







Joan and her Sacred Banner

THE FRANCE OF JOAN OF ARC

By LIEUTENANT-COLONEL

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The France of Joan of Arc

CHAPTER I

A Beginning of Discord

1380 and Later

WITH the exception of the privileged few, who enjoyed life through the sufferings which they inflicted upon others, the inhabitants of the country of France had but a miserable time of it in the years immediately preceding the coming of Joan of Arc.

Torn by wars from end to end—wars with England, which owned the great Duchy of Aquitaine, with the Duchy of Brittany, with Castile, or with Flanders—the country was overrun by the Free Companies. These, under noble captains who were no better than brigands, when not serving for pay under one party or the other, roamed about, burning, pillaging, ravishing, and destroying at their own sweet will. Life was a hell and France a ruin. The country had sunk to a depth of misery of which neither before nor since has the like been seen on the fair plains of Gaul.

Charles V. and his great Breton Constable Du Guesclin both died in the autumn of the same year, 1380, when Charles, so-called "le Sage," left

everything in an unfinished condition, and only a twelve-year-old son to succeed him to put matters in order. The great schism of the Church, whereby while one Pope ruled at Rome in Italy another occupied the Papal throne at Avignon in France, was one of these matters. Others were the war in Brittany, the insurrection in Languedoc, and the revolution in Flanders. Nevertheless, in spite of all the money which he had given to the English and the Free Companies, Charles V. left plenty of money behind him. The sum of seventeen millions of livres, which he had saved, was found hidden in a wall at Vincennes.

The first of the French Monarchs who can be said to have had anything worth calling a policy, that of Charles V. consisted in strengthening the towns, the bourgeois, against the old feudal nobility who had formerly been practically little kinglets in their respective provinces. The bourgeois of Paris were enabled to acquire feudal fiefs; they were allowed to array themselves like the Knights. A new nobility of traders was created, into whose hands passed many of the great estates depending upon the King. Thus a balance of power was established, and the prestige and power of the old noblesse lowered. By keeping his own Pope at Avignon under his thumb, the King had contrived to retain the disposition of the rich benefices in his own hands. He did not dare, however, to lay his hands upon the riches of the Church.

From the old feudal Suzerainty, by the policy of Charles V., a new and central Monarchy had sprung up. He had taken the backbone out of feudality wherewith to fortify himself; but when the thunders

of war rattled about his ears he sought to restore it to its old strength. But the French chivalry, while retaining its pride, had become but the shadow of its former self, and thus it broke at a touch, and the employment of mercenary soldiers became an absolute necessity. These mercenaries could not, however, be maintained without large sums of money to pay them ; and, since the pockets of the Church could not be touched, these payments became impossible. Accordingly, at the end of the reign of Charles V., in spite of all his political wisdom, he found himself utterly unable to resist the English as he had a dozen years earlier.

His system had failed ; and he died, leaving the system of wisdom to be followed by that of madness and extravagance.

With the coming of Charles VI. there was in France a recrudescence, or rather, an imitation, of the old-time chivalry.

Although the people of the country were ruined already, this new and artificial chivalry of Charles VI. indulged in the wildest extravagance. The costliness of arms and armour, the gorgeousness of armorial bearings, were exaggerated. Jousts and tourneys were continual, and indulged in at the wildest expense, for which the down-trodden people were, of course, compelled to pay.

Yet were the old knightly customs so absolutely forgotten that when the ceremony took place of the knighting of the young King's cousins, the sons of the Duc d'Anjou, none of those present at the investiture could understand the signification of the ancient rites employed.

The youthful Charles VI.—or should we not rather say those princely Ducs his uncles?—commenced the new reign by a series of dazzling fêtes in the Abbey of Saint-Denis.

At these festivals immense display was made of all the pomp and panoply of heraldry. And yet, although the walls were bedecked with ancient blazons and escutcheons, but vainly could the onlooker have searched the brilliant assembly for scions of many an ancient line whose shields, which had done service in the Crusades, hung intermixed with those of a nobility of more recent creation.

Strange were the costumes worn at this festival at Saint-Denis. The fine ladies, the pretty daughters of the nobles, seemed at the same time to have chosen the style of their dress from the saints and the demons. While, suspended from their headdress, they carried the precious veils which were used to attire the Holy Virgin in the religious processions, these headdresses themselves were surmounted by immense horns.

Juvenal des Ursins says: "These marvellous horns were high and wide, and had on each side, in place of padded caps, two great ears, so wide that when they would pass through the door of a chamber, they were forced both to turn sideways and to stoop." As for the men, the toes of their shoes were twisted into horns, into claws, into scorpion's stings. The women, so strangely attired with their immense horns and bare bosoms, towered above the men, their smiling faces seeming rather those of devil-sent witches and warlocks than of aught that was modest or feminine. Many of the men were apparelled more like women than the women themselves, dragging trains behind

them a dozen yards in length. While their trousers were closely fitting to the leg, their immense sleeves swept the ground. Upon these sleeves were represented all kinds of strange devices worked in embroidery or jewels. The Duc d'Orléans, for instance, is mentioned as having the words and notes of the music of the song "Madame, je suis plus joyeux," worked in pearls upon his sleeves. Every note was formed of four pearls, and there were in all nearly a thousand pearls upon his dress.

The only persons who wore the insignia of Royalty—flowing red robes trimmed with ermine furs—were by no means Royal. They were mere bourgeois who had originally been scribes of the Parliament of the Barons, but who now had, by the grace of the late King, blossomed out into magistrates and judges, before whom the Barons, their former masters, might be called for judgment. The young Charles VI. himself disdained to wear these heavy robes, but preferred to attire himself in the short jacket of the people, and to run about and amuse himself among the crowds, to whom, thus travestied, he was unknown.

At this period not only was there discord in France, but all over Europe. There were internecine wars between contesting rulers in the Empire, in Italy, in Portugal, and in Aragon. In England the way was being paved for the future struggle between the Red Rose of Lancaster and the White Rose of York, while France herself was preparing for the bloody and long-drawn-out contest between the Armagnacs and the Burgundians.

Behold then, in these troublous times, seated

upon the throne of France, which had been recently much consolidated by war, marriage, treaty, and inheritance, one who was not only a mere child, but, at the same time, a more actual King than any of his predecessors.

Not only had the kingdom been extended, independent, or semi-independent countries such as Champagne, Dauphiné, Guyenne, Flanders, and the Duchy and the County of Burgundy fallen to the Crown, but the great lords, the Seigneurs, by submitting to the principle of appeal to the monarch, had placed themselves in his hands. In place of, as heretofore, waging war with one another merely upon their own account, the rulers of these great States, and many lesser ones, now placed their swords in the hands of the King of France, and looked to him as Suzerain for the signal to commence the battle.

To control this rising power of a recently united France there was a boy of feeble will and violent disposition—which way, then, would the newly constituted country turn, in what direction give vent to its energies?

In addition to an aunt (Jeanne), married to King Charles II. of Navarre, and another aunt (Isabelle), the spouse of Duke Gian Visconti, of Milan, the young King, Charles VI., had three uncles, all violent men, greedy of money and power. These three sons of the unfortunate King Jean II., who was for so long after Poitiers a prisoner in England, were Louis, Duc d'Anjou et Provence, Philippe, Duc de Bourgogne, and Jean, Duc de Berri. The two former, although practically reigning Sovereigns in their respective appanages, did not on that account cease to



BERTRAND DU GUESCLIN.

be Frenchmen, while the third, who had no such independent position, jealously maintained his great inherited status as son, brother, and uncle of Kings of France throughout his long life. He became the scourge of Languedoc and Guyenne.

All of these uncles sought to lead the young King in the direction which best suited their respective interests, and all disputed the Regency. After facing each other at the head of an armed force, Anjou and Bourgogne eventually submitted their rival claims to the Parliament of Paris, when the former was adjudged to be Regent. The personal care of the child-King was, however, awarded to his maternal uncle Louis, Duc de Bourbon.

The violent and avaricious nature of Louis, Duc d'Anjou, became patent from the outset. When the Treasurer of the late King Charles V. hesitated to break the oath which he had sworn not to reveal the hiding-place of a treasure of golden ingots in the wall of the castle of Melun, Louis soon brought him to reason.

“Send for the executioner with his sword!”

The man of blood appeared in a minute.

“Cut me off this man's head!”

The Treasurer barely saved his head by instantly disclosing the hiding-place.

The uncles took the young Charles VI. to Reims, and there had him crowned with great magnificence; but as they did not abolish the ancient taxes the people, who were crying out for bread, rose in revolt, and brutally murdered the tax-collectors both in Paris and Rouen.

The Princes were obliged to give way, and, after

threatening Paris with an armed force, the Duc d'Anjou granted the bourgeois their lives in return for the small sum of a hundred thousand francs, which was all that could be obtained wherewith to carry on the government of the country.

Then, having been adopted as her heir by Queen Joanna I. of Naples, Anjou left Paris for Italy to oppose Charles de Durazzo, the rival pretender to the Neapolitan Crown. Before leaving France in 1382, after two years of the Regency, the Duc d'Anjou contrived, however, to pillage the country from end to end. He did not neglect to plunder the Pope of Avignon, whom he forced to connive at his so-called loans from the Church; and, after having caused the clergy to sell for his benefit even their chalices, ornaments, and holy missals, he marched off laden with treasure, and followed by the curses of the people. In Italy he arrived too late to save Queen Joanna from Durazzo, who had caused her to be suffocated, and after two miserable years, during which both his army and money had disappeared, even his crown having been sold, Louis d'Anjou, Comte de Provence and nominal King of Naples, died wretchedly of fever at a place called Bari.

Jean, Duc de Berri, meanwhile, having no other means of establishing himself to his satisfaction, caused his youthful nephew to nominate him as Governor of Languedoc and Guyenne. Marching off to the south, he ruled these two great provinces in the most absolute fashion, and with a rod of iron. There for a time he was contented to remain, nor did he trouble himself with the concerns of the rest of France.

Thus the rule both of Charles VI., the King, and of the remainder of the country was left in the hands of the powerful Prince known to the French as Philippe le Hardi, Duc de Bourgogne—to the English as Philip the Bold, Duke of Burgundy. He was the first of the three Dukes of Burgundy who, by their greed, their quarrels with the Orleanist or Armagnac faction, and their alliances, either open or secret, with the English, brought such terrible additional troubles upon the already distracted land of France. By their direct action these French Princes, who were at the same time independent rulers of a neighbouring and powerful State, reduced the Monarchy of France to such an abject condition that it required nothing short of a miracle to restore it to the condition which it had attained under the rule of Charles V.—the Wise. How that miracle was eventually accomplished through the human agency of that heaven-sent woman, Jeanne d'Arc, commonly known as La Pucelle or the Virgin Maid, it will be the task of the writer of these pages to portray.

CHAPTER II

The Rising Power of Burgundy

1380—1400

THE immense feudal dependency of the Duchy of Burgundy had first been granted by Robert, King of France, as an appanage to his son Robert, the first Duke, at the beginning of the eleventh century. The separate County Palatine of Burgundy, with which the great County of Flanders soon became incorporated, was then vested in a separate line, which commenced with Rainald I.

The Duchy, but not the County, reverted to the Crown of France when, in 1313, the Prince who became King Philip VI. of France married the Burgundian heiress Jeanne. Their son was King Jean II., and one of their grandsons Philippe "le Hardi," to whom the Duchy again passed as a separate appanage. This Philippe, Duc de Bourgogne, was successful, after considerable opposition on the part of her father, Louis III. de Mâle, in contracting a marriage with Marguerite, the heiress of the Counties of Burgundy and Flanders, to which Counties he expected to succeed on the death of his father-in-law.

Being the uncle of the boy-king Charles VI. when a revolution took place in Flanders which seemed to

place his succession in jeopardy, Duc Philippe marched his young nephew off with an army into the Low Countries, where the "Whitecaps," under the leadership of a bourgeois of Ghent, were committing horrible atrocities, especially upon all of noble birth.

The Duc de Berri had his hands full likewise in Languedoc, where the starving peasantry were ruthlessly slaughtering the nobles and priests. So cruel were they that they murdered a Scottish knight, after first crowning him with a red-hot iron crown, and at the same time a monk, after spitting him upon a heated iron spit.

In Flanders the crisis had been partly brought about by the domination, violence, and exactions of their French Count, Louis de Mâle; but the bitterness of the struggle was intensified by the jealousies and hatred for each other of the cities of Ghent and Bruges.

Between these two there was raging bloody war, while distant towns, such as Liège, Courtrai, or Brussels, and even the County of Holland, encouraged or assisted one side or the other, sending men, arms, or provisions to the combatants.

The Comte de Flandre was in Bruges. There, after forty thousand Brugeois had been defeated by only five thousand workmen from Ghent, under the famous Philippe Artevelde, these latter entered the city with the defeated force and slaughtered their rivals indiscriminately. As for the Comte, Louis de Mâle, this father-in-law of the Duc de Bourgogne only escaped by hiding himself in an old woman's bed.

When the people of Ghent retired they completed the discomfiture and humiliation of Bruges by carrying

off with them a famous trophy. This was a great dragon of gilt copper, which Baudoin, or Baldwin, of Flanders, Emperor of Constantinople, had brought from the church of Saint Sophia about the year 1204. It had been the crowning adornment of the great cloth-manufacturer's hall in Bruges.

It was an easy matter for the expectant heir of Flanders to convince the young Charles VI. that scoundrels who could behave in such a manner were deserving of punishment, and especially as they had overrun Tournai, which was then French territory. In the hopes of rich booty, crowds of Normans, Bretons, and Burgundians flocked to the standard of Charles, and soon the pillagers were having a merry time of it, packing up, selling, or sending to their homes everything of value which Flanders produced.

The story of the battle of Roosebeke, near Courtrai, is one of a horrible massacre. In order the better to preserve their order while charging, and not to be separated by the mounted men-at-arms, the people of Ghent foolishly tied themselves together, and advanced with pikes into the mass of their opponents. Soon they were entirely surrounded by the *gens d'armes*, whose lances were longer than their pikes. While the people composing the outer flanks were being pitilessly slaughtered, the four faces of the great battalion were forced in upon the centre. None could fly, and those composing the mass in the centre were suffocated; their bones actually cracked from the pressure.

When all were dead the youthful Charles, who had been kept in safety in the rear, was brought by his uncles of Bourgoigne and Bourbon to view the carnage.

He was on horseback, and they persuaded the now fourteen-year-old lad that he had been himself the conqueror, the glorious author of this awful and almost bloodless massacre. Bloodless, since Froissart says that there was an immense mountain of the dead Flemings, but never in a battle was so little blood seen, owing to the greater number having been killed by suffocation.

The young King, after this battle of Roosebeke, became drunken with the lust of blood. Being taken back to Courtrai by the Duc de Bourgogne, a rich Flemish town which would form part of the succession the Duc was waiting for, somebody mentioned to Charles the fact that there were retained there several thousand gilt spurs of former French Knights. These Knights, under Philippe le Bel, had been defeated by the Flemish at the battle of Courtrai in 1302. The blood of Charles VI. boiled with rage. In spite of his uncle, he ordered the sacking and subsequent burning of the city of Courtrai.

The boy was all for continuing the war in Flanders, but winter had come and the Flemish remained in arms. The King's uncles therefore reminded Charles that Paris was still in a rebellious mood, and suggested that it would be wiser and easier to punish the recalcitrant Parisians with the force at his disposal. To welcome their conquering Prince, and at the same time to overawe him, the Parisians turned out well-armed before Montmartre. Froissart says that "there were of the city of Paris rich and powerful men armed cap-à-pie to the number of thirty thousand, as well armed and appavelled as any Knight could be."

The triumphant force of the boy-King snapped its

fingers at these armed citizens. The barriers of Paris were thrown down, the gates torn from their hinges by the haughty chivalry, and cast upon the King's roadway. All the army trampled scornfully upon the gates of Paris while upon its march into the city. The King, armed, with lance on thigh, looked neither to the right nor left, returned no salutes, as he continued his proud progress to the Cathedral of Nôtre-Damé. The soldiers installed themselves by force in the houses of the bourgeois, whom, moreover, they ordered, with savage threats, to disarm at once. The terrified inhabitants of the city thereupon brought all of their arms—enough to arm eight hundred thousand men—and disposed them in front of the Palace of the Louvre. The King, or rather the Duc de Bourgogne, now had the rebellious Paris at his mercy, and it was determined to punish the city which had dared to refuse to pay the taxes and murdered the officials sent to collect them.

Two new forts to control the town were erected, and the executions were commenced without delay. Many of the innocent suffered among the guilty, but, as the Duc de Berri had declared that the whole of the population of Paris deserved death, that was not looked upon as a matter of consequence. When many had already suffered the death penalty, and the prayers for the lives of the remainder proffered to the King by the University had been openly refused, advantage was taken of the terror-stricken Parisians in a prearranged scene.

The King, with his uncles and many great lords, took his seat on a throne in a gorgeous tent, which was highly raised outside his palace. The courtyard

in front was crowded with people—men, women and children—most piteously begging for mercy. They were forcibly quieted, and compelled to listen while the King's Chancellor read aloud the enumeration of their crimes, and declared them all to merit instant death, with tortures.

The wailings of the people recommenced ; they were convinced that their last moments had arrived.

The uncles and Louis d'Orléans, the King's young brother, pretended to be touched. They threw themselves at the King's feet and begged for clemency, prayed that, in his Royal mercy, he might commute the death penalty to a fine.

Fear had its effect ; while immense sums, amounting to five, six, or eight thousand livres, were demanded from all well-to-do bourgeois, they untied their purse-strings readily. When they had, in some instances, paid all that they possessed, all the old taxes were, to the sound of the trumpet, first reimposed, then augmented, then increased once more.

The chains which had formerly been fastened across the streets had been taken away, the Provost of the Merchants and the Sheriffs had been beheaded, the people were entirely unarmed, and at the mercy of the men-at-arms.

What could they do but pay to the uttermost farthing that they possessed, or could beg or borrow ? They did so, saved their lives—and starved.

As Paris had been treated so were Rouen, Châlons, Reims, Orléans, Troyes, and Sens.

It might have been imagined that the money thus wrung by the extortion of the King's uncles was employed for the purposes of carrying on the govern-

ment of the country. Far from such being the case, the greater part of it passed into the pockets of the great nobles and their followers.

The pride of these nobles, the chivalry of France, and the pride of the young King himself, however, reached extravagant bounds. They congratulated themselves that they had crushed the insolence of the lower orders in Belgium, crushed it likewise in France, of which country the lower orders had directly instigated the Flemish population to rise in revolt.

The King of France had not, however, crushed the Flemings, and, as the discontent continued in what is now Belgium, two more expeditions were sent to quiet the revolted people. At the same time the English, the commercial allies and hitherto friends of the people of the Low Countries, attacked them also. Upon the grounds that the Flemings were schismatics, followers of the Pope of Avignon, the Bishop of Norwich landed with an army and took many towns, including Gravelines, which had nothing but friendly feelings towards England. Some cities, such as Cassel, were first taken by the English, then pillaged by the French. The boy, Charles VI., whose blood-thirstiness had not subsided since Roosebeke, determined to take a town by assault—to enter by the breach. This gallant feat he accomplished at Bergues, escalading the walls although the town had already opened its gates to surrender.

Despite the request of Louis de Mâle, Bourgogne's father-in-law, for more forcible and useful measures than the attack of undefended cities, the Comte de

Flandre was not listened to. The stronghold of the insurrection was Ghent, a large and well-fortified city, but the French and Burgundians shrank from the task of a long and difficult siege. The Duc de Berri, who had left his Languedoc to take a leading part in the Flemish war, moreover, realised that he was only fighting for the interests of his brother of Burgundy, the heir to Flanders. The country was wet, cold, and foggy; he longed to return to the sunny south in Languedoc.

Suddenly the Comte de Flandre died. The Flemish maintained that the Duc de Berri had poignarded his brother's father-in-law. There seems, however, to have been no reason for this action. It is not mentioned by either the Religieux de Saint-Denis or Froissart, the two principal authorities for this period. The Flemish chronicle which makes the assertion states that, having married the heiress of the County of Boulogne, of which the Comte de Flandre was Suzerain, Berri quarrelled with Louis de Mâle upon the subject of rendering homage. As the Duc de Berri did not marry this young lady until some five years later, the story is evidently false. He was, moreover, far milder by nature than either of his brothers, and by no means prone to personal deeds of bloodshed.

Froissart says that the Comte died of sickness, and, in any case, the person most interested in the death of the Comte was the Duc de Bourgogne.

