she had received visits from nearly all the principal persons of the town, and had even been into the streets to show herself to the people, and the night before, she had kept herself awake and armed all night long, for fear if she

was disarmed that the Bastard would return and she would not be able to arm herself in time to render him any assistance; but now, confiding in the promise that Dunois had made her to commence the attack the next day, she caused her armour to be taken off, and throwing herself dressed upon her bed she fell asleep.

Meantime some notables of the town, seeing the garrison so much relieved by the presence of Joan and the arrival of the provisions, availed themselves of this moment of reaction to enlist in their train a great number of common archers, in order to make a sortie; this sudden and unexpected attack was directed against the bastion of Saint Loup, one of the strongest and best defended of the English strong-holds, commanded by a valiant captain named Guerrard, and completely furnished with soldiers and ammunitions. Thus the French were vigorously received; but as in their enthusiasm they had become imbued with an extraordinary courage, they rushed upon the walls with the greatest fury, rendering blow for blow, death for death, so that the combat on both sides was kept up with greater carnage than had been seen since the commencement of the siege.

All at once Joan, who had been sleeping upon her bed for about an hour, sprang up, wildly crying out:

“Holla, my squire! Holla, Daulon! make haste hither!”

“What is the matter?” cried Daulon rushing into her room.

“Why,” exclaimed Joan, seizing her helmet, “the French at this moment are in mortal combat before a bastion, and I must make haste and arm myself, for there are already many killed and wounded.”

As Daulon was putting on her armour, she kept crying out: “My horse! my horse!” But Daulon could not arm her and go for her horse at the same time: so when he had finished the buckling of her cuirass, he turned to go out; but Joan arrested him.

“Stay, stay!” said she; “finish arming yourself, and then follow me as quick as possible; I will go for my horse myself.”

Then she took a small battle-axe in her hand, and hurried off so fast that she forgot her banner which was in her chamber. Upon the stairs she met her hostess.

“My God!” said Joan to her, “the blood of our people flows over the ground, and you did not waken me; you have done very wrong.” Then she hurried on, shouting: “My horse! my horse!”

She found her page at the door playing.

“Ah! wicked boy!” cried she, “why did you not tell me that the English were spilling the blood of the French? Go quick, my horse! my horse!”

Whilst Imerget, her page, ran to the stable, she perceived that she had not her banner, and calling out to Daulon, he handed it to her through the window. Joan spread it. At that moment her horse was led to her, and notwithstanding the weight of her armour the young Amazon mounted

him with as much ease as the most accomplished chevalier; and without asking on which side the bastion of Saint Loup was, she put spurs to her horse, crossing the streets upon a full gallop, the fire flashing from the pavement at every step of her noble courser. As she arrived at the gate of Burgundy, she met a wounded man whom they were carrying back to the city; she stopped her horse, and as she looked at the poor unfortunate fellow, two tears stole down her cheeks; then, shaking her head: "Alas!" said she, "I have never looked upon the blood of a Frenchman, without my veins being frozen with horror!" But soon the sound of approaching arms, and the cries of the flying reminded Joan that it was no time to yield to tender emotions: she dashed through the gate-way, and saw the French returning in great disorder, hotly pursued by the enemy. Then she rushed on with great rapidity, raising her banner and shouting: "Courage! courage! here comes La Pucelle, here comes the daughter of God!" and without regarding whether she was followed or not, she plunged into the midst of the English.

This apparition produced a double effect: it inspired the French with courage, and the English with terror; the result of it was, that the ranks of the besiegers hesitated a moment, which time Joan put to profit by rallying the discomfited party to her standard. At the sound of her voice they returned to the charge. Just at that time Daulon and four or five other brave captains appeared at the gate of Burgundy, hastening with their armed men to the assistance of Joan. Each one did his utmost in pursuit of the English, remarking with surprise, that since the arrival of Joan not one of the French had been wounded, but on the contrary every blow they dealt seemed to be mortal. The English repulsed, in their turn took to flight, but they were so hotly pursued by the French that they all entered pell-mell into the bastion, and the next moment Joan's banner was waving triumphantly from the top of the wall.

Then Talbot, who commanded the bastion Saint Laurent, essayed to go to the relief of his companions of the bastion Saint Loup; but the Count of Dunois, followed by Chevalier Graille, Marshal Boussac, Baron Coulonge, and a part of the garrison, having anticipated this movement, placed themselves between the English and the attacked bastion, offering them battle, which, for a long time before, the French had not dared to do. However, it was now the turn of the English to decline the combat, so that La Pucelle could give undivided attention to the achievement of her victory.

The bastion being taken, they found they had accomplished but half their task. This fortress had been made of a church on account of its thick walls; so that the English took refuge in the belfry, of which they made a second citadel; but the French pursued them there with great fury; many were slain in the stair-cases, many precipitated from the top to the bottom; so that about two hundred men perished, and the few English that were saved were those who having found in the vestry room some

priests' costumes, endeavoured to fly under this disguise ; but the fury of the French was such, that they were going to put them to death without mercy, when Joan, in honour of the priestly robes which covered them, ordered her men to desist, and to lead them to town as prisoners of war.

As to the bastion, in order that it might not again serve as a rampart for the English, after the provisions and ammunitions contained in it were withdrawn, it was burnt and demolished.

La Pucelle entered Orleans with the other chiefs, but none could deny but that to her belonged all the glory of the victory : she had been miraculously warned by her voices ; she had found the way to the bastion of Saint Loup, unaided by any human direction, and when there, by her presence alone, without doing any thing more than to set an example of courage by marching boldly forward, she had been able to change a defeat into a complete victory : also as she returned, on her entrance to the town, all the bells rang as if vibrated by invisible hands, and the English, from their camp, could hear this exulting sound, which celebrated the first triumph of her whom they had treated as a cow-herd and a sorceress.

In the evening Joan entered the council and demanded that there should no respite be given to the English, and that profiting by the confusion into which they had been thrown, the attack should be renewed the following day. But the chiefs observed to Joan that the next day was a grand holiday, and that in honour of the Lord Jesus Christ it ought to be spent in prayer ; Joan yielded very reluctantly, saying that the best way to pray to God was to obey him, and that God had commanded her to continue the combat the next day ; but as she perceived that the universal opinion was contrary to hers, she decided that she would avail herself of this day of repose to summon once more the English to surrender.

Accordingly she repaired to a bridge which was two-thirds broken away, and in front of a strong bastion commanded by Gladsdale, and standing upon the end of this bridge she fastened a third copy of her letter to an arrow, and ordered an archer to hurl it into the enemy's retrenchment ; the archer sped the arrow into the midst of the English, Joan at the same time shouting : " Read ! Read !" But instead of reading they took the letter and tore it up. Then Joan cried out : " In the name of God, I tell you that you are doing wrong, for it is the will of the Lord that you should abandon the siege, and leave the country." But the English, as at first, only replied by insults so gross and offensive that Joan could not help crying, and raising her hands to heaven : " Oh !" cried she, " wicked people that you are, God knows that all the things you have said are only base falsehoods !" Then gazing fixedly towards heaven, her countenance suddenly changed, the tears rested upon her cheeks, and a sweet smile played upon her lips : " God be praised !" said she, turning to two or three officers who had accompanied her, " I have just had news from my Lord in heaven !"

During the absence of Joan, and perhaps purposely to profit by it, the

chiefs had assembled in council, and had decided that the next day they would feign to attack the bastions on the right, and when the English should be unprepared, to attack them on the left bank. Just as this decision had been made, Joan returned; Dunois sent for her, and told her, that according to her desire they would march the next day against the bastions on the west. But Joan shook her head. "The truth is this, my brave captains," said she, "you think you ought not to tell me all, supposing that I cannot keep a secret, because I am a woman; however, I know all your decisions, and you need have no fears but that I can keep a secret when it is necessary."

Seeing that it was useless to attempt to conceal anything from this extraordinary woman, the Bastard of Orleans, who was one of her warmest friends, related to her the determination they had taken, and asked her if it met with her approval. Joan replied that she thought the project was a very good one. Then she forbade any soldier's marching to battle the next day without first confessing, and she gave the example herself by confessing and communing. The next morning, at break of day, Joan and the principal chiefs assembled the troops which had been designed for the expedition across the Loire; as there was in the city a great number of boats which had been placed at the disposal of Gaucourt, the governor of the town, Joan passed over with La Hire to a small island which was near the left bank; with two boats they made a bridge by which they could easily gain the shore from the island; then the soldiers got into the remaining boats and crossed over from the right bank to the island, and from the island to the left bank.

All these precautions had been taken because they expected the English would have opposed their landing; but instead of which, they abandoned the first bastion and burned it, so as to render it useless to the French, and then retreated to the second, which was that of the Augustins, having bulwarks and turrets. Emboldened by this retreat, Joan passed over to the shore with only fifty men; for only the foreguard had arrived, and the other troops were occupied in crossing from the right bank to the island, which they could do but slowly on account of the small number of boats.

But Joan calculated neither the number of her own men, nor of those against whom she combated; she was urged on by the power of God, and the ordinary calculations of men were nothing to her; she marched straight to the bulwark, and planted her banner within a half bow shot of the walls; then returning, she summoned the fifty or sixty men who had followed. At that moment a cry arose that the English were advancing in great numbers from the direction of Saint Rive; at this cry, the armed men who accompanied La Pucelle, and who were mostly common soldiers, took fright and fled straight to the passage of the Loire: about fifteen men, however, remained near Joan, and with this small number she also slowly retreated. As soon as the English saw her beat a retreat, they issued in great numbers from the bastion Saint Augustin, and pursued her with derisive shouts, and

such abusive language, that, few men as she had, Joan faced about and fell upon the English; then God, in order to display in all its force the celestial mission of the inspired maiden, put fear into the heart of all that multitude, who fled before her standard like a flock of sheep before the shepherd's crook. Joan pursued them to the bulwarks, followed not only by the fifteen men who had remained faithful to her, and by the fifty men who had fled at first, and rallied afterwards, but also by all those who had crossed from the right bank to the island, and who, seeing La Pucelle engaged with the enemy, hastened to her assistance. La Pucelle then suddenly found herself at the head of a considerable force, which was soon further augmented by the arrival of the rear-guard led by Chevalier Retz. Then Joan marched directly to the palisades, and a Spaniard, named Seigneur de Partada, and Seigneur Daulon made an opening, through which Joan passed, and immediately her banner was seen floating above the pickets. Every one then rushed through the passage, which soon became an enormous breach; the English strove to resist, but no human courage could withstand the force of men animated by the wrath of God. In an instant the bastion of the Augustins was taken, and for fear that her people would occupy themselves with pillage, and thus offer to the enemy an occasion for taking revenge, she set fire to it with her own hands.

The steeples and roofs of Orleans were covered with a multitude of people, who watched with intense interest the heroic movements of La Pucelle, animating her by their loud cheers and clapping of hands, as the spectators do at a theatre. As soon as they descried upon the bastion the sacred banner, all the bells rung, as a signal of triumph. La Pucelle ordered her men to pass the night where they were, promising to return with new forces the next morning. As for herself, as she had been wounded in the foot with a caltrop, and had fasted all day, it being Friday, she returned to the town to take some repose and a little nourishment; for now that she was no longer supported by the feverish excitement of battle, she sank from weariness and exhaustion.

In the evening the chiefs held a council of war. Contrary to the resolution previously adopted, their whole efforts had been directed against the left bank; it was now agreed that, since nothing prevented the reinforcements from arriving, as the bastions Saint Loup, Saint Jehan de Blane, and the Augustins no longer existed, that they would not permit any more soldiers to leave the town, as in the absence of three quarters of its defenders, there was a possibility of its being taken suddenly by assault.

Joan learned this resolution: "You have been to your council," said she, "and I to mine. Now, the counsel of the Most High is contrary to yours: also, his will stand, and yours will perish. Let them be ready at an early hour, for I shall have more to do to-morrow than I have ever yet done. Then," added she, with a sigh, and as if she shuddered with pain, "to-morrow my blood will flow: I shall be wounded!"

Joan passed a very restless night, waking every few moments; she was so much afraid that the English would attack her men, that she sprang up very often and ran to the window to listen if she could hear any noise, and every time that she did so, the wife of Jacques Boucher, who slept in the same bed with her, endeavoured to soothe her agitation, telling her to sleep quietly, for that the English had been so much terrified by what had passed the two preceding days, that they were more disposed to fly than to attack. Joan became calm for a moment, and returned to bed, but soon the same fears disturbed her again; and thus she wearied out a part of the night; but she dressed, and had herself armed, long before daylight.

Before she left her chamber, she repeated, with an involuntary shudder, the prediction relative to her wound.

“Why do you go out then?” demanded her hostess.

“The hand of God impels me,” said Joan.

As she was going out, some sailors brought to Jacques Boucher a superb shad.

“Stay with us,” said her kind host, “instead of exposing yourself in battle, and we will eat this nice fish.”

“No,” said Joan, “no; but wait the supper for me a little while, and I will return by the bridge towards evening to take my share, and will bring some English to sup with us.”

“God grant it!” said Jacques Boucher, “for if you return by the bridge, you will first have to take the Bastion of the Tournelles.”

“With the aid of God, I have no doubt but that we shall take it,” replied Joan.

At these words, she went out; it was about half past seven in the morning. On arriving at the gate of Burgundy, she found it shut, and it was Governor Gaucourt who, in virtue of the decision of the council, had given orders not to let Joan go out. But Joan exclaimed that the orders of the council did not concern her, that she was chief of war, and that besides a much higher council than that which wished to fetter her, had ordered her to go. The result of this conflict was a great mutiny at the gate. They ran to inform the governor of it, who hastened to the gate; but in defiance of all he could say, Joan remained firm in her resolution. The people then began to murmur in her favour. The governor wished to elevate his voice.

“You are a wicked man,” cried La Pucelle, overwhelming the voice of the governor, “but you shall not have power to oppose the will of our Lord. The soldiers will go out in spite of you; the soldiers will obey my voice, and not yours; the soldiers will follow me, and they will win the victory to-day, as they did yesterday and the day before.”

“Yes! yes!” responded the soldiers, the archers, and the people, from every direction, “Yes, Joan is our only chief, and we will follow her.”

And, as Gaucourt still made some difficulty, they fell upon him and his

suite with such violence, that, but for Joan, he and all his men would have been slaughtered. At length, the gate was opened: Joan passed through first, and all that roaring multitude followed after. Joan crossed the river in a boat, holding her horse by the bridle, as he swam after her. When she reached the other shore, she raised her standard, and her soldiers, who had encamped there the night before, seeing that she had kept her promise to return to them early in the morning, put themselves in battle array, uttering cries of joy, and shouting from rank to rank, "to arms! to arms!" La Pucelle did not allow sufficient time to elapse for their ardour to decrease, before she gave orders to commence the assault.

The bastion Tournelles was the strongest of all, and contained within its walls, Sir William Gladsdale, with the flower of his army. It was built upon an arch of the broken bridge, being isolated one third of the breadth of the Loire, the river serving it on every side as a fosse. Besides this, there was a well fortified bulwark on the left bank, defending the approach to the bastion Tournelles, and communicating with it by a draw-bridge; so that this bulwark had first to be taken, and then the task would be but half accomplished.

La Pucelle marched to the combat with her habitual confidence, and soon she saw all the chiefs coming to her assistance, who being ashamed to permit a woman to combat alone, had followed on to take their part in the battle. There were the Bastard of Orleans, the chevaliers Retz, Gaucourt, Gamache, Gravelle, Guitey, Villars Chailly, Coaraze, Yilliers, Thermes, Gontaut, Admiral Culant, La Hire Zantrailles; that is to say, with few exceptions, the flower of French chivalry. On seeing the approach of the French, Sir William Gladsdale reminded his soldiers that they were of the same blood as those who conquered at Cressy, Poitiers, and Agincourt; besides, added he, those who fought those famous battles, had men for their antagonists, and not a woman. The English swore to show themselves worthy of their fathers and themselves, and the assault commenced.

At the first onset, by their manner of attack and defence, it was evident that each one regarded it as a mortal struggle, the issue of which would be decisive for France or for England. From ten o'clock in the morning till three in the afternoon, the French ceased not to assail and the English to repulse. Every one fought not with the deliberate regularity of a general battle, but with the desperation of a private duel. Each one selected his antagonist, attacked and defeated him, or was defeated by him; the French making use of their swords and lances, with which they could reach the farthest, and the English striking with leaden maces and iron axes, and precipitating the men with large timbers, breaking the steps with enormous stones; then pouring down upon these prostrate and shattered bodies, lime and boiling oil or melted lead. For three long hours the horrible conflict raged thus; for three hours the voice of La Pucelle was heard above all others, shouting "Courage!" for three hours they saw her banner waving

foremost, now rising, now descending, then rising again; till at length, harassed by fatigue, repulsed on all sides, the French retreated a few steps, notwithstanding the efforts of Joan, who rushed forward to the wall, crying, "In the name of God do not retreat! in God's name, courage! for I tell you they will soon all be at our mercy." And wishing to reanimate them by her example, she took a ladder and placed it against the rampart, and mounted alone, crying: "Surrender, Englishmen, surrender, and if you do not, you will all be discomfited, for such is the will of God."

At that moment, an arrow hit her above the breast and came out four or five inches behind the neck. That was the wound poor Joan had predicted the day before; she uttered one cry of agony, descended the ladder, and overcome by suffering she fell into the fosse. The English seeing this, took courage, and rushed out of the fortress to take her, but the French chevaliers flew to her aid. Chevalier Gamache reached her first, and with his axe hewing down two Englishmen who essayed to touch her: "Joan," said he, "you are a brave girl, and I beg your pardon for having thought evil of you; take my horse, and let us be friends." "Yes, let us be friends," replied La Pucelle, extending her hand to him, "for I have never seen a better bred chevalier than you are." Then they carried Joan about a hundred paces from the fortress, for she could not mount a horse, and there they disarmed her. Joan raised her hand to the arrow in her shoulder, and did not know till that moment that it came out half a foot behind; then the warrior succumbed to the woman, strength to weakness—Joan was afraid, and began to cry; but suddenly her tears ceased, she raised her eyes to heaven, her countenance became radiant, and her lips murmured a few words which no person understood. They were her saints who had appeared to her to console her.

When the vision vanished, Joan felt herself again strong and confident, she took the arrow with her own hands and drew it from the wound: then one of the soldiers who had helped to carry her there, approached her, and offered to charm away the pain she suffered by some magical words. But Joan recoiled from him with horror: "I would rather die," said she, "than to go contrary to the will of God. If my wound can be healed I shall be glad; but I would rather it should remain open all my life, and lose by it my last drop of blood, than it should be closed by such means." Then another approached, and put upon it some cotton saturated with oil, which relieved her a little.

At that moment, Dunois came to her, and told her she had better prepare to retire; that the retreat had been ordered, and the cannoniers were beginning to take away the cannons. Then Joan rallied all her strength, put on her armour, mounted her horse, and leaving her standard in the hands of one of her soldiers, she galloped into the midst of the chiefs, crying: "In God's name, have courage a little longer, for we shall soon enter. Let the

men eat and drink, and repose a little while ; then return to the assault, and in less than half an hour, all will be in our power."