Philippe le Hardi now became the Comte de Flandre himself, in right of his wife, and, his possessions being so greatly increased by the addition of Flanders to Burgundy, he wisely determined at once to

end the war with his new subjects, the Flemish. He accorded them, therefore, all the charters that they demanded, and soon excused them from following the ordinary procedure of a vassal when addressing his Suzerain, that of addressing him only on their knees.

This peace was made in the middle of December, 1384, and by the lenity of its terms this first great Duke of Burgundy showed that he was possessed of considerable political acumen. By his lenience he obtained far more than by severity, and, having the attachment of his new subjects, became the more powerful.

Determined still further to solidify his position as a sovereign in the centre of Europe, Philippe proceeded to marry two of his children into the House of Bavaria, which owned Hainault, Holland, and Zealand : great provinces which flanked Flanders on the north and the south. He married his eldest son Jean, afterwards known as "Sans Peur," to Marguerite, the daughter of Albert, Count of Holland, and his daughter Marguerite he gave to Albert's son William, who became Count William VI. of Holland. The father of Albert, Count of Holland, was the Emperor Louis of Bavaria, and, the further to strengthen himself with his young nephew the King of France, Philippe resolved to give him also as wife a young Princess of the House of Bavaria.

The selection which he made of the skittish Isabeau, daughter of Stephen, Duke of Bavaria, can hardly have been said to be a happy one ; but we shall hear more of her later on. As a political move in his own interests, the marriage was a good one, however, for the Duc de Bourgogne.

The young Bavarian Princess had moreover the advantage in good looks over two rivals of the Houses of Lorraine and Austria, whose portraits, like her own, were sent to Charles VI., for him to determine from them upon his choice. Had the portrait of Isabeau not been sufficiently prepossessing, the wily Burgundian would certainly have seen to that matter. The marriage with this young lady, who could not then speak a word of French, was to have taken place at Arras. Her husband was sixteen years old and she in her fifteenth year when she arrived, in great state, at Amiens. The young King was so pleased at her appearance that he declared that he would not wait a day, but married her on the spot. Judging by Froissart's mention of her demeanour at the ceremony, Isabeau showed more modesty on that occasion than others during her career: "The young lady, while remaining standing, kept perfectly quiet, and moved neither eyelid nor mouth."

With this marriage safely accomplished, the Duc de Bourgogne felt himself on very firm ground, and consequently was inclined to do something great. He had a secure footing in France, had established himself also in the Empire. The English were, as usual, devastating the south of France, also making war on Castile, the ally of France. The Burgundian Duke imagined, therefore, the bold idea of paying off old scores with England, at one fell swoop, by invading her shores with an immense fleet, which was to carry an army.

The idea was vastly popular among the nobles and Knights of France and Burgundy, who gaily set to work to procure vessels from all parts of Europe,

mostly at their own expense, as they expected to recoup themselves in England. Their extravagance was ridiculous! In rivalry with one another, as a hundred and twenty years later, at the Field of the Cloth of Gold, they did not scruple to ruin themselves in the decoration of ships which were at the best nothing but transports. Of these private ships Froissart says that thirteen hundred and eighty-seven were collected at Sluys, "the navy of the Constable not being counted."

The prows of the vessels were gilt, the masts silvered all over, while the silken flags were of immense size, and bore armorial designs of great magnificence.

A township of wood, cut and made ready to be erected for the whole army on its landing on British shores, was ordered in Brittany. Seventy-two ships were laden with these wooden houses alone, and it was calculated that, when fitted and put together in a circle, the wooden town would have a diameter of about two and half miles.

The Duc de Bourgogne was doing something great with a vengeance, but although he had hitherto led the King of France, Charles VI. had the bad taste at the last moment to remember that his uncle was not for all practical purposes even a Frenchman, but the ruler of another country, Burgundy, and also of a third country—Flanders to wit. It would be the commercial interests of Flanders, not those of France, that would profit by the successful invasion of England. Charles determined therefore to take his time about embarking. The Duc de Berri also contrived to delay the King, without any difficulty, by the festivities attending a foolish marriage of Royal

children, and meanwhile the summer passed away, and with it the fine weather which would have made an invasion possible. Charles dawdled until late in September.

The Duc de Berri refused, moreover, to hurry with his army to the point of embarkation; his brother's written reproaches on this score were all in vain, and he did not arrive at Arras, the appointed place of meeting, until December, when, owing to the stormy weather, and the destruction of many of the ships, notably those carrying the wooden town, the expedition to annex England had to be abandoned.

Not long after this, that border Prince, the Duc de Gueldre, always a troublesome neighbour to Burgundy, paid homage to England and defied the King of France. Delighted at the opportunity of extending his influence, the Duc de Bourgogne assembled another large French army, and without much difficulty brought Gueldre to his knees, not figuratively but literally, to make his excuses to Charles VI. The only person to profit by his humiliation was the Duc de Bourgogne.

CHAPTER III

Wild Youth and Madness of Charles VI

1384—1392

EVEN before Charles VI. had attained his twentieth year, one of his principal counsellors was the bold Breton, Olivier de Clisson, whom he had made the Constable of France. De Clisson was the determined enemy of England, and had nearly lost his life as a traitor when fighting against Duc Jean de Montfort, the ruling Duke of Brittany, who was the ally of the English. De Clisson's son-in-law was Jean, son of Charles de Blois, the occupant of the ducal throne of Brittany, who had been killed by the English and John de Montfort at the battle of Auray. While fighting to place young Blois in the place of Montfort, Clisson had been taken prisoner. Personal prowess or great family connection stood in those days for much more than mere devotion to country. The great nobles of Brittany, therefore, prevented their Duke from putting Clisson to death. The Sire de Laval said to his master: "There will not be in Bretagne Knight or Squire, castle or good city, nor man of naught but will hate you with deadly hatred, and take pains to disinherit you. Neither the King of England nor his Council will thank you either.



CHARLES V. OF FRANCE.

You would lose yourself just for the life of one man."

Accordingly de Clisson was spared, to remain the right-hand man and disinterested adviser of the young French King. After this latter had seen how little he gained personally from his various military expeditions, which seemed but to turn to his various uncles' advantage, Clisson advised him to take a pacific course, and free himself from his uncles' thrall.

Charles, however, reached his twenty-first year and still remained a slave. Then, with the aid of various great Bishops, the aid also of La Rivière, the favourite counsellor of the late Charles V., the discomfiture of the uncles was planned. At length, in a great meeting at Reims, the plot was carried out. One of the Bishops publicly praised the King, and, after enumerating all his good qualities, remarked that he wanted in nothing but to reign alone.

"Quite so," replied Charles VI. Then, turning to his uncles de Bourgogne and Berri, he thanked them for their past services and added that the time had come for them to take themselves off to their respective Governments, and the more so as he felt sure that Burgundy and Languedoc must require their presence. His mother's brother, the Duc de Bourbon, Charles, however, asked to remain with him.

The Ducs de Bourgogne and de Berri duly departed, but the Bishop of Laon, who had suggested to the King that he was capable of ruling alone, died of poison.

Now began the rule of the counsellors nicknamed the "Marmousets," or people of no importance.

The Government was not a bad one. A truce

was entered into with England, and efforts were made to abolish the great schism in the Church. The King, however, having given up his ideas of warlike glory, commenced to lead a life of absolute folly in time of peace. Tourneys, fêtes, balls, and all kinds of love-affairs and passing amourettes now filled the existence of the young Monarch.

Spending himself with both hands, Charles gave away with both hands also. Any excuse served as a means for expense. To crown a week of wild extravagance at Saint-Denis, to which place all the nobility of both England and France were invited, and where fine ladies lived among the monks in the abbey, Charles conceived the idea of a splendid funeral.

As nobody of consequence happened to die just then, he decided to bury the famous Breton warrior, Bertrand Du Guesclin, who had already been dead for four years. Du Guesclin's funeral was certainly a great success, most certainly also it cost a mint of money. Another extravagant idea devised by Charles was the Royal entry of his Queen, Isabeau, into Paris. Since her child-marriage, five years earlier, Isabeau had been in Paris hundreds of times. Her "First Entry" was, nevertheless, celebrated with every symbol of pomp and magnificence. Paris seems to have gone mad with crazy gaiety over this fête, when, whether in possession of money or no, every bourgeois, every bourgeois' wife and daughter, felt called upon to celebrate the occasion with mirth, folly, and licence. The merchants of the city dressed themselves all in green, the followers of the various Princes were all attired in pink, while hanging out of every window

were to be seen bebies of laughing girls clad in scarlet silken robes, with golden waist-bands.

Angels and saints were to be seen descending from heaven, swinging on ropes with golden crowns in their hands, fountains spurted milk and wine in all directions, and the semi-religious theatrical representations known as "mysteries" were performed in every open space. Meanwhile the young King, disguised as a city lad, roamed the streets amid the crowd to watch the Queen's procession pass by. In the evening he boasted to the ladies of the Court that he had received "several good whacks on the head" from the sergeants of the watch for daring to approach too closely.

Not content with this exploit, Charles VI. joined in the joustings which formed part of this festival, doing so simply because he had heard that there were many strangers in the city who had said that it would delight them greatly to see the King in a tourney.

The occasion for another magnificent festival was found when the King's brother, Louis, Duc d'Orléans, married his Italian cousin Valentina Visconti, a young Princess of Milan. Could the giddy Charles but have foreseen what oceans of French, Spanish, German, Swiss, and Italian blood this marriage was to cost Europe some generations later even he in his folly would not have considered its celebration at Melun an occasion for wild and extravagant rejoicings. Since the future is, however, fortunately hidden from mortal ken, Charles had no cause to restrain his wild exuberance of spirits when the amiable daughter of Duke Gian Galeazzo and Isabelle

de France brought her charms and her ultimate claims to Milan together to the land of France. The nature of Valentina was singularly sweet, as she showed no less by the ascendancy which she acquired over the feeble mind of the wild young King than by the loving forgiveness which she accorded to the glaring infidelities of her husband. She did not come portionless to France, as she brought with her the sum of four hundred and fifty thousand florins and the Italian province of Asti as dowry.

After the marriage of his brother, having received pitiable reports from a monk of the maladministration of Languedoc by his uncle, the Duc de Berri, Charles determined to make the tour of France. Thinking that he could enjoy himself better without the presence of either uncles or wife, he took this journey *en garçon*. It was for the young King but one long pleasure-trip, during which all the young beauties of the country appear to have flung themselves at his feet, where he did not allow them to remain long before stooping to raise them to his arms.

At no place of sojourn did Charles pass a more pleasant time than at Avignon, with the French Pope, Clement VII., who must not be confounded with the Italian Giulio de Medici, called Clement VII., one hundred years later. According to Froissart, although he and his companions "were lodged with the Pope and Cardinals, yet could they not restrain themselves, but passed every night in dances, in carols, and in merrymakings with the ladies and *damoiselles* of Avignon, while fêtes were given to them by the Comte de Genève, the Pope's brother.

When the King left Avignon he left many rich

gifts among the ladies of that place, "who all praised him highly." He had also established himself on terms of great friendship with the Pope of Avignon, who conferred upon the King's young cousin, the Duc d'Anjou, that title of King of Naples which had cost his father his life in Italy. To the King the Pope made the splendid gift of seven hundred and fifty benefices, including the disposition of the Archbishopric of Reims.

Upon arrival at Montpellier in Languedoc, although Charles found his time once more pretty fully occupied by those whom Froissart calls the "frisques [frisky?] damoiselles," he was soon enlightened as to his uncle of Berri's playful mode of administering the country.

A trait of the Duc de Berri was generosity—this in his own Duchy of Berri was genuine, and there he was beloved. In Languedoc, however, he made the people give him that which he himself gave away so liberally in turn to those who pleased him, notably to the twelve-year-old daughter of the great Comte de Foix whom, when himself sixty, he had married. To his jester he made a little present of a hundred thousand francs. Devoted to architecture, he built freely; most beautiful churches were his handiwork, and he endowed their clergy liberally. To escape from having to provide for Berri's liberalities any longer, fifty thousand persons from Languedoc had emigrated to Spain, to the kingdom of Aragon.

As a satisfaction to the people of Languedoc, Charles VI. caused his uncle's treasurer to be burned alive under his windows when at Toulouse. Also in honour of his visit to that city, he accorded a strange mark of his Royal favour to the gay women of the

place, who were compelled then to reside in what were called "abbeys." To the great joy of these chaste nuns, he absolved them from being obliged for the future to wear an especial costume or uniform, and permitted them to dress as they pleased. His Royal Edict on this weighty point is still in existence. Charles VI. returned to Paris at the age of twenty-two, blasé at that early age with the excitements of life. He had passed several years as a warrior in various campaigns, several more as a votary of pleasure. To rational enjoyment of any kind he was soon to be fated to become a stranger.

Some little time after the King's return to the capital a most daring attempt was made to assassinate the head of the Marmousets, the Constable de Clisson.

The Duc Jean de Montfort, ruler of Brittany, had never been able to forgive himself for having allowed Clisson to escape alive from his hands. He had, however, in his service a powerful Seigneur from Anjou, one who hated Clisson, whom he feared would punish him for his malpractices should he ever have the opportunity of so doing. This noble's name was Pierre de Craon. He was rightly detested by the Royal House of France, for the reason that he it was who had robbed Louis, Duc d'Anjou, of his treasure when upon his ill-fated expedition into Italy to secure the kingdom of Naples.

The Duc de Berri had once called de Craon a traitor to his face, and, after accusing him of his brother's untimely death, ordered his people to arrest him. None, however, had dared so to do, and the Angevin had then escaped into Brittany. There he knew that he was a marked man and feared Clisson's

partisans. Craon feared the more the influence of Clisson from the fact that the widow of Anjou, now called Queen of Sicily, who had vowed his destruction, was the daughter of the late Charles de Blois, Duc de Bretagne, and consequently the sister of Jean de Blois, the young Prince who had married Clisson's daughter.

From the above explanations it will be understood that the fear of Jean de Montfort for the redoubtable Breton, Constable of France, was equalled by that of Pierre de Craon. The two put their heads together and the latter promised to the Duc de Bretagne that he would rid him of their mutual enemy.

Secretly Craon returned from Brittany, and, having entered Paris by night, repaired to his own house, the Hôtel du Marché-Saint-Jean. Remaining there concealed, he secretly filled the place with cut-throats.

Upon June 13, 1392, which was a holy day of great rejoicing, the Constable de Clisson was present at a fête in the King's Palace named the Hôtel Saint-Paul. But slenderly attended, he was returning home after midnight, when in a dark and silent quarter of the town he was set upon by de Craon, at the head of forty mounted ruffians. They flung themselves upon the Constable and his attendants, whose torches they extinguished; but so unexpected was the attack that de Clisson at first took it for a practical joke on the part of the madcap Duc d'Orléans, the King's brother. He was soon undeceived, as sword-cuts, which he parried as he could with his small and merely ceremonial sword, were rained upon him. At the same time the would-be assassin, in his certitude

of revenge, cried out : " It is I, thine enemy, Pierre de Craon, who kill thee ! " Struck at length upon the head, he fell from his horse, and, striking the unfastened door of a baker's shop, where the baker was at work, fell with three parts of his length within the entry.

The band of assassins, fearing to remain to see if de Clisson were actually dead or no, did not dismount, but galloped straight out of Paris, of which the gates had never been shut or guarded since the disarming of the citizens after the Flanders campaign.

Charles VI., who had retired to rest, was instantly informed of the crime, and, without waiting a moment, repaired in his night-chemise and a cloak to the side of the stricken but not dead Constable, who returned to his senses as the King leaned over him.

The rage of Charles was terrible, and he swore to his faithful Clisson that terrible indeed should be the vengeance that he would take. It was in vain for the King's uncles, who were furiously jealous of Clisson's influence, to represent that it would be useless to pursue Craon, saying that he had fled to Spain. The King would not listen. He believed, and probably rightly, that the murderers had fled to Brittany. It was at any rate, he declared, Jean de Montfort, Duc de Bretagne, who was the real culprit, and upon him he would be avenged. He would brook no delay, and insisted upon his uncles assembling their vassals at all speed, to attend him upon an instant war on Brittany. In order to induce his unwilling uncle Berri to be as speedy as possible, he gave him back the Government of Languedoc of which he had been deprived.

His impatience to start made the King ill, and he was seized with a fever, which could not, however, turn him from his purpose. He refused to keep still or take care of himself in any way, his brain being full of but the one idea—vengeance. He mounted his horse, and dragged his uncles and their vassals off with him to the town of Mans, but there they contrived to delay him for a week or two. Imagining himself better, Charles caused his standard to be unfurled, and continued his journey to the west.

The weather of that August was terribly hot, and the King attired in black velvet, with a scarlet velvet cap. Pushing on ahead in his impatience, he gave way to the blackest of thoughts; his mind was full of the ingratitude of his uncles, who had shown such unwillingness to help him that even now, after being rewarded in advance for their services, they lagged behind. He felt himself surrounded with nothing but traitors, and suddenly, as though to give words to his thoughts, a wild, gaunt figure sprang from the bushes and seized his horse's bridle, while crying wildly aloud:

“Stay, noble King! Go no farther! You are betrayed!”

With difficulty could the strange being be induced to relinquish his hold, but still he followed, crying in weird, tragic tones:

“Stay, noble King! You are betrayed!”

At length, from the forest he was traversing, the King issued upon a sandy plain, where the heat of the noonday sun was intolerable. One of the King's pages, who was carrying his lance, fell asleep in the saddle. He fell forward, and, in doing so, struck with

the lance-head the King's helmet, which was being carried by another page.

Hearing the sound of steel upon steel, the recent words of the crazy hermit flashed upon the young King's already disordered brain. Imagining that the treason foretold was being enacted, he became suddenly a raving maniac.

Drawing his sword, Charles screamed wildly :

“Down with the traitors ! They will betray me.”

Then, clapping his spurs to his horse's sides, he charged upon his brother, the Duc d'Orléans. The Duc managed to elude his onslaught by a miracle. Not so, however, four other unfortunate persons, whom the King cut down and killed, one after another. Continuing to pursue and strike with his sword at any person whom his eyes lighted upon, at length the unhappy young man became fatigued, when one of his Knights contrived to pinion him from behind.

He was disarmed and laid upon the ground, when his eyes rolled horribly in his head. Every one, even the Ambassadors of the King of England, approached and gazed upon the maniac King, but he recognised no one.

After some time, how long is uncertain, the King's senses returned to him, when he expressed the greatest sorrow for what he had done, and humbly confessed himself.

The expedition into Brittany was discontinued by the Ducs de Bourgogne and Berri, who even eventually caused a pardon to be sent by the King to de Craon for his crime, on the grounds that he had made the pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Bourgogne's anger was kindled far more against those surrounding the

King, who had allowed the King of France to be seen in his madness by the Ambassadors of his enemies, the English. For that reason he threw the Chamberlain, La Rivière, and others, into prison.

Although Charles VI., in his first lucid moments, ordered that no harm should be done to them, he soon relapsed into lunacy.

He ceased to be a maniac, but for the rest of his life the unfortunate monarch was subject to prolonged periods of imbecility, with lucid intervals which were usually of but short duration.

CHAPTER IV

The King plays Cards—Queen Isabeau Unfaithful—The Popes

1392—1400

CHARLES being well for a time, his courtiers endeavoured to keep him happy by leading him into giddy acts of folly, one of which was the direct cause of his relapse.

Upon the occasion of the remarriage of a lady of the suite of Queen Isabeau, a certain noble named Hugues de Guisay suggested that the King and five of his companions should disguise themselves as satyrs, when, at a court ball, they could the more freely behave with all the frolicsome indecorum which in that day attended the marriages of widows.

The would-be satyrs were sewn up in close-fitting cloth, which was laid over with some sticky, resinous substance. Upon this, in order to give the woolly appearance of a goat-skin, tow was stuck, the whole body and limbs being covered. With masks and goats'-horns, the satyrs were perfect. The ball was in full swing, and the satyrs enjoying themselves vastly, pursuing the shrieking women; the King, as it happened, being in the very act of roughly romping with his very

young aunt by marriage, the daughter of the Comte de Foix who had married the Duc de Berri. At that moment the Duc d'Orléans and the Comte de Bar entered the ball-room. Thinking that it would add greatly to the hilarity of the evening, and make the ladies scream louder than ever, these two madcaps set fire to the tow with which five of the satyrs were covered. The tow and the resinous matter to which it was attached flamed up fiercely, and, with howls of agony, the burning satyrs ran wildly round and round the great saloon, setting fire to the dresses of some of the ladies present.

By the merest chance, the one satyr whose woolly skin had not at first been ignited was the King, and, by her presence of mind, the young girl with whom he had been romping saved his life. To prevent the torch from being applied to his goat-like hide, the child-Duchesse de Berri wrapped her robe entirely round him and held him closely to her. Nor during the half-hour that the fiery imps were rushing about the ball-room, scattering fragments of burning tow in all directions, did this brave young girl of the House of Foix ever relinquish her hold, even although in his excited struggles the King sought to free himself. At length the fiery skins of the satyrs burned themselves out, and the five unfortunate young men, including Hugues de Guisay, were carried away to die in agony. Not a single spark had fallen upon the King, but when he was unsewn his madness had returned, although it was of a harmless nature. He declared that his name was not Charles, but George, that his arms were a lion transfixed by a sword, and that he had neither wife nor child. Whenever he

saw the fleurs-de-lys of France, on walls or windows, he first danced in front of them and then broke them. Fortunately, however, Charles remained perfectly harmless, and, with the exception of his giddy wife, Isabeau, was peculiarly susceptible to female influence, notably that of Valentina, his sister-in-law. As the Queen refused to continue to share the King's couch, they gave him a beautiful young girl to replace her, a young merchant's daughter, who was largely remunerated for her complaisance.

Her name was Odette de Champdivers, and she was the first mistress of a King of France whose name has been recorded in history. According to the detailed Latin chronicle of the Religieux du Saint-Denis, this young lady became known by the sobriquet of Parva Regina—the Little Queen. To the little Queen two large and handsome manors, those of Creteil and Bagnolet, were accorded by the King, who always treated her kindly. She became the mother of a daughter, known, so says the Monk of Saint-Denis, as the Domicella de Belleville, from a property which her father the King gave to her upon her early marriage. She was legitimised some years after her birth under the name of Marguerite de Valois.

After the renewed fit of lunacy brought on by the above-mentioned tragic event, the result of the criminal folly of two young men, whenever the King came to himself, or partly to himself, he endeavoured to do some good in the country, and regarded with especial favour the Provost of the Merchants, by name Juvenal des Ursins, and also the citizens of Paris. By his good bourgeois he became much beloved in turn. Often when other officials came to see him

upon matters of business, Charles VI. would look at them in a startled manner and fail to recognise them. Juvenal, however, he not only always knew well, but was willing to work with, saying: "Now, Juvenal, let us do some good work together." Thus, even if crazy, Charles became most popular.

As the people of France continued to increase in their devotion to their crazy monarch, all kinds of strange methods were devised for his cure. Not the least of these was sorcery, which was firmly believed in by the people, and one of the most absurd instances of attempting to charm his madness away is recorded as having taken place in the neighbourhood of Dijon. To the Bailli of that place came two wizards, who declared that what was necessary was that twelve iron columns should be erected in the forest and surrounded by a circle of iron. Outside this circle were to be placed twelve iron chains. To each column a man, who should volunteer for the purpose, should be chained all night long. Then the dozen devotees would be visited by the devil, who would reveal the cause of the King's malady and give them instructions how it was to be remedied.

All this farrago of nonsense was believed in, and eleven brave persons were found ready to run the risk of being visited by Satan while remaining helplessly chained to an iron column, without possibility of flight should Beelzebub prove perchance unfriendly and attack them with horns and hoofs, or possibly break their chains and carry them off bodily. As a twelfth volunteer was not forthcoming, the Bailli offered himself to complete the magic circle.

The worthy Monk of Saint-Denis does not inform

us what happened to the two wizards upon the morning following this fearful but ineffective incantation. It certainly went very hardly with various other sorcerers, chiefly monks, who came to perform similar hanky-panky tricks in Paris. Upon their imposture becoming evident, they were broken upon the wheel, or burned alive, for the crime, not of witchcraft, but of not having proved to be bona fide good wizards.

To amuse the King in his palace of Saint-Paul, hand-painted cards were given him to play with. Various games of cards were invented, and, as the King played, every one followed his example. It has been popularly supposed that this is the first instance on record of the use of playing-cards in Europe; but an anonymous author, who wrote a poem, finished about sixty years earlier, mentions them as being used in his day. The poem was called "Le Renard Contrefait," or the Disguised Fox, and the author stated that he began it in the year 1320 and finished it in 1341.

There seems, from researches made by various French authors, to have been considerable doubt, even in early modern times, as to the real origin of playing-cards. Some ascribe them to ancient Germany, some to Spain or Provence, while M. Rémusat declares the first French cards to have been copied from the Chinese. As those of Charles VI., so the cards used a little later by the Dukes of Milan, were hand-painted. Duke Philippe Marie Visconti paid as much as fifteen hundred pieces of gold for a pack of cards in the year 1430. Eleven years later, however, the card-painters of Venice began to complain that printed cards were being brought into the country.



ISABEAU OF BAVARIA, WIFE OF CHARLES VI.

To return to Charles VI. While playing with his pack of cards, he himself greatly resembled the king of one of the suits, in that while nominally at the top he was more often at the bottom. At times he still reigned by his own authority, but far more often he merely signed the Royal decrees while others reigned in his place and caused him to affix his signature as they dictated.

Such, for instance, was the case when, in the concluding years of the fourteenth century, the weight of the University of Paris was sufficient to compel Charles VI. to sign a decree suspending the authority of the Avignon Pope, Benedict XIII., in France. Further, this crazy young King, who had enjoyed himself so vastly with Clement VII. at Avignon, was compelled to send the French Maréchal de Boucicaut to Avignon to arrest the successor of his friend Clement, who had originally been the Bishop of Cambrai, and who died in the year 1394.

Peter de Luna, who reigned in his place as Benedict XIII., was one of those tough old churchmen who believed neither in yielding to the secular power, as represented by an army, nor to his rival, the Roman Pope Boniface IX. When Boucicaut's army came to attack him, the brave old Benedict put on his armour as might any other captain of the age, and made a splendid defence of his castle of Avignon. During the years 1398 and 1399 he resisted a siege. When short of fuel wherewith to cook his food, the Pope gradually pulled his castle to pieces, burning the joists and rafters. But he still resisted, and eventually remained victorious.

At the same epoch the Roman Pope, whom the

French University supported, was also in arms against rebellious Romans. Such was the condition of the heads of the Church during the times of the Great Schism! Oddly enough, at this very time, 1398, Charles VI., the crazy king of France, was receiving in Paris a visit from the Emperor of Germany, Wenzel IV. of Bohemia, the Supreme Ruler of the Holy Roman Empire.

As this successor to the sceptre of Charlemagne was continually drunk, it is scarcely matter for surprise that but little elucidation of the matter which he had come to discuss resulted from the interviews between the two Monarchs.

That matter was one no less weighty than the Schism of the Church. Needless to say, the very Christian King and the inebriated Emperor were not successful in attaining a settlement of the complicated affairs of the Papacy.

CHAPTER V

The Quarrel of Orléans and Burgundy

1400—1407

MEANWHILE, about the year 1400 was commencing in France another violent disturbance, the direct outcome of the insanity of Charles VI., one which was to turn the country topsy-turvy for the space of a generation at least.

This was the quarrel, born of jealousy, of Louis d'Orléans, the King's brother, first with his uncle Philippe le Hardi (Philip the Bold), then with his cousin, Jean Sans Peur (John the Fearless). It was the great struggle known as that of the Armagnacs and the Burgundians, although when it commenced that great Gascon noble, the Comte d'Armagnac, was, if anything, the enemy rather than the friend of the Duc d'Orléans.

This young Louis de France was a man of pleasure, devoid of personal cruelty, but without any serious object in life. He was handsome, open, and agreeable, something of a poet, much beloved of women—a sinner, yet the friend of the Church. To the people in his youthful days he was somewhat of a tyrant; nevertheless, upon his early and violent death at the age of thirty-six, he was greatly mourned by the people

whom he had oppressed. He took, in the sunny charm of his manner, much after his mother, Jeanne de Bourbon, she whom her husband Charles V. always had spoken of as the "Sun of his Realm."

That the young Duc d'Orléans was a man of wit and considerable learning there is no doubt, from the fact that he was not in the least disconcerted before the doctors of the various faculties of the University, and took pleasure in interrupting their weighty and tiresome dialogues with his lively sallies. The University, however, forgave him for a time, as he was generous to the students and priests belonging to its body. Most charitable also was Louis to the poor.

Such was the Duc d'Orléans in himself, but much of his culture and winning ways he owed to the charming ladies whom he frequented, including his talented and brilliant wife, Valentina Visconti. All women adored Louis, but Louis was unfortunately utterly deficient in that one quality requisite to make woman's adoration permanent — namely fidelity. Another woman who influenced Louis, one whose mother had also been an Italian Visconti, was the Queen.

After the young Queen Isabeau had separated herself from her husband upon his becoming insane, she nevertheless continued to present him regularly with children, until she had brought into the world no less than six sons and five daughters. Who were the lovers who were the fathers of all these supposedly legitimate scions of the Valois line is unknown, but there appears to be little doubt that one of those most beloved of this half Italian, half Bavarian Princess

was her brother-in-law, Louis d'Orléans. He was probably the father of several of her children, including Catherine, who became first the wife of Henry V. of England, and subsequently of Owen Tudor.

That Louis d'Orléans was the father of Isabeau's fifth son Charles (the third she had of that name), who came to the throne as Charles VII., was believed even by her husband. When Charles VI. disinherited this son, describing him in his document of banishment as the "soi-disant Dauphin Charles," Queen Isabeau herself raised no objection, and made no pretensions as to his legitimacy.

The possessions of the Duc d'Orléans were large. He obtained from his brother in succession the appanages of Orléans, Perigord, and Angoumois. Then he succeeded in adding to these the four Counties of Valois, Blois, Beaumont, and Dreux. He had, in addition, a position on the Italian side of the Alps, in the shape of Asti, brought to him by his wife.

These various territories were, however, scattered about, and in no way to be compared to the almost empire which had been amassed by his uncle Philippe le Hardi, Duc de Bourgogne.

When Philippe had received the appanage of Burgundy from his brother, Charles le Sage, that King had also given French Flanders, Lille, and Douai to the father of Marguerite, the heiress of Flanders, as a bait, in order that his brother might be granted the hand of that great heiress.

It had been tacitly understood between Charles V. and his brother that French Flanders should revert to France, but once Philippe had become Comte de Flandre he took care to treat that province as being

absolutely his own. With his wife he obtained on the north-east of France the Counties of Artois, Rethel, Nevers, and Franche Comté, in addition to Belgian Flanders. With all of the rich commercial counties of Flanders, thus added to Burgundy, Philippe might have been content. But no, he obtained a footing in the Empire by marrying his son and daughter into Holland, which belonged to the Bavarian House, and which marriages seemed likely to bring both Hainaut and Holland to Burgundy. As the Emperor Wenzel IV. had also married the Princess Sophia of Bavaria his connection with Burgundy was close, and by this connection the power of Philippe augmented. He had further, in the year 1390, rounded off his Duchy and County of Burgundy by the purchase of the County of Charolais. To the south of Paris he had acquired likewise Étampes from his brother Berri. A fact that made Philippe's influence still more redoubtable was that his relations were most friendly with both his cousins Jean IV. (de Montfort), Duc de Bretagne, and the Duc's wife Jeanne de Navarre, the daughter of Charles le Mauvais, King of Navarre, the enemy of the ruling line in France. When the Duc de Bretagne died in 1399 Philippe le Hardi not only obtained the guardianship of his young successor Duc Jean V., but became also practical Regent of the Duchy of Brittany.

The Duc d'Orléans felt the difference in his position to that of his uncle, all the more from the reason that until nearly the time that his brother Charles VI. became insane the Duc de Bourgogne had continually helped himself to large sums drawn from France. After the insanity of Charles, and the

fall of the Government of the Marmousets, his uncle had likewise extracted considerable so-called gifts from the mad King, and at the same time done all in his power to prevent d'Orléans from taking that share in the Government which, as the King's brother, was rightly his due. Louis considered, and perhaps with reason, that the position of Regent belonged to him alone, and that, with all his immense possessions, his uncle might well cease to interfere in the affairs of the kingdom.

A crisis in the state of bad feeling between uncle and nephew occurred when Henry, Earl of Derby, the son of John of Gaunt, crossed over to England in 1399, and, after dispossessing his cousin Richard II. of the Crown, himself assumed it as Henry IV. The Duc d'Orléans' very young niece Isabelle, daughter of Charles VI., was the second wife of Richard, and she was roughly sent back to France by the usurper of the English throne. Thereupon, although d'Orléans and Henry IV. had formerly been intimate friends, and had even sworn brotherhood in arms, Louis d'Orléans sent him a challenge to fight with a hundred Knights a side.

At this same time, although Philippe le Hardi made a show of preventing Henry's passage to England from Brittany, he and his Breton relations were really encouraging him. Likewise, although, as a good Frenchman, he should have joined wholeheartedly in the French war against Henry IV., which he feigned to do, Philippe as a good Fleming actually renewed the commercial treaties of Flanders with England.

Of this transaction the Duc d'Orléans could but

be aware, and his bitterness was duly increased against his uncle. The cup was not, however, yet full. Louis d'Orléans knew that upon his passage through Brittany the newly widowed Duchesse, Jeanne de Navarre, had fallen in love with Henry IV.; was aware also that the Duc de Bourgogne was actually secretly encouraging this love-match, which soon took place, with a daughter of the bitter enemy of the House of Valois. It seemed therefore to d'Orléans as if, in every way, his uncle Philippe was acting against the interests not only of the ruling French line, but of France herself.

His challenge to his old brother-in-arms, now become the King of England, was not only one to avenge the death of Richard II., which had taken place mysteriously in prison, but couched in knightly style so as to defend the honour of widows and virgins. Louis accused Henry IV. that in the manner in which he had treated the youthful Queen Isabelle de France he had shown himself wanting in all "*qu'un homme noble devait aux dames veuves et pucelles.*"

Henry sent an insulting and at the same time hypocritical reply to the Duc d'Orléans. First he said, to this son and brother of a King, that he, an usurper sprung from a younger branch, declined to fight with those of less rank than himself. Then he said, as further excuse for not fighting, "that which a Prince does he does it for the honour of God and all Christianity, or for his Kingdom, but not for his own vainglory."

He gave, moreover, a sly and sarcastic rub to Louis in reply to his remark about the protection of widows and virgins: "Might it please God that

you yourself had never used any rigour, cruelty, or villainy with respect to any lady or demoiselle, we should think that you would then be a good deal more worthy."

With these matters concerning England and Brittany may be said to have commenced the quarrel between Orléans and Burgundy, which for so many years tore France to pieces from end to end. The first actual move in the game was made by Louis d'Orléans, who purchased the small State of Luxembourg, and established himself there in the midst of his uncle's Burgundian dominions. From this point of vantage he stirred up that notable freebooter, the Duc de Gueldre, the old enemy of his uncle, whose dominions he paid him to invade and pillage.

With Gueldre and other Princes in his train, with Clisson and some friendly Bretons, also some Scotch and some Welsh troops whom he procured from the garrisons of Guyenne, Louis now came to Paris. Philippe le Bon did the same, his army being furnished in a great measure by the Bishop of Liége and other Flemish vassals.

The Princes did not fight each other, however, but went through the farce of a reconciliation. Actual warfare with arms was not necessary for the Duc de Bourgogne to ruin his nephew in the estimation of the Parisians, for he was able to do him far more injury in a hundred underhand ways with his tongue. Philippe accused his nephew of having made immoral attempts upon the virtue of the wife of his son (Jean Sans Peur), whose picture in a state of nudity he was said to have in his picture-gallery. Nothing was ever proved as to the culpability of Marguerite de Hollande

in this matter, but the Flemish historian Meyer states that, even in the lifetime of his father, Jean Sans Peur wished to kill his cousin d'Orléans from motives of jealousy.

Another accusation that was frequently made and circulated among the people was that the Duc d'Orléans was the sole cause of all the taxation, and that it was unnecessary. Even although it was well known that the taxation was simply required to carry on the war with England, Philippe le Hardi advised the people, the University, and the Church, to refuse either to pay taxes or subscribe to a loan for this purpose. No advice could have been more popular, and, naturally, while the Duc de Bourgogne contrived to establish himself in the public favour, his nephew became the object of universal execration.

Accordingly, after, with such money as he could procure, carrying on a war for a time against England, both by sea, with the aid of the Bretons, and in Guyenne, in which place he gained some successes, chiefly through the Constable d'Albret and the Comte d'Armagnac, Orléans retired from Paris. He went off with the Queen to Melun, taking a force with him. His uncle remained supreme in Paris as head of the King's Council; but when he called upon the Parisians to follow him to attack his nephew, they refused.

In the year 1404, when Philippe le Hardi was at the height of his grandeur and power, he died. He was succeeded by his son Jean, known as "Sans Peur," although he did but little to deserve such a glorious surname. He succeeded to all his father's power and possessions at a moment when the affairs of his cousin Louis were at a pretty low ebb. His

patriotic efforts to fight for his country having resulted, through his uncle's machinations, but in his being called one who grabbed money merely for his own purposes, Louis d'Orléans had indeed latterly behaved in a manner which seemed to justify all the ill that was said of him. Not being able to procure money except by violent measures, when Louis found that he could not obtain sufficient wherewith to carry on the war he determined to expend all that he obtained for his own pleasures. He was credited with supplying his sister-in-law, the lively Isabeau, with immense sums, which the Queen was supposed to send out of the country to place in Germany. The Burgundian party gained at this period immensely, owing to the spiteful sermon preached at the Duc and the Queen by a monk, one who had dedicated a book to Louis but been inadequately rewarded for his flattery.

Both were present when the Augustine monk attacked the prodigality of the Court, new customs, dancing, the modes of the day, long fringes and huge sleeves. He told the Queen, from the pulpit, that her abode was nothing but the domicile of Venus!

Such a success was this sermon for the Burgundian party that they ran to the King to tell him of it. Charles VI. thereupon went himself to hear the Augustine preach. Then the monk attacked the Duc d'Orléans violently to his semi-imbecile brother, whom he declared to be himself attired with the blood and the tears of the people.

Nevertheless, d'Orléans was soon master again for a time, and the King gave him Normandy. And then came his cousin, Jean Sans Peur, with a large army to Paris, on pretence of doing homage for Burgundy, and

managed to seize the eldest surviving Dauphin, aged nine, whom the Queen and the Duc had just sent for to Melun, and while he was on his way to join them.

With this child as nominal head of the Council, the Duc Jean Sans Peur became for the time triumphant, but, while Orléans openly demanded from his cousin that he should join him in taking a personal part in the war against England, public opinion loudly cried out for a reconciliation. The University of Paris, which at this time made and unmade Popes and bullied Kings, thought to bully Louis into submission. Its most learned Doctors proceeded to Melun, to demand of the Duc to send the Queen back to Paris, not to assemble troops, and to agree to the principle that what the Duc de Bourgogne had done he had well done. Louis merely snapped his fingers at the Doctors. He answered their long diatribes syllogism for syllogism, and with a great deal of wit reduced their lengthy dialectics to nothing. In his terminating remarks he crushed them with his sarcasm.

“Does not the University know, the King being ill and the Dauphin a minor, that it is to the King’s brother that falls the duty of ruling the kingdom? But how should it know? The University is not French; it is a mixture of men of every nation—these foreigners have nothing to do with our affairs. Doctors, return to your schools! Every man to his trade. You would not, I suppose, call in men-at-arms to decide upon questions of faith? Who has charged you to negotiate a peace between me and my cousin of Burgundy? There is neither hatred nor discord between us.”

Shortly after this, the cousins met and shook

hands, and the old Duc de Berri and all the Council coming over to his side, the Duc d'Orléans was once more at the top of the tree. Louis then persuaded Jean Sans Peur to attack the English in Calais, while he marched off himself to carry the war into Guyenne. Both the Princes had their pains for nothing. Bourgogne failed signally, while d'Orléans was unsuccessful in an attempt to take Bordeaux.

After his return from his wearying winter campaign, in which he had suffered great hardships, Louis found the University and the people dead against him, and he likewise received a severe blow in the death of the bold Breton, Clisson. The Duc and the Queen endeavoured vainly to recover their popularity by abolishing an infamous law by which the Princes and Royal personages generally could help themselves to anything they chose belonging to the lower orders. Unfortunately, both d'Orléans and the Queen had already made far too frequent use of this law of "Prise" for the people to show them much gratitude for its being rescinded thus late in the day.

The Queen, moreover, was enceinte once more, although still living apart from her husband. The child, a son, was born and died in a few days after birth, when Isabeau gave vent to open and unrestrained grief for an infant whom all the world declared to be the son of the beloved Louis d'Orléans. This event occurred in the month of November 1407.