But they were all so completely disheartened by their long fruitless struggle, that the bravest were inclined to return to the town ; suddenly it occurred to Chevalier Daulon, that if they saw Joan's banner moving towards the fortress, they would all follow, and he made a movement to take it from the soldier to whom Joan had confided it, but the soldier was so proud of his charge that he would not give it up. Daulon then proposed that they should go together against the English ; and taking each other by the hand, they ran towards the fosse, crying out, "forward, soldiers, forward !"

The scheme of Daulon succeeded admirably, for without regarding the chiefs, the soldiers and common people rushed on to the fortress. Joan had dismounted, and was kneeling beneath a vine, praying earnestly to God, beseeching him to infuse courage into the drooping hearts of her soldiers, when she heard a great noise, and looking up she saw all the men returning to the assault. She plunged into the thickest of the crowd, urged her way forward to the place where the standard was, and taking it from the soldier she raised it above her head, and waved it to and fro with all her strength. The effect of this apparition was magical : the most distant returned, and the most timid took heart. The English, on their part, who supposed that Joan was dead, or grievously wounded, were terrified and amazed to see her return, armed, vigorous, and apparently safe and sound ; it seemed to them that nothing short of a miracle could have brought about her return, and the thought that God was combating for the French seemed to produce a paralyzing effect upon their energies. At this moment, to augment still further the confusion which began to spread among them, the citizens of Orleans, conducted by commander Girenne, came over to attack the bastion upon the bridge. A brave carpenter threw a broad beam of the broken bridge so that one end of it rested upon the bastion Tournelles : the commander sprang upon it first, shouting, "death to the English ! death to the English !"

Sir William Gladsdale, hearing these shouts, and fearing that in his absence his people could not defend themselves well, and might allow themselves to be surprised by an attack from behind, wished to go to the place from whence he heard the cries. Joan saw him going towards the draw-bridge, by the aid of which they communicated with the bastion Tournelles : "Surrender, Gladsdale, surrender !" cried she, "surrender to the King of heaven, and you shall find mercy ! You have basely injured me, nevertheless I have pity upon your soul and the souls of your people !" But Gladsdale made no reply ; he had just stepped on to the draw-bridge, sword in hand, and was passing along suspended above the river, when suddenly Daulon, who had ordered a brave cannonier to direct his bombard against the bridge, ordered him to fire : the stone with which it was charged hit full on the beam of the draw-bridge, which, being loaded with men, and so

much shattered by the shot from the bombard, that it cracked and broke in the middle, and Gladsdale fell into the Loire, and was dragged to the bottom by the weight of his armour. Moulins, Pommiers, and several other English chevaliers, were drowned with him.

A cry of despair rose at the same time from the bulwark and the bastion: God declared himself visibly for the French. An Englishman declared that he saw above their ranks the archangel Michael, and Saint Aignan, the patron saint of the city of Orleans, mounted upon white horses, armed with flaming swords, and combating in aid of their enemies, the French. The English chief was no longer there to give orders, his bravest captains were either dead or wounded, and resistance any longer was impossible. Then was heard the despairing cry, "*Sauve qui peut!*" Some leapt from the bulwark into the river, some surrendered and sued for mercy; and there were others who would neither fly nor surrender, but perished arms in hand. In fine, as Joan had predicted, in less than half an hour the bulwark and bastion were both taken.

Thus, as Joan had announced to her host, she actually returned to the town by the way of the bridge.

This was a more triumphant entree for Joan than she had ever yet made. It is true her miraculous mission had never displayed itself so clearly. All that she had predicted had been accomplished: she had been wounded, the bastion had been taken, and she had returned by the way of the bridge as she had said she would do in the morning. The *Te Deum* was sung, the bells rang all night, and the citizens promenaded the illuminated streets till break of day, embracing each other in token of their gladness, and uttering exclamations of joy and thanksgiving.

Jacques Boucher waited for Joan with his shad; but she was suffering so much from pain and fatigue, that she could not take any of it, she only ate a little bread, and drank part of a goblet of wine and water, and having her wound, which was already closed, newly dressed, she retired to her bed.

At dawn of day they awoke Joan, telling her there was a great flame and a thick smoke in the direction of the English quarters; Joan arose, and, instead of her heavy cuirass, she put on a light jacket of mail, and mounted her horse. As she reached the ramparts, she saw the English in battle order, having their troops ranged along the moat of the city, and seeming to offer combat to the French. During the night, Lord Talbot, the Count of Suffolk, and the other English chiefs, had decided to abandon the siege; but as they wished for honour's sake to make this retreat, not as men who were driven away, but as if they went of their own accord, they had set fire to their lodgings, and ranged their soldiers in battle array, to offer the last challenge to their conquerors.

The French chiefs, at this demonstration, wished to go out and accept

the combat; but this time it was Joan who, instead of exciting their courage, endeavoured to calm their ardour.

“For the love and honour of the holy Sabbath!” cried she, “do not make the first attack; for it is the good pleasure of God that we should permit them to depart if they will. But if they attack you, defend yourselves boldly, for in this case you will be masters.”

Then she sent for some priests, with their sacerdotal vestments; and while they sang hymns and chants, accompanied by the people, she ordered a table and a consecrated marble to be brought, and by the aid of these two articles they made a temporary altar, where the priests said two masses, to which Joan listened devoutly, kneeling. At the end of the second mass she asked if the English had their backs or faces turned towards the town.

“They have their backs turned, and are making their retreat,” was the reply.

“Well, let them go,” said Joan, “for it is not the will of God that we should pursue them to-day. Another time God will deliver them into our hands.”

Whatever was the desire of the chiefs to pursue the enemy, there was so much inspiration in Joan’s voice, that they were arrested by it, and according to her desire they let the English retire unmolested; only the soldiers and common people went out of the city to pillage the two bastions which remained standing; then they demolished them, after they had withdrawn the cannons and the bombards, which they brought with them on their return to the town.

A part of the population and the whole garrison were upon the ramparts of the city, from the top of which they watched the retreat of the English. At the moment the bell rang for noon their receding forms vanished in the distance. Joan had now raised “the siege of Orleans.”

Nine days had sufficed for La Pucelle to accomplish the first promise which she had made in the name of God.

CHAPTER VII.

JARGAN AND PATAY.

HAVING raised the siege of Orleans, Joan had nothing more to do there; and on the 13th of May she took her departure from the city she had so miraculously saved. The Bastard of Orleans and nearly all the military chiefs accompanied her; for in seeing her so brave in battle, so modest after, and so pious always, they had ceased to be jealous and were emulous to render her justice. They rode on thus to Tours, where the king

was. Charles VII. made a grand feast in honour of the chiefs and of La Pucelle in particular, which was her just due, for she had fulfilled all her promises; and there was not one chief in the whole army, however powerful or intrepid, who would have dared to conceive a hope of accomplishing what she had promised.

Then a grand council was assembled to decide upon their future movements. Joan strongly insisted upon conducting the Dauphin instantly to Reims, saying, that from the moment when he should be crowned the power of the English would continue to decline throughout the kingdom. But it was finally thought best to first clear the Loire, by recovering those towns upon the river which were in possession of the English. Consequently they convoked a grand assembly of nobles, whom the king placed under the guidance of the Duke of Alençon, recommending him, however, in all things to take counsel of La Pucelle. The Duchess of Alençon was much distressed at being again separated from her husband, but Joan, as before, promised her that he should return safe and sound, and as this promise had been once fulfilled the duchess took courage and embraced Joan, recommending the duke to her prayers.

On the 20th of June they arrived before Jargan, and the next day, which was St. Barnabas's day, they commenced the siege. The French had in their army the Duke of Alençon who was commander-in-chief, Joan, the Bastard of Orleans, the Chevaliers Boussac, Gravelle, Culant, Ambroise Dehore, and Stephen de Vignoles. As for the city, it was defended by the Count of Suffolk, in person, and Alexander and John de la Poule, his two brothers. We may well suppose that the city being so well attacked, would also be well defended.

The day after they arrived they began to cannonade the walls. All that day, which was Saturday, they kept up the battering with so much vigour, that on Sunday morning the breach was practicable, and they ordered the assault. In fact, there was no time to be lost, for the English were daily expecting a large reinforcement from Paris, which was to be led on by the famous Sir Falstaff, who had so cruelly beaten the French at the celebrated battle of the Herrings.

The day before, Joan had given a new proof of the spirit of divination which animated her. As the Duke of Alençon was advancing with Chevalier de Lude to direct the fire of a battery, Joan called out to him to draw back, and as he did not hear her she ran to him, caught him by the arm, and drew him aside two or three yards. At the same moment an English bombard was discharged, and Chevalier de Lude, who was standing in the very spot where the duke was, had his head carried off. The Duke of Alençon had already a great affection for Joan, and almost from the commencement had entire confidence in her, but from this time his gratitude to her was unbounded, for there was no doubt but that she had saved his life. This event, which had taken place in the sight of all the

army, infused new courage into the soldiers, and they boldly prepared for the coming strife.

At the moment when the assault was about to commence, the Count of Suffolk demanded a parley. The English were no longer the same as when two months before they had attacked the French wherever they encountered them, even though they were treble their number; on the contrary, they felt no security in their numbers or their walls, and avoided the combat as much as possible.

Several were inclined to continue the assault and not to grant the parley; but Joan and the duke declared that it ought to be granted. Then the English envoy advanced between the two armies and demanded to treat in the name of the Count of Suffolk, promising to surrender the town at the expiration of fifteen days if no succour arrived to him in that space of time. The duke's reply was, that he could only grant the English garrison their lives, and moreover permission for the nobles to keep their horses; but the envoy said he could not accept such a proposition.

"Then we will take you by assault," replied La Pucelle.

The envoy retired.

"Forward, gentle duke!" cried Joan, "forward to the assault!"

"But," said the duke, "do you think Joan that the breach is sufficiently practicable? does it not seem to you that we ought to wait a little?"

"Have no doubt," said Joan, "but march boldly forward; the hour is come; this is God's time; and it is his will that we should make the attack now, and he is ready to aid us."

"Nevertheless"—said the duke, hesitating still.

"Ah!" interrupted Joan, "are you then afraid, my gentle duke, and do you forget that I have promised to your wife to bring you safely home?"

"Come on, then," said the duke, "since you will have it so, Joan, it shall be done according to your pleasure." Then raising his voice, he shouted: "To the assault! to the assault!"

Each one then rushed to the walls with admirable ardour. But as the duke had thought the breach was too high up, and they had to make use of ladders to reach it, which was no easy matter: for there was at the most assailable place (and consequently the most attacked,) a great strong Englishman armed cap-a-pie, who performed wonders, sometimes with a war-club and sometimes with great pieces of rock, which he hurled with the force of a machine of war.

Then the Duke of Alençon, seeing the ravage this giant made among them, went to a master cannonier who passed for a very skilful pointer, and pointing out the Englishman to him, asked him if he could despatch that troublesome enemy. The cannonier, who was called Master John, and who was well worthy of his reputation, instantly charged his culverin, and directing it against the Englishman, who exposed himself very much

just at that moment, he hit him full in the breast; he was thrown back by the shot four or five paces, and then fell dead from the top of the breach.

Profiting by the disorder which this master-stroke created among the English, Joan descended into the fosse with her standard in her hand, and setting up a ladder in the place where the English were making the severest defence, she put her foot upon the first round, calling and encouraging her companions. Just then she was recognized by the English, and one of them taking a large stone which he could hardly lift launched it upon her head with such force that the stone broke into a thousand pieces upon her helmet, and Joan, stunned by the blow, was obliged to sit down. But she soon rose, and with an energy and faith stronger than ever she cried out:

“Mount! mount boldly! and enter the city; you will find no more resistance; for their hour is told, and God has condemned them!”

At these words, giving the example, she mounted first; and, in fact, the French had hardly made an effort when every thing yielded before them, and the English began to fly. The French pursued them sword in hand, and the Count of Suffolk, who had just seen his brother, Alexander de Poole, fall dead, fled like the rest, and being closely pursued by a gentleman called William Renault, who as he pursued called out to him to surrender, he turned around:

“Art thou a gentleman?” demanded the count of his enemy.

“I am,” replied he.

“Art thou a chevalier?” again demanded the count.

“No, but I deserve to be one when the Count of Suffolk flies before me,” replied William.

“Good!” said the count; “upon my soul you shall be one, and what is more, by my hand, so down upon your knees!”

William Renault obeyed and knelt down before the count. The count then gave him three slaps upon his shoulder with the flat of his sword, saying: “In the name of God and St. George I dub thee a knight.” Then he immediately surrendered to him the same sword with which he had conferred on him his new title.

This good news was soon transmitted to the king, whilst that the French army, after having left a garrison at Jargan, retired to Orleans, where they intended to recruit themselves by a short period of repose.

The king, much elated with so rich a prize—after having heartily returned thanks to God by masses and processions—made a new convocation of nobles and soldiers, and as at the moment his fallen fortunes began to rise, reinforcements poured in to him from all quarters, he sent them all on to Orleans, where, as we have said, were the Duke of Alençon and La Pucelle. The principal persons among the arrivals were Seigneur Retz, Seigneur Chavigny, Seigneur Loheac, his brother Guy of Laval, and Seigneur Latour d’Auvergne.

When the Duke of Alençon saw himself thus powerfully reinforced,

he immediately resolved to continue that period of success which had been opened by the taking of Jargan. He marched directly upon Meung-sur-Loire, where the English were commanded by Lord Seales, who, not judging himself sufficiently strong to offer resistance, abandoned the town and retired to the citadel. The French then continued their march to Beaugency, where Lord Talbot commanded; but, like Lord Seales, not daring to defend the town, he left a small garrison in the fortress and went to join the forces which had been led from Paris by Sir Falstaff, and which had arrived too late to render any assistance to their compatriots at Jargan.

The Duke of Alençon was before Beaugency, when the news reached him that Count Arthur, of Richmond, constable of France—who had been removed from the king by the influence of Seigneur Tremoille—had come to join him with an army. In effect, the constable, who was young and brave, and moreover a Frenchman at heart, had become weary of the repose which the intrigues of a court inflicted upon him, and longed to share in the stirring scenes which were enacting at that period of time. Consequently, he left Parthenay with a great number of gentlemen of the first families of Brittany, and came as we have said to the Duke of Alençon, to tender his sword in the service of the king, and if need was, to serve Charles VII. with or without his consent.

The situation of the Duke of Alençon became very embarrassing, for he had positive orders from the king not to accept the aid of the constable, and the constable, being already at Amboise, had sent two of his officers to secure lodgings for himself and his men in Beaugency, the same town where the duke was. Placed between the two unpleasant extremities of disobeying the king or making an enemy of the constable, whom he much esteemed, the duke was upon the point of retiring. Joan, being entirely ignorant who the Count of Richmond was, and judging from the perplexity which he caused in the French army that he was some enemy, proposed to march towards him and defeat him directly. But this proposition excited a great clamour against her, and many chevaliers, and even La Hire, who was one of her best friends, declared boldly that if any attack was made upon Arthur of Richmond their services need not be relied upon, for they much preferred the constable to all the girls in the kingdom.

During these consultations they learned that Lord Talbot was approaching with Sir John Falstaff. Then La Pucelle, who by this time rightly understood who the constable was, gave her opinion first, saying, that instead of encouraging civil discord and division, it was necessary to support and aid each other; declaring that she herself would answer to the king for this violation of his commands. The Duke of Alençon, who desired nothing better than a union with the constable provided another would take the responsibility of it, convoked the principal chiefs of his army to accompany them to the constable. When they were within a few paces of the Breton army, the French chevaliers dismounted from their

horses; and Joan advancing first, knelt to embrace the knees of the constable, but the constable quickly raised her, saying: "Joan, I have been assured that you wished to combat me: I do not know whether you come from God or not—if you are from God I have no fear of you, for God knows the intentions of my heart: if you are from the devil I fear you still less."

After Joan came the Duke of Alençon; the two princes shook each other cordially and frankly by the hand; then French and Bretons mingled, and began to talk of the marvellous things that had been accomplished; from these relations they mutually inspired each other with courage for the coming contest, which they knew could not be far distant.

The first effect of this union was to cause such alarm in the English garrison at Beaugency, that the commander, Chevalier Gueton, demanded a treaty. The next day a capitulation was signed, by which every Englishman then in the garrison had liberty to depart with his horse, his armour, and the value of a marc of silver.

During this time Lord Talbot, Lord Seales, and Sir John Falstaff, had united their forces, and were marching upon the French with the evident intention of proposing battle in the open field; it was then very fortunate that this good understanding existed between the French and Bretons, and to none did it impart more satisfaction than to Joan. "Ah! my good constable," said she, "you did not come by my desire or command, but you are not the less welcome."

La Pucelle spoke words of encouragement to all. "If the English come," said she, "we must not hesitate to fight like heroes; God has sent us to punish them, and were they hung in the clouds they should not escape us." Thus Joan, by her tone of confidence and animation, banished from the minds of her soldiers the recollection of the unfortunate battles of Vrevent, of Verneuil, and of Rouvray—and with the brilliant successes of Orleans and of Jargan still glowing in their memories, the soldiers eagerly demanded to be led on to the encounter.

The Duke of Alençon and the Constable resolved to profit by the favourable state of feeling which prevailed—and they ordered the army to prepare themselves, not for a defence against the English when they should arrive, but to anticipate them in their march and present the challenge themselves. They formed a fore-guard chosen from the flower of the troops, and commanded by Ambroise de Lore, Chevalier de Beaumanoir, James de Tillet, La Hire, and Zandrilles. La Pucelle loudly demanded to be included in this number, for she said it was her custom to march in the first rank; but they required her to remain in the main body of the army, with the Constable, the Duke of Alençon, the Count of Dunois, Admiral Culant, Marshal Broussac, and the Seigneurs Laval, d'Albret, and Gaucourt.

They now commenced their march. The order was given to the fore-

guard to attack the English as soon as they encountered them, so as not to allow them time to range their troops in battle order—their great advantage over the French having always been attributable to their skill in disposing their armies. They marched admirably in the beautiful plains of the Beauce, where they expected to encounter the English; and as they arrived near Patay, at a place called Coignéés, where the view was obstructed by a growth of coppice, the fore-guard started a buck. La Hire and the chevaliers who were near him, fastened their eyes upon the animal with the attention of men who, next to war, knew no nobler task than the chase. A few minutes after the stag had disappeared in the border of a wood, they heard great cries, and the animal again bounded in sight apparently bewildered with terror: it had come in contact with the English army, and the cries that they heard were those of the enemy. La Hire soon ranged his fore-guard in good order, and sent word to the Duke of Alençon that he had just encountered the English, and demanded if he should attack them according to their first decision. The duke was near Joan when the messenger brought the news. Turning himself towards her:

“Joan,” said he, “the English are here in battle array; shall we combat?”

“Have you your spurs, gentle duke?” demanded Joan, smiling.

“Why our spurs, Joan? do you think we ought to fly?”

“No, indeed,” said Joan, “they are the ones to fly, and not we; this day will be won for the Dauphin the finest triumph he has ever gained, for my counsel has assured me that we shall be the victors; this is why I asked you if you had your spurs, because we shall put them to flight and you will have need of them in the pursuit.”

“Very good, Joan,” replied the duke; “let us hasten forward.”

“Come on, in God’s name,” said Joan, “for I answer for it beforehand—the battle will be ours.”

And the messenger soon reported the orders to La Hire to commence the attack.

La Hire fell upon the English so precipitately—and they, not knowing the French were so near, and not being at all prepared for the attack—had not time to set in order their battle; besides, there was discord in their ranks: some wished to accept the combat and others wished to decline it. Lord Talbot was of the former opinion and Sir John Falstaff of the latter; but it was already too late to beat a retreat, and they had no choice left them but to face the French. Then another discussion arose: some wished to combat in the same place where they were, affirming it to be sufficiently defended by a strong hedge which extended along their right—others wished to take a better position, where they could be supported on one side by the Abbey of Patay, and on the other by a wood. As the majority were of the latter opinion this course was decided upon. Then they all began to run to reach the proposed place; meantime the French fore-guard had

gained ground considerably, and seeing the English run they thought they were taking flight without awaiting the attack ; their courage being so much augmented by this they urged on their horses, so that they arrived pell-mell with the enemy upon the spot where they designed to form their ranks ; the result of it was, that before the English chevaliers could couch their lances, before the archers had planted the pickets behind which they fought and which protected them from the thrusts of the cavalry, in short, before any thing could be properly disposed, the French fore-guard were slashing right and left, levelling all that came in their way ; and when the main body of the army came up the victory was already in so good train that the mere showing themselves put the climax to the achievement. Sir John Falstaff and the Bastard of Thian took flight ; Lord Talbot, Lord Seales, and Lord Hungerford were made prisoners ; two thousand two hundred English remained upon the field of battle ; the others were pursued as far as Janville, where they expected to find a retreat, but were disappointed ; the good people of Janville, who were French at heart, seeing the English defeated shut their gates upon them, and they were obliged to pass on. Moreover the governor of the city, seeing that fortune declared itself decidedly for the King of France, proposed to the conquerors to surrender Janville and to enlist themselves in the interests of the French, if they would grant them their lives and protection from injuries ; the proposition was accepted, and with the same blow a battle was gained and a city taken.

But the results of this great battle did not end here ; consternation among the English was so great that they abandoned Meung, Mountpipeau, and St. Simon, and setting fire to the fortresses they concentrated themselves upon Paris.

As for La Pucelle, the Duke of Alençon, and the other chiefs of war, they returned to Orleans, where they entered the 18th of June. The Constable and his Bretons remained at Beaugency, where they awaited the orders of the king.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CORONATION.

THEY had supposed at first that the king would have paid a visit to Orleans, which honour was in justice due to a city whose fidelity had been so nobly manifested ; also the citizens and priests, in anticipation of his arrival, had prepared the streets and houses with the same pomp as for Corpus Christi day ; but these good people were disappointed : the king remained at Sully without coming to Orleans. From Sully he passed on to Châteauneuf-sur-Loire, and from that place to Gien ; and as he was supported by a formidable army, he summoned the captains who held the cities of Bonny, of Cosne, and of Charité, to return to his allegiance ; but this

summons was useless, and the commanders of these different places still adhered to the English interest.

While the king was at Sully, Joan went to see him, and was very joyfully received. But great as her influence was with the king, and earnest as were her entreaties, she was not able to restore the constable to his favour. So powerful was the baleful influence of Tremoille over him, that the king declared that it was much to his displeasure that he had been served at the battle of Patay by a man whom he regarded as his enemy. Other nobles, among whom was the Duke of Alençon, added their entreaties to Joan's, but with as little effect. Then the constable, seeing himself so sternly repulsed by his sovereign, resolved still to continue his services; and to further the deliverance of the country from the enemy, he had gone to put the siege before Marchenois.

When Charles VII. was at Gien, Joan went to see him again. The news of her arrival was, as before, received with great joy by the king, and he ordered that she should be immediately introduced to his presence. Joan approached him with her habitual respect; then kneeling before him:

“Well beloved sovereign,” said she, “you see how, by the help of God, and your good servants, your affairs have been conducted to the present, for which your thanks are due to God alone, for it is he who has done all. It is necessary now for you to prepare to make your journey to Reims, that you may be there anointed and crowned, according to the custom of your predecessors the kings of France. The time is come, and it pleases God that the thing be done, seeing there must a very great advantage result to you from it; for, after your coronation, the consideration and honour of your royal name will augment in the eyes of your people, and at the same time it will become more formidable to your enemies. Have no fear of those who hold the cities and châteaux in the country of Champagne, through which you have to pass, for with the aid of God and your good captains, we will conduct you in such a manner that you will pass safely. Assemble, then, your forces, gentle Dauphin, that we may execute the will of God.”

However difficult the enterprise appeared—the country through which they had to pass being full of enemies—the young girl, by her pious conduct and military services, had acquired such an influence, that this proposition, coming from her, instantly became a subject of consideration, whereas, if it had been offered by the boldest and bravest chevalier, it would at once have been judged impracticable. A lively discussion then took place between those who thought best to follow the inspirations of Joan, and those who wished to avail themselves of the discouragement of the English to carry the war into Normandy, the centre of their power. Then as each one was maintaining his opinion, the Duke of Alençon, who was for the coronation, proposed in a low tone to make some new questions to Joan, to satisfy himself more clearly upon the source of her inspi-

rations. The king and several of his counsellors approved of this proposal; but they feared this indiscretion would displease the young girl; when Joan anticipating their wishes, approached them:

“Gentlemen,” said she, “in God’s name, do not undertake to conceal anything from me, for whether you speak loud or whether you speak low, I know what you think. You wish me to repeat to you what my voices have said to me concerning the coronation; and I will tell you: I knelt down to pray, in my accustomed manner, lamenting that neither the Duke of Alençon nor the Count of Dunois would believe me, when I said the king would be anointed and crowned without any resistance: then the voices said to me: ‘Daughter of God, go to the gentle Dauphin himself, go, go, and we will aid thee,’ and immediately I departed; for as soon as I hear these voices I am filled with great confidence and conviction, and as they have never deceived me, I do instantly what they order me.” And in saying these words, Joan raised her eyes to heaven, and all her countenance took the character of sublime exaltation.

“But,” said the king, partially convinced, “what if we make the expedition to Normandy first and the coronation afterward?”

“The coronation first and before all, gentle Dauphin,” replied Joan; “for after that I cannot aid you any more.”

“Why so, Joan?” demanded the king.

“Because I shall not last more than a year,” said Joan, with a melancholy shake of her head.

“Why, what will happen to you when that time expires, Joan?” said the king.

“I do not know,” replied she, “my voices have not told me; I only know that my mission is ended when I raise the siege of Orleans, and conduct you to Reims to be crowned. Let us depart then, gentle Dauphin, as soon as possible, for it is the will of God.”

The young girl spoke with such conviction, that by a sympathetic attraction, the strong confidence which she had in God seemed to pass into the hearts of all the bystanders. True, the enterprise was difficult, but taking every thing into consideration, it was less so than those which she had already executed with success, and it was unanimously resolved that they would do according to her desire, and would depart instantly for the city of Reims, without attempting to recover Normandy, and regardless even of the cities of Casne and Charité.

Consequently the king sent messengers over the country, to invite the captains who were to accompany him in this grand voyage, and when all the company was assembled, after having taken leave of the queen—who had come from Bourges to Gien for that purpose—and whom they dared not take with them on account of the perils of the enterprise—he ordered the fore-guard, which, under the command of La Pucelle, was to clear the country through which he was to pass, and departed from Gien on St.

Peter's day, spurring on straight to Reims, with as much nonchalance as if the country were his own.

In fine, the king had about him a more powerful concourse than ever; for with his good fortune, fidelity returned to him from all sides, and on the occasion of the coronation, they all hastened to him with such eagerness, that it was finally decided that all those who presented themselves should be permitted to attend him to Reims, with the exception of the constable, towards whom the king still remained implacable. Now as many as had received the news of this journey had repaired to the king, in order to become one of the party; and it was regarded as such an honour, that very noble chevaliers, who had been totally ruined by the war, and had not wherewith to redeem their war-steeds, condescended to go in the capacity of archers or cutlass-bearers; and in all this multitude there was not one who had the slightest doubt of the success of the enterprise, so much was Joan regarded at that hour as a sainted and inspired virgin. As for herself, she led the van, as we have said, always armed cap-a-pie, and supporting fatigue like a captain of war—always the first to depart and the last to retreat—and conducting her men in such fine order, that Dunois or La Hire could not have done better. The discipline also which she maintained, excited strong admiration and surprise in the captains and soldiers; who, five months previous, had seen her as she came from her native village, a poor, little simple peasant girl, and who afterwards saw her conducting the affairs of the kingdom, on an equality with the king's most intimate counsellors; and this admiration was still further augmented, when on approaching her they found her so beautiful and so chaste, so gentle and so modest in her conversation, and withal so pious, stopping at all the churches to pray, and at least once a month, confessing and receiving in communion the precious body of our Saviour.

On the night of the first day's march, Joan slept at a village four leagues from Gien: this was the distance that was to be preserved throughout the journey, between the van-guard and the main body of the army—a convenient distance for maintaining communication with each other. The king left Gien the day after Joan, who, continuing to precede him, marched directly to Auxerre. Auxerre was for the English, and seeing the French army approach their walls, the citizens sent a message to the king, begging him to pass by and permit them to pay to him a contribution. Joan would hear nothing of it, saying that the king, being in his own dominions, had only to give the order, and the gates of the city should be opened: but the sagacious citizens had already discovered the vulnerable quarter, and accordingly addressed themselves to Seigneur de la Tremoille, so that the wily and all-powerful counsellor persuaded the king to renounce the siege; saying it would probably be a protracted one, and cause them the loss of much precious time. The proposition of the citizens was then accepted, and the king received, in token of submission, a trifling sum, whilst it is

affirmed that Tremoille received for his part more than six thousand crowns. The captains of the king's counsel were much dissatisfied with this concession, and the exorbitant appropriation of the money which Tremoille made to himself, and Joan especially, who, at the moment of departure, could obtain of the back pay due to her men only a crown a-piece, beheld with indignation this usurious grasping of the money, of which the poor soldiers had so much need.

The king then directed his course to Saint Florentin, which proffered to him full and entire obedience: he stopped there only to take a little repose, and after receiving the oath of allegiance from the inhabitants, he proceeded to Troyes, which city gave him much anxiety, being well defended by walls, and having an English garrison of nearly a thousand men.

These fears of the king were not groundless, for hardly was the vanguard in sight of the city when the English bravely made a sortie and offered battle to the French; the latter, who had not been accustomed to such audacity—especially since they marched in company with La Pucelle—rushed upon the assailants with such violence that after a short struggle, they were forced back into the town.

Meantime the king arrived and encamped with his army about the city, hoping that upon this simple demonstration the English garrison would capitulate; but, contrary to his expectation, five or six days elapsed without the besieged making any reply, either to the promises or threats which were made to them.

The situation was perplexing, and but for a sort of miracle which was accomplished then, it would have become still more critical: four or five months before that time a Franciscan friar, named brother Richard—who was of the king's party—had been preaching through the country, and stayed some time at Troyes, and all through Advent he ended every one of his sermons with these words: "Plant plenty of beans, my brethren, plant largely, remember it is I who tell you, and again I say, plant beans, for he who is to harvest them will come shortly." Now, as they had great confidence in brother Richard, every one had obeyed this order, leaving to God the care of explaining the signification of it. Well, the beans had been planted, the beans had grown, the beans were ripe, and they were about commencing the harvest, when king Charles appeared with his army: then it was evident that he was the reaper announced, and at the same time that the army, who were short of provisions, blessed God for finding thus a good and wholesome nourishment—the people of the city whispered it among themselves that it was a great sin for Frenchmen and christians too, to defend themselves against a prince who so evidently had the Lord on his side; so that notwithstanding the haughty replies of the English, there was in the city even a royalist party, who were all ready—when it should become sufficiently powerful—to open the gates to king Charles.

Indeed, the king had need that this party should conquer its majority

soon; for after waiting five or six days, the bean fields, copious as they were, began to be rather thin of beans; so on the seventh day, the Dukes of Alençon and of Bourbon, the Count of Vendôme, and several other of the noblest and wisest captains were convoked with the king, his lordship the Bishop of Reims, was also present, and there they held a consultation upon what was best to be done. As for Joan, they had purposely removed her from this deliberation; for as it was by her advice they had been drawn into this dilemma, they feared that her great confidence in her revelations—which this time seemed to have failed her—would incline her to maintain her opinion and to urge the army into a still more critical position.

Then each one, emboldened by the absence of Joan, exposed the danger in all its bearings. They could not induce the peasants to bring them provisions by any promises of payment, for they had been so often deceived before that they resolved to bring nothing more; on the other hand, the army had neither cannons, bombards, nor any machines for carrying on the siege, and the nearest town from which they could obtain them was Agin, and from Troyes to Agin was a distance of thirty leagues. These difficulties having been well exposed, the king desired his chancellor to take votes upon what was to be done. They were all of the opinion that it was best to abandon the siege and return behind the Loire, for they said if the king could not enter a small town like Auxerre, he would never be able to force Troyes, which was a large city, well armed and well defended; but when they came to the ex-chancellor Robert le Manou, his advice was, to have patience and persevere: "For," said he "very dear and honourable prince, you have undertaken this enterprise, not by any faith you have in human power, but in the confidence with which you had been inspired by Joan. Now, my advice is, that this voyage having been determined on by the influence of La Pucelle, La Pucelle ought to be present at the resolutions we shall form, in order that she may approve or oppose them."

As he finished these words a loud knocking was heard at the door; the usher opened it, and Joan appeared.

Then the young girl advanced a few steps, and after saluting the king:

"Sire," said she, "my voices have told me that important debates are going on here, and it is for this reason I am come: for if the counsel of men is good, that of the Most High is better."

"You are welcome, Joan," said the chancellor: "for the king and his council are in great perplexity just now regarding their future movements;" and he repeated to her word for word all that had been said before her arrival, openly exposing the advice of each one.

"Sire," said Joan, addressing herself to the king, "shall I be believed in what I am going to say?"

"Joan," replied the king, "have no doubt of that, for if you say things possible and reasonable we will willingly believe you."

Then turning herself to the consellers:

“Once more, gentlemen,” demanded she, “shall I be believed?”

“That will depend on what you say,” replied the chancellor.

“Very good! know, gentle Dauphin,” said Joan, addressing herself again to the king, “that this city is yours; and that if you will remain but two or three days longer before it, it will surrender itself to you either by force or from affection.”

“But,” said the king, “what authority have you for making me this assurance, Joan?”

“Alas!” replied the young girl, “I have no proof or sign, only the promise that my voices have made me; but it seems to me my words have been verified often enough by this time to render my affirmation worthy of belief; especially when I make so simple a demand as only to wait two or three days.”

“Joan,” replied the counsellor—after having consulted the countenances of the others—“if we were certain that the city would surrender in six days we would be willing to wait that length of time; but who can say if what you tell us is the truth?”

“It is the truth like all that I have said until now,” said Joan, with gentle composure.

“Well,” said the king, “it shall be done as you desire, Joan; but I assure you it is a great responsibility you take upon yourself.”

“Give me leave to act,” said Joan, “and I will answer for the results.”

“Do so,” said the king, “for you speak in such a convincing tone it is absolutely irresistible, and we find ourselves forced to submit to your counsel.”

Joan curtsied low to the king; then leaving the council she mounted her horse, took a lance, and followed by her standard-bearer she put in requisition chevaliers, esquires, and soldiers, to carry fagots, fascines, beams, and even doors and windows, in order to facilitate the approach to the town, and to plant as near as possible to the walls a small bombard and some cannons of middling caliber, which the army had brought with them; giving her orders with as much correctness and precision as if she had done nothing but command sieges all her life. Every body regarded her movements with astonishment, especially the common people, who, not having the happiness to possess quite so much science as the great, are indemnified by an increased ratio of faith.

The people of Troyes, seeing the great preparations which were making against them, began to assemble upon the walls and to be rather clamorous in their murmurs. At that moment,—either by chance or as a sign from heaven—myriads of white butterflies came fluttering about Joan’s banner, so numerous that they appeared like a cloud. At this sight the citizens burst into exclamations of wonder, and declared to the English that it was a sin against God to resist her whom he had sent, and that, whether it was the pleasure of the soldiery or not, for their part they wished to hold a parley. Finally, the soldiers of the garrison—fearing that they might expe-

rience a similar fate to those of Jargan—concluded to appoint some of their number to accompany the bishop and the most notable citizens, who were soon assembled to present themselves to King Charles. The same evening, as Joan was continuing her preparations, Charles, to his great astonishment, saw the gates of the city open and a numerous deputation advancing towards him.

The conditions which they demanded of the king were so reasonable that they were instantly accepted; these conditions were, that the soldiery should be granted their lives and permission to take their property away with them, and the citizens were to surrender themselves to the obedience of the king.

The same evening there was a grand festival and great rejoicing in the city, for the citizens could not wait till the enemy was gone to express their joy in becoming true Frenchmen once more; and as they knew that there were many in the army who had eaten nothing but beans and ears of wheat for five or six days, they sent to the camp a good many cartloads of provisions, which were distributed among the soldiers; and every one, from the king down to the lowest soldier, blessed Joan for having preserved her confidence in God in such a trying circumstance, for which he evidently rewarded her.

The next day the English garrison issued at one gate while the king's archers entered by another and ranged themselves in lines on each side of the streets through which the garrison was to pass; but at this sortie there arose a great dispute; the English were determined to take their prisoners with them, pretending that the conditions of the treaty permitted themselves and their property to leave the city, and as prisoners of war were the property of those by whom they were taken until the ransom was paid, they ought of course to be comprised under the head of *property*. Joan maintained on her part, that they had understood by *property* only their horses, arms and silver. They were thus battling opinions—neither party being inclined to yield—when King Charles sent to say that if the English would put their prisoners at a reasonable price he would pay the ransom. The English, who had been on the point of losing them, now showed themselves reasonable and obliging, and the king having accepted their conditions and payed the required sum, the poor prisoners were so happy in being released that they showered many heart-felt blessings upon Joan to whom they owed their liberty; and the joy was so much the greater among these unfortunate men as many of them were poor Scotchmen, who in their own country had no great resources, and their resources were fewer still, as we may suppose, when they were five hundred leagues from home.

About ten o'clock in the morning—all the English having left the town—the king, lords and captains made their entree magnificently arrayed. As for the common soldiers, seeing the great privations they had suffered, it was feared they would commit some depredations upon the citizens, consequently they were left behind under the conduct of Seigneur de Loré, and

as the day before, the citizens sent them a great number of carts richly laden with bread, meat and fruits.

The day following, by the desire of La Pucelle—who seemed unwilling to take any repose until after the coronation of the king—Charles VII. again set forward on his journey to Reims; then, in token of possession, the whole army—which had camped as we have said outside the gates—fled off through the city in fine order, no disorder whatever resulting from it. The citizens on their part, took an oath to be good and loyal servants of the king, which oath they have faithfully kept ever since.

The king and lords, preceded as usual by Joan, rode on until they came to the city of Châlons en Champagne. During all the route they had had some apprehensions about the reception they might meet with in this city, but as they approached the walls the king saw the gates open, and the bishop and notables of the town advancing towards him, and desiring permission to take the oath of allegiance. The king, as at Troyes, wished his army to encamp beyond the walls; but the citizens were so much gratified that they demanded to receive the soldiers within the city, and to show them hospitality by feasting them. In quitting Châlons the king left there, as he did also at Troyes, a captain, officers, and a garrison.

They met with the same reception at Sept-Saulx, the château of which belonged to the Archbishop of Reims, but had been occupied by the English garrison. This garrison, although commanded by two brave noblemen, allies of the English, did not wish to await the arrival of the royal army, and went away leaving the citizens free to surrender or to defend themselves; the citizens were no sooner masters of this liberty than they opened the gates and joyfully welcomed the arrival of the king.