At this time this young Prince, being unwell, turned to religion, and retired for a time to a monastery, where he gave evidences of the greatest devotion. To his surprise he received a visit from his cousin, Jean Sans Peur, Duc de Bourgogne. The matter

which he came about had to do with his young brother-in-law, whom, without being ordained, Jean Sans Peur had made the Bishop of Liége.

The Liégeois had hunted out the twenty-year-old Bishop and elected another from Luxembourg, one recommended by the Duc d'Orléans. Jean was greatly perturbed; he feared that his cousin's influence in Luxembourg would cause continual uprisings against his authority in Flanders.

The old Duc de Berri came to see if he could establish a real reconciliation between his nephews, and to this Louis d'Orléans willingly agreed. He confessed, went to Mass with his cousin, and together they took the Holy Communion. The evening ended by a dinner of reconciliation, given by Berri. After dinner the two cousins embraced with fraternal affection (November 22, 1407).

The next night, as the Duc d'Orléans was visiting the Queen in the palace called the Hôtel Barbette, he received a message that the King wanted to see him. Accompanied by two pages, he came forth, gaily humming a tune. Scarcely was he outside than he was brutally attacked by his cousin Jean and several other masked villains, who were hiding in a house which for a week past had been hired merely for the purpose of assassination.

The unfortunate Louis was literally chopped into little pieces with axes and swords, and one of the young pages was also killed while trying bravely to defend his master.

Such was the result of the great reconciliation, and of the peace of mind which followed the Holy Communion (November 23, 1407).

CHAPTER VI

The Comte d'Armagnac on the Scene

1408—1413

THE sly allusion of Henry IV. to the violent mode of behaviour of Louis d'Orléans towards ladies and maidens had not been without justification. Ever drawn irresistibly by the attraction of forbidden fruit, he had violently torn from her husband, the Sire de Canny, a beautiful young lady. By the Dame de Canny he became the father of Jean, Comte de Dunois, the celebrated Bastard of Orleans, who always boasted that this latter cognomen was one that he was proud to bear.

Upon the brutal murder of Louis by his cousin, all the world mourned the loss of him whom they had condemned while living. Even the murderer, who soon openly admitted his crime, sobbed bitterly while acting as one of the pall-bearers at his cousin's funeral. Perchance his conscience reproached him! By none was the Duc d'Orléans more lamented than by his neglected wife. She showed her deep affection to her lost husband in the case of the young Dunois. This youth she took into her own household and educated as her son. Frequently, so states Juvenal des Ursins, she would press him to her bosom, while

exclaiming, "Ah! thou hast been stolen from me, but thou it is who shalt avenge thy father!"

Upon the 10th of the December after this foul and traitorous assassination, the widowed Valentina, Duchesse d'Orléans, went in state to the Hôtel Saint-Paul to demand vengeance of the King. She took with her the fifteen-year-old widow of Richard II. of England, Isabelle de France, who was now betrothed to the young Duc d'Orléans, and was accompanied also by two of her children. She was preceded by the King of Sicily (Anjou), the Duc de Berri, the Duc de Bourbon, and the young Comte de Clermont, now Constable of France.

Her litter, or carriage, was draped with black and drawn by four white horses. In a tragic scene, with her eyes full of tears, Valentina threw herself at the King's feet and demanded justice. Some words in the discourse pronounced on her behalf before the King seemed prophetic for France. "Weep, Princes and nobles! for the road has been cleared to cause your death secretly by treason! Weep, men, women, old men and young people! The sweetness of peace and tranquillity has been reft from you, since the path has been shown to you to murder and carry the sword against the Princes. Thus behold you yourselves in war, in misery, on the path of destruction!"

The poor King Charles VI. himself wept, and promised vengeance for his brother; but, alas! Valentina was never to see that vengeance carried out, for shortly afterwards, despite the repeated efforts of his uncles to prevent him, the murderer, Jean Sans Peur, returned to Paris at the head of his vassals. The fickle people, thinking that he was going to suppress the



JEAN SANS PEUR, DUC DE BOURGOGNE.

taxes, cried, "Noël to the good Duc!" The Princes, even the shameless Queen Isabeau, floating with the tide, welcomed him also. Nevertheless, the new Duc de Bourgogne, far from being "fearless," trembled with fear, and, although his hotel was surrounded with troops, he built himself a strong room of masonry within it, wherein he dwelt, even then not feeling himself secure.

His efforts were at once devoted to obtaining from the Doctors of the University the public justification of his crime. Owing to its hatred of the Avignon Pope, Benedict XIII., whom Louis d'Orléans had strongly supported, this white-washing the University was inclined to give. The very learned monk Jean Petit gave an immense discourse, under many absurd heads and sub-heads, to prove, with reason and sub-reason drawn from philosophy and Holy Writ, that the assassination was justified. He said that, as Judith had slain Holophernes, so had the Duc de Bourgogne slain for God, since the Duc d'Orléans was the enemy of God, the enemy of the people of God, the friend of the Devil. Further, that Bourgogne had acted as a good citizen, since the Duc d'Orléans was a tyrant, and a tyrant should be killed.

In this manner, even after his death, was the memory of the Duc d'Orléans publicly outraged. The assassin likewise obtained, to salve his conscience, letters of remission from the foolish King—the murdered man's brother. These also were the work of the University; but shortly after the University received a blow, by the arrival of an Aragonese gentleman bearing Bulls of excommunication of the King and his adherents from Pope Benedict.

We need not go here into the fury and commotion which arose among the Universitarians. A new order was given to the Maréchal de Boucicaut to arrest Benedict, and many of his partisans, including the Abbot of Saint-Denis and the Dean of Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois, were thrown into prison. Matters were by no means improved when, on May 25, 1408, a Royal Edict was read out to the people declaring that henceforth obedience should be given neither to the Pope of Avignon nor the Pope of Rome, and that the Holy Chair was vacant. Both the Popes, Benedict and Gregory XII., had in June 1409 been deposed by the Council of Pisa, and both were now in flight. While the French priests, assembled in council in the Sainte Chapelle, declared their intention of ruling themselves, they cruelly ill-treated and pilloried such Papal messengers as ventured to come to Paris from Benedict, who boldly held out in Aragon for fifteen years longer. During this troubled time the Queen and all the Princes fled from Paris, leaving there only Jean Sans Peur, with the King in his hands.

The party of Benedict and Orléans was, however, stirring up trouble for Jean in Liége, whence John of Bavaria, his cousin, whom he had again made Bishop, was expelled. Forty thousand Liégeois rose in arms. Bourgogne had to leave Paris to face them, and on September 23, 1407, he defeated them at Hasbain. In the early part of the battle his mounted and well-armed men-at-arms had surrounded some thousands of the citizens on foot. These had laid down their arms and surrendered, when the Duc de Bourgogne beheld ten thousand reinforcements from another Belgian

town coming to join the insurgents. Instantly he gave the order to all his men-at-arms to charge upon and slaughter the unarmed prisoners, who were butchered to a man.

It was after this battle of Hasbain, in which the Duc de Bourgogne claimed to have put to death twenty-five thousand of the supporters of Pope Benedict and the Orléanist party, that the name was given to him of "Jean Sans Peur." As a French writer says, he might just as well have been named Jean "Sans Pitié," and that if he was indeed Sans Peur, it was Sans Peur de Dieu—without fear of God.

His previous experience of war had not been so fortunate, although from it he may well have learned to be merciless, and to appreciate the convenience of slaughtering his prisoners in cold blood, lest they should again perchance take up arms against him. As a quite young man, when Duc de Nevers, he had been placed by his father at the head of a French army sent to help the King of Bohemia against the Turks, and had suffered a terrible defeat at Nicopolis. The Turkish Sultan Bajazet had, after the battle, caused the whole of the French army, with exception of Nevers and twenty-five other great Seigneurs, to be knocked on the head with maces. Nevers and his companions had only been released after the payment of immense ransoms, that of Jean himself being paid from the Royal Treasury of France.

Upon his return to Paris after his success over his Flemish subjects, Jean found that the Queen and Princes, now all of the Orléans party, had taken advantage of his absence to make off with the King to Chartres. Without the puppet King in his hands,

even with Paris and the University behind him, Bourgogne felt himself greatly weakened. He determined therefore to listen to proposals for a reconciliation brought to him by the Grand Master Montaigu, who had been one of the Marmousets.

A most dishonourable treaty, one humiliating to both the contracting parties, was entered into. By its terms the second young son of the murdered Louis d'Orléans was to marry a daughter of Jean the murderer. She was to have a dowry of a hundred and fifty golden crowns. At the same time the Duc de Bourgogne was publicly to own his culpability in the Church of Nôtre-Dame of Chartres, and there to humbly beg the forgiveness of the King and the children of the Prince whom he had murdered. This ceremony was duly carried out, Bourgogne being compelled to sue to the children of Orléans "to banish from their hearts all hatred and vengeance, and to be good friends with him."

After some of the Princes had gone through the farce of interceding with the King for the Duc, the pardon, which was merely one of the lips, was accorded to him by the children of the cousin whom he had so basely slaughtered in cold blood.

After this scene the two parties only hated each other worse than ever, and it was determined to make a scapegoat of the unfortunate Montaigu, who had drawn up the treaty. He was guilty of one crime in the eyes of all—that of being very rich. At a grand feast which Montaigu gave to celebrate the reconciliation, both parties viewed with greedy eyes the masses of gold and silver under which his tables groaned. That settled the matter; therefore, although this man

of humble birth had connected himself by marriage with some of the greatest nobles in France, his death was decided upon. Not even his brother, the Bishop of Paris, could save him.

Montaigu was accused by Jean Sans Peur of having been the cause of the King's illness. When subjected to terrible tortures, he confessed his crime—poor man! A mere rag of a human being, he was dragged to the place of execution, where, before his head was cut off, he withdrew his avowal. He solemnly declared that neither he nor the late Duc d'Orléans had in any way been guilty towards the King or the kingdom, saving in that they had perhaps spent too much of the King's money.

All wept for poor Montaigu, who was greatly beloved; but all feared the terrible man who could deal three such blows as the murder of Louis d'Orléans, the massacre of the Liégeois, and the torture and execution of the guiltless Grand Master.

The Duc de Bourgogne took advantage of the fear which he inspired to impose his friendship in various directions. He gained his cousin, the young Louis d'Anjou (King of Sicily), by giving him one of his daughters with a large dowry. He won over King Charles III. of Navarre to oppose his neighbour on the Spanish border, that great Orleanist partisan the Comte Bernard VII. d'Armagnac, and he brought over Queen Isabeau to his side by promising to her brother Louis of Bavaria a daughter of his friend the King of Navarre. These useful alliances he succeeded in effecting in the year 1409.

To gain the good opinion of the people of France, Jean now made another attempt to besiege Calais.

His friends in Flanders, and enemies in France, the English, made short work of the Duc, however, before Calais, where they burned up with Greek fire the wooden town which he had built round the city, destroyed also all his stores, his battering-rams, and his artillery. Returning to Paris, he took all the treasuries and finances into his own hands, making of the Comte de Saint-Pol his Receiver-General. Jean further continued his tyranny by the use that he made of a violent man, Dessessarts, the Provost of the Merchants, and through this greedy and savage villain he completely dominated Paris.

It is now time that we took into consideration the great party which, with the child-Duc Charles d'Orléans as its nominal leader, was, from hatred of the Duc de Bourgogne and his evil ways, constantly increasing throughout France. The name given to this party was the Armagnacs, and its head at this time was that great Gascon noble, almost Prince, the Comte Bernard d'Armagnac.

To explain the excessive hatred which existed between not only the Armagnacs and the Burgundians, but also between the Armagnacs and the inhabitants of the north of France generally, it must be understood that in the France of that day different languages were used in the northern and southern parts of the country.

In the northern provinces was employed the *langue d'oïl*, an ancient Romance dialect, while in the south another old Romance dialect, the *langue d'oc*, was universally spoken.

The provinces of the north accordingly looked upon those of the south, whose language they did

not understand, as strangers, and hated them worse than if they had been real foreigners. To the Norman or the Picard, the Gascon or the Provençal was nothing but an uncouth savage. The Bretons, then as now, also spoke a different tongue. When it is remembered that the armies employed in France at that date, largely formed from the Free Companies, often contained many English, Flemish, and Germans, and even Italians from Lombardy, some idea can be given of the babel of tongues which was often to be heard on the same battle-field.

The marvel is that any orders were ever understood. One fact is certain: that, from the want of comprehension between the conqueror and the vanquished, even when both were of Gallic race, little pity was often shown to those crying for mercy.

The country to the south of Bordeaux and Toulouse was that of the allied families of Armagnac and Fézenzac.

Pillagers of the Church from generation to generation, they were continually excommunicated, but, like the famous Jackdaw of Rheims, never seemed one penny the worse for the Papal ban. In the earlier times these great nobles were constantly to be found in arms against the King, but, having received several severe lessons, they came to the conclusion that their interests lay more in keeping in with the Monarchy than in opposing it.

The Kings, on their side, thought it good policy to attach these freebooting chieftains to their standard by giving them in marriage Princesses of the Royal blood, and a daughter of Armagnac had been, further, united to a scion of the family of Orléans. The great

family of Albret fought with them, and, wearing the white cross as their emblem, these furious Gascons were ever in arms. They were the first formed infantry soldiers in France, and greatly feared for their ferocity. Wherever they passed they impressed the peasants to assume the white cross with them. Woe to him who refused to follow the Armagnac when called upon! His foot was cut off, or his arm severed at the wrist.

These hardy Pyrenean warriors received immense rewards from the Kings of France, who early learned to appreciate the valour of this Gascon infantry. Nevertheless, the Comtes d'Armagnac were by no means always successful in their guerilla warfare, and twice were Comtes d'Armagnac defeated and taken prisoners in Italy. At the battle of Agincourt also, when commanded by d'Albret, then Constable of France, their warlike bands suffered terribly.

Even when they had nominally become the dutiful servants of the King of France, these wild Comtes knew neither religion nor law; they remained noted for their crimes, which went unpunished. In order to preserve her dowry, one of them married his sister-in-law, while another one espoused his own sister, having forged a Papal dispensation for the purpose.

Of all the Comtes d'Armagnac, none was perhaps more violent and cruel than the Comte Bernard VII., who, after the murder of the Duc d'Orléans, openly declared himself his avenger. Not originally on good terms with the Duc, he yet had at one time served him in the south, and even retaken sixty small places from the English.

When, however, Louis d'Orléans went himself upon his winter expedition into Guyenne, d'Armagnac,

who fought only for his own hand, and at such seasons when pillage was easy to get, flatly refused to back up the brother of Charles VI. Among the cruelties for which this Comte Bernard was renowned, was his barbarous treatment of his near kinsman, the Vicomte de Fézenzaguët.

After robbing this unfortunate Seigneur of his possessions, he put out his eyes, and those of his sons, then threw them all together to drown in a cistern.

The Gascons of Armagnac looked forward to a fine time of it in pillaging the towns of the hated north of France, and this was, doubtless, the chief reason for their assumption of the cause of Orléans against the Duc de Bourgogne. Moreover, the churches were rich in the north, and these sacrilegious adventurers, who scrupled but little in pillaging the shrines of the saints of the *langue d'oc*, considered that there would be positive merit in robbing the shrines of those of the *langue d'oïl*.

The chalices would make fine drinking-cups, while the gorgeous priestly robes would come in handy to repair their tattered garments.

The Comte d'Armagnac marched up to the north and proceeded to establish himself and his followers in the rich Abbey of Saint-Denis and the surrounding small towns near Paris. In this Abbey, so the worthy monk informs us, the Abbot and brethren were inclined to the cause of Orléans. The Abbot, nevertheless, caused all the riches of the Abbey to be carried away and hidden. He had, however, in his charge, all of the Queen's gold and silver vessels. To his horror the Comte Bernard called him one fine morning and said: "The money that should have been sent to us

to pay the troops has not arrived. Now I am sure that the Queen will only be too pleased to lend us what she has left here in your care ; so be good enough to produce it. I will give you a receipt." By force, hammer in hand, the Comte broke open the locked chests of treasure. Thereupon the Abbot instantly sent away from the monastery all those who knew where their own treasure was concealed, lest, by torture or otherwise, they should be made to disclose the secret of the hiding-place.

In this way the Orleanists became out of favour around Paris, but that which still more offended the people was the manner in which the Armagnacs mocked at their imbecile King, whom the people loved. The Gascons had a playful habit of catching some unfortunate peasant, and, after cutting off his nose and ears, saying, "There now, go and show yourself to your idiot of a King." As on their way to Saint-Denis the followers of Armagnac had sacked every town they had passed through, the people turned all the more in their hearts to Burgundy.

This did not, however, alter the fact that the only armed force of any importance was that which Armagnac commanded, that they pressed Paris on all sides, and that Jean Sans Peur was powerless to make them relax their grip on the city.

Then was seen the strange sight of the Duc de Bourgogne summoning Henry IV. of England to his assistance. He made a new commercial alliance between Flanders and England. He offered one of his daughters, with a large dowry, to the Prince of Wales, and promised, so the Orleanists said, to return the Duchies of Guyenne and Normandy to England.

Vainly did the young Duc Charles d'Orléans write and beg Henry IV., in the name of the relationship existing between them, not to help his father's murderer. Henry tersely replied that he had accepted the Duc de Bourgogne's offers.

When the English advanced from Calais, the Armagnacs fell back before them, from town to town. They crossed the Loire and lost Poitiers. With the good-will of the people, who greatly preferred the English to the Armagnacs, the pursuing force, with which was Jean Sans Peur and the imbecile King, whom he dragged everywhere, shut up the Gascons in Bourges. Here want of food and the plague, which filled the countryside with corpses, compelled the two parties to patch up what was called the Peace of Bourges. It was signed in July 1412, and by it Jean Sans Peur falsely promised to restore the possessions of which the various Princes of the Orléans party had been deprived by his followers.

Now at once followed a strange turn in the game. Henry IV. deserted his allies. He sent an army to attack the Burgundian forces that were in Guienne, while Armagnac and the Princes donned the red cross of Saint George and became his allies. The Princes did homage to the English for their possessions, while the Gascons handed over to them at least a score of places in the south of France ; but the Comte d'Armagnac was confirmed for ever in his fiefs.

While Burgundy and Armagnac, in their hatred of one another, were thus each in turn bartering away France to the enemy of their country, matters came suddenly to a temporary standstill, owing to the death of Henry IV., which took place in 1413.

CHAPTER VII

The Revolution of the Butchers

1413

IN about the year 1412 the idea of treating the people as a dominant force, of striving to sway public opinion, first came into vogue. At that time the leaders of both the contesting parties commenced to issue manifestos, and further to employ rabid and savage-tongued preachers to inflame the populace against their opponents.

The preachers, usually belonging to the University, employed by the Burgundian side carried the more weight. The manifestos also of the Duc de Bourgogne were the more efficient in stirring up those of the capital against his opponents.

One reason for this was that he put his own words into the King's mouth, and published his appeals to public opinion by Royal authority. For instance, in February 1412, he caused the King to issue an appeal to all both of the *langue d'oïl* and the *langue d'oc*. While asking for monetary help, the King, so beloved of the people, praised up his good bourgeois of Paris, made excuses for the disturbances of the party of Burgundy, and held up to public execration the evil behaviour of the men-at-arms of the Orleanist faction.

Nevertheless, while controlling the King, and, through him in a great measure gaining the sympathy of Paris, the Duc de Bourgogne began to find the then Dauphin Louis, who was his son-in-law, eluding him. This youth was seventeen years of age at the time of the extraordinary Revolution we are about to describe, and he died three years later. He was the third Dauphin. His eldest brother Charles having died when only a few months old, a second Charles died in 1400, while John was to succeed Louis for a year only. Thus there were four Dauphins before the third son of Charles VI. who was named Charles, and who eventually reigned as Charles VII.

While the Dauphin Louis withdrew himself from his father-in-law, the University remained the ally of Jean Sans Peur. This body, seeing the difficulty that there was for the Duc of procuring enough money to carry on the war, and the further difficulty that there was for him to establish peace, declared that bold reforms were necessary, and that the King must carry them out.

The two faculties in the University, of Theology and Arts and Logic, were much divided among themselves. That of Arts and Logic was divided into four so-called "nations," but each nation contained not only Frenchmen, but Danes, Irish, Scotch, and Lombards. The Doctors of the faculty of Arts, nevertheless, to a great extent ruled those of Theology. Among this latter class were many begging monks, men who had become vicious from their own poverty, and only anxious in consequence to inflict all the suffering that they could upon others. It was among those of the Carmelite Order that the Duc de Bour-

gogne recruited his most violent preachers, and of these the principal was a certain rabid monk named Eustache de Pavilly.