This city was only four leagues from Reims; it was then agreed that they would remain there that night and take a little repose, and the next morning the king was to depart with the archbishop to receive his coronation; many were busy all night long, so that every thing might be in complete readiness. It was a miracle how every necessary article was supplied; among other things the regal robes, so rich, beautiful and fresh, as if the king had sent them on in advance, though in truth no one could tell from whence they came.

The abbot of St. Remy was the guardian of the anointing vessel of the kings of France, and it was customary not to deliver it until certain formalities were accomplished, to perform which the king appointed Marshal Bous-sac, Seigneur Retz, Seigneur Graille, and Admiral Culant; the four carried each a banner, and being well accompanied, they repaired to the Abbey of St. Remy. On their arrival the royal messengers took an oath to conduct the abbot and the precious relic of which he was the bearer in safety to Reims, and afterwards to return them safely to St. Remy; then they mounted their horses and each rode at one corner of a canopy under which marched the abbot, with as much solemnity and devotion as if he had held

in his hands the precious body of our Lord Jesus Christ. They went on thus, followed by a multitude of people, until they came to the church of St. Denis, where they halted, and the Archbishop of Reims, in his clerical robes and attended by his canons, came forward to receive the anointing vessel from the hands of the abbot, and carrying it into the cathedral he laid it upon the high altar. The four chevaliers, to whose keeping it had been confided, entered with it into the cathedral still mounted upon their horses and with all their armour on, and they did not alight until they reached the choir; then they held their bridles in the left hand, and with the right hand they grasped their naked swords.

Then came the king magnificently arrayed, and having pronounced between the hands of the archbishop the accustomed oaths, he knelt down and was made a chevalier by the Duke of Alençon; the archbishop then proceeded to the consecration, following from beginning to end the ceremonies and solemnities set forth in the pontifical book, so that the ceremony lasted from nine o'clock in the morning until two in the afternoon, and during all this time La Pucelle remained standing near the king and holding her standard in her hand; at length the crown was laid upon the king's head, and every one shouted: Noël! and as they blew up the trumpets at the same time it seemed as if their joyous ringing acclamations would rend the vault of the cathedral.

The ceremony being ended, Joan threw herself at the feet of the king, and embracing his knees: "Gentle king," said she, "the pleasure of God is now fulfilled; you have received your coronation, and thereby shown that you are the sole true king of France, and that the kingdom rightfully belongs to you. Now my mission is accomplished, and I have nothing further to do either in the court or in the army; permit me then to retire to my native village Domremy, where I may live with my father and mother as becomes a humble village girl; if you grant me this request, sire, I shall be more grateful than if you were to name me the greatest lady in France, after the queen."

"Joan," replied the king, who had for a long time expected this demand, "for all that I am this day I am indebted to you; five months ago you took me poor and powerless at Chinou, and you have brought me strong and triumphant to Reims; you are then mistress, it is for you to order rather than to request. But do not leave me yet; I am anointed and crowned it is true; but to make the ceremony complete I have yet to make a pilgrimage to Corbigny, where is, as you know, the body of the glorious St. Marcoul, who is of our race. Come with us to Corbigny, Joan, and after that you may do as you desire."

"Alas! alas!" said Joan, "my voices have told me to depart this very day; this is the first time I have disobeyed them, and I fear some great affliction will happen to me for it."

The king tried to soothe Joan's apprehensions; but without replying to

all he could say she continued to be melancholy and desponding; so that when she came out of the cathedral which she had entered so triumphantly she had the air of a condemned malefactor. On arriving at the door, however, she raised her head and uttered a cry of joy, for she had recognized in the crowd her young brother Pierre, who had stolen away from Domremy, and had come all the way to Reims to see if that extraordinary woman, who was the theme of all France, was really his own sister Joan. Joan threw herself into his arms,—for, as we know, Pierre was her dearly beloved brother—and passed the whole day with him, talking of her parents, of the old curate, and every body in the village. Pierre told her that they loaded her with blessings, and chanted her praises as if she were really a saint and in paradise.

In the evening the king sent for the young man, and Joan vainly waited for his return until ten o'clock, when, being overcome with fatigue, she retired to bed. The next morning, on awaking, the first person she saw was the lad richly dressed as a page: he came to announce to his sister that he should thenceforward be one of her attendants, and in order that he might be the equal of Imerget and Chevalier Daulon, the king had granted to her and to all her family letters patent of nobility as well as the most beautiful coat of arms in all the army. It was an escutcheon of azure and two flower-de-luces of gold, and a silver sword with a golden hilt, the point of the blade tipped with steel in a crown of gold.

“Alas! alas!” repeated Joan, drawing a deep sigh, “would to God he had been pleased to let me remain a simple peasant girl, that I had never borne any other sword than my shepherd’s crook, and that the only crowns I had ever touched had been the crowns of flowers I used to hang upon the branches of the fairies’ tree, or deposit upon the altar in the poor church at Domremy.”

Joan, who felt as if her career was near its close, and that her spirit would soon leave her body, again made some attempts to depart; but her retreat under the then existing circumstances, when her influence over the army was at its acme, appeared so fatal a thing, that the king’s council assembled, and it was agreed that they would remonstrate with Joan upon the impropriety of taking her departure at that time, when the consequences of it might prove so disastrous; but the king did not wish to commit to another the care of so important a negotiation; he therefore summoned her into his presence, and besought her in his own name and in the name of the soldiers, not to quit the army, saying that she was the guardian angel of France, and if she went away, the good fortune of the kingdom would depart also. Joan sighed heavily, and seemed to hesitate a long time; at length, as Charles renewed his entreaties: “Gentle king,” said she, “it is not for a poor girl like me to struggle against the will of a powerful prince like you: let it be as you desire, and God direct whatever may befall me.”

The same evening, Charles VII. joyfully announced to his council that La Pucelle had decided to remain.

Joan having resolved to again enter that turmoil of war and politics, which she would so gladly have renounced forever, and having seen with great grief that place, which—in his triple title of peer of the realm, for Flanders, Artois and Burgundy—the Duke Philip had left vacant at the coronation of the king, she sent the same evening for brother Pasquerel, who served her as a secretary, and dictated to him, for the noble Duke, the following letter, which she signed with her cross.

After writing this letter, Joan remained four days longer at Reims: during these four days a Scotchman painted her portrait. She was represented as being wholly armed, kneeling upon one knee and presenting a letter to the king. This is, according to Joan's own statement, the only picture that was ever made of her.

“Jhésus Maria :



High and redoubtable prince, Duke Philip of Burgundy, Joan La Pucelle requires, in the name of the King of heaven, her rightful Lord and Sovereign, that the king of France and you, make a good strong peace, that will last a long time. Pardon each other from the bottom of your hearts, entirely, as loyal christians ought to do, and if it pleases you to make war, go and make it upon the Saracens. Prince of Burgundy, I pray, beseech and require you, as humbly as I can require, that you will war no longer in the sacred kingdom of France; and that you will withdraw immediately and directly, your people which are in any of the places and fortresses of the said kingdom. On the part of the gentle king of France, he is ready to make peace with you, saving his honour. And I assure you, in the name of the King of heaven, my rightful Lord and Sovereign, for your own good and your own honour, that you will gain no battle against the loyal French, and that all those who war against the said kingdom of France, war against the King Jhesus, King of heaven and all the world. And I require you, and beseech you with clasped hands, that you would make no battle or war against us, neither you, your soldiers or your subjects. Believe, surely, that whatever number of people you bring against us, they will gain nothing: and it will be a great pity to see how much blood will be shed of those who come against us. It is now three weeks since I wrote and sent to you good letters by a herald, in order that you might be at the coronation of the king, which took place yesterday, on Sunday the 17th day of this present month of July, in the city of Reims. I have had no reply, and have never since heard any news of the herald.

I recommend you to God, and pray him to establish a good peace. Written at the said place of Reims, on the 18th of July.”

CHAPTER IX.

THE SWORD OF ST. CATHARINE DE FIERBOIS.

FROM Reims the king repaired to Corbigny, there to pay his devotions at the tomb of the blessed St. Marcul. This last formality of his coronation being accomplished he determined to make an approach towards Paris, by entering that province which surrounds the capital, and which to this day is called the "Isle of France." The moment for this expedition was well chosen; the Regent Duke of Bedford had gone to meet some troops which had been sent to him by the Cardinal of Winchester; the Duke of Burgundy, always wavering between a rupture with England and an accommodation with France, had withdrawn his forces from Picardy; in fine, the Dukes of Lorraine and of Bar, and the Seigneur of Commercy, who were formerly the allies of the English, had voluntarily come to rejoin the king during his triumphant march to Reims, and had renewed to him their oath of allegiance.

When the king reached Vailly, a small town within four leagues of Soissons, he learned that every thing concurred in his favour. Château-Thierry, Provins, Coulommiers, Crecy-en-Brie, had all surrendered merely at the summons of his captains. Soissons and Laon, summoned in their turn in the king's name and by the king himself, soon followed the example; Soissons especially manifested so strong a desire to receive him, that he went there immediately to satisfy the joyful impatience of the inhabitants. From Soissons he passed on to Château-Thierry, and finally from Château-Thierry to Provins, where, having received news of the approach of the English, he remained some days.

At length, on the 24th of July, the Duke of Bedford entered Paris with the new troops which had been sent over by the Cardinal of Winchester, so that he could then command about twelve thousand combatants, and with this force he was advancing to attack the French army. He passed through Corbeil and Melun, and halted at Montereau, where only a few leagues separated the two armies.

At Provins the king received a letter from the English regent. This letter, which was delivered to him by a herald who bore the same name as his master, contained a challenge. The Regent offered to King Charles VII. to settle their long and bloody quarrel by one single battle. The letter, as we may suppose, was received with great joy by Charles and the brilliant chivalry which attended him, so that after lavishing many attentions upon the English herald the king sent for him, and taking off the rich chain which he wore upon his own neck, he presented it to him, saying:

"Go tell your master that he will have no trouble in finding me, for that I have come from Reims for the express purpose of meeting him."

Then the king advanced half the distance which separated him from his

enemy, and having found a convenient place for the disposal of his troops he resolved to await the approach of the English. As soon as they encamped they all applied themselves diligently to fortify their position, and it was surprising how La Pucelle maintained her standing among all those brave experienced captains, making such useful suggestions that even the Duke of Alençon, Dunois and La Hire, sometimes adopted her plans in preference to their own. Nevertheless it was evident that if her courage was undiminished her faith had abandoned her. When she was asked if it was best to combat, she replied :

“ Without doubt we must persevere and march forward.”

But she no longer said in her former tone of assurance,

“ March ! march ! the King of Heaven is on our side, and he will give us the victory !”

With her hope still lingered, but her faith was gone.

As for the Duke of Bedford he was still in his camp—which was well chosen and well fortified—hoping that the king of France would be so much exasperated by the menacing tone of his letter that he would come to attack him there ; but when he saw that Charles contented himself with advancing half way, and was likewise disposed to await the attack behind his retrenchments, he dared not give him that advantage ; and as he was perpetually apprehensive that some revolt might burst out in the capital, he abandoned his camp and retook the road to Paris.

The king, seeing his design upon the capital thus parried by the precipitate return of the Duke of Bedford and his reinforcement of troops, thought proper to assemble his council. The French regarded their late successes with feelings of astonishment, but did not attribute them to any superiority of their own ; thus, their confidence in themselves not being heightened, their dread of the English remained undiminished, and the majority of the council were disposed to make a retreat upon the Loire. As usual they consulted Joan, but she merely replied that she thought they had better march towards Paris, for she knew that the king would effect an entrance there, but she could not tell when ; and as she held herself responsible for nothing since the day of the coronation, she had no influence in determining an opinion contrary to that which had already been taken.

Accordingly, couriers were dispatched over the country to reconnoitre the environs, and to ascertain by what route the king might regain Gien. Some of the couriers returned the day after their departure, and said that there was a small village named Bray-sur-Seine, where there was a fine bridge over which the king and his army could pass, and that the inhabitants of this village had promised to yield to the king both obedience and passage. The army then, victorious as it was, began to beat a retreat as if it had been conquered, when, on arriving within sight of the village, they learned that a strong detachment of English had taken possession of it the night before. Of those who were sent to assure themselves of this fact some were taken and others robbed.

The passage was then impracticable; and in the days of their adversity this obstruction would have been regarded as a reverse, but since God had so signally declared himself for France it was welcomed as a miraculous favour. The Dukes of Alençon, of Bourbon, and of Bar; the Counts of Vendome and of Laval, Dunois and La Hire, in fine all the chiefs who had been in favour of proceeding to Paris, were delighted with this contre-temps, and being seconded by the circumstance they recovered all the influence which for a moment they had lost by the hesitation of Joan; so that a contrary resolution was instantly adopted, and the same day they retraced their steps and continued their march to within a short distance of Dammartin, where they encamped in the open field.

They were now but ten leagues from Paris, and every thing appeared to favour King Charles VII.; wherever he appeared the people came thronging to meet him, shouting Noël! and chanting Te Deum Laudamus. This universal enthusiasm at times restored to Joan her former vigour, but still her mind was never exempt from a tinge of melancholy which indicated that the Lord was no longer there to support her.

"In the name of God," said she to Dunois and the Chancellor, who usually rode near her, "here is a good, loyal and devoted people, and when my time comes to die I hope it will be in this country."

Then the Count of Dunois said to her:

"Joan, do you know when and where you are going to die?"

"No," replied Joan; "I do not know exactly when I shall die, but I know the moment of my death cannot be far distant, for I have accomplished the mission to which my Lord appointed me; and would to God I could now return to my father and mother, and again watch their flocks as in former days."

Those who heard Joan utter such sentiments were more than ever persuaded that she came from God, and as she herself said, that she would soon return to God.

This new movement of the king having come to the knowledge of the Duke of Bedford, he set out from Paris with all the troops he could muster to come to the encounter. While Charles was encamped before Dammartin, he learned that the Duke of Bedford had arrived at Mitry, and was encamped behind the mountain upon which was situated the city which separated them.

Then the king immediately set his army in battle array and chose couriers who, under the orders of La Hire, were to reconnoitre the enemy. La Hire acquitted himself in this mission with his usual audacity; he had been within bow-shot of the English army, had examined every thing, and was convinced that it would be the height of imprudence for the king to attack the enemy in their present position. The king concluded to abide by the counsel of La Hire, and wait for the enemy to come out of their camp; but he waited in vain, and the next day he was informed that the Duke of

Bedford had returned to Paris, where he had just been reinforced by the arrival of four thousand men.

The king then retired to Crespy-en-Valois, which was a well defended city, and from thence he sent a summons to Compiègne to surrender. As in the other cities this summons was instantly obeyed. The citizens sent a reply to Charles, saying that they were impatiently waiting for him and would receive him with great pleasure; the citizens of Beauvais seeing this, did still better, for scarcely were the heralds in sight when they began to shout: "Long live Charles VII! long live the King of France!" and sending away their bishop, Pierre Cauchon, who was furious for the English, they opened their gates without even awaiting the summons.

Senlis yet remained under the dominion of the English, and the king did not wish to leave it in that state in case he should make another advance upon the capital. He accordingly proceeded to Baron, a village about two leagues from this city, with the design of assailing it the next day; but on his arrival he learned that the Duke of Bedford had again left Paris with the four thousand men before mentioned. But by this time it became known that these four thousand, which were led by the Bishop of Winchester, had been raised at the Pope's expense for the purpose of marching against the Bohemians, and, by a strange abuse of authority, they were conducted against the Catholics. Moreover this proved the degree of weakness to which the English were reduced, when, in order to fortify themselves with so slender a reinforcement they had gone so far as to trifle with sacred things.

But whether they were originally intended to combat Bohemians or French, nevertheless they were then advancing towards the French army, and the king ordered Ambroise de Lore and Zantrailles to mount their horses and to reconnoitre their numbers and intentions. The two chevaliers immediately equipped themselves, and choosing twenty of their best mounted men they rode off in the direction of Senlis, and when they reached there they perceived that the air was darkened by a cloud of dust which seemed to reached the sky. They instantly despatched a courier to the king to apprise him of what they had seen, promising to send another messenger as soon as they were certain whether it was the Duke of Bedford's army or not, advising him however to keep constantly on his guard. The reconnoitring party boldly advanced so near that they recognized the whole English army marching directly upon Senlis. Then, as they had promised, they despatched a second rider to the king with this news, and there being too little space for action in Baron, the king ordered his troops into the open fields, between the river which passes Baron and the tower of Montepilloy. The Duke of Bedford arrived at Senlis about two o'clock in the afternoon, and commenced crossing the stream on the bank of which the French troops were ranged. Ambroise de Lore and Zantrailles—who had kept along side of the enemy until then—now put spurs to their horses and galloped away

to the king to advise him to attack the English whilst they were occupied with their passage. The counsel appeared good to Charles, and he gave orders to march against them. But whatever diligence the king made, the regent made still greater, and by the time the van-guard of the French reached the place the English had effected their passage and put themselves in battle array. As it was almost night both armies encamped where they were, the English on the bank of the Nonnette and the French at Montepilloy. The same evening there was a little skirmishing between the scouts of the two parties, but without producing any important results for either.

The next morning, at the break of day, the king disposed his forces for action; the van-guard was commanded by the Duke of Alençon and the Count of Vendome; the main body of the army was under the orders of the Dukes of Bar and of Lorraine; a third corps, forming the wing of the army, was commanded by Marshal Broussac and Marshal Retz; Seigneur Graville and a Limosin chevalier, named John Foucault, led the archers; finally, a rear guard, destined to render assistance in any quarter where it should be needed, was commanded by the Bastard of Orleans, Seigneur d'Albret, Joan la Pucelle, and La Hire; as for the king he took no command, but remained aside, having for his guard the Duke of Bourbon, Seigneur Tremoille and a good number of brave chevaliers.

The king's impatience to attack was extreme; he passed and repassed the front of the French army with the Count of Clermont and Seigneur Tremoille, to ascertain in what quarter the enemy was vulnerable; but the science habitual to the English had not failed them on this occasion; the Duke of Bedford had chosen an almost impregnable position near the Abbey of Victory, which was founded by Philip Augustus after the battle of Bouvines; the flanks of his army were defended by hedges and ditches; the river and a large pond protected it on the rear, and along the front sharp stakes were set as close as a palisade, and behind these stakes were those terrible English archers who—in showing the twelve arrows contained in their quivers—boasted that they each carried the death of twelve men.

At the epoch when Joan was inspired, in the days of Orleans, of Jargan, and of Patay, the sight of La Pucelle, with her waving banner, would have been sufficient to draw the army on to battle and to victory; but Joan was the soul of the army, and confidence in abandoning her abandoned also the army, so that the chiefs having assembled in council, decided that the position of the enemy was too strong to venture an attack, and that there was danger of losing in a single day the fruits of all his former conquests. They then offered battle to the English if they would come out; but the English, on their side, were no longer the men of Crevent, Verneuil, and of Bourvray, and they replied that they were ready to combat but should wait until they were attacked in their camp; consequently that day passed, as the preceding, unmarked by any event except a few slight skirmishes between the bravest of the two armies.

The night passed on the side of the French in the expectation of a de-

cisive affair for the next day, for they had been informed by a prisoner, that the Seigneurs of Croy, of Créguy, of Bethune, of Fosseuse, of Lannoy, of Lalaing, and the Bastard of Saint Paul—Burgundian gentlemen, who adhered to the party of the Duke Philip, and were serving in the English army—had been made chevaliers by the Duke of Bedford—a thing which rarely happened except on the eve of a battle. Every preparation was then made for the coming contest, but great was their surprise in the morning, when they perceived that the English had quitted their camp during the night and were on their return to the capital.

In effect, the Duke of Bedford had received very sad news: the constable whom the king would not suffer in his presence, had nevertheless continued his services to him, and having entered Maine, he had taken Ramefort, Malcione, and Gallerand, and was said to be marching upon Evreux. Thus the English found themselves menaced in the very heart of Normandy. The return of the Duke of Bedford to Paris was not inopportune, for on his arrival he heard of the reduction of five new cities. Moreover, the Duke of Burgundy—being softened by the letter of La Pucelle—had consented to receive ambassadors at Arras, and in the opening of August the first conferences took place. There was no time to be lost on the part of the Duke of Bedford, if he wished to offer opposition to all the dangers that threatened him; so, leaving two thousand five hundred men at Paris, he distributed the rest in Normandy, and hastened to Rouen.

The king again seeing the enemy elude him, and not knowing the cause of his return to Paris, instead of pursuing the Duke—which would have thrown him into great embarrassment—he left Montépilloy and proceeded directly to Compiègne, where he was received by the citizens with great enthusiasm. The king appointed a gentleman of Picardy, named William de Flavy, to be their governor and captain; and having learned that the people of Senlis—supposing themselves abandoned by the Duke of Bedford—were desirous of submitting themselves to him, he hastened on to that city where he slept the night of the same day in which he left Compiègne.

During the few days that the king sojourned at Compiègne a great event took place. In reply to the overtures of Arras, the Duke of Burgundy had sent ambassadors to Compiègne: these ambassadors were John of Luxemburg, the Bishop of Arras, the Seigneurs of Brimeux, and Charny; and upon the first exchange of conditions a truce had been concluded. One of the conditions of this truce was that the English should be admitted to treat; the king had consented to it, and demanded in return, that those princes who had been prisoners in England for fifteen years, should be put at a ransom. This truce, for which the king was indebted to Joan, and which he anxiously hoped might be the preliminary of a peace, was however but partial; it extended over all the country on the right bank of the Seine, from Nogent to Honfleur—Paris and the cities

erving as passage upon the river being excepted—the king having a right to attack and the duke to defend them.

Whilst these conditions were being discussed at Compiègne—La Hire, who had nothing to do with politics, and whose active temperament could not endure repose—had gone with a few bold companions in search of warlike adventures, and they had scoured away so far that they found themselves one morning in face of the fortress of Château-Gaillard, seven leagues from Rouen. As it was scarcely dawn, and Kingston, the commander had no fear of being attacked, knowing the French to be more than twenty leagues distant, La Hire had time to take possession of one of the gates before the English could offer any resistance: he put to profit this first advantage by summoning the governor to surrender. The governor seeing himself thus taken unawares, and being ignorant of the number of the assailants, merely demanded his life, with great fear of not obtaining even that. La Hire granted his demand, and great was the astonishment of the governor as he beheld the entrance of the little troop of conquerors; the English garrison was numerically double in strength to those to whom they had surrendered. Kingston, however, adhered not the less to his word; he surrendered the château and all it contained, according to the stipulation which had been made, and took his departure. La Hire soon installed himself in his place and dignity.

As he was taking his breakfast, they came to tell him that they had found in a basement room a French prisoner shut up in an iron cage; La Hire left his breakfast and ran down to see the captive, but he was so much changed he could not recognize him. It was the noble and brave Lord Barbazan, who had been taken nine years before at Melun, and had ever since been confined in this cage, even the door of which was riveted for fear he might effect his escape. La Hire instantly broke the bars. Although he saw this way of escape open before him, the old chevalier shook his head and sat down in a corner, declaring that he had promised the governor to be his loyal prisoner, and so long as he was not absolved from this promise, nothing in the world could induce him to leave his cage. La Hire in vain assured him that Kingston had surrendered the château and all it contained, and that consequently he must be included in the capitulation; Barbazan replied that it might be so, but he should nevertheless remain where he was until he was disengaged from his promise. La Hire was then obliged to send for Kingston, who returned to deliver Barbazan and relieve him of his word. La Hire left a garrison at Château-Gaillard and returned to the king with the old chevalier, who had retaken his arms and was dying with impatience to make use of them. They found the king at Senlis, and the brave lord Barbazan was received by him and his captains with great joy, for not having heard him mentioned for so long a time they had given him up for dead.

The king had just received news of the departure of the Duke of Bedford for Rouen, and he resolved to avail himself of his absence by making an

approach upon Paris: the reinforcement of the two brave chevaliers confirmed him in this resolution, and having learned that his van-guard had penetrated as far as Saint Denis, he set out in his turn, and arrived at that ancient seat of royalty on the 29th of August. Scarcely had he appeared, when all the adjacent cities surrendered: Creil, Chantilly, Gournay-sur-Aronde, Luzarches, Choisy, and Lagny, performed their acts of obedience; finally, the Seigneurs of Montmorency and of Mouy took the oath of allegiance.

All went on prosperously; success seemed to crown every project undertaken by Charles. At Saint Denis, La Pucelle again sought the king, and kneeling before him she implored him—as he no longer needed her assistance—to let her depart, saying with her eyes filled with tears, that she was certain she could no more be useful to him, and that her voices had told her if she remained in the army some great misfortune would happen her. The king asked her what the misfortune would be: Joan replied that she would first be wounded, and then captured. But the king remained unmoved, regarding her presentiments as idle, saying to her—God forbid that she should be wounded—but if she was she would soon recover as she did before, and if she was captured he would sell the half of his kingdom to ransom her. Joan rose heavily from her knees, and with a melancholy shake of her head—seeing she could obtain nothing from the king—she went away to offer her devotions in the church, praying that when her calamity should overtake her she might at least be in the favour of God.

The next day they decided to advance upon Paris, and they quitted Saint Denis to encamp at La Chapelle. Joan rode along drooping sadly upon her horse, while her young brother followed bearing her lance, and Seigneur Daulon her standard; just then she saw a soldier giving his arm to a wicked female adventurer. Joan had always prohibited women of this stamp from following the army, and she sent brother Pasquerel with orders for her to retire. But instead of obeying, the woman made her an insolent reply; and as Joan advanced to enforce her orders, the soldier sprang towards her with his drawn sword, saying that brave soldiers like them had been governed by a woman long enough, and that it was high time for a change: Joan, accustomed to see herself respected as a military chieftain, could not suffer such insolence, and she drew her sword; but reflecting that if she struck with the edge she might kill him, she struck upon his helmet with the flat of the blade and ordered him to stand back; but weak as was the blow, the hour of this good sword—which had received so many rude shocks—was at length come, the blade was shivered to atoms and the hilt alone remained in her hand.

At that moment the king hearing some noise, came in person to see what was passing, and he saw Joan looking mournfully down upon the broken blade and the useless hilt. Then they related to him what had happened, and approaching the young girl he said:

“Joan, you ought to have struck with your lance, and not with that good sword which was divinely bestowed upon you.”

“It goes as it came,” said Joan; “for believe me, sire, this is my last warning from God that tells me I ought to retire.”

Then the king began to laugh at Joan's perseverance in believing these melancholy presentiments, and to console her he offered her his own sword; but Joan refused it, saying she would take another from the English.

Indeed, how could the king be affected by the ominous fears of the young girl when her increasing fame spread far and wide, and every one addressed her as a prophetess and a saint? at Troyes many women came to entreat her to officiate as god-mother for their children, and she held three or four at the baptismal font, giving to the girls the name of Joan and to the boys the name of Charles. At Laguy they sought her and begged her to go and pray beside the couch of a child, who for three days seemed to have been dead, and whom the priest refused to baptize saying that it was dead; but when Joan approached the couch and knelt down to pray, scarcely was her prayer finished when the child opened its eyes and the priest seized the moment to baptize it, declaring publicly that this miracle had been wrought in answer to Joan's prayer.

Finally, after that, when she was at Compiègne, the Count of Armagnac, one of the highest nobles in the land, wrote to her, a poor peasant girl, to ask to which of the three Popes, who disputed the throne of St. Peter, he ought to accord his belief, promising to acknowledge whichever she acknowledged.

Certainly these were great honours, and would have dazzled any other than Joan; but on the contrary, Joan was more modest and humble than ever, for she felt that God was removing farther from her every day.

CHAPTER X.

COMPIEGNE.

THE same evening the French presented themselves before Paris, which was defended by Prince Louis of Lexemburg, the Bishop of Therouenne, Sir John Ratcliff, an English chevalier, and nearly three thousand men, without including the citizens, who having participated in the massacre of the Armagnacs, had reason to fear the King's just vengeance in case he should get possession of Paris, and consequently were even more interested than the English in keeping him at a safe distance. The French passed beyond Montmartre, and disposed their forces upon the ground which is at present comprised between the streets Madelaine and Martyrs. There they established a battery of cannons, and fired several shots to try the reach of it, which they found to be good, the bullets having entered the town. Immediately the English and citizens rushed to the walls; there

was also a corps of Burgundians among them who were easily recognized by the red cross upon their banners.

But this evening there was nothing done, the hostile parties contenting themselves with the exchange of a few shots. The sight of the enemy, the noise of the bombards, and the smell of powder restored to Joan's languid spirit a portion of that courage which had animated her in her earlier exploits, and she again took upon herself the management of the assault, whilst the Dukes of Alençon and Bourbon with their men, stationed themselves behind the Butte aux Pourceaux which protected them from the artillery of the place, and from whence they could fall upon the besieged if they attempted to make a sortie.

Notwithstanding these preparations, the Parisians did not expect an attack the next day, because it was a Holy-day, the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, and they supposed the French would not dare to commence the assault during so great a solemnity. But about eleven o'clock, great was their consternation to hear the bells—which had finished ringing for mass—begin to sound the dreadful tocsin, and numbers of people running up and down crying, The Armagnacs are upon the ramparts! Paris is taken! All is lost! However, the sound of the bells and the cries of the flying, so far from intimidating the garrison, on the contrary, seemed to rouse their courage. English, Burgundians and citizens rushed to the walls, where they perceived that the assault had truly commenced, but was far from being in as good train for the French, as these pretended runaways had said, they being in fact partizans of King Charles, who by these cries hoped to excite a revolt in the city.

In effect, whatever was the courage of the assailants, their task was exceedingly difficult, if not impossible. They had overcome the first barrier and set fire to it, and La Pucelle and Seigneur Saint-Vallier in front had penetrated into the outer bulwark, but they found they had still two ditches to get over before they could reach the wall. La Pucelle at the head of the bravest cleared the first ditch amid a shower of arrows and cannon shot, but she found the second moat to be deep and full of water. She was not before aware of this obstacle, though several of the French army knew it to exist, but would not tell Joan for fear she would think that they wished to renounce the assault; she gained the most elevated point of the fosse, and waving her banner she called upon the chevaliers and soldiers destined for the attack to advance, which they did with great alacrity under the command of Marshal Retz. Then Joan ordered them to bring fagots, beams and posts, and every thing they could find to consolidate a road across the mud and water, and she herself advanced to the edge of the fosse to sound the depth of it with the staff of her banner, crying with a loud voice: "Surrender, good people of Paris! surrender! for if you do not before night, we will enter your city by force, and you shall all be put to death without mercy." At that moment a cross-bow-man aimed at her and shot her through the hip.

Joan fell, for the wound was cruel, and as she was supposed to be dead

they all began to fly. Then she put her standard into the hands of the nearest soldier and commanded him to mount to the top of the fosse, and wave it with all his strength to show that she was only wounded. The soldier did as he was ordered; but whilst he was waving the banner and crying out: To the assault! to the assault! an arrow pierced his foot; he stooped to draw the arrow from the wound, and in order to see better he raised the visiere of his helmet, when at the same instant a second arrow hit him in the forehead, and he fell dead.

At that moment Seigneur Daulon came up; he saw Joan lying upon the slope of the fosse, and the ground about her studded with arrows, which had been sped at the prostrate body of the poor girl. He then essayed to take her by the arm and lead her away from the battle; but Joan—with that tone which she knew how to take when she wished to be obeyed, ordered him not to do it, but to raise her standard and to rally the French. Meantime, Joan had withdrawn the dart from the wound, but as her suffering was intense, she did not remove, but still kept ordering them to fill up the fosse, and the soldiers, encouraged by so much heroism in a woman, applied themselves to the task. But the water was so deep—as we have said—the work seemed almost impracticable. The whole day was passed in carrying fascines to fill up the fosse, and still it was not filled. Joan, although it was five hours since she had been wounded and no remedies had been applied, was still resolutely ordering the attack, when orders came from the king to retire to Saint Denis. Positive as the orders were, Joan would not obey, saying that if they would persevere, Paris would be taken in less than two hours; twice the Duke of Alençon sent for her, but she would not leave; finally, as he loved her very much, he went for her himself. Joan then consented to retire, and rising to her feet, she displayed such wonderful courage—that notwithstanding the dreadful wound that she had received, she scarcely seemed to limp.

The retreat of the French was molested only by the discharges of artillery that followed; the besieged not daring to come out of the town for fear of ambuscades. This circumstance permitted the besiegers to gather up their dead, of which there was a great number; but as they had no time to prepare a burial place, they heaped them in a barn and burned them.

In the course of the night they regained Saint Denis. There they reported to the king what had passed, and the Duke of Alençon and Marshal Retz, related to him how Joan had done every thing she could to get herself killed. Then the king went to find her in her lodging, where she was ill with a high fever, and he remonstrated with her some upon the discouragement into which she had fallen. Joan began to cry, and confessed she had much rather die than to fall into the hands of the English, which her voices had told her would surely happen if she did not return to her village. Then the king to encourage her, told her that she must stay till she got well, and after that he would give her leave to do whatever she chose. The same evening Joan made a trophy of her arms, devoting them to Saint Denis; and

as in a few days after that, thanks to her youth and the strength of her constitution her wounds were closed, she ordered a mass in the royal church, and after having prostrated herself before the altar of the martyr, and having devoutly thanked God, the Virgin and the Saints, for the mercies they had bestowed upon her—she suspended her arms upon the column nearest to the shrine containing the relics of the holy apostle. This pious ceremony being accomplished, she went to the king to ask for the discharge which he had promised to grant her.

But during this time, they had remonstrated with Charles upon the imprudence of letting Joan depart at a time when nothing was decided, and when every one, from the highest captain to the lowest soldier, regarded her as their good genius. So when Joan preferred her request, the king told her that he had made her that promise to encourage her, but now that she was well, he begged she would not leave him, affirming that the most sagacious in his council had said that if she withdrew all was lost. Joan wished to insist upon it, but from the knowledge that she had of the king's character, she had scarcely uttered one remonstrance when she saw well that it was lost labour, and that it was a settled determination not to allow her to depart. Then the poor girl resigned herself to her fate. As the king offered her new arms she accepted them all but the sword, saying as before, that she would take one from the English, which in fact she really had done.

In effect, to invest her with more importance the king augmented the retinue of Joan, raising it to the rank of his first captains; he delivered to her the letters patent of nobility which he had promised her, permitted her to send for her second brother, and gave her twelve led horses, and a private purse to pay the little corps which, from that moment, she was to command in person; but all these favours could not divert her mind from the melancholy thought that she was soon to fall into the hands of the English; she was resigned but not consoled.

The counsel decided that the king should retire beyond the Loire, and this decision was executed; Charles returned to Gien, leaving governors in the towns he had conquered; thus Ambroise de Loré was appointed to Laguy, Jacques de Chabannes to Creil, William de Flavy to Compiègne, and the Count of Vendome to Saint Denis and to Senlis; as for La Pucelle, she followed the king with the other chiefs of war.

Hardly had the French quitted Paris than the Duke of Bedford returned to the capital, where the Duke of Burgundy had already arrived with a safe-conduct from Charles, under pretext of making a treaty of peace; but when the two brothers-in-law met, the Duke of Bedford managed so well that the fine resolutions of the Duke Philip vanished, and the sentiments awakened by Joan's letter gave place to those which were suscitated by ambition; it is true, however, that few hearts could have resisted such offers as were made to the Duke of Burgundy. The Duke of Bedford committed to him the regency of Paris, and also promised him Brie and

Champagne, contenting himself with merely his government of Normandy; the result of it was that the new regency and the treaty of Compiègne were published at the same time, and it was evident that the hope of peace was this time, if not entirely destroyed, at least very much retarded.

After fifteen days conference in the city of Paris the two princes separated, the Duke of Bedford returning to Rouen, the seat of his government, and the Duke Philip returning to Bruges, to marry Isabella, daughter of King John First, of Portugal, and to found there the order of the Golden Fleece.

During this time we may well suppose that the sworn truce was but very little observed, neither English, French, nor Burgundians cared for it the least in the world. The Duke of Alençon had sent his forces, under the guidance of Ambroise de Loré, governor of Laguy, to reconquer his appendage of Normandy; the king's council, on their side, returned to their former project of securing all the towns which commanded the course of the Loire, and Seigneur d'Albret, valiantly seconded by Joan, had just taken by assault Saint Pierre le Montier. This capture—one of the most brilliant *faits d'armes* of La Pucelle—had infused so much courage into the hearts of the French, that—contrary to the advice of Joan—Marshal Broussac and Seigneur d'Albret had gone likewise to put the siege before La Charité; but by the result of this enterprise, they recognized still the last glimmer of that inspiration which was almost extinguished in the soul of Joan; the French were repulsed by Perrin Granet, who commanded the town, and were forced to abandon their cannons and retire: this check, predicted by Joan, augmented her renown by realizing her prediction.

Meantime the news which arrived from the capital and its environs were such, that the eyes of the king and council were turned in that direction. Not only had the French garrisons succeeded in maintaining themselves, but the inhabitants of Melun had driven the English from among them, and committed their city to the commander of Giresme; Saint Denis had also been surprised and become French again; in fine, La Hire, who ceased not to make war as a partisan—had taken possession of Louviers, and extended his adventures even to the gates of Rouen, which he was very near taking by the complot of some citizens. Paris—which was so well defended the preceding year—now seemed abandoned by the Duke of Bedford and the Duke Philip, to the pillages and rapines of a garrison half Picardian, half Burgundian; thus it became filled with malcontents; this was rich news for the party of king Charles, and each one was anxious to profit by it. The council, therefore, decided that on the return of spring they would carry the war in that direction; in the meantime, they made great proclamations for the assembling of troops, and strong appeals to the people for money.

While these transactions were going on, a conspiracy had been plotted at Paris, which though discovered and repressed gave new hopes to the fol-

lowers of King Charles : for it indicated to them that they had intelligences in the capital. Some Seigneurs of Paris, united to those of the parliament and of Châtelet, after being joined by some merchants and mechanics, had resolved to introduce the French into the capital ; a Carmelite, named Pierre Dellee, was the messenger who carried letters back and forth between those without and those within ; but the guards of the gate St. Denis, surprised to see this Carmelite constantly passing and repassing, arrested him one morning and led him to prison ; there, as he would not reply to their questions, they put him to torture, and by force of torments they made him confess all ; six heads were shot off, and more than fifty dead bodies were found on the banks of the Seine.