Having determined to interfere in the Government, the Doctors of the University applied to the Parliament of Paris to join with them in making remonstrances to the King. The body of learned Magistrates of whom the Parliament was composed had too great a respect for the Royal authority to do anything of the kind. Accordingly, they replied tersely to the University "that it would be very unbecoming for a Court established to dispense the King's justice to make of itself a complaining party to demand that justice."

From this refusal of the Judicial class to join in the proposed revolutionary measures, it became evident that, whatever might be the new concessions, laws, and ordinances obtained by the University from the Crown, there would be no legal body to enforce them. When it became evident that the Parliament would do nothing in any way calculated to shake the Royal Authority, the University determined to go ahead and reform the Kingdom itself.

Its first step was to send the Carmelite Eustache de Pavilly to denounce certain persons to the King. Among these, in violent language, he accused Jean Sans Peur's own right-hand man, the violent Provost Dessessarts. This man escaped, leaving word that if his accounts were two millions short it was because the money had been paid over to the Duc de Bourgogne.

The Provost returned, however, to Paris shortly, and occupied the Bastille in the name of the Dauphin.

The Dauphin, while thus acting openly for the

Orleanist faction, imagined that the people of Paris would desert Jean Sans Peur and become Armagnac. On the contrary, the people, in their thousands, besieged the Bastille.

The Duc de Bourgogne now persuaded Dessessarts to come out from the security of the fortress, vowing on the Cross that his life would be safe and that he would defend him with his own body. No sooner had Dessessarts yielded than the people—the better class of the bourgeoisie, which was acting under the instigation of the University—arrested him, saying that he should have a fair trial.

There were, as it happened, a vast quantity of butchers in Paris, who were divided into two fraternities, that of the Great Butchery, who lived in the Parish Saint-Jacques, and those of the Butchery of Sainte-Geneviève. The master-butchers were honest citizens whose offices were hereditary, the same families retaining them for centuries. Some of these families of butchers, which had been in existence for a couple of hundred years before Charles VI., were still established in Paris as late as the eighteenth century.

Although many of these master-butchers were very rich, according to their rules they still personally exercised their calling. They therefore remained strong, lusty, accustomed to scenes of blood, handy with the axe or the knife. Being celebrated for their attention to religious observances, many of the master-butchers founded chapels in honour of their favourite saints. The butchers of Sainte-Geneviève were not, however, on good terms with the Abbot of that Abbey, who had formerly been their feudal Seigneur. He objected to their melting down suet in the quarter,

at the risk of setting fire to the houses, objected also to their selling meat on fast-days—habits which they declined to discontinue.

This fraternity, which was inclined to violence, resided close to the Carmelite Convent, and was on friendly terms with the violent monk Pavilly. The chief family of their clan was named Legoix, and was on good terms with the disputatious students of the University. Under the sway of the master-butchers, and at their disposition for good or evil, there was a regular army of under-butchers and butcher-boys, who filled various offices. Some were slaughterers, some stunned the animals, some prepared tripe, some were flayers. The masters imagined that they could always hold these in hand, that even if they started them on any mischief they could recall them to order at a word.

Under the rule of the family Legoix there were, however, two men who were before long to prove that they could not be controlled. These were the skinner Caboche and the tripe-seller Denisot. From the name of the former, the whole party of the Parisian butchers became before long designated by the name of "Les Cabochiens."

After the arrest of the Dauphin's man Dessessart, the master-butchers who had headed the movement to attack the Bastille realised that they held Paris in their hands. Friends of the University, friends of the Duc de Bourgogne, they had none to gainsay them.

In their blind devotion, they considered that all the evils which had fallen upon the distracted kingdom of France were but a part of that same Divine punish-

ment which had rendered the King insane and caused the death of Louis, Duc d'Orléans. It was the just reward for the sins of both the King and his brother, for the immorality of their lives. But, in their devotion and love of orderly habits, the Legoix and other master-butchers determined that the young Dauphin Louis should not be allowed to fall into similar errors, lest the Divine chastisement should spread still further throughout the land. Now the boyish Dauphin was extravagant, he was also very musical, and kept very late hours, turning night into day, and keeping the town awake with his organs, choristers, and fiddlers. This was more than the butchers could stand. They determined to withdraw from the young Prince all those who led him astray, and, at the same time, to instil into his young mind the fear of God.

The better to effect this purpose, they placed at their head a venerable surgeon named Jean de Troyes, a man who was celebrated for his powers of oratory, and proceeded in force to the Hôtel Saint-Paul, the palace where the Dauphin was. They demanded that the Dauphin should come to the window and hear what they had got to say to him. As his cousin, Jean Sans Peur, was within, and advised him to do so, Louis complied.

Jean de Troyes thereupon addressed the Prince, saying that the people had only appeared in arms in order to prove that they were ready to lay down their lives for him. They wished him, however, to understand the displeasure with which they regarded his giddy youth, and at seeing him surrounded by traitors who led him astray. They feared lest the evil educa-

tion which he was receiving from these traitors should make him incapable of reigning later on, and they were determined to exercise vengeance upon those from whom he learned such evil habits.

The discourse terminated by a formal demand to the Prince to hand over to the mob of butchers those evil counsellors by whom he was surrounded.

In reply, the Dauphin thanked the "bons bourgeois" for their solicitude on his behalf, and asked them now to go home and leave alone the servitors to whom he was attached. The Dauphin's Chancellor added: "If you will name the traitors, we will see that they are punished."

"You are yourself the first on the list," howled the butchers. "Here it is, look at it; there are fifty more Seigneurs beside you."

Then they forced the Chancellor to read the list aloud, twice in succession.

Despite his rage and indignation, the young Dauphin saw that resistance was in vain. With tears in his eyes, he forced the Duc de Bourgogne to swear on the Cross that no harm should happen to his people; but in the meantime the butchers were breaking in the doors and searching the palace.

The Chancellor was seized, the King's cousin, the Duc de Bar, also. Old La Rivière, chamberlains, equerries, and valets de chambre, all were violently dragged out of the Hôtel Saint-Paul. The Dauphin's young wife, the daughter of the Duc de Bourgogne, threw her arms around one gentleman and endeavoured to save him; but the butchers tore him from her arms.

All the prisoners were dragged off, some being tied on horses, in the direction of the Tower of the

Louvre. Many, however, were murdered on the way and thrown into the Seine. Some of these were quite harmless people, such as a furniture-dealer and a fiddler, accused of leading the Dauphin into expensive habits and encouraging his late hours.

Not content with this first attempt to reform the Dauphin, the ferocious butchers kept the ball rolling. Daily they returned to the Hôtel Saint-Paul, bringing with them religious teachers to instruct the young Prince in the way he should go. The addresses of Eustache Pavilly, to which he was compelled to listen, would have been enough in themselves to kill him from *ennui*, had there not been the constant danger of the terrible butchers behind the Carmelite monk.

“You have been taught,” declaimed the never-ending Eustache, “an odious and insupportable thing to the King’s good subjects : to make of night day, to pass the time in feasting, in horrid dances, and in other ways altogether unbecoming to the Royal Majesty.”

And so he went on, by the hour together, often with long homilies, delivered in the presence of the Queen or the various Princes, traversing point by point the duties of the great, drawing examples from the past history of France, or from the old Testament. It is, indeed, no wonder that the Dauphin Louis died young!

His cousin, the Comte de Vertus, one of the sons of Louis d’Orléans, contrived to escape from Paris, and he, seeking to follow his example, wrote to the Princes with the Armagnacs to come and deliver him. The butchers were too sharp, however, for any project of evasion to prove successful. They occupied the gates of the palace day and night, and even estab-

lished there as door-keeper old Jean de Troyes. The King and his son were therefore kept within quite securely—for their own protection—by the good and virtuous butchers.

Even had the devout master-butchers been willing to leave off the revolt which they had commenced at the instigation of the University, matters had now gone beyond them, for all of the lesser orders of the fraternity, headed by Caboche the skinner and Denisot the tripe-seller, had now taken the matter in hand. These had secured the outposts of Paris; Charenton and Saint-Cloud, whence the food came to the city, were in their hands.

The people of Flanders—those of Ghent—wearing the white hood of that place, now came to Paris. They said that they also required to have the custody of their Prince. The Duc de Bourgogne was compelled to deliver over into their hands his eldest son, the Comte de Charolais, with his wife, a very young daughter of Charles VI. Before leaving with these hostages, the people of Ghent introduced the fashion of the white hood in Paris, where all adopted it as a sign of liberty or reform. The people even caused the King to accept and wear the white hood of Ghent. Churchmen, men and women of quality, market-women and fish-wives, all wore this badge of Revolution; while any person who wore it crookedly was supposed to do so in derision, and liable to ill-treatment or death. To pull down one corner of the hood was considered as the equivalent of wearing the sign of the Armagnacs. The Dauphin did this one day out of mockery, when the butchers expressed the greatest indignation.

Having imprisoned all the Seigneurs of the Dauphin's *entourage*, the lower orders, being mostly out of work, now commenced all kinds of acts of violence, rich bourgeois being seized by them and held for ransom. Woe to him who did not pay! The Doctors of the University had by this time become both ashamed and tired of their alliance with the butchers, but, not knowing how to get matters back as they had been before the Revolution, they resorted to people who saw visions for advice. Eustache de Pavilly failed to gain much light, even from an old woman who saw three suns in the sky at once. Nor did another woman, who saw the King of England sitting on the top of the towers of Nôtre-Dame, do much to elucidate the situation.

That worthy man Juvenal des Ursins, now Advocate-General, the friend of the King, was at length consulted by his opponents. He gave the apparently frank advice that the Princes should become reconciled with each other. It was good advice, but no one knew how to bring such a simple matter about. The honest Juvenal was merely laughing at those of the Burgundian party in his sleeve, and he says slyly in his records that the Carmelite Pavilly was contriving to fill his own purse during the whole of the period that he was going about noisily mouthing Reform to the Dauphin and the kingdom. Jean Sans Peur, like the University, had got thoroughly sick of his friends, when suddenly the butchers came to the palace with another list of traitors. Headed by a brutal Burgundian captain, named Hélion de Jacquville, they broke into the King's Hôtel, and commenced by laying violent hands on Louis of Bavaria, the Queen's

brother. Many others were also roughly seized, including thirteen of the ladies of the Queen and the Dauphin's wife's Households. It was in vain that the young Bavarian Prince begged for a week's grace in which to celebrate his nuptials, in vain also that the Duc de Bourgogne begged for him. After breaking all the doors, the butchers marched off with their prisoners, male and female, among them being a Burgundian captain whom they had themselves placed in the Hôtel Saint-Paul.

The old Duc de Berri and the Orleanist Princes now tackled the University, and demanded to know if it acknowledged responsibility for all these outrages. In reply the Doctors equivocated. Thereupon, not knowing how far matters might go, this great Prince, the King's uncle, persuaded the imbecile monarch to sign an "ordonnance" of reform, which was declared "inviolable." There were seventy pages in this code, but we need not go into them. Many of the clauses were excellent, if only they could be carried out. But in spite of the code, there was nobody to carry it out with the exception of the authorities of the Commune of Paris, composed of mere Cabochiens. Nobody would assist them with money, either to carry on the war against the English or to run the government of the country. The Church refused to pay, the Cabochiens themselves could not pay, old Juvenal des Ursins went to prison rather than pay anything to this irregular government. When the Cabochiens seized some money, the result of a fair which belonged to the monks of Saint-Denis, even their friends of the University cried out loudly against them. The Doctors forced the Cabochien government even to

return some money which it had raised by taxing some officials connected with the University.

Thereupon the Government of butchers, which had honestly endeavoured to send a force against the English at Dieppe, became wild with rage at being thus blocked in all directions. In their fury they pursued one of the most celebrated of the Doctors, named Gerson, and he was compelled to hide in the crypt of the Cathedral of Nôtre-Dame.

In their anger, also, at seeing all those who should have supported the code, and paid according to its provisions, refuse so to do, they determined to make but short work of the numerous prisoners. Their trial was hurried, and sentences rapidly pronounced by a commission that was appointed. First a traitor was executed. He had been the means of several hundred bourgeois of Paris falling into the hands of the Armagnacs. Next followed the trial of the cruel and warlike Dessessarts, whose life Jean Sans Peur had sworn on the Cross should be sacred. He had been on both sides in turn, and no oath of the Duc de Bourgogne could protect him. Dessessarts was dragged on a hurdle to the Place de Grève, and executed on July 1, 1413. This bold rascal did nothing but laugh mockingly, and jeer at the Cabochiens, the whole time that he was on the hurdle and until his head fell. The ruffianly captain, Hélion de Jacquville, went to the prison where old La Rivière was confined, and insulted him. Then, becoming enraged at the replies which he received, he knocked his brains out. La Rivière's body was, however, taken to execution next day among a large batch of living victims.

While these horrors were going on, and his friends

being killed, some men of the watch heard, one night, singing and dancing in the foolish young Dauphin's apartments. Jacquville and the butchers bröke in upon him and asked the Prince if it was decent for a Son of France to dance at such an hour, half-past eleven? The captain was so insulting to the Dauphin and his friend, the Sieur de la Trémouille, that the Prince lost his temper and flew upon Jacquville with his dagger. He struck the brutal captain three times on the body, but he was wearing a shirt of chain armour, which saved his life. The Duc de Bourgogne contrived to prevent the subsequent murder of La Trémouille in the Dauphin's presence. After this, many of the more decent citizens rushed to assure the Dauphin of their sympathy, many of the lowest orders also, worn out with being compelled to be perpetually on guard and going the rounds, became sick of their own party and anxious to secede.

The Princes, being well informed, advanced on Paris and offered peace. The Dauphin aiding within the city, the University and the Parliament decided in favour of a conference. The skinner Caboché opposed it, with threats ; but his day was dead, no one listened to him, and the old Advocate-General, Juvenal des Ursins, worked hard to bring about the downfall of the butchers. He contrived to cause the offers of the Princes to be read aloud in all quarters of the city, when the great majority carried the day against the minority of the butchers. A brave carpenter named Cirasse boldly bearded the butcher Legoux to his face and jeered at him, and everywhere people were heard crying out "Peace! Peace!" They were willing to accept it at any price, and even the Duc de Bourgogne

and the Cabochiens themselves were compelled to follow in the train of the Dauphin when, in the beginning of August 1413, he proceeded to set the prisoners free from the Tower of the Louvre.

The Duc de Bar and the Duke of Bavaria were found to be still alive, and they were immediately proclaimed Captains of the Bastille and other Forts of Paris, while the people cried out for the bold carpenter, Guillaume Cirasse, to be installed as Sheriff in place of Jean de Troyes, the surgeon.

This latter, and two of the butchers, were immediately put to death, while the populace gaily set to work to pillage the houses of the remainder of the Cabochiens, who fled for their lives.

While several of his followers were seized in his hotel, the Duc de Bourgogne considered that he likewise would do well to leave Paris in a hurry. He made off with the King, but Juvenal, with some mounted citizens, overtook Jean Sans Peur at Vincennes, and made him yield over the person of Charles VI., with whom the gallant Advocate-General returned in triumph to Paris. The University had stipulated that the Princes should not re-enter Paris; but the young Duc d'Orléans marched in with the Dauphin, both being dressed exactly alike, and both wearing the white scarf of the Armagnacs. Everybody at once assumed this badge. Even the images of the Virgin and the Saints were draped with the Armagnac colours.

CHAPTER VIII

How Henry V. took Harfleur

1415

THE absence of Jean Sans Peur after the Revolution of the butchers was not to last for long, since many of the exiled Cabochiens, who had joined themselves to him, determined the Duc de Bourgogne to make an attempt to regain Paris. There he had been publicly declared a rebel, and his estates sentenced to be confiscated, but the Dauphin Louis, being tired of the restraint imposed upon him by the Princes, secretly wrote to his cousin, the Duc de Bourgogne, and invited him to return. His investment of Paris proved, however, by no means a success, for the Comte d'Armagnac had arrived with a large force, and, after driving Jean away, pursued him with the King and the Princes.

The King's army determined to carry out the confiscation of the Burgundian territories. The cruelties of the Armagnacs, however, were so terrible at the capture of Soissons that when the force besieged the Duc de Bourgogne in Arras the people of that place made a furious and prolonged resistance.

The King soon became tired of the war, and determined to listen to the Duc's offers to make a merely formal capitulation of Arras. This was to consist in

his offering the keys of the city to Charles VI., thus saving an assault. Juvenal des Ursins relates that the mad King could not be persuaded to refuse to treat, and tells an amusing story of the failure of a Grand Seigneur to make him change his mind. This Seigneur found the King in bed, and, pulling him by the foot, woke him up. The King asked his "beau cousin" what he required, when the nobleman replied, merely his permission to storm Arras. The King refused. When the Seigneur expressed his horror that the King declined to attack "this bad, false, traitorous and disloyal man, who had falsely and evilly killed his brother," Charles VI. mildly replied, "The fair son of Orléans has forgiven all that." The Seigneur would not take no for an answer. "Alas! Sire," he continued, "think that you can never see your poor brother again!" The King, however, pithily replied: "Beau cousin, get out of this! I shall see him again at the Day of Judgment!"

Accordingly Arras was not assaulted, and a treaty of peace between the Orleanists and Burgundians was patched up in September 1414. The principal terms of this treaty were that in future neither the white scarf of Armagnac nor the Cross of Burgundy should be permitted to be worn. In Paris, however, the Princes showed no moderation, and, having the King in their hands, squandered immense sums. The honest Juvenal, who had become Chancellor, protested, when his protest merely resulted in his seals being taken away from him. The distinguished Churchman Gerson indulged, before the King and the Princes, in the most bitter invective of Jean Sans Peur upon the occasion of a funeral service held in commemoration of

the Duc d'Orléans, and thus the great quarrel was kept alive as before, with no hope of settlement.

While the struggle of the Armagnacs and Burgundians was tearing France to pieces, the great struggle of the Church, the settlement of the Great Schism, had, as mentioned above, been attempted at the Council of Pisa. While for long past all the Universities in France, all the bodies of churchmen in Europe, had been flying at one another's throats over this matter of the rival Popes, the great assemblage at Pisa had at length decided to depose both of the Pontiffs, and to elect a third Pope in their place. This third Pope, Alexander V., was soon succeeded by a fourth Pope, John XXII., but still the two original Popes, Gregory XII. of Rome and Benedict XIII. of Avignon, refused to resign at the command of the rebellious churchmen of all parties. The subterfuges to which both resorted, apparently in collusion with each other, to avoid resigning were most amusing, and we will describe them presently. In the meantime, it is no less amusing to consider the constitution of the Council of Pisa.

This, when assembled in the Duomo, the ancient Byzantine cathedral of that place, consisted of no less than twenty-two Cardinals, four Patriarchs, two hundred Bishops, three hundred Abbots, four Generals of the begging orders, the representative deputies of two hundred cathedral Chapters, and of thirteen Universities. There were, in addition, present three hundred Doctors and the Ambassadors of many States. All of this immense congregation of rebels were unable to induce Gregory and Benedict to yield; and yet each of these Popes cunningly announced his

intention of yielding if he could meet with the other, so that they might both resign the Papal Tiara at the same time and in the same place.

The difficulty arose when efforts were made to bring about this meeting, as every day each made new objections. They said that the routes by land were not safe, that they must be furnished with safe-conducts. When these were sent by Kings and Princes, they found them unreliable and required the money to provide suitable escorts of their own. Then, not having sufficient funds to carry out their journeys in proper state, the Popes put their Cardinals under heavy contribution. Then the Popes came to the conclusion that, after all, a sea-journey would be safer, and they demanded ships to take them to the place of meeting. When the ships were ready, they decided that it would be wiser to avoid the dangers of seasickness. After various other subterfuges, equally ridiculous, had been resorted to, Benedict XIII. boldly declared himself to be tired of all this nonsense about yielding, and said that he considered that he would be committing a mortal sin by consenting at all to the yielding of the Papal authority to that of a mere council of subordinates. He retired, as already mentioned, to his native Aragon, where he continued to call himself Pope until 1423. It was not until the new Council at Constance deposed John XXIII., in 1415, and elected, as a sixth Pope, Otto Colonna, who became Martin V., that Gregory at length grew weary of the long-drawn-out conflict, and consented to lay aside his Papal Crown and the keys of Saint Peter.

While the internal struggles of France and the

quarrels of the Church were occupying the public mind to the exclusion of other matters, a new danger was being prepared for France on the other side of the Channel.