The moment was then favourable for a renewal of hostilities ; Joan set out with her little corps, and arrived at Laguy without encountering the English. There she learned that a brave but merciless man, named Franquet d'Arras, with about four hundred men under his command, was making the most disastrous incursions upon the good people of the king's party, for he received no person at a ransom, neither men nor women, but went on pillaging and slaughtering all who were not English or Burgundians : Joan was not willing to pass so near such a man and leave his crimes unpunished. She left Laguy with a number of combatants equal to that with which she was to combat, and about a league from town she met the desperado whom she sought ; she marched directly towards him, and commenced the attack with the same vigour which she had shown at the commencement of her career. But Franquet's four hundred men were valiant archers who had twice repulsed the royal troops ; and twice had Joan rallied her men and rushed to the onslaught, till at length Franquet and his partisans were obliged to retreat to a small fort, which was however impregnable for Joan and her men, as they had no cannons. Happily, at that moment John de Foucault, who commanded at Laguy, arrived with a part of the garrison and the artillery ; the batteries erected, they soon made a breach so that the wall was practicable, and then they ordered the assault. Franquet and his men fought desperately, but they were at length overpowered by the assailants ; part of them perished by the sword, the remainder sued for mercy ; Captain Franquet was among the latter.

Then arrived the judges from Laguy, and the bailiff from Senlis, who declared Franquet to be a traitor, robber and murderer. Joan, on her side, declared that as he was her prisoner she would not give him up to any one, but that she intended to exchange him against Seigneur de Lore who had recently been taken ; but they replied to her that this exchange was impossible, Seigneur de Lore having died in captivity. Upon this assurance she abandoned Franquet and delivered him to the bailiff, saying : " Do with him as justice demands." The trial lasted fifteen days, and Franquet, after having confessed all his crimes, was decapitated.

Meantime a new conspiracy had just broken out at Paris, and though repressed like the first, it was so near being accomplished that it created a

profound impression. One of the prisoners of war of the Bastile, who had paid his ransom, and being at large, came and went at his pleasure, found the gaoler one day asleep upon a bench in the court; he approached him softly, and taking from him the bunch of keys which he had in his girdle, he opened the prison of three of his comrades, and all four, armed with knives and clubs, fell upon the guard, some of whom they massacred before they had time to recover themselves; and they were in a fair way of rendering themselves masters of the Bastile, when Seigneur de l'Isle Adam, governor of Paris, who was going his round with a troop of soldiers, and hearing the cries of the guards, galloped his horse into the court, and with a battle-axe struck off the head of the ringleader; the others were then taken, and by torture they wrung from them the confession that they had intended to deliver the château into the hands of the royalists; they were all condemned to death, and either decapitated or thrown into the river.

Joan heard this news while she was at Laguy, and she was intending to march upon Paris to profit by the favourable dispositions which seemed to prevail there, when she heard news of still greater importance; the Duke of Burgundy, who was more than ever in the English interest, had arrived with a strong army to put the siege before Compiègne, which was commanded, as we have said, by Seigneur de Flavy. Joan resolved to hasten to Compiègne; she sent on before her Jacques de Chabannes, Regnault de Fontaine, and Zantailles, to say to the governor to stand firm, for that she was on her way. Her last orders being given, she stopped at Crespy one day to make her devotions, and at night she set out for Compiègne, where she entered without any obstacle, under favour of the darkness, although the city was surrounded mostly on all sides, and the Seigneur of Luxemburg, the Seigneur of Noyelle, Sir John Montgomery, and the duke himself guarded the principal points.

In the morning Joan repaired to the church St. Jacques, to hear mass, as was her custom when she was in town. Hardly did the inhabitants know she was there than the church was filled with people, especially women and children. Her kneeling form was supported against a column, and during all her devotions her tears ceased not to flow. So long as mass continued the people contented themselves with looking at her, without disturbing her; but as soon as it was finished the multitude pressed about her, begging permission to kiss a little gold ring which she wore upon her finger, and upon which were engraven three crosses and the name of Jesus; then Joan abandoned her hands to these good people, and one, who was kneeling before her, asked her why she looked so sadly upon them: "Alas! my good friends and my dear children," replied she, "I must tell you a melancholy truth: there is a man who has sold me; I am betrayed and shall soon be delivered to death. Pray for me, I beseech you; for I shall soon be unable to serve my king or the noble kingdom of France!" Then the multitude, hearing these words, began to weep and sob, telling her to point out the traitor, if she knew him, and they would see him justly

punished. But Joan merely shook her head, and going out of the church she returned to the house where she lodged, and all the crowd followed after her, and lingered long about the door in hopes of seeing her again.

Joan passed the day in prayer, and, like our Saviour upon the Mount of Olives, she doubtless drank of the cup which was brought to her by some angel. The evening before, having ordered her troops to hold themselves in readiness to make a sortie at four o'clock in the afternoon, Pothon, the Burgundian, one of her captains, came at the appointed hour to say to her that the soldiers were ready, and only awaited her arrival.

Joan was dressed in her usual costume, which was the armour of a man, over which she wore an overdress of crimson velvet, embroidered with gold and silver; a strong sword, which she had won from a Burgundian at Laguy, for since she had broken the sword of Fierbois, she would use only that of an enemy, and her little battle-axe. She mounted her horse, took her standard from the hands of her squire, and having twice made the sign of the cross, and recommending those who gazed upon her, as she prepared to depart, to pray for her: "Come on!" said she to Pothon, and setting her horse into a trot, she rode on towards the gate where her troop awaited her. The gate was instantly opened, and Joan, followed by five or six hundred armed men, dashed into the plain, and fell upon the quarters of Seigneur de Noyelles, where happened to be, at that moment, John of Luxemburg and some of his cavaliers, who had come there to make a little closer examination of the city.

As they could not have foreseen this sortie, the first effect of it was terrible; all the soldiers of Seigneur de Noyelles were surprised without arms, and only John of Luxemburg, and the cavaliers who attended him, essayed to make any resistance, whilst a messenger ran to his quarter to demand help. During this time the French slashed right and left, overwhelming all that came in their way, and even penetrating to the camp of Sir John Montgomery. Then they all started to their feet, for the cry: *La Pucelle! La Pucelle!* had echoed from one end of the camp to the other; soon, masses ten times more numerous than the assailants, advanced against them, and they were forced to recoil. *La Pucelle* was the first to attack and the last to retreat, and in making her retreat, whenever they pressed upon her too closely, if she faced about, the whole mass of enemies seemed to recoil before her dreaded banner. On arriving at the barrier, Joan could not prevent a little disorder in her troop; each wished to enter first, and there was a struggle who should pass. Joan saw that if she did not contrive to give a little time to her men, the half of them would be stifled in the gates, or thrown from the top of the bridge to the bottom of the fosse. She turned, the third and last time, to charge upon the enemy; the enemy recoiled; she pursued them with about a hundred men, forming her rear-guard: but when she returned she found that the English had slipped in between her and the bulwark; then she drew her sword—which she had not done before throughout the contest—and charged, to

open for herself a passage. The English were repulsed by the shock, for the bravest of both parties were then hand to hand; but on reaching the gate Joan found it shut, and notwithstanding her cries, no one came to open it. Then she essayed to make her retreat through the fields; she retired between the river and Compiègne, in order to gain either the open country, or some other gate which they might open to her; but when they saw her thus abandoned, with scarcely a hundred men, the most cowardly took heart and rushed upon her. Attacked before and behind, Joan was forced to stop and make face to the enemy; the struggle was long and terrible: Pothon, the Burgundian, performed prodigies of valour, and Joan truly accomplished miracles. At last a Picardian archer, who had crept along among the horses' feet, arrived at the place where Joan was, and seizing her by her surcoat of velvet, with a violent jerk he unhorsed her. Joan instantly sprang to her feet and continued to defend herself; but at length, her strength being exhausted, she fell upon one knee; she cast a last imploring look upon her soldiers, but each was fighting for his own life, none could succour her. She was conscious that, for her, all was lost, and that the fatal hour, predicted by her voices, was now come; she surrendered her sword to Lionel, Bastard of Vendome, who appeared to her to be the principal person among her antagonists.

Soon a cry arose in the camp of the Burgundians, which was shortly echoed throughout the length and breadth of France:

Joan La Pucelle is a prisoner!!

This event occurred on the 28th of May, 1430.

CHAPTER XI.

THE TRIAL.

THE capture of Joan, as we may well suppose, created much joyful excitement in the quarter of the English and Burgundians; one would have thought that they had gained a battle like Cressy, Poitiers or Agincourt, and that the king of France himself was their prisoner. In truth, this poor girl, now laden with chains, was the most terrible adversary they had ever encountered upon French soil: before she appeared, they had almost conquered the kingdom; but since her appearance they had numbered nothing but defeats, and had lost two-thirds of their former conquests in the kingdom of France.

The Bastard of Vendome had delivered his prisoner to the Seigneur of Luxemburg, and his quarters were thronged with persons who had come to look at her. The Duke of Burgundy was among the first who hastened to see her, and as he held a private interview with her, none knew the subject of their conversation; but it was remarked that on leaving her, the Duke appeared like the vanquished and the young girl the victor.

The peril which threatened Joan was imminent; couriers had been

sent to the Duke of Bedford, to the Count of Warwick, and to the Bishop of Winchester, and three days had hardly gone by, when the English—thirsting for revenge—had addressed to the Duke of Burgundy, through brother Martin—a master in theology and vicar general of the inquisition of faith to the kingdom of France—the following summons :

“Using the rights of our office and of the authority committed to us by the holy see of Rome, we require instantly, and enjoin, in favour of the Catholic faith, and upon the penalties of the law, that the said prisoner Joan, who, being strongly suspected of many crimes savouring of heresy, should be brought before us, to be, according to law, proceeded against by the proctor of the holy inquisition.”

But neither the Duke of Burgundy, nor the Seigneur of Luxemburg, were disposed to submit to this requisition. They knew that to deliver the young girl to the English, and to deliver her to death, were synonymous acts, and the Duke of Burgundy, who had received her letters, and had held an interview with her for an hour, at the time she was captured, knew better than any person, that she was a noble heroine, and not, as her enemies said, a miserable sorceress. It was then agreed between him and John of Luxemburg, that they would make no reply to the English, nor any decision with regard to the prisoner, until they should receive news from the king of France.

There was a treaty of war between the Duke of Burgundy and the king of England, by which the latter could claim certain prisoners by paying ten thousand pounds, but the prisoner must be a prince of the royal blood, a constable, a marshal of France or a general. Now, as Joan had no positive grade in the army, the Duke of Burgundy could excuse himself on this ground for delivering Joan to the king of France, provided he would pay a ransom equal or superior to that which he expected from the king of England.

But the Duke of Burgundy waited in vain: Charles VII., who had detained the poor girl when she wished to retire to Domremy, telling her that if she was taken, he would sell the half of his kingdom to ransom her, Charles VII. sent no messenger from Paris, Charles VII. offered no ransom. Hardly was the crown firm upon his head when he forgot her who had placed it there. It is true he was then distractedly in love with Agnes Sorrel.

Six weeks passed by, during which the English—seeing they could obtain no reply from the Duke of Burgundy—sembled several councils, and each of these councils was followed by a new summons, but all was useless.

Nevertheless, the proposal of the Regent of England had arrived; he consented to regard Joan as a general of the army, and offered for her a sum equal to that he would have offered for a king or for a prince royal, that is to say, ten thousand pounds. At the same time, they invited Pierre Cauchon—who had been driven from his diocese of Beauvais at the time

that city submitted itself to the French—to claim Joan as much in his own name, as in the name of the king of England, under pretext that having been captured within the limits of the Bishop's jurisdiction, it was his province to conduct her trial. Pierre Cauchon resisted for some time: he knew that if he suffered himself to be intrusted with the trial of Joan, he would be exposed to the vengeance of the English if he acknowledged her to be innocent, and to the execration of posterity if he declared her to be culpable. The Bishop thought then to extricate himself from this dilemma, by replying that he ought—before making any decision—to take the advice of the University of Paris: they urged him to ask this advice; Pierre Cauchon delayed as long as he could, but at length he was forced to write. The University was composed in great part of doctors who were entirely influenced and governed by the English: the reply consequently was, that since Joan had been taken in his diocese he ought to claim her and conduct her trial.

During this time the prisoner had been transferred from the château of Beaulieu to the château of Beurevoir, situated four leagues from Cambray, where she found the wife and the sister of John of Luxemburg. The two noble ladies were at first much prejudiced against Joan, regarding her as a sorceress, or at least as a heretic; but at the first appearance of the youthful captive, seeing so much simplicity, meekness and chastity pervade her whole bearing, they were involuntarily won to an emotion of interest which soon yielded to real heart-felt pity. A month after Joan became their cherished friend.

The first wish of these ladies was to save the poor girl. Several times they obtained new delays from the Seigneur of Luxemburg, impatient as he was at the silence of France, and intimidated as he was by the menaces of England. Five months glided away in this manner.

During these five months the English did not slacken their pursuits. Pierre Cauchon, Bishop of Beauvais—urged by the University to which he had referred himself—at length departed from Paris on the 15th of July, with an apostolic notary and an envoy from the University. On the 16th a second summons was signified to the Duke of Burgundy and to John of Luxemburg, in the name of the king of England: in this summons the Regent claimed Joan as one of the principal generals of the king of France, and in consequence he offered to John of Luxemburg the sum stipulated in the treaty, viz: ten thousand pounds; moreover, an annuity of three hundred pounds was assigned to Lionel, Bastard of Vendome, to whom she surrendered her sword.

The offers were pressing, and the refusal dangerous: every day the Seigneur of Luxemburg related to his wife and sister the ascendant march of things, and every day the two noble ladies prevailed upon him to delay his decision a little longer. They still clung to the hope that the king of France would come to the aid of Joan, but the king of France remained

cold, silent, and pre-occupied, as it appears, with interests more important than that of ransoming a poor peasant girl.

Whilst Joan was awaiting the decision of her fate, she led a holy life which edified and affected all who approached her: she passed her time in prayers and religious exercises; then, with those hands which had brandished the royal sword and borne the banner of God, she sewed and spun as in the days of her youth and her obscurity. Her visions had returned to her; and although her voices spoke to her only of resignation and martyrdom, she felt, if not consoled, at least stronger for having heard them.

At length, about the middle of September, the Seigneur of Luxemburg announced to his wife and sister that he could no longer postpone the painful task of delivering Joan to the English. Both ladies, at these words, fell at his feet and besought him to save the poor young girl; for they knew that to deliver her to the English was to condemn her to martyrdom. John of Luxemburg promised to offer a last chance of salvation to his prisoner; that was to declare that he consented to give her up, but that she should remain in his keeping until the ten thousand pounds were paid, and so long as it remained unpaid he should hold himself free to treat for her ransom with the king of France.

This condition, which appeared at first a little advantageous for the prisoner, nevertheless involved a long delay. The Duke of Bedford had no money, and John of Luxemburg knew it perfectly well; but as in all probability he would raise the amount some day or other, either in France or England, he charged his wife and sister to announce to Joan that he had been forced to treat with the English, and that she must momentarily hold herself in readiness to be delivered to them. The two ladies tried again to soften their lord; but this time he was inflexible.

They were then obliged to announce this terrible news to Joan. The poor child, on hearing it, forgot that she was the heroine of Orleans and the conqueror of Jargon, and only remembered her weakness and isolation. From the day of her captivity the warrior had disappeared, and only the woman remained. She melted into tears like a child, kissing the hands of the two ladies as if she were going to leave them that moment for ever. But in all that anguish of heart, no prayer escaped her lips unworthy of herself; she murmured not a single reproach against her king; but clasping her hands, she cried: "Oh God! oh God! I knew it would be so; for it was the warning of my voices."

At night, when she went up to her chamber—which was in the third story of one of the towers of the castle—as she knelt down to pray, her saints appeared to her. Then, as usual, her tears ceased, and she fell into that pious ecstasy with which she always listened to the orders of the Lord.

"Joan," said her voices, "we come to bring thee comfort,—thou wilt

have much to suffer : but the Lord will give thee courage. Though hope forsake thee, preserve thy faith."

These words indicated to Joan that some dark and terrible catastrophe awaited her ; and willingly obedient as she had always been to the divine orders, she now vainly endeavoured to resign herself to her cruel fate. She did not sleep one moment all the weary night ; she wept unceasingly, and every quarter of an hour she rose from her bed to prostrate herself before a large ivory image of the Saviour, which she had desired them to transport from the chapel to her chamber.

The next day passed, like the night, in prayers and tears ; only Joan seemed to be meditating some desperate project. Several times the two ladies, alarmed by her strange manners, interrogated her ; but she only replied : "I would rather die than be delivered into the hands of the English."

At night she retired at her usual hour ; then, as the evening before, her chamber became resplendent with light, and raising her head she beheld her saints ; but they had a sad and reproachful air ; Joan lowered her eyes before their displeasure.

"Joan," said the voice, "God, who knows the secrets of all hearts, has discerned the guilty thoughts of thine, and orders thee to renounce them. Martyrdom conducts to heaven, but suicide to eternal damnation."

"Oh ! my saints, my saints !" cried Joan, wringing her hands, "I would rather die than be delivered to the English."

"It must be as God ordains," said the voices, "it is not for thee to dispose of thyself."

"Oh ! my God !" said Joan sobbing, "why was I not left poor and obscure in my native village ?"

The next morning as the lady of Luxemburg became alarmed at the absence of Joan, she went up to her room, and found the poor girl lying upon the floor, pale and cold ; she had passed the night in the same situation in which her visions had left her.

The lady tenderly entreated Joan to come down and take her breakfast with them ; but Joan replied that she could not eat, and that she desired to take the communion ; the lady of Luxemburg knew the pious habits of Joan, and she knew also the powerful consolations which religion affords to the wretched ; so she descended alone and sent the chaplain to Joan.

About four o'clock in the afternoon, Joan descended to the apartment of the ladies ; her gratitude appeared stronger than ever towards these ladies who, from her gaolers had become her friends ; but she left them and went up to her chamber some time before her accustomed hour.

The wife and sister of Luxemburg were troubled about the motionless cold despair which seemed to possess Joan, and they sat till quite late, talking about their prisoner and expressing their apprehensions to each other. Every thing else seemed to combine to augment those instinctive inquietudes which one sometimes experiences on the approach of great

events. It was in the beginning of October; the sky was dark and stormy, as it usually is at that season of the year in the southern countries of France. The wind battered the old towers of castle Beaurevoir, roared through the chimneys, and swept in long wailing plaints through the empty chambers and sombre corridors. The two ladies were sitting alone in an apartment directly below Joan's chamber, listening to all those mysterious and indescribable sounds of night, when immediately after the last stroke of the midnight bell had sounded, they fancied that they heard a doleful cry borne upon the wind. They both shuddered and listened; but to this cry succeeded the most profound silence, and they thought they had been deceived. Soon after, however, deep moans seemed to rise from the fosse of the château. The ladies, filled with a vague terror, ran up to the door of their prisoner, but they called and knocked in vain, no one answered. Then, suspecting some strange event had happened, they ordered the sentinels to go out with torches and make the tour of the château. As the sentinels were passing under Joan's window, there they saw the body of the poor girl lying upon the ground; at first they thought she was dead; but they soon perceived that she had only swooned. They carried her into lady Luxemburg's own chamber, where, thanks to the attentions lavished upon her by the two ladies, she at length recovered her senses.