When Henry IV., son of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, had in the year 1399 replaced his deposed cousin, Richard II., on the English throne, he reigned in a great measure by the aid of the Established Church.

Those honest religious reformers the Lollards, the followers of John Wyclif, the intellectual Master of Balliol College in Oxford, had been the friends of John of Gaunt and had asserted the freedom of religious thought. They had scoffed at the French Pope of Avignon, and resented the opening in England of a market for the disposal of pardons, dispensations, and indulgences at so much apiece. They declaimed against the wantonness of the great ladies who, headed by the King's mistress, came to tournaments dressed in men's clothing, riding on noble coursers with girdles of gold and silver, and daggers slung across their bodies. Even, as Chaucer mentions, the courtly Prioress paraded her vice by the love-motto on her brooch. The Lollards boldly declared that the power of the King should prevail over that of the Church in temporal matters, and maintained that the immense wealth of the Church should be seized and employed for national purposes.

After John Wyclif had died of a stroke of paralysis, his followers, among whom were many great Barons, had still remained strong in England. They had, however, been deserted by Henry IV. He had basely abandoned his father's allies to the tender mercies of

the priesthood, and at the same time the usurper had diplomatically informed the wealthy ecclesiastics, who owned twenty-eight thousand of the knightly fiefs of England, that he desired nothing from the Church but her prayers. This had proved for him the way to get on in the world; the bold and profligate Prince his son, however, kept on good terms with the Lollards, and was notably the friend of their leader, Sir John Oldcastle, who became Lord Cobham and openly defied the Bishops. It was from this noble, Sir John Oldcastle, that Shakespeare, blinded by sectarian prejudice, formed his ludicrous figure of Sir John Falstaff.

When the bold young Prince of Wales, in the year 1413, stepped into his father's shoes, he felt he had much to contend against, and that the House of Lancaster had still much to fear. There were still in England many partisans of Richard II., the murdered son of the Black Prince, and, in addition, the rightful heir to the Crown was the young Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March, the great-grandson of the Duke of Clarence, the elder brother of John of Gaunt and the second son of King Edward III.

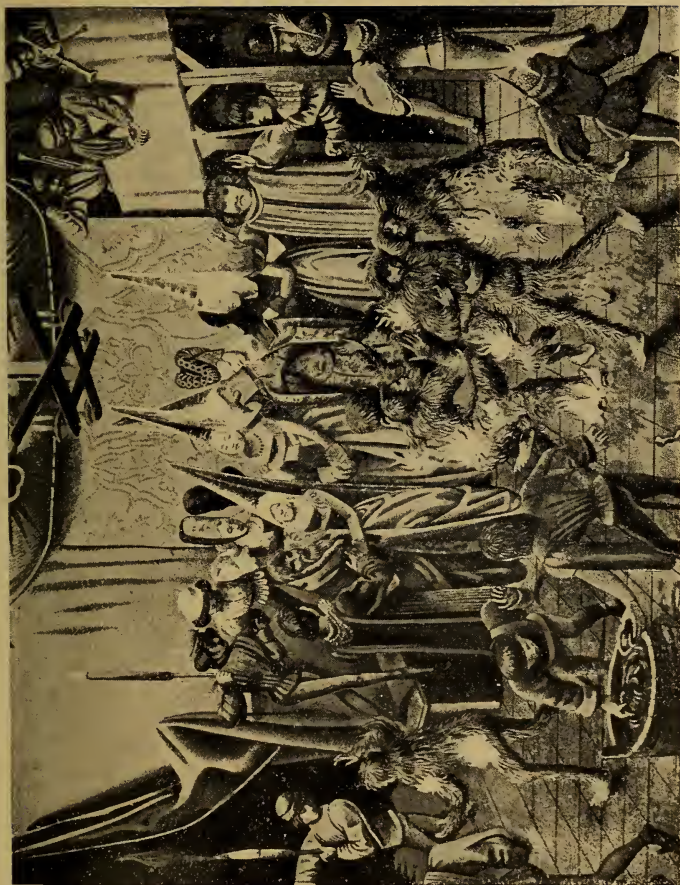
In the Church Henry V. saw his salvation. This wild young Prince therefore abandoned his profligate career, and expressed much devotion. He likewise gave over his friend, Sir John Oldcastle, and his followers to the Bishops, to be burned as heretics, and posed as a saint. Henry V. then won the Church to his side; he had, however, yet to reckon with the English nobility. These, notably many of the younger sons, were impatient for a renewal of the war with France, in which country they sought to win renown

and wealth. The people at large in England also, remembering the successes of Crécy and Poitiers, which had brought them much of the riches of France, were anxious for a new opportunity of pillaging that country, where the quarrels of the Armagnacs and Burgundians seemed to offer a favourable opportunity.

To secure himself upon his throne, the ambitious young Henry realised that he would do well to enrol as many of the various factions as possible under his banner, and should himself do some great feat of arms by which all would become contented to recognise him as their lawful King. Henry, accordingly, upon his accession, claimed the French Crown, by right of descent. It was a frivolous claim since, although Isabelle of France, mother of Edward III., had been the daughter and last direct heir of Philippe IV. (le Bel), the Salic Law had barred her from the succession. Moreover, if the legitimate claim to exclude the House of Valois were a good one, then Edmund Mortimer, the descendant of the Duke of Clarence, not Henry, the descendant of John of Gaunt, was the rightful King of France. Trifles such as these did not appal Henry V. He had, by hook or by crook, to keep his seat on the throne of England, and since the best way so to do was to drag in his train to France all the idle, discontented, rebellious, or wavering of England, to France he intended to go, as soon as ever opportunity should offer.

The warlike young King, who had already had plenty of experience of fighting against the bold Owen Glendower in Wales, set to work to make his opportunity without delay.

He did not at first show his hand openly, but,



THE SAVING OF CHARLES VI. AT THE BURNING OF THE SATYRS.

while renewing the old Lancastrian friendly relations with Burgundy, began quietly making preparations on a large scale for an invasion. As early as the month of March 1415, Henry made a treaty with Holland to supply him with ships ; he commenced impressing sailors, and bought carts for baggage-wagons. He laid in a large supply of horse-shoes and nails, purchased large quantities of oxen and cows ; further gave orders for the baking of bread and the brewing of beer on a large scale. Masons, carpenters, and locksmiths were also impressed into his service before the end of that month. From these preparations, it will be observed that Henry was a foreseeing General, and intended not to leave anything to chance on landing in France, but to enter that country "all found."

In April he announced his intentions to Parliament, and ordered all his lords to get themselves ready. In May he feigned alarm of a sudden descent by the French in England, and wrote to the Archbishop of Canterbury and other prelates to organise the vassals of the Church "for the defence of the kingdom."

In June, while causing his knights to collect all men capable of bearing arms, and to divide them into companies, this prudent young King made efficient arrangements for the defence of the Scottish frontier. Further, he at the same time entered into negotiations with his old Welsh opponent, the noble Owen Glendower. In July he entered into treaties with the Kingdom of Aragon, the Duchy of Brittany, and, last but not least, with Jean Sans Peur, Duc de Bourgogne.

While thus carefully laying his plans, Henry V.

had twice sent embassies to France, demanding the return of all the French territories which had been yielded to England, not as fiefs but as independent States, by the treaty of Brétigny forty-five years earlier. These had included the whole of the great Duchy of Aquitaine, over which the Black Prince had reigned as an independent Sovereign during his father's life-time, but of which by far the greater portion had been subsequently lost. It also included several Counties and Viscounties in the neighbourhood of Calais. He demanded also the great Duchy of Normandy, and the hand of Catherine, the daughter of Charles VI., in marriage. This young Princess was only fourteen years of age in that year 1415, but extreme youth of a Princess made but little difference in those days, and her elder sister, Isabelle, had been given over to King Richard II. at the tender age of seven.

While making these modest demands Henry stated that he would wait for the French Crown until Charles died. An immense and solemn embassy came over to England in reply. The historian Rymer says that it consisted of twelve Ambassadors, and no less than five hundred and ninety-two persons in their suite.

This was certainly doing things in style! But while the French Envoys offered the young maiden Catherine with the immense sum of eight hundred and fifty thousand golden crowns, and agreed upon all other points demanded, they offered the Limousin instead of Normandy. Henry was, however, determined to have Normandy. Once in possession of this, with the mouth of the Seine, with Harfleur, and

that immense city Rouen, he would hold the gates of France, be able to walk over and secure the rest of the country at his leisure. Henry treated the members of this French mission with all courtesy, and kept them in England for three months. When all his preparations were complete he sent them off laden with rich gifts, while informing them that he was about to follow on their heels.

Upon August 11, 1415, he appointed his brother John, Duke of Bedford, the Guardian of England, and immediately set about the embarkation of his army upon his transport ships. These, according to Monstrelet, amounted to as many as fifteen hundred vessels, although another French contemporary writer makes them a good deal less.

The English Parliament had voted a very large sum for the expedition, and before sailing Henry endeavoured to placate parties at home by according a magnificent funeral to the remains of his murdered cousin, Richard II.

Taking with him a goodly number of great Church dignitaries, instead of touching at the English port of Calais, Henry went with his fleet directly to Harfleur at the mouth of the Seine, and was neither molested on the seas nor opposed while landing his army. This consisted of a large number of mounted chivalry—no less than six thousand men-at-arms. When we remember that each man-at-arms had from three to six attendants, this mounted force must have been in the neighbourhood of twenty thousand men. There were, in addition, twenty-four thousand archers, armed with the longbow; thus altogether it was a magnificent force.

Owing to his wisdom in hiring or buying his ships from countries like Holland and Zealand, subject to the influence of Jean Sans Peur, Henry knew well, before sailing, that he was sure of the neutrality of the Duc de Bourgogne; thus he had none but those of the Armagnac party to fear. Upon landing on Norman soil the English King assumed the title of the Duchy; the people, however, did not receive the Duc de Normandie with open arms. The different towns and castles kept themselves strictly on the defensive, and any small wandering parties of the English army were fallen upon and cut to pieces. Owing to his foresight in having taken with him a large quantity of provisions Henry was, however, able to keep his large force together, although at first all of Normandy of which he was the master was the muddy beach of the estuary of the Seine.

Except from the unhealthiness of his camping-ground the King did not have much to fear, as since the time of the Cabochiens the country had had no settled Government. While the Burgundians had made themselves scarce to the north-east, the Armagnacs had retired to the south; thus the centre of France remained practically undefended. However, the old Duc de Berri, now almost eighty, soon made an effort. He took the Maréchal de Boucicaut and the King with him to Rouen, on the Seine some distance above Harfleur, and endeavoured to collect the nobles and gentry of the north of France. Many of the gentlemen of Picardy, however, refused to flock to the French King's standard, having received word from the Duc de Bourgogne not to stir without his orders. Others actually joined the English, pre-

ferring to fight on their side to that of the detested Armagnacs.

Harfleur made, however, a brave defence when besieged, as a good many French nobles contrived to throw themselves within the walls. They were largely aided by the dampness of the climate; moreover, fruit being abundant in the month of September, the English troops, whose provisions had become deteriorated, ate the fruit too freely. Thus the army soon became attacked with dysentery, and great numbers of all ranks, including the Bishop of Norwich, died. Thousands of the attacking force perished, but Henry, ever on the alert, first captured a relieving force with a powder-train from Rouen, and then completely destroyed a force of six thousand mounted gentlemen. These *gens d'armes* perished through their own rashness, which changed what might have been a successful surprise into a crushing defeat.

Towards the end of the month that the siege lasted the fighting became furious, especially after huge breaches in the walls had been replaced by the besieged by palisades, which the English contrived to destroy by fire. Henry gave the people of Harfleur no peace; he never ceased firing upon them with his artillery day or night, until they became worn out for want of sleep.

At last the defenders begged for two days more to see if help would come; if not, they would surrender.

“Take four if you like,” replied Henry, “but give me hostages, so that you may keep your word.”

He did wisely to take his hostages, since at the end of the four days, had he not held them, they would not have yielded.

As it was, a good many of the defenders contrived to hold out for another fortnight in some neighbouring châteaux, to which they escaped; but the city was forced to surrender.

The English King behaved with the utmost haughtiness before he would consent to receive the deputies who sought him in order to surrender the keys of Harfleur. These unhappy men were kept waiting on their knees for hours in three separate tents, in each of which they were told they would find the King, before, at length, Henry deigned to make his appearance.

Even then, for a long time, Henry pretended not to see the miserable, half-starved officials of Harfleur, who did not know but that they were about to be put to death.

Eventually the King of England allowed himself to become aware of the presence of these unhappy beings, when he silently signed to the Earl of Dorset to receive the keys, and then allowed the messengers to depart with their lives.

Henry V. made a state entry into the city, and, in accordance with the pious character that he had assumed, pulled off his shoes and entered the parish church barefoot, to return thanks to God for his success. He, however, revenged himself savagely upon the inhabitants of the city. All of the well-to-do bourgeois were held for ransom, as though they had been captured in battle.

Then all of the inhabitants were driven out of the city, wherein it pleased the English to assert that they had been living unlawfully, as this Norman town was English soil. Not only all of the men, but young

girls, married women, and children, all piteously lamenting, were ruthlessly turned out into the fields. Shame was added to cruelty. The women were stripped to the waist, and left with only a petticoat apiece.

A dole of five sols was awarded to each as they were driven from their homes in this pitiable plight. Such was the chivalrous conduct of that saintly King Henry V. upon the conquest of the first city in his Duchy of Normandy.

CHAPTER IX

The Battle of Agincourt

1415

HENRY V. had taken Harfleur, but he had had immense losses, including some of the greatest of his followers. Owing to wounds and sickness, he found himself compelled to send back at least five thousand more to England, where he feared lest the people should not be greatly impressed by his success.

More than ever, he realised, had it become incumbent upon him to do something great and showy. He began by challenging the Dauphin Louis to single combat, which challenge the young French Prince declined to accept.

Next, in order to show his disdain of France, he announced his intention of marching through the enemy's country from Harfleur to Calais, saying that he would do it in a week.

Henry thought himself safe in making this boast, owing to the divisions between the Armagnacs and Burgundians, which had already prevented any serious force being sent against him while besieging Harfleur.

Of his army the best and strongest men remained to him. There were thirteen thousand archers, and a couple of thousand men-at-arms, with their attend-

ants. It was but a small force, but compact and healthy. A week's provisions only were taken, as the King imagined that, should he be longer on the way, he would probably be assisted by the Burgundian commanders as he marched through Picardy and Artois. As for wine, there would be plenty of it for the men, as it was the season for the wine harvest.

Like a wise leader, the English King gave, on starting, the strictest orders concerning the enforcement of discipline, and the avoidance of the Armagnac methods of ill-treating the inhabitants of the country to be passed through. Any instances of violation, or of pillaging churches would, he said, be punished by hanging, while for simple pillage any soldier in his force would immediately be beheaded.

It was at the beginning of the second week of October that the English force started on this march of bravado through an aroused and hostile country. While passing the town of Arques, subsequently so famous for the first great battle of Henry of Navarre, the opposition of the inhabitants became active. The threat to burn the town and all the country round soon, however, brought the citizens to reason, and, in addition, procured large quantities of bread for the invading army.

When the river Somme was reached, some few days later, various fords which were tried in succession by the advance-guard were found to be strongly held. A prisoner of distinction, moreover, solemnly swore that a very large French army was assembled in the rear of the parties holding the fords.

The English, instead of attempting to cross, there-

fore, proceeded to march up the river-bank, and only reached Amiens on the ninth day after the start, the soldiers becoming somewhat discouraged as they were cut off from their base, and saw but little chance of reaching Calais. The Burgundians were, however, good to them at such places as they held, and especially supplied them liberally—almost too liberally—with wine.

At length, near Nesles, Henry V. and his force seemed to be in desperate plight. Provisions were exhausted, and the unfordable Somme in front of them. The inhabitants of the country all ran away at their approach, and a large marsh made even an attempt to follow the course of the river dangerous.

It seemed as if the pride of England were about to be humbled, and some terrible disaster to befall, when, in the moment of direst necessity, a bolt came from the blue. Turner says: "But suddenly in the midst of their despondency, one of the villagers communicated valuable information."

This was, that on crossing the marsh, a ford would be found, one which the King of France had ordered a certain Captain de Saint-Quentin to destroy, and, moreover, to plant stakes in its midst. Nothing, said the peasant, had been done; and, although the ford was both long and dangerous, he offered to show the way across.

All the wood-work from a neighbouring village—doors, ladders, window-panes, logs, boards—were thrown into the river as a sort of a raft to aid in the dangerous crossing, and after twenty-four hours of anxious labour the English army was across the Somme (October 19, 1415). Incredible as it may

seem, no opposition was made to the crossing, and yet there was a large French army in the vicinity.

In spite of the timid advice of the old Duc de Berri, the remaining French Princes—the young Duc d'Orléans, the Duc de Bourbon, and the Constable d'Albret, had resolved to fight. They had gathered together all the noblesse of the south and the centre of France, and were waiting for the English. A council of war had been held, and the question of risking a battle or no put to the vote. Of the thirty-five Grand Seigneurs present, thirty voted for the battle. The old Duc de Berri, however, being mindful of Crécy and Poitiers, insisted that neither the King nor the Dauphin should be allowed to risk their lives or liberty in the contest. He remembered too well the long English captivity of his father, King Jean II.

The French army had, in spite of the veto of Jean Sans Peur, been largely reinforced by Flemish, and even Dutch, Seigneurs, and it was very numerous in the heavily armed *gens d'armes*, whose horses were as heavily caparisoned with richly inlaid armour as the Knights who bestrode them.

While Henry had been ascending the western side of the river, the French army had followed up the Somme from Abbeville to Péronne, where it halted. No sooner did it find the English force upon the same side as itself than, according to the laws of chivalry, the French Princes challenged the English King. They sent him a herald to ask him to name the day and the place for a battle, and requested him to be good enough to state which route he proposed to follow. To this summons Henry replied that he was

going straight to Calais, and that, as he was not intending to enter any cities, he could be found at any time in the open fields. He ended his message by politely requesting his enemies to keep out of his way, and so avoid the effusion of Christian blood.

While Henry divided up his force, for the sake of cover in that rainy weather, and sheltered it in various villages, the French made no effort to attack his scattered detachments, and thus missed a good opportunity. Thinking more about making a brave show on the day of the coming big encounter, the French chivalry assembled *en masse* near the Castle of Azincourt (Agincourt) in such a manner as to block the road by which Henry must advance to Calais.

The cartel of defiance from the Princes was received on October 20, 1415, and on Thursday, the 24th of that month, there was an alarm that they were advancing to attack the English, who were on the line of march. A halt was called, and the men-at-arms, dismounting, offered up their prayers to God to protect them in the coming contest. Seeing no enemy, Henry continued his advance, and lodged for the night at Maisoncelle, near Agincourt. He allowed all of his prisoners to go away on parole, telling them that if those who had captured them survived the battle they could come and pay their ransoms at Calais.

Details of the battle of Agincourt have been left by various participants in the great encounter. Of these the Picard Lefebvre de Saint-Remy, who subsequently became the Herald of the Burgundian order of the Golden Fleece, fought on the English side, while Jean de Vaurin was with the French. Juvenal des

Ursins also throws some light on the composition of the forces. This latter says that the Duc de Berri was very anxious to keep both the Duc d'Orléans and Jean Sans Peur from joining the King's army in person, and to limit the followers of each to five hundred men. The party of the Duc d'Orléans, however, had arrived *en masse*, and while Jean Sans Peur carefully kept away, a good many Burgundians and Flemish were present. One who arrived late was Jean's brother, the Duc de Brabant. This Prince considered that the honour of the family required him to join in fighting against the invading claimant of the French Crown. Another of his brothers, the Comte de Nevers, had joined the army earlier.

Lefebvre makes out the numbers of the English force who actually took part in the combat to have been only about twelve thousand men. Of these some were Welsh, under David Gam, some Portuguese, others men from Hainaut. Of the English archers ten thousand were present. Jean de Vaurin, who says that "he knows the truth, having been on the side of the French," gives the French numbers as about fifty thousand; thus the odds were immense against Henry V. The King was, nevertheless, in good heart, and when Sir Walter Hungerford expressed a wish that ten thousand more archers were present, made a pious reply :

"By the name of our Lord, I would not have another man; the number that we have is that which He has willed."

During the night before the battle, the two armies employed themselves differently. For fear of rain, the English knights carefully rolled up their banners and

their mantles worked with their coats of arms. They took off their armour, and, after sharpening the points of their lances, had a good rest, upon straw procured from neighbouring stacks. The archers in the meantime carefully replaced their old bow-strings by new ones. Every archer, during the preceding few days, had carefully cut a long stake, which he had sharpened at each end. These were to stick in the ground in front of them with one sharp point, bayonet-wise, facing the enemy's cavalry. Their preparations concluded, the soldiers confessed themselves to the priests, but very quietly, for Henry V. had given out that the punishment for any loud talking would be, for a gentleman, the deprivation of his horse; for any one of lesser birth, the loss of an ear.

In the camp of the immense French host, on the other hand, all was noise and confusion. There a great deal of the time was taken up in dubbing the squires knights. Big fires were blazing everywhere, and so greatly did the French despise the small force which they so immensely outnumbered that no military precautions were taken against a night-attack.

The weather had been very rainy, and the ground upon which the French had encamped consisted of wet clayey soil. The misery undergone by many of their men-at-arms must have been great during that cold autumn night, as, in order not to soil their magnificent armour, many of them remained all night long in the saddle. As a cold rain came on, we can imagine the wretched discomfort which these must have undergone. On the morning of October 25, 1415, Henry V., after hearing three Masses, put on his helmet. This was surrounded by a golden imperial crown. He rode

a small grey horse, but wore no spurs. After advancing his whole force to some untrampled ground, and while sending a Herald with certain offers to the French, he rode along his lines, exhorting his men to be brave, for the honour of the Crown and Old England. In particular, he reminded his archers that the French had threatened to cut off three fingers of the hands of each one whom they might capture.

In the message which Henry sent to the Princes, he offered to give up the title to the Crown of France if the Duchy of Guyenne, considerably increased, the Province of Ponthieu, and the King's daughter, with an immense dowry, were handed over to him. He did not expect for one moment that these offers would be listened to, but the fact was that the ground was in such a terrible condition that neither side cared to advance to the attack. While the time was being wasted in these parleys, the archers were fortifying the ground to their front with their pointed stakes. A large party of archers were also being carefully placed in a wood, where they would remain in concealment on the flank of the French, should they advance.

Meanwhile Henry had inquired from David Gam, the Welshman, what he thought of the numbers of the enemy. "Sire," answered David, "there are enough of them to be killed, enough to fly, enough to be taken prisoners."

While the English were only drawn up in a four-deep line, the French were divided into three immense solid masses of mounted men, each thirty-two ranks in depth. They resembled three forests of lances, and glittered with gold inlaid-armour, brilliant coats of arms, and numerous banners. All the leading Princes and

Seigneurs were in front. Indeed, the Monk of Saint-Denis relates, so great were the quarrels among them as to who should occupy the posts of honour in the front ranks that they actually drew their swords upon one another to settle the matter. It would appear that they possessed artillery, but that it was not used. Further, although they had four thousand archers, and Paris had offered six thousand men, in their overweening confidence the French chivalry refused to make any place for the employment of these commoners. "What," they exclaimed, "do we require with these common people? Are we not already three times as numerous as the English?"

The English men-at-arms were equipped much in the same style as the French. The archers, however, had no armour. Their caps were of leather, or of wickerwork interwoven with iron, and they carried axes and hatchets suspended from leathern belts. Many of them were without shoes, and one of the old chroniclers states that in order the more freely to wield their axes and wade through the mud, many of these hardy English archers had even divested themselves of their breeches. If so, they must have appeared a terrible and ferocious band of raggamuffins as opposed to the gorgeously caparisoned French chivalry.

As instruments of slaughter, however, they were far more efficient, especially as the French order of battle was such as to court defeat. Any leader possessed of but the rudiments of military skill should have foreseen that, in the deep formation of many ranks, only those in the front could wield their lances or battle-axes.



CHARLES VII. OF FRANCE.

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Stuck as their heavily armoured horses were in the trampled mud, when the English commenced the conflict by advancing with a wild cheer, meant to encourage the enemy likewise to advance and join issue, the French could not move. To the astonishment of the English, they appeared to remain glued to the ground, and only by the most cruel application of the spur could the glorious chivalry of France at length move slowly at a laborious walk. In the words of Lefebvre de Saint-Remy : " The French were so loaded with armour that they could not move forward. First, they were charged with coats of steel, long, passing the knees, and very heavy, and underneath leg-harness, and above white [steel] harness, and on their heads basinets [round helmets].

" They were so pressed one upon the other that, with the exception of those in front, they were unable to raise their arms to strike their enemies."

Seeing the unfortunate French cavaliers thus sticking in the mud, the English archers halted, and from behind their planted stakes endeavoured to wake them up with flights of thousands of arrows, aimed at their faces. The shields carried by the Knights could not be raised, their bearers could only lower their heads to prevent themselves from being pierced in the face and eyes through their visors ; which, however, was the sad fate of many of these too well-defended yet all defenceless warriors.

At length the two French wings, one from the side of Tramecourt, the other from that of Agincourt, contrived to advance in an attempt to charge. Terrible was the fate of those from Tramecourt, as they were taken in flank by the archers hidden in the wood.

The others also, advancing from Agincourt, were utterly unable to push their charge home in the face of the terrible arrows, which not only found the joints in the harness of both men and horses, but must, from the frightful mortality, in many cases also have pierced the steel itself.

But a small number, some couple of hundred or so, of the twelve hundred who commenced the charge reached the pointed stakes in front of the archers. All of the rest, many as yet unwounded, had fallen with their horses, and, while wallowing about in the slippery mire, were unable, owing to their heavy armour, to extricate themselves from the mud.

The confusion became worse when the horses of those who reached the stakes, stung by the pitiless arrows, turned with their riders and dashed furiously back into the French ranks, which were unable to open to allow them to pass through. Now, indeed, was heard the shock of steel on steel, and, with the frightened horses plunging into the compact masses, fearful were the accidents that ensued. Riders were thrown in all directions and trampled into the deep mud, and many others had their limbs smashed to pieces by being jammed together between the plunging steel-clad horses.

This was the moment chosen for the archers to charge in turn. Laying down their bows, the Englishmen sprung from behind their pointed stakes, and with their hatchets, and maces weighted with lead, proceeded to deal death in all directions among the struggling masses of the French chivalry.

Wild and bloody was the scene, awful the clang of iron upon iron, as with fierce cries the terrible

English and Welshmen butchered and slaughtered without mercy. Every stroke was bound to find its victim in man or horse, and when all of the French advanced body had been slaughtered, with King Henry at their head the English, both horse and foot, hurled themselves more savagely than ever upon the great compact mass in rear. Eighteen French gentlemen together now flung themselves upon the English King. They had sworn to perish or to lay low his golden crown. The result was that they perished to a man, while the King remained unharmed.

Some historians, Monstrelet for instance, have described a supposed Homeric conflict as having now occurred between Henry V. and the Duc d'Alençon. In the terrible confusion of the battle, nobody can know what really took place, save that there was no space in the awful *mêlée* for anything of the nature of a duel, nor would the fierce combatants on either side have been content to stand by at such a moment as calm spectators. That the Duc d'Alençon was among the slain is certain; also there appears to be no doubt of the fact that the bold young King of England, while joining like the meanest of his archers in the awful butchery, had one of the golden ornaments shorn from the coronet which encircled his steel headpiece.

Seeing that those of the French who could contrive to disentangle themselves from the awful scene of carnage were making off from the field, the Duc de Brabant, whose followers had remained behind, determined to die nobly. Cutting a hole in his banner, this noble scion of Burgundy placed it round his neck, then threw himself among the victorious English, where he instantly fell to rise no more.

A great many prisoners had been taken, chiefly from among the great lords who had fallen in the sticky mud and could not rise until helped by their valets, and who had yielded to the barefooted archers. Each of these archers was congratulating himself upon the fine ransom he would receive, when word was brought to the King that a body of Frenchmen was pillaging his camp and baggage. At the same moment he saw a part of the French rearguard, composed of Bretons and bold Gascons of Armagnac, rallying as if to make a counter-attack upon him. Seeing his men so encumbered with prisoners that they would be unable to fight, Henry now gave the cruel order to each man to kill his prisoners. The unbreeched archers, however, refused thus to destroy the geese from which they expected the golden eggs.

Thereupon Henry selected two hundred men, to whom he gave explicit orders to slaughter these unhappy prisoners, who had been admitted to parole, otherwise their own lives would pay the forfeit. Much against their will, the two hundred were forced to comply with this terrible order, when there ensued an awful scene of carnage of unarmed men, butchered in cold blood.

The attack on the camp proved to be by no means serious ; it was conducted, against the orders of their master the Duc de Bourgogne, by peasants of Agincourt and its vicinity. Monstrelet, the Burgundian historian, says that although they took Jean Sans Peur a fine jewelled sword for his son, he punished the pillagers severely.

Deprived of their prisoners, the half-naked archers now threw themselves upon the still warm bodies of

the dead, whom they stripped, and thus soon provided themselves with new and better breeches than those they had cast off before the beginning of the battle. Underneath the heaps of piled-up corpses some were found still living. Among these was the young Charles, Duc d'Orléans, the rallying head of the Armagnac faction. This Prince was spared and taken to England, where he was detained for many years, not being allowed to obtain his liberty by paying a ransom. He has since been celebrated as the poet Duc d'Orléans. Upon the day following the battle there were still many of the wounded living. Of these, by Henry's orders, some were killed and some retained as prisoners.

While the losses of the English in the battle of Agincourt amounted to some sixteen hundred, the French lost from ten to twelve thousand, chiefly of gentle birth. Among them were a hundred and twenty Grand Seigneurs who were entitled to carry their own banners, and seven Princes of the Blood Royal. These were the already mentioned Antoine, Duc de Brabant, his brother Jean, Comte de Nevers, the Duc d'Alençon, the Constable d'Albret, and three cousins of Charles VI., members of the House of Bar.

With all the stripped and naked corpses, with the dead and dying horses, many of these latter screaming in their agony, the battle-field was a terrible sight. As the Burgundian Lefebvre describes it: "It was a pitiable thing to see the great noblesse which had there been slain, which were already all naked like those which are born of nothing." The son of Jean Sans Peur caused five thousand eight hundred of these

dead nobles, among whom were his own two uncles, to be buried in an immense square. Many others were, however, borne off and buried separately.

In spite of all the prisoners whom Henry had ordered to be butchered, there were yet retained alive fifteen hundred, and among them the greatest names in France. The Duc de Bourbon, the maternal uncle of Charles VI., the Maréchal de Boucicaut, and Pierre de Craon, who had indirectly caused the King's madness, were among the number.

CHAPTER X

The Comte d'Armagnac almost King

1415—1417

WHEN one calls to mind the immense slaughter at battles such as Crécy, Poitiers and Agincourt, the masses of armour-clad dead men and horses left strewn upon the field of battle, the question arises in the mind, What became of all the armour? The victors cannot, except in cases of exceptionally rich suits, have carried it off. It would have been too cumbrous, while to the peasantry of the neighbourhood it must have been absolutely useless. Lances, swords, and spears might be carried away and perhaps come in useful again, but imagine the mountains of armour which would remain when the bodies of some fifteen, twenty, or twenty-five thousand had been stripped prior to burial! The horses that died in these bloody encounters were probably never stripped at all, and, after slowly rotting in their steel cases, their still steel-clad skeletons must have remained for generations on the ground where they fell. It is indeed a strange problem to think of what became of all the vast debris of these great battles, which, even if left lying on the ground, must have prevented the ploughman at every yard from pursuing his arduous and peaceful avocation where so many had fallen.

Of the prisoners that remained in the hands of his men after Agincourt, Henry V. made a good business. He bought them at a low figure from their captors, then, removing them all to Calais, shipped them off to England, where he held them until he eventually obtained immense ransoms. Nor were they as a rule released until, in addition to their ransoms, large sums had been paid for their keep during the time of their captivity.

After the battle of Poitiers, when King Jean fell into the hands of the Black Prince, he was treated with the utmost courtesy. Instead of treating his Royal captive as merely Jean de Valois, as the English called him, the Prince of Wales behaved to him as though he were indeed a Sovereign, if fallen. He served him at table on bended knee, and, when he took him to London, made King Jean ride first on a noble white courser, while he himself modestly followed on a little black pony. Most courteous also was the Black Prince to his other captives, allowing many of them to go to their homes on parole, merely asking them to come to pay their ransoms at the time of the Christmas festivities, in which he asked them to join.

Henry V. did not believe in all this politeness, and kept his prisoners of the greatest distinction, such as Charles, Duc d'Orléans, and the young Prince Arthur, son of the recently deceased Duc Jean IV. (de Montfort) of Brittany, under close constraint. And yet this Arthur was in a sense his half-brother, as he was the son by the first marriage of Jeanne de Navarre, the second Queen of Henry IV. Upon his arrival in London, Queen Jeanne was only allowed to hold the

shortest of interviews with her son, and this meeting was all the more embittered from the fact that the young Prince at first mistook one of the Queen's ladies, who had preceded her, for his mother, and threw himself into her arms.

Immediately after the battle the prisoners were forced to listen to the hypocritical preachings of Henry V., who lost no opportunity of explaining to the unfortunate Frenchmen that God had allowed him to gain the victory on account of the sins of France, which deserved punishment.

To Montjoie, the Herald of France, on the field itself, among the dead and dying, Henry observed sententiously, "It is not we who have done this killing, but God, for the sins of the French."

On the way to Calais the Duc d'Orléans refused to eat and drink; thereupon the King took the opportunity of visiting him and moralising at considerable length: "Beau cousin," he commenced, "I know well that if God gave me grace to beat the French it was not because I was worthy, but because He chose to punish them. It is not to be wondered at, when one considers that never were seen such disorders, voluptuousness, sins, and evil vices as exist to-day in France. It is no wonder indeed if God be angry."

With words like these, according to Lefebvre de Saint-Remy, who was present, would the unchivalrous Henry bully his unfortunate prisoners, and thus make their captivity more miserable. They came but badly from him, the disorders of his own youth being notorious to his unwilling listeners.

There is, however, no doubt that there was far

greater order preserved during the French wars of Henry V. in his armies than in those of his opponents. While the French armies were followed by the mistresses of the Knights and other loose women, among the English soldiers were to be found no giddy girls. Nor was there any swearing or gambling among the English ranks.

The Duc d'Orléans was held as a prisoner in England for a quarter of a century, as the head of the Armagnac faction was considered too dangerous to be allowed to return to France. Therefore in England the unfortunate Prince remained for long years after all his numerous compatriots had been allowed to regain their native shores. At first he was confined with his fellow-prisoners at Windsor Castle, but he was soon separated from his friends and removed to the Castle of Pomfret. For so long as he was considered to have a chance of succeeding to the throne of France he was never allowed to leave this place. And yet, in spite of the precautions of the English, was the son of Charles d'Orléans to be fated to assume the French Crown, with the title of Louis XII., some twenty years after his father's release.

In his captivity at Pomfret the Duc d'Orléans was honourably treated, and he always spoke kindly of his gaoler and his wife as "my very good host and my very sweet hostess." Nevertheless, the only distraction allowed him being that of hawking, the poor Prince almost died of *ennui* during the long weary years. He devoted his time to versifying, and although his verse was not of the very highest order, still, for the day, it was good. Although, as might

have been expected, there was usually a ring of melancholy in his stanzas, yet was Charles quite a pretty poet, especially in his love-verses. Of these the following is a specimen—in this poem Charles d'Orléans sings of his absent mistress :

Dieu ! qu'il la fait bon regarder,
 La gracieuse, bonne et belle !
 Qui se pourroit d'elle lasser ?
 Tous jours sa beauté renouvelle,
 Par decà ni delà la mer,
 Ne sçays dame ni demoysele
 Qui soit entout bien parfait telle.
 C'est un songe que d'y penser !
 Dieu ! qu'il la fait bon regarder !

While thus lamenting his '*chère amie*' among those whom he had left behind him, the Duc d'Orléans is said not to have found the fair ladies of England by any means unwilling to console him for her absence. Indeed, it is said, so greatly were the amiable qualities of Charles the prisoner-poet recognised by the great ladies of Albion, that in his honour, and that of his mother, the charming Valentina Visconti, was instituted the festival of Saint Valentine's day.

We must now leave the Duc d'Orléans to his captivity in England and turn once more to his party in France, of which the Comte Bernard d'Armagnac in his absence became the supreme head.

This domineering but subtle leader of a violent soldiery had, like the cousin and deadly enemy of d'Orléans, the assassin of his father, the Duc de Bourgogne, carefully absented himself from the battle of Agincourt.

Each of these was watching the turn of the cards. Jean Sans Peur had, to his son's great regret, likewise

prevented him from fighting for France upon this great occasion, for which this son, afterwards Philippe le Bon, never ceased to express his sorrow, whether sincere or no.

The battle having swept away, in its thousands of slain and fifteen hundred prisoners, both the friends and the enemies of Armagnac and Bourgogne, left the board clear as the field for their ambition. Each now imagined that the power remained in his hands, and each made a dash for Paris, to secure with that city the possession of the person of Charles VI.

Giving instructions to his army of Burgundians to follow him as soon as possible, no sooner did Jean Sans Peur learn the news of the great disaster to France than, with barely a dozen followers, he rode night and day until he reached Paris. Great and bitter was his disappointment to find that the wily d'Armagnac had got there before him. With six thousand of his savage Gascons, Comte Bernard had occupied Paris and, with both the King and the Dauphin in his hands, had caused himself to be nominated Constable of France, in the place of d'Albret, slain at Agincourt.

Not far from the capital, at Lagny, Jean Sans Peur established himself, sending daily messengers to his numerous supporters within the city walls that he was coming to their assistance. When he had waited for a couple of months without doing anything, the Parisians began to sneer at their would-be rescuer from Armagnac, saying that he was not Jean Sans Peur any longer, but "Jean of Lagny, who never hurried."

It will now be observed in what a remarkable

manner death intervened to make the position of the Constable d'Armagnac yet stronger, by clearing all of the Princes out of his way. First, in the year 1415, the Dauphin Louis died from the result of too continuously turning night into day. He was only twenty years of age when called to a world beyond the strife of the Armagnacs and Burgundians, who had made of him but a pawn. In the following year he was followed to the grave by his octogenarian great-uncle, Jean, Duc de Berri. Before the close of 1416, the young Prince Jean, who had succeeded Louis as Dauphin, was also called to his rest. To complete this catalogue of death, Louis II., Duc d'Anjou and King of Sicily, the first cousin once removed of the imbecile Charles VI., followed the three other Princes to the grave in 1417. D'Armagnac had now only left in a position to contend for power with him in Paris a mere child of the Blood Royal, in the person of Charles, the fifth son of Charles VI., who became Dauphin. This boy, born in 1403, was, however, reared in the Orleanist, that is to say the Armagnac fold, and, as his future actions will disclose, had no wish to associate himself, against the Constable, with the Duc de Bourgogne.

With this young Prince in his hands and the power in his grasp, Armagnac showed himself to be a man, the one man in France who was willing to make a renewed effort to defend the kingdom in its peril from the English. Henry V., after returning to England to celebrate his triumph, was now openly talking about coming to take possession of his city of Paris. Unscrupulous, grasping, savage, and blood-thirsty, the Comte Bernard had shown himself to be all his life,

but in this crisis he proved himself patriotic, a man of head and a man of daring.

While all of France was in a condition of abasement from the recent crushing defeat, while too he knew the risk that he ran from Burgundy should he leave Paris, the Constable boldly took that risk. Quitting the capital with some gentlemen men-at-arms and his Gascons, he suddenly astonished the English in Harfleur, by appearing before that place and laying violent siege to it.

What might have been the result of this bold move it is hard to say, had not the cowardice of some of Armagnac's gentlemen in an assault, which he headed in person, compelled him before long to abandon his courageous enterprise. He promptly hanged the nobles of his following who had shown the white feather, but the opportunity of a surprise was lost. This bold Gascon did not, however, at once give up the contest. Resolved to attack Harfleur by sea, he scraped together the money to hire a Genoese fleet and five thousand Catalan archers. With these he obtained a considerable advantage over the English, with much heavier tonnage, in the Channel. Not finding himself strong enough to reduce Harfleur, the Constable then returned to Paris. Here he found the Burgundian influence had much increased during his absence; moreover, that a conspiracy was afoot to introduce Jean Sans Peur, and, so says Monstrelet, to massacre the Dauphin and any remaining Princes of the Blood Royal. While squeezing Paris tightly to obtain the money to keep a force under arms, the relentless Comte made short work of the conspirators, one of whom was a Canon, and brother of the last

Bishop of Paris. The Canon was attired in scarlet and driven round the city in a tumbril, then walled up in such a manner that he could only be fed with bread and water through a hole in the wall. His associates were beheaded and drowned by the score in the Seine. So full of corpses was the river that bathing was prohibited, lest it should be made an excuse for counting the bodies floating about or lining the shores. A secret and efficient police was established by the Constable, and consternation reigned throughout Paris.