Joan had repeatedly said that she would rather die than to fall into the hands of the English, and in defiance of the orders of her voices, she had thrown herself from her chamber window in hopes of making her escape or of being killed in the fall. Without doubt God had supported her in her perilous leap, or she must have been dashed to pieces.

When Joan recovered herself she appeared very repentant for what she had done, but the impression produced by this event upon the Seigneur of Luxemburg could not be effaced by this repentance. He feared that in a similar attempt Joan might succeed in destroying herself, and thereby deprive him of the 10,000 pounds ransom; he then declared to the Regent that he was ready to put Joan at his disposal on condition that her trial should not commence until the ransom was fully paid. The Duke of Bedford acceded to all the conditions which the Seigneur of Luxemburg was pleased to impose, so great was his fear lest the king of France might enter into some negotiation with him, and he should finally lose the distinguished captive. But the Regent's apprehensions were groundless. The king of France seemed to have forgotten the existence of the noble-minded maiden to whom he was indebted for his crown.

On the 4th of August, 1430, the regent convoked at Rouen the states of the province of Normandy, and demanded of them a contribution of 80,000 pounds, which demand had been complied with. Out of the 80,000 pounds, 10,000 were appropriated to the ransom of La Pucelle, and paid over to the Seigneur of Luxemburg, about the 20th of October.

The Bishop of Beauvais then occupied himself with an activity, which was urged on by the revengeful hatred of the English, to assemble the tri-

bunal which was to pass sentence upon Joan. Meantime she had been transported from the château of Beaurevoir, to the prisons of Arras and Crotoy, and from the latter city she had been conducted to Rouen, where was the young King Harry, poor youth, who was totally unconscious of the crime in which he was participating. On arriving at Rouen, Joan was conducted to the large tower, where they had prepared for her an iron cage, which closed with two padlocks, and in which she was still further secured by chains upon each ancle. There, she was exposed to the outrages of the multitude like a wild animal. The soldiers insulted her, and pricked her with the points of their lances, to make her rise, whenever they wished to show her to any persons of distinction. The Seigneur of Luxemburg himself, after having received the price of her blood, had the cruel curiosity to come and see her a last time; he was accompanied by the Count of Warwick and the Count of Strafford: "Joan," said he smiling, "I have come to ransom you, but you must promise never to draw your sword against me." "Alas!" replied the young girl, "I know that you mock me, for you have sold me, and have neither the will nor the power to ransom me. Moreover, I know that the English will put me to death, thinking, by that, to gain the kingdom of France: but in that matter they will be disappointed, for were they an hundred times more numerous than they are, this kingdom would never be theirs." At these words the Count of Strafford was so enraged, that he insulted her in the grossest manner, and even drew his sword to strike her; but the Count of Warwick prevented him at the moment when Joan, perceiving his intention, sprang forward to throw herself upon his sword.

But, captive as she was, shut up in an iron cage, chained and guarded, poor Joan inspired her enemies with so much terror, that letters written in the name of the king of England, and dated December 12th, 1430, gave orders to arrest and bring before the councils of war, every soldier who should abandon his colours through fear inspired by Joan. In fact, latterly, no army was willing to march against her, and the soldiers chose rather to expose themselves to death by desertion than by combat.

The preparations for Joan's trial were pursued with the greatest activity; finally, on Wednesday, the 21st of February, 1431, the tribunal assembled in the royal chapel of Rouen, and the letters, by which the king ordered La Pucelle to be delivered to ecclesiastical justice, were read in presence of the following gentlemen, viz: Siegneur Gilles, the Abbot of Fecamp, John Beaupère, John de Châtillon, Jacques le Terrier, Nicolas Midi, Gerrard Feuillet, William Hecton, Thomas de Courcel, and Master Richard Prate. Then Master Jehan Estevit, proctor of the trial, demanded that Joan should be brought forward to be interrogated, which was instantly complied with by the bishop. An usher presented a petition, desiring, that before the opening of the trial she might be permitted to hear mass. The bishop and judges deliberated upon it, and decided that her request ought not to be granted, in view of the crimes of which she was accused. The order was conse-

quently given to conduct her immediately before the tribunal. Joan was brought forward, and the same day the examination commenced.

It was then that Joan showed herself truly great and beautiful. The poor young girl, who could neither read nor write, who had only been taught to sew and spin, and whose whole learning, as she said herself, was confined to her *Pater*, her *Ave Maria*, and her *Creed*, the poor solitary prisoner, without human counsel, supported solely by God and her conscience, showed herself always calm, often energetic, and sometimes truly sublime. We will content ourselves with citing, in order to give our readers an idea of that majestic character, some questions and replies, taken almost at random from her examination :

Being admonished to swear upon the holy gospels that she would say the truth in all things upon which she was interrogated,

Joan replied : " I will not swear, seeing there are such things concerning the king of France, upon which I cannot answer to his enemies."

" But," replied the Bishop, " you will swear at least to tell the truth upon whatever concerns the Catholic faith, and those things which pertain to yourself alone?"

Joan replied, that " concerning her father and mother, and every thing that she had done since she left Domremy, she was ready to answer, and would willingly swear to tell the truth ; but concerning the revelations made to her by God, and which she had never confided to any one but King Charles, they might cut her head off before she would reveal them, without the permission of God and King Charles."

This reply was made with the simplicity of a young girl, and the firmness of a hero ; the bishop then admonished her to swear to tell the truth in whatever regarded the faith. Joan then knelt down, laid her two hands upon the missal, and swore that she would say the truth upon things concerning the faith ; but she added that of her revelations she would tell nothing, unless she received permission to do it from the same voice who had made them to her. Then addressing herself to the bishop, looking him steadily in the face :

" Look well to it," said she, " before you make yourself my judge, for in the name of God, I affirm, that you are taking a heavy charge upon yourself."

Being interrogated upon the place of her birth, her age, and the education she had received,

She replied, that she was born at Domremy, that she was nineteen years of age, and that she knew the *Pater Noster*, the *Ave Maria*, and the *Creed*.

Interrogated at what time she had her first revelations, and by what intermedial,

She replied, that it was at the age of thirteen years, and by the same voice which had ever since instructed her what to do ; that the first time she heard the voice she was much afraid ; that it was in the summer time, at mid-day, and that she was in her father's garden.

Interrogated upon what the voice ordered her,

She replied, that two or three times a week the voice ordered her to depart immediately, without the knowledge of her father, and go to raise the siege of Orleans, and conduct the Dauphin to Reims to be crowned.

Interrogated if, when she left her father and mother, she believed she was acting wickedly,

She replied: When God commanded it, if I had had a hundred fathers and mothers, and had I been the daughter of a king, I would have obeyed.

Interrogated if she met with any hindrance on the road,

She replied, that she went to the king directly without any hindrance.

Interrogated in what place the king was,

She replied, that she found him at Chinon, where she arrived about noon; that she put up at a small hotel, and that after dinner she went to see the king in his château.

Interrogated if the king was pointed out to her,

She replied, that he was not, but that she knew him by the counsel of her voices.

Interrogated of what material his standard was,

She replied, that it was white satin.

Interrogated by what sorcery she inspired the soldiers who followed her banner, with so much courage,

She replied, I said:—Enter boldly among the English, and I entered first myself.

Interrogated why her standard, at the coronation, was nearer the choir than any other,

She replied:—It was but just, that being the foremost in trouble, it should be the first in honour.

Interrogated if the hope of victory was founded in herself or in her standard,

She replied:—It was founded in God, and nought else.

Interrogated if those of her party firmly believed that she was sent from God,

She replied:—If they believe it, they are not deceived.

Interrogated if St. Michael, when he appeared to her, was naked or clothed,

She replied:—Do you not suppose that God has wherewith to clothe him?

Interrogated if she made the sortie of Compiègne at the instigation of her voices,

She replied:—That being one day upon the fosse at Melun, her voices told her that before mid-summer she would be taken by the English; but that she must not be desponding, but on the contrary she must take it as coming from the Lord, and the Lord would assist her.

Interrogated if, since that time, her voices had renewed the same warning to her,

She replied:—That she had received it several times, and that she had asked when and where it would happen, but her voices made no reply.

Interrogated that if, in case she had known that she would have been taken, she would have made that sally,

She replied, that she would not have done it of her own accord, but if her voices had ordered her to do it, she would have obeyed them to the letter.

Interrogated why she leapt from the tower of Beaurevoir, into the fosse,

She replied:—It was my choice to die rather than to fall into the hands of the English.

Interrogated if her voices had advised this means of escape,

She replied, that on the contrary they had forbidden her to do it, and that it was the first time she had disobeyed them.

Interrogated if, in leaping thus, she expected to be killed,

She replied, that she did not know whether she would be or not, but as she took the leap, she recommended herself to God.

Interrogated if, after this attempt at flight, she was sorry for having acted contrary to the advice of her voices,

She replied:—My penance was the pain I caused myself in falling.

Interrogated if the wound was serious,

She replied, that she could not tell, that she only knew that for three or four days she could neither eat nor drink; but that she was at last consoled by St. Catharine, who ordered her to confess, and thank God that she had not destroyed herself; that, moreover, the people of Compiègne would have succour before St. Martin's day; and upon this consolation she commenced to eat, and was soon cured.

Interrogated if her voices had told her that she would fall into the hands of the English,

She replied, that her voices had said to her:—Take all patiently, and be not troubled by reason of thy martyrdom, for it is the road to heaven.

Interrogated if, since her voices had made her this promise, she truly believed that she would go to paradise,

She replied, that she believed it as firmly as if she were already in the kingdom of heaven; and as they had told her that this promise was of the highest importance, she cherished it as her greatest treasure.

Interrogated if, after such a revelation, she believed herself to be in the grace of God,

She replied:—If I am not, I pray God to put me there; if I am, I pray God to keep me there.

It was thus that Joan replied; it was thus that the young girl, after having passed from faith to heroism, passed from heroism to martyrdom; for however godly were her replies, and however clear her innocence, they had determined to condemn her.

Nevertheless, they dared not yet speak of death, for all their accusations of sorcery and impiety had been successively defeated by Joan. Previous to her examination, they had introduced into her prison a miserable

wretch, named Loyseleur, who gave himself out for a priest of Lorraine : who, like herself, was suffering persecution and martyrdom. This pretended priest had several times heard her confession, whilst the Count of Warwick and the Duke of Bedford were listening, concealed behind some tapestry. But Joan's confession was pure as an angel's, and they could not surprise her by that means ; being obliged to renounce this plan, the infamous spy left her prison one morning for ever. They had sent to Domremy to get information with regard to Joan's character, and the whole country unanimously replied that Joan was a saint.

They had assembled learned medical doctors, and a jury of venerable matrons, who had all declared Joan to be an unspotted virgin ; they could not then possibly say that Joan had made a league with the devil, since the ritual positively declares that the devil cannot form a compact with a virgin.

All these accusations being destroyed, one after the other, her accusers took refuge in some miserable subtleties ; for instance, *she refused to submit herself to the church, and she continued to wear the dress of a man.*

Her refusal to submit herself, was a snare into which her judges had made her fall ; they had made so subtle a distinction between the church triumphant in heaven, and the church militant upon earth, that notwithstanding its lucid and prompt conception, she was not able to comprehend it ; so much had they mystified a plain simple truth. Besides, that miserable priest—whom she supposed to be a man of God, and whose absence she lamented every day—had persuaded her, that to submit herself to the church, was to acknowledge a tribunal composed entirely of her enemies.

As to her obstinacy in wearing a man's dress, the reason is obvious, as it quite naturally explains itself: Joan, being young and beautiful, had several times been rudely assailed by her keepers—who, it was said, were even encouraged in this wickedness by the Duke of Bedford—and she thought herself better protected by a man's dress than by a woman's.

Nevertheless, several of the judges were stung with remorse at their unjust proceedings, and one among them, being overwhelmed by the voice of his conscience, suggested to Joan in the face of the whole tribunal, the idea of appealing to the general council of Bâle, which was at that time assembled.

“What is a general council?” demanded Joan.

“It is an assemblage of the whole church, universal,” replied brother Isambert, “where you will find as many doctors of your party as of the English party.”

“Oh! in that case, gentlemen,” exclaimed Joan, “be assured I not only submit myself to it, but claim it as a right.”

“Hold your tongue, devil's imp!” interrupted the bishop ; then turning towards the apostolic notary : “I forbid you,” said he, “to insert that demand in the verbal process.”

“Alas!” replied the poor girl, with that sad tone of resignation which

had become habitual to her, "you write down every thing that is against me, but you will write nothing that is for me."

When the tribunal broke up, the Count of Warwick waited at the door for brother Isambert; when he saw him, he advanced towards him with uplifted hand; but, reflecting upon the danger which he incurred by striking an ecclesiastic, he lowered it; then, with a tone which implied all the threat of his gesture:

"Why," said he, "did you prompt that girl this morning? Blood and oons! villain, if I see you inclined to take sides with her, I'll throw you into the Seine."

The examination being finished, the judges assembled on the 12th of May, at the residence of the Bishop of Beauvais; there—as they dared not take upon themselves alone the responsibility of so iniquitous a judgment as that to which Joan was destined—they prepared twelve incorrect false articles, which they sent for consultation, under the form of a memorial, without even naming the accused, to the university of Paris, to the Chapter of Rouen, to the Bishops of Contances, of Avranches, and of Lisieux, and to fifty or sixty doctors who had been lateral judges in the trial. The reply was as follows: "That the accused had lightly or presumptuously believed in apparitions and revelations which doubtless proceeded from the evil spirit; that she had blasphemed God by maintaining that he had ordered her to wear the dress of a man, and that she was a heretic by refusing to submit herself to the church."

During this tedious inquest Joan fell sick; then, orders arrived to have the greatest care taken of her, and the best physicians in Paris were sent to attend her. "For the empire of the world," said the Count of Warwick, "the king would not have her die a natural death; he has purchased her dearly enough, to do with her as he pleases, and he intends that she shall be burnt alive."

Joan recovered, as the king of England desired; and as she might, with all the fatigue of mind and body that she endured, fall sick a second time and never rise, they urged the sentence, and the sentence was passed: it was—as is usual with ecclesiastical judgments—a declaration made to the accused, that she was cast off from the church as a corrupt member, and that she was delivered over to secular justice. The counsellors, however, added, that in case the accused would consent to recant and to renounce her man's dress, they would engage the judges to moderate the penalty.

But it was no easy matter to persuade the inspired maiden that the revelations which she continued to have, and from which alone she derived strength and consolation, proceeded from the evil spirit, and not from God. They endeavoured at first to conquer what they called her obstinacy, by the fear of torture. The Bishop of Beauvais went to her prison, with the executioner and the instruments of torture. They announced to Joan, that if she would not abjure and acknowledge her heresies, they were going to put her to torments; at the same time the executioner prepared

the *chevalet*, an instrument of torture, made like a horse. Joan, seeing these preparations, became deadly pale, but her constancy was not shaken for an instant, and turning towards the bishop :

“You may do it,” said she ; “but I warn you that the misery which you inflict upon my body and soul, will fall upon your body and soul.” This menace, of course, was not sufficient to arrest her persecutor ; but as Joan was still very weak from her recent illness, the physician declared that it was very possible she might die in the torments.

As her death was the misfortune that the English were most anxious to avoid, and as Pierre Cauchon held himself in some manner responsible for the head of Joan, they again had recourse to that miserable priest, Loyseleur, who had before been foiled in his attempts to extract any thing from the poor girl which might be turned to her injury. He crept into Joan's dungeon, and pretended that he had moved the gaoler by his prayers to let him enter. Joan received him as her spiritual liberator, and the wretch advised her to submit to whatever they should require of her, assuring her that when once she submitted, she would pass directly from the chains of the English into the hands of the church. Joan combated all one night the sophisms of this villain, opposing to them the clear logic of her own mind ; but at length, believing that it was through pure devotedness that he gave her this advice, and humbling her own ignorance before the wisdom of him whom she regarded as the man of God, she promised to submit to all their requirements.

Consequently, the day after this promise, that is to say, the 24th of May, 1431, Joan was taken from her prison and conducted to the place of the cemetery St. Ouen, there to hear her sentence. Two scaffolds had been erected : one for the Bishop of Beauvais, the vice-inquisitor, the Cardinal of Winchester, the Bishop of Noyou, the Bishop of Bologna, and thirty-three side judges ; the other, for Joan and William Erard, who was appointed to address her ; at the foot of the scaffold was the executioner, with his cart all ready, in case of a refusal on the part of Joan, to conduct her to the old market-place, where the funeral pile awaited her. Every thing, as we see, was prepared, if occasion required, to finish the horrible catastrophe without delay.

The whole population of Rouen seemed to be divided into two parties ; one party awaited Joan upon the place of the cemetery, and the other at the door of her prison, and in the streets through which she was to pass ; this latter portion, as she advanced, fell in the rear and followed on, so that, on arriving at the square, which was already filled, the press became so great that they were obliged to make use of their swords and bayonets to open a passage to the scaffold.

Hardly was Joan mounted upon the scaffold, than William Erard commenced his harangue, and strove to crush her under the weight of a discourse filled not only with accusations but insults. Joan listened to this

polemic with her usual resignation, without uttering a word in reply, appearing to be deeply absorbed in mental prayer, as if she did not hear the words of the orator. This apparent insensibility exasperated William Erard so much, that he laid his hand upon the young girl's shoulder, and shaking her rudely: "It is to you I speak," roared he, "and not only to you, but to your king, whom I declare to be a schismatic and a heretic." At these words Joan rose up to defend, with her tongue, the ungrateful monarch whom she had defended with her sword.

"By my faith, saving your reverence," cried she, "I dare swear to you, upon pain of death, that the king whom you insult is the most noble of christians; one who loves the faith and the church most truly, and does not merit the odious name you give to him."

"Silence her, silence her!" cried out the Bishop of Beauvais and William Erard, with one voice, to Massieu, the beadle.

Then the beadle arose, and thrusting Joan into her seat, he took the schedule of abjuration, and read it aloud to her; having finished reading, he handed the schedule to Joan, saying: "Abjure!"

"Alas!" said Joan, "I do not know what you mean by ordering me to abjure."

"Explain it to her then," cried the bishop, "and above all use dispatch."

The beadle then approached Joan; it was his office to accompany criminals to prison, to the tribunal, and to the scaffold, and even this man, accustomed as he was to scenes of horror, when he saw the candour and resignation of Joan, felt himself softened by a strong emotion of pity, and advised her, instead of abjuring, to appeal to the Pope.

Joan then rose, and with a gentle but firm voice, she said:

"I will first refer myself to the church universal, to know whether I ought to abjure or not."

"Abjure without condition, abjure instantly," cried William Erard, "or by the God of Heaven, I swear this shall be your last day, and before night you shall be burned alive."

At this threat, Joan turned pale and trembled; her strength was almost exhausted, and two great tears rolled down her cheeks; the heroine gave place to the woman.

"Ah well!" said she, her voice broken by sobs, "I declare that I will refer the whole matter to my judges, and to our holy mother the church."

"Sign then," said William Erard, presenting her a paper which he took from the hands of Laurent Callot, Secretary to the King of England.

"What is that?" demanded the maiden.

"The act of abjuration which has just been read to you, and by which you promise never more to bear arms, to let your hair grow, and to renounce the dress of a man."

"But," said Joan, hesitating, "the one you read to me just now seemed shorter than this."