Not satisfied with the Parliament or the University, the Comte soon allowed his vengeance to fall also upon these bodies, while four hundred wives and daughters of bourgeois, many being those of the butchers who had fled to Jean Sans Peur, were turned out of Paris, and roughly conducted by Armagnac soldiers to Orléans, the women being spared no indignity on the way that Gascon brutality could devise. The Queen also had earned the displeasure of the all-powerful Comte. Finding Isabeau secretly treating with Jean Sans Peur, the Constable threw one of her lovers into the river in a sack. Then he caused Isabeau herself to be seized in turn, carried off and incarcerated in the castle of Tours. He now suppressed all hereditary offices among the butchers, and broke up the two great establishments of butchers into various smaller ones. The Comte also removed the chains which the bourgeois were accustomed to stretch across the streets. As a final precaution against a siege, he ordered every citizen to lay in a stock of provisions. By acting in this determined and overbearing manner, the Comte d'Armagnac almost attained to the position of King of France.

CHAPTER XI

The Massacres of the Armagnacs

1418

WHILE the Constable was acting thus vigorously, and even forcing every three citizens to provide for the cost of a man-at-arms, his great rival Jean Sans Peur cunningly contrived to deal him a subtle blow below the belt. Making a sudden descent upon Tours, he carried off the Queen, then, declaring her to be Regent, the Duc de Bourgogne issued proclamations all over France to the effect that she forbade the payment of the taxes. We can easily imagine with what delight such a popular edict would be welcomed among us to-day; how much greater, then, was the joy in all the great cities of France in a time when taxation was crushing, when salt even was forced upon the people by the State, whether it was required or no, and at a most exorbitant rate.

The effect was soon apparent: the power of the Comte d'Armagnac commenced at once to diminish. When he considered that Rouen was in want of a garrison, and sent some Gascons, the people of that city rose in revolt, and butchered the chief magistrate, who wished to admit them. The gates of Rouen



JOAN'S HOME AT DOM-REMY.

were closed upon these troops, as upon those of the invading English.

While Paris, hungry and rebellious, was impotently raging against its oppressor, Henry V. landed once more in France, near Caen in Normandy, being accompanied by his brother, Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, and forty thousand men. As the Duc de Bourgogne was blockading Paris, and preventing the ingress of food, Henry very wisely saw that there was no need for him to hurry in an advance on the capital, which would soon be weak enough, owing to the quarrels of the rival factions.

Secure in the secret neutrality of Burgundy, Henry proceeded quietly to complete his conquest of the Duchy of Normandy, sending off Gloucester, with one part of his forces, in one direction, while with the remainder he proceeded himself to besiege and reduce various cities, notably Caen.

This was a large place, and a great centre of agriculture; it formed the largest market in the north of France. As it would be most useful to Henry as a base for obtaining supplies, he adopted an ingenious, if not particularly honourable course to prevent any assistance being sent to Caen. While sending off Ambassadors to Paris to make deluding proposals for peace, he pressed the siege with immense vigour. The result was that Caen fell into his hands before any effort was made in Paris to despatch reinforcements to the beleaguered garrison. Being determined to make of Caen an English city, like Calais and Harfleur, Henry drove out to starve twenty-five thousand wretched beings from this capital of Lower Normandy. According to his usual custom

upon taking a Norman city, a few heads of the principal burghers were cut off by Henry for *lèse-majesté* in resisting their Sovereign, but the lives of the remainder were spared, and the honour of women respected.

Having captured also Bayeux, Alençon, and Falaise, and while gradually extending his conquests, the "Duke of Normandy" acted with considerable wisdom in establishing an orderly and settled government wherever his army were supreme. While punishing those who resisted him, he protected all who yielded to his authority; those among the priesthood, for instance, who chose to remain in their benefices, and landowners, settled upon their estates, who acknowledged him as their Sovereign.

So secure did the King of England feel of uninterrupted in his operations, owing to his secret understanding with Jean Sans Peur, that he proceeded to break up his army into various small detachments, and to invest three or four places at the same time.

While Henry was thus placidly continuing his successful military promenade through Normandy, the Duc de Bourgogne, quite regardless of the presence of the invader in the country of which he belonged to the Blood Royal, was only occupied with the Comte d'Armagnac, and how to procure his fall.

That it could not be very far off was apparent from the straits to which the Comte Bernard had been reduced owing to the success of his opponent's edicts against paying the taxes. While in Paris he remained as proud and fierce as ever, the situation of the Constable was really deplorable. From want of money wherewith to pay them, d'Armagnac was

daily losing more of his Gascons, who left the city by degrees. In his need he laid violent hands upon the sacred church vessels, and melted them down. It is true that, as when he had seized the Queen's plate at Saint-Denis, the Comte declared this to be but a loan. He even made a settlement of certain State revenues wherewith new chalices and candlesticks would be eventually procured for the churches and abbeys. Nevertheless, the worthy Religieux de Saint-Denis states that the monks of his abbey were furious, and declared that this annexation of the church goods should be recorded in their annals as the greatest blot on the reign of Charles VI.

The bourgeoisie of Paris, wearied out with being forced to perform continuous military duties, now hated the Comte d'Armagnac as much as it feared him. The Church and the University hated him also. If any extra reason for this hatred on the part of the University were needed, it was to be found in the fact that this upholder of the cause of the late Duc Louis d'Orléans was an upholder also of that Prince's favourite Pope, Benedict XIII., whom the University had declared schismatic. Armagnac now it was whom they called schismatic—a schismatic brigand, and a Gascon to boot, which was almost as great a crime in the eyes of an inhabitant of northern France as being an infidel follower of Mohammed.

Meanwhile the Parisians were longing for peace with the Burgundians. "Let there be peace!" was their daily cry. It was not, however, that of King Charles VI. When, in one of his lucid intervals, he was informed that the reason of the scarcity of provisions in Paris was that the city was blockaded

by the people of Jean Sans Peur, he exclaimed testily :
“ Why don't you drive those rascals away ? ”

At length even the King and the young Dauphin were willing to listen to the cries of the people, and patch up a reconciliation. Not the Constable! He would not hear of such a thing, for well did that fierce man realise that what might mean peace to all others would mean death or destruction to him. He had but three thousand Gascons left. What could they do if the gates were opened to the army of Burgundy?

Nevertheless, this is what came to pass—by treachery!

A certain young man, named Leclerc, was the son of the official whose duty it was to keep the keys of the Gate Saint-Germain. Associating some other rascals of bad character with himself, Leclerc robbed his father of the keys, and one night admitted eight hundred Burgundian Knights under the command of a powerful Seigneur, the Sire de l'Isle-Adam. Some of the people instantly joined Isle-Adam, who by surprise obtained possession of the King, when the Dauphin fled to the Bastille. There was subsequently a fierce combat in the streets, when the Bretons and the Gascons who remained faithful to Armagnac were crushed by stones hurled upon them from the windows by the people, who joined the Burgundians. Isle-Adam remained victorious, and the proud Bernard d'Armagnac was, with some of the leading men of his party, compelled to hide. They were betrayed and imprisoned.

Now commenced the fête of the Parisians, who pillaged from top to bottom the houses of all of the Armagnac faction, while their owners were held for

ransom. The banished butchers, those whose wives and daughters had been so ill-treated by the Gascon soldiers while being conducted to Orléans, now returned to Paris. They were gaunt with hunger and fierce for vengeance. Nor was their rage modified when they beheld the ruined condition of their houses. These people crammed the prisons full of the Armagnacs, whom they had just cause to hate, whatever had been their own misdeeds in the past.

This sudden reversal of the Armagnac Government and the downfall of the Constable took place at the beginning of June 1418, and meanwhile starvation increased in the city, which, moreover, remained in a constant state of wild alarm, with the tocsin ringing nightly. There were two causes for alarm. One that the Armagnacs outside the city might return in force and free the prisoners, the other lest the English, who had cleverly obtained possession of Pont-de-l'Arche, on the Seine between Paris and Rouen, should attack the city.

To avert the former danger, the furious bourgeois determined to murder the prisoners. On the night of June 12, 1418, they assembled in their thousands and swarmed to all the places of confinement. Then ensued a scene similar to that of the September massacres of the time of the French Revolution. In vain was it that Isle-Adam, with Fosseuse and Luxembourg, two other great Burgundian Seigneurs, at first endeavoured to restrain their fury. At some of the prisons the imprisoned Armagnacs made a furious resistance, but all were murdered. At others they were called out one by one, and upon reaching the gates their throats were cut.

Mad with the lust of blood—again like the September massacres—the bourgeois soon forgot to discriminate among those whom they killed, but every one was slaughtered, no matter for what cause confined. Debtors, Bishops, some of the Presidents of the Parliament who had been imprisoned by the opposite faction, and various other members of the Magistracy, even of the Burgundian party, had their throats cut as ruthlessly as though they had been the Constable himself. Needless to say that the great Comte Bernard was one of the first to meet with a bloody end, and in the Palais de Justice for several days his naked corpse was the object of the mockery of the crowd. The children, meanwhile, played in the streets with the stripped corpses of his followers. People in the streets, including many women, were murdered also. One woman notably, who was about to become a mother, was butchered with circumstances of most revolting cruelty. Her living child was left lying in the street, but the priests refused to baptize it, saying that it was an Armagnac, and should die without baptism as it deserved to be damned!

Between midnight of Saturday, June 12, and the morning of Monday, June 14, sixteen hundred persons were massacred in the prisons or in the streets of Paris. As at the time of the massacre of Saint Bartholomew, many a man who wished to get rid of his personal enemy falsely designated him as a Huguenot, so now it was sufficient for one who had a grudge against another to cry "Armagnac!" after him, when, rightly or wrongly, his bloody doom was certain.

How terrible, indeed, have been the deeds of the

French race time after time! What hecatombs of dead have littered the streets of the French cities, of Paris, and many other towns and villages, from the early days of the long-continued slaughter of the helpless Albigenses!

How merciless those of this nation have repeatedly proved to their own compatriots, ever since its first component races, with their largely Latin foundation, became fused into a nation! Surely the French must hold the record for massacres against all the world! Other nations may have had their occasional outbreaks, their blind slaughterings of their fellow-countrymen; but, so frequent? We doubt it.

L'appétit vient en mangeant seems to have ever been the motto of our Gallic neighbours where wholesale killing was concerned, and this proved to be the case now with the populace of Paris. The June massacre of the unfortunate Armagnacs will not suffice them — they will find some more to slaughter in August! We shall come presently to the next—what should it be called?—ebullition of popular feeling will do, since in the case of the Parisians of that, and a later day, ebullition and wholesale murder have proved to be but synonymous terms!

While within the horrid city, in jest, a long white strip of skin was cut from the back of the dead Comte Bernard, to represent the Armagnac scarf, while too the stench of the corpses with which the children were playing became insupportable, the living wearers of the white Armagnac scarf were enabled to take a little revenge on the Parisians.

They held Melun, up the Seine, in force, and starved the city from that side as the English were

doing from the other. The Parisians sent for the Duc de Bourgogne to come and help them. Jean Sans Peur came—with the Queen, and the fickle crowds were delighted at first. They soon found that there was not much cause for their cries of “Noël au bon Duc!” or “Vive la Reine!” for these brought no food with them—no peace either!

The triumph of the Armagnacs outside commenced when the plague began within, being brought on by the smell of the improperly buried corpses and starvation in the city. Then they pressed in all the closer, and kept the food out more carefully than before, both by way of the river and at Montlhéry from the province of Beauce.

The plague, however, soon spread to the environs of Paris also, and then those who might have been willing to have brought in food by other routes were dead or dying. In Paris there were before long fifty thousand dead, and, strange to say, those chiefly concerned in the recent massacre not only died first, but gave themselves up to despair from the moment that they were attacked by the scourge. Crying wildly, “We are damned!” these even refused the consolations of religion in their dying moments.

In the midst of this awful mortality, clerical members of the University began to declaim from the pulpit that if everything was thus going wrong it was because not enough had been killed—that the work of slaughter should be continued.

These priests abused the leaders of the Burgundian party, saying that, doubtless, they intended to allow the remaining Armagnac prisoners to go on payment of a ransom, and that this must be prevented at all

hazards. The preachers did their evil work only too well, and, towards the end of August, 1418, in a time of dreadful heat, the mob armed once more for murder. Headed by Capeluche, the executioner of Paris, mounted on a white horse, the multitude surged to the prison of the Grand Châtelet. Here the gaolers armed their prisoners, and encouraged them to defend the doors.

With ladders the assassins mounted to the roofs, broke an entrance, and, pouring in, butchered gaolers and prisoners together.

The same butchery then took place at the Petit Châtelet.

To the Bastille next thronged the bloodthirsty thousands, still headed by the mounted executioner. The Duc de Bourgogne, without any armed escort, met them, and begged them to spare the lives of the prisoners, of all descriptions, with whom the Bastille was crowded.

In order to gain his point, this great Prince even humbled himself so far as to shake hands with the hangman.

Thereupon Capeluche promised, the mob also promised, that all that they would do would be to transport the prisoners to the prison of the Châtelet.

Jean Sans Peur was helpless to prevent this ; but no sooner had the howling mob removed the prisoners than they were met by another howling mob, which had made no promises to the Duc de Bourgogne, and which massacred them all.

In his rage at having touched the bloodstained hand of the executioner, and for nothing, this Prince now determined to have his revenge. By cunning

words he contrived to send the armed ruffians off to attack the Armagnacs at Montlhéry, a few miles to the south of Paris. No sooner were they outside than he shut the gates of the city behind them. He now had the executioner at his mercy, and was determined to make him pay dearly for the honour of having grasped the hand of a Prince of the Blood—a mighty ruler of many States. Capeluche was seized and borne off to the place where he was wont to ply his loathly calling. When about to be hanged, this hangman showed no white feather but the greatest sang-froid. Having carefully explained to his assistant how to arrange matters so as to make no bungle, the executioner of Paris coolly made his bow to the world, and was then hurried into eternity from his own scaffold.

CHAPTER XII

How Henry V. took Rouen

1418—1419

THE great leader of the Armagnac faction in France being murdered, and Charles, Duc d'Orléans safely bottled up in an English prison, Jean Sans Peur remained the definite head of the Government of France.

In this position, it became at length incumbent to do something to defend the country against the English. No longer was it possible for the Duc de Bourgogne to shelter himself behind his opponents, and say that, if the English were not driven out of France, it was all the fault of those wretched Armagnacs. His equivocal position as the secret ally of Henry V., with his Flanders treaties for mutual commercial benefits, became galling in the extreme; the people, now that he had become their ruler, as the ruler of the King, began to cry out to him for protection from the foreign foe, which, gradually ascending the Seine, was placing Paris in danger.

But where Comté Bernard d'Armagnac had found himself before the June massacres, there did Jean Sans Peur find himself now. With the town to feed,

to provision against a possible siege, and with no money unless he renewed the taxes which he himself had abolished in order to injure his rival, the Burgundian Duke found himself indeed in a fix.

He had put his head into a noose out of which it was impossible to withdraw it; he could do nothing either for war or peace. Should he renew the taxes, his popularity would go.

Even his friends and most ardent supporters, both in Rouen and Paris, had become by this time more for a determined war of defence against the English than for one of extermination against the Armagnacs, and, seeing how slow was their beloved leader in taking any active steps, began to cry out. They said that he was "the slowest of all slow men in his labours."

Much as he felt the invidious light in which he was regarded, the Duc de Bourgogne still remained helpless. His commercial treaties with England prevented him from summoning his Flemish vassals to his aid, while the Armagnac forces held nearly all the cities of central France, and thus kept his Burgundian troops in a constant state of alarm for their own safety.

While in this quandary, Jean, by an effort, contrived to send four thousand horsemen to Rouen, but the loss of these men-at-arms, nearly all Burgundian gentlemen of noble birth, left him weaker in Paris.

It may perhaps be wondered at that, when on the horns of this dilemma, this ruler of various foreign States did not openly declare himself for England, and go over bag and baggage to Henry V. The reason for not so doing was that he knew, should he adopt

this open course, that he would lose all of his following in France, and a great part also of his subjects of Burgundy, which country cared nothing for Flanders, as it reaped none of the advantages of the Flemish trade with England, in which the Duc de Bourgogne had, however, his share of the profits.

There is no doubt but that Jean wrote to Henry to this effect, and explained to the English King how much more advantageous to him was his veiled neutrality than his open assistance. There is, indeed, in existence a secret treaty by which Jean recognised the claim of Henry to the throne of France. It is undated, and probably was only signed by Jean in his capacity as Comte de Flandre. Its existence was suspected at the time, but was not actually known, for Henry, clearly understanding that he would do wisely to keep it quiet, said nothing about it.

Meanwhile, while reducing the taxes in the great part of Normandy which he had turned into an English colony, and altogether abolishing the hateful duty on salt, Henry pursued the even tenor of his way. As he had mapped this out for himself, his next objective point was Rouen, in Upper Normandy, and to Rouen he accordingly went.

An indefatigable negotiator, Henry had by various treaties prepared for being left undisturbed while attacking this most important city on the Seine. He made a treaty for the neutrality of Guyenne, he renewed an old treaty of truce with Brittany, and he made new treaties with Flanders. Last, but not least, by his clever method of working upon the feelings of his numerous French prisoners in England, he in-

clined them to write to France in the interests of peace, and thus to block the efforts of those of their friends who would otherwise have made more violent efforts to oppose him in the field.

In an amicable visit which Henry paid to the Duc d'Orléans before leaving England, he talked to this Prince in a confidential manner, one calculated to alarm him for the future of his country should the war continue. To the Duc de Bourbon he did the same: "Beau cousin, I am returning to the war, and this time I shall spare nothing; yes, this time France will have to pay the piper"; or "Beau cousin, soon I am going to Paris. It is a great pity, for they are a brave people; but, you see, they are so terribly divided that they can do nothing."

The result of these confidential chats with the various French prisoners was so to discourage them all that they begged and obtained leave to send the Duc de Bourbon to Paris, to represent them with the King of France, to implore him to hurry up and make peace on Henry's own conditions. To say, further, that if peace were not made, then would they renounce their country as Frenchmen, and hold their fiefs there in future as vassals under the English Crown.

In addition to his other treaties, Henry, at her own request, willingly accorded one of neutrality, for her separate provinces of Anjou, Provence, and Maine, to Yolande, the recently widowed Duchesse d'Anjou (Queen of Sicily). This Yolande was a Spanish Princess, the daughter of King John I. of Aragon. She was a woman of considerable head, tact, and foresight, as she proved later in the efforts she made

for the aggrandisement of her House. By the clever marriage which she made of her second son René she obtained for him the great independent Duchy of Lorraine. She made her daughter Marie the wife of Charles VII. of France, while her granddaughter Marguerite became the Queen of Henry VI. of England.

When this politic woman sent to Henry V. to ask him for neutrality, he met her half-way. Nothing, he said to the Queen of Sicily, would give him greater pleasure than to avoid the effusion of Christian blood in the three French provinces left to her by her much-regretted husband.

The fifteen-year-old Dauphin now stood in France for the head of the Orléans or Armagnac party. This indeed was but natural, considering that the late Louis d'Orléans had been, if not, as all supposed, his father, certainly the uncle of the Dauphin Charles.

To the Dauphin, as Armagnac, Henry pretended to turn a willing ear when he received representations for peace, and equally to Jean Sans Peur, as Burgundian, he impartially lent his attention. All the time he was preparing to besiege Rouen, and, as a preparatory measure, imported some eight thousand famishing Irish to eat up the country round about the city. Having loosed these starving raggamuffins in Normandy, he told them to procure their own living. They were unarmed, and wandered about, riding on small ponies or on cows, and terrified the inhabitants by becoming kidnappers of children, whom they held for ransom.

Monstrelet says of this army of Irish scaramouches :
“ One of their feet was shod and the other naked, and

they were without breeches. They stole little children from the cradle, and rode off on cows carrying the said children."

Rouen, which contained some sixty thousand souls, was very strongly held by the provincial militia and the four thousand cavaliers sent by the Duc de Bourgogne. The difficulty would be how to nourish the inhabitants, especially as Henry held Pont de l'Arche above on the Seine, and Harfleur below.

The English King, afraid of no exterior attack, quietly divided up his army into seven or eight large detachments, stationed at different points round the city. These he connected with one another by trenches and parapets, to protect from artillery-fire. With military precautions in advance of his time, he protected the reverse of these trenches with a strong thorny fence, or "zariba," similar