“No, it is the same,” said William Erard, and putting a pen in her hand, and placing her hand upon the paper: “Sign,” said he, “sign instantly, if not”—here he called out to the executioner, who, backing his horse a little, brought the cart into full view before the scaffold.

“Alas!” said Joan of Arc, “God is witness that I am here alone against you all, and if you deceive me it is most infamous.”

At these words she raised her eyes to heaven, as if to implore a last counsel from God. Then, dropping her head upon her breast, with a deep sigh, she made the sign of the cross, which was, as we know, the only signature she could trace.

But this abjuration, which was calculated to render Joan infamous, in confessing that all that she had accomplished had been done contrary to the counsel and will of God, and by the suggestion of evil spirits—for, as Joan suspected, they had absolutely made her sign a schedule, different from that which was read to her—this abjuration, I say, saved her life; for the consultation had said, that in case the accused would abjure, let her hair grow, and wear the dress of a woman, they would implore for her the mercy of the judges.

At the moment Joan abjured, a great clamour arose in the crowd; the French uttering exclamations of joy upon seeing her saved, and the English pouring forth execrations and threats.

Then the Bishop of Beauvais rose, and making a sign that he wished to read the sentence, he imposed silence upon that vast multitude agitated by divers sentiments. We here transcribe the sentence.

In nomine Domini, amen.

“All pastors of the church, who have a desire to conduct the people of God, must faithfully and diligently watch, lest the devil by his subtle arts and frauds should seduce and deceive the flock of Jesus Christ, which he is constantly seeking to do; for which cause it is necessary by great diligence to resist all false and disloyal enterprises; as thou Joan, vulgarly called La Pucelle, hast been circumvented by many errors in the faith of Jesus Christ, for which thou hast been called into judgment, and having been witnessed, by us, all the points and articles of thy process, the confessions, replies and assertions made by thee; and the whole trial having been seen and deliberated upon by the masters and doctors of the theological faculty of Paris, and by many prelates and doctors, both in ecclesiastical and civil law, residing in this city of Rouen, by whom thou hast been long and charitably admonished, notwithstanding which admonitions and remonstrances thou hast rashly sinned with open mouth, for all these things, in order that thou mayest do salutary penance, we condemn thee to perpetual imprisonment, with the bread of grief and the water of anguish, that thou mayest bewail thy sins, and commit no more henceforward, saving our grace and moderation, if thy future conduct shall merit it.”

After the reading of this sentence, William Erard rose and cried out three times: "O France! France; thou hast been seduced by a woman who has made thee heretic!"

But Joan rose and with a loud voice she exclaimed: "That is not true, that is not true, say it of me, if you will, but not of France, for it is a sacred kingdom."

"Silence," cried they, "silence, Joan, it is not so long since your merciful sentence was passed but that it may be revoked."

"Ah, well!" said Joan, "as has been agreed upon, let me be taken from the hands of the English, and led to the prisons of the church."

But without heeding this claim, founded as it was upon a positive promise, Joan was reconducted to the large tower. She was soon followed by the vicar of the inquisition, and by several of her judges, who came to make her feel the price of the pardon she had received, and to signify to her to abandon her man's dress. Joan meekly replied that she was ready to obey strictly to the tenor of the judgment. They brought her a box of female attire. Joan desired to be left alone, and then changed her dress; the English then entered, and passing a chain round her waist they made it fast to an iron post in the middle of her prison: at night, two chains fixed at the foot of her bed responded for her security; besides, she was guarded by five soldiers, three of them were stationed within her dungeon and two at the door.

Nevertheless, the design of the English was not accomplished. It was not torture they desired, nothing short of her death could satisfy them: also the count of Warwick, as he was leaving her prison, expressed all his anger to Pierre Cauchon, telling him that the king of England would be so much displeased that Joan was not delivered to death, that he would certainly blame him for the mildness of the judgment.

"In God's name be quiet," said the Bishop, "she is not yet saved, and we may yet find occasion to destroy her."

In fact, this occasion, so ardently desired by the English, soon presented itself. Joan, shut up in her dungeon, with three of her keepers, had been obliged, the very night of her abjuration, to defend herself against their violence. Foreseeing that those men, from whom she knew she had every thing to fear, would renew their attempts of this kind, she watched until her keepers had fallen asleep, then stealing from her bed she retook her man's dress—which doubtless had been purposely placed within her reach—so that the first who entered her prison in the morning, perceiving that she had on her man's dress—uttered a cry of joy and communicated the welcome intelligence to the others. Joan had broken the oath which she had taken never to quit the dress of a woman; Joan, consequently, merited death.

The Bishop of Beauvais being informed of this infraction—for which, by the way, he was quite prepared—hastened to the prison, and in spite of Joan's declaration that fear alone of a misfortune which she dreaded more

than death, had decided her to commit this perjury, and in spite of the traces of the struggle upon her face and arms, he prepared the verbal process of her disobedience; this verbal process being finished, he went out joyfully from the prison, and meeting the Count of Warwick upon the stairs: "Make yourself easy, count," said he, "for the thing is done!"

The next day Joan was again conducted to the tribunal: interrogated upon the causes which had led her to disobey the church, she related every thing; but they took care not to consign this declaration to the interrogatory, for by simply exposing the facts the whole crime would be thrown upon her enemies. Then Joan, strong in her innocence, thus apostrophized her judges:

"If I had been in the ecclesiastical prison, and guarded by churchmen, nothing of all this would have happened, and I should not now be the miserable being I am. But for all that happens to me, I appeal to God, the great judge of the wrongs and injustices inflicted upon me."

But all that Joan could say was useless; her death was resolved upon, and her pretended disobedience was the only pretext upon which her murderers supported themselves; accordingly on Wednesday the 31st of May, after a deliberation in which it was acknowledged that Joan, being yet obstinate in her errors, had, through malice and diabolical obstinacy, falsely showed signs of repentance; that she had abused the sacred and divine name of God, blasphemed damnably in showing herself an incorrigible heretic, that, in short, she had relapsed into heresy and error, which rendered her unworthy of all mercy, she merited the following sentence. Eight days passed between the provisional and the definitive sentence, so we see that the English, together with Pierre Cauchon, did not suffer their patience to be tried by a long delay:

In nomine Domini, amen.

"We, Pierre, by the grace of God, Bishop of Beauvais, and we, brother Jehan Magistri, Vicar of the Inquisition of Faith, competent in this party:

"As thou, Joan, called La Pucelle, hast been found by us to have fallen into divers errors and crimes of schism and idolatry, of invocation of the devil, and of many other misdeeds, and that for these causes we have heretofore justly declared thee to be schismatic and idolatrous: nevertheless, because the church never closes her arms against those who desire to return to her, we supposed that thou hadst fully and truly withdrawn thyself from all such errors, into which thou hadst publicly vowed, sworn and promised never again to fall, but, on the contrary, to remain in the union and communion of the holy catholic church, and of our holy father the Pope, which promises are contained in a schedule signed by thine own hand; nevertheless, thou hast again fallen therein, as the dog returns to his kennel. For this cause we declare thee to have incurred the sentence

of excommunication, which thou hadst at first merited, and pronounce thee to be relapsed into thy former errors. Wherefore, we declare thee to be heretic, and by this assembly now seated in the tribunal of justice, we declare in this writing that as a corrupt member we reject thee from the unity of the church, and deliver thee to secular justice, beseeching for thee humane treatment, whether in loss of life or limb."

The same day about eleven o'clock this fatal decree was read to Joan.

CHAPTER XII.

THE MARTYRDOM.

JOAN listened to the reading of the sentence with tolerable composure. For seven months she had been in the hands of the English, and her gaolers had inflicted such atrocious tortures upon her that she had often longed for the death which now approached so near, and which had often been predicted to her by her voices. But the kind of death was not specified in the sentence; Joan demanded what kind of death they had reserved her for, and they replied she was to be burned.

At this announcement Joan's fortitude completely forsook her; she dreaded nothing so much as the death to which she was condemned, and in fear of which she had incurred the displeasure of her voices by abjuring.

Habituated to war and to the gleaming of swords, she could have faced death by the flashing steel with the heroism of a warrior, but to be consumed by fire, that slow, cruel, infamous death, was more than her resignation could endure.

"Alas! alas!" cried she, "to reduce my body which is pure and incorrupt to ashes; I would rather have my head severed from my body seven times over. Ah! if, as I demanded, I had been guarded by church people, all this would never have happened."

At that moment Pierre Cauchon entered her prison with several of her judges.

"Bishop," cried Joan, "Bishop, I die by your hands; but mark my words, it is a heavy charge you take upon yourself by putting me to so cruel a death!"

Then turning towards one of the judges:

"Oh! Master Pierre," said she, "where shall I be to-day?"

"Have you not good hope in God?" demanded he.

"Oh! yes indeed," replied she, "by God's help I hope to go straight to paradise; but the fiery path which conducts to it—Oh God! Oh God!"

"Have good courage, Joan," said the same merciful judge.

"I think I could have courage," replied Joan, "if they would only send me a priest that I might confess before I die. In the name of God, gentlemen, will you not allow me a priest?"

The judges then consulted among themselves, and it was agreed that they would send her one. Joan hearing this good news, thanked him heartily, and desired that it might be brother Loyseleur; for she did not know that this man was a traitor, or that he had in any way contributed to her death. But the Bishop had heard that Loyseleur had been brought to repentance in consequence of a vision which had appeared to him, and that he had made two or three efforts to penetrate into Joan's prison to make a full confession to her. Accordingly they replied to Joan that what she demanded was impossible, and that they would send her another priest. Upon this refusal, Joan insisted no farther, but begged them to leave her alone that she might pour out her griefs before God.

As the moment of martyrdom approached, the judges—moved probably by fear of the awful responsibility which Joan had called down upon their heads—decided to send the three men who throughout the debates had constantly shown themselves favourable to her, to assist her in her last moments; they were beadle Massieu, Pierre, one of the lateral judges, and brother Martin Ladvenu.

As soon as Joan saw them: "My fathers," said she, "you know that my judges have had pity on me, and are going to permit me to confess."

"They do more still, my daughter," replied Martin Ladvenu, "they permit me to give you the communion."

"Blessed be God," said Joan, "for it is near seven months since I have received the precious body of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Saying these words she knelt down where she was, for the chain which girdled her body could not permit her to remove from the post. Martin Ladvenu then took a chair and sat down before her, and as the two assistants retired to a corner of the prison, Joan asked if they were not priests, and being answered in the affirmative, she begged them to approach, saying that she was so sure of her innocence and the mercy of God, that she was willing to confess before the whole world.

The auditors in listening to this confession, which revealed a life of purity, devotedness and torture, and which was about to be terminated by the most horrible death invented by man for the most atrocious criminals, were moved to tears, whilst that Joan, in proportion as she drew near to death, and consequently to her God, seemed to receive from divine mercy that strength which she so greatly needed.

After the confession, the holy sacrament was brought upon a paten covered over with a cloth, without a taper, stole or surplice, and all through the communion they repeated the Litany of the dying; *Orate pro ea*, pray for her.

At two o'clock, Joan, who was still praying, assisted by brother Martin Ladvenu, heard the noise of the cart, the shouts of the English who accompanied it, and that dull confused murmur of the crowd which rises full and constant like the noise of the tide. She comprehended that the moment was

come, and rose first herself. Then her keepers entered and detached the chain from her waist: two others soon brought her some female attire, which Joan humbly and modestly put on in the darkest corner of her prison; her hands were then bound, and an iron ring placed upon each ankle, the two rings being connected by a chain.

Joan descended leaning upon the arms of Massieu the beadle, and brother Martin Ladvenu; Pierre marched before to preserve her as much as possible from the insults of the English. On arriving at the door, in the midst of the cries and abuses which saluted her, she heard one voice of supplication addressed to her, she turned in the direction whence the sound proceeded, and saw Loyseleur struggling with the guards; goaded with remorse he strove to mount the executioner's cart to obtain Joan's pardon at any price whatever; but the English knowing his intention, and who feared that such a confession would excite the pity of the multitude in favour of the accused and cause a mutiny, retained him by force. But hardly was the cart in motion when he escaped and ran after it, crying: "Pardon, Joan! Forgive me, Joan! God grant me a long life to expiate my sins by a penance equal to my crimes. Pardon! pardon!"

Joan could not imagine what he meant; for, as we have said—she believed this wretch to be a worthy good priest. Brother Martin then told her who he was, and how she had been betrayed by him: Joan immediately stood up, and with a loud voice: "Brother Loyseleur," said she, "I forgive you; pray to God for me." The priest then fell with his face to the earth, so overwhelmed with remorse that he wished to be trampled under the feet of the horses, and as his public confession had already caused some emotion in the multitude, they were obliged to take him up and carry him away by force.

The cart was attended by eight hundred full armed Englishmen, who, numerous as they were, had great difficulty to force a passage through the vast serried multitude; so that Joan was an hour and a half going from the tower to the old market place. On arriving there she cried out: "Oh! Rouen, Rouen, is it here that I must die!"

Three scaffolds were erected; one for the judges, one for Joan, and the other for the burning of the victim. At the sight of the funeral pile a deadly pallor spread over the lovely face of the youthful martyr, she averted her head from the dreadful view, and her confessor gave her a crucifix, which infused into her fainting heart sufficient courage to raise her brow and look at the pile.

At the foot of the scaffold from which she was to hear her sentence pronounced, she got out at the back of the cart and mounted the scaffold steps supported by Martin Ladvenu; Pierre and Massieu remained at the foot.

Hardly had she reached the place destined for her, when the priest Misi commenced a discourse against her, which contained more abuses than she had ever received from the English. Joan appeared not to hear it, but

prayed and kissed the crucifix as long as it continued. At last the preacher terminated his long harangue by these words: "Go in peace, the Church being no longer able to defend you, delivers you into secular hands." The Bishop then rose and read to Joan the judgment which had been previously read to her by the keeper of the register.

As soon as it was pronounced, Joan fell upon her knees and addressed to God our Saviour the most devout prayers; holding up her manacled hands, she supplicated the prayers of the by-standers, of whatever rank or nation they might be. The bailiff then ordered the executioner to take the prisoner and conduct her to the pile; but even the executioner was softened by the great faith which Joan exhibited, and prolonged his preparations in order to give her time to finish her devotions; and she performed them with so much earnestness—says the chronicle—that the judges, prelates, and other assistants were moved even to sobs and tears, and many English made confession and acknowledged the name of God in seeing her, whom they had represented as a heretic, come to so pious an end.

Nevertheless, there were others who, far from being moved at this touching spectacle, were chafing with impatience to see it finished, fearing that some sedition might spring up in the city and disappoint them in their murderous intentions. Many soldiers and captains cried out: "Why so much manœuvring and delay? Hand her over to us and we will soon despatch her. Among the rest two or three impatient judges were heard to say: "Come, come, priest; executioner, no more delay. Do you want us to dine here?"

The guards then seized Joan and placed upon her head a mitre, upon which were written these words: "Relapsed heretic, apostate, and idolater;" and dragging her to the funeral pile they thrust her into the hands of the executioner, saying, "Do your duty." Poor Joan turned towards brother Martin, and stretching out her hands towards him; "My father," said she, "do not forsake me."

The worthy man needed not this appeal; he followed Joan, and as the pile had been raised very high upon a mound, so that every body could see her die, he aided her in ascending it, which was very difficult on account of the chains upon her ankles. Finally, the priest and the executioner raised her up in their arms, whilst a sub-executioner drew her up by the shoulders. Brother Martin and the executioner followed after.

Then they bound her to the stake which formed the centre of the pile. Joan made no resistance, but with lamb-like submission she bowed to her cruel fate, merely imploring all believers in God to pray for her. The executioner having finished his task descended with his valet, leaving Joan alone with brother Martin. Pierre and Massieu who were standing at the foot of the pile cried out to her: "Courage, Joan! courage, God will aid you!" she replied, "Thank you, thank you good people."

At that moment the executioner approached the pile with a torch, and as

they had placed rosin and other combustible substances upon each corner of it, the flame spread rapidly. Brother Martin was completely absorbed in his pious functions exhorting Joan to put her faith in Christ, and to pray for strength to support the fiery trial, when the flame was on the point of communicating to his dress. Joan observed it first, and said to him; "In God's name, take care, my father; the flame has almost reached your robe! descend, descend quickly, and hold up the crucifix before my eyes that I may look on it till I die!"

The priest had barely time to descend, for the fire gained with such rapidity that the English began then to complain that the torments of their victim—for which they had so long and impatiently waited—were going to finish too soon. At that moment—no one knew why—the Bishop had the courage to descend from his scaffold and approach the burning pile. "Bishop, Bishop," cried Joan, "you know well that I die by your hands!" Then feeling the heat of the flame: "O Rouen! Rouen," she exclaimed, "I fear thou mayest suffer for my death!"

The fire continued to gain, whilst the smoke formed a curtain between the sufferer and the spectators; but as long as they could see her, her eyes were raised to heaven, and they heard her voice invoking her God. At length the flame dispelled the smoke; they heard for the last time the word *Jesus*; then a piercing cry of anguish rent the air: it was the *Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani!* of the Saviour of France.

Joan was hardly dead when the executioner went up to brother Martin and asked him if he thought God would punish him for the evil he had done to that woman, whom he said he regarded as a saint. Brother Martin tried to console him, saying that he was only the instrument, and that God would distinguish between the instrument and the arm that wielded it.

But it was still worse when the executioner found that notwithstanding the coal, sulphur and oil which he had laid upon the breast of Joan, her heart remained entire and full of blood. He had exercised his terrible vocation for nineteen years, and this was the first instance of the kind that he had ever known.

But this compassion which moved the soul of the executioner pervaded more than one breast; at the moment the pile was lighted, several of the judges, and among others Houpeville, Migot, Fabry, Riquer and Mauchon, left their places and retired, saying that they could not endure such a spectacle as that. Mauchon, who was the apostolic notary, declared he had never shed so many tears in all the afflictions he had ever suffered, as he did for the cruel fate of poor Joan; and in token of his sincerity, he took a part of the money which he had received for the process, and bought a missal, in which he ceased not to pray for Joan to the end of his days. Furthermore, at the instant the martyr expired, a prebendary of Rouen named John de la Pie was heard to say: "Alas! alas! my God, when the hour of my

death shall come, receive my soul into the same place with the departed spirit of Joan." Even the secretary of the king of England, John Frappart, returned from the execution weeping lamentably, and saying, "Wo to us ! wo to us ! we are lost ; for we have this day burnt a saint, whose soul is now in paradise."

But the report which made the strongest impression upon the minds of all, was that an Englishman, who hated Joan so much that he had insulted her in her prison, and during her trial, and at last swore that the day Joan was burned, he would carry one fagot to the pile. In fact, he was approaching the funeral pile with his fagot of wood, when suddenly his legs failed him, he fell upon his knees, extended his hands towards Joan and begged for pardon apparently ready to expire. He was soon lifted up, and being asked what the matter was, he declared loudly that the moment Joan cried Jesus ! he saw a dove come out of the fire and ascend towards heaven, and that he was certain that the dove was the soul of the martyr.

The same day the cardinal of England—fearing that even her relics might accomplish some miracle—ordered that her heart should be given to him, and that the ashes of her body mingled with those of the pile should be thrown from the bridge into the Seine, to be thus transported to the boundless ocean.

These things came to pass on the thirtieth day of May, 1431.

THE END.






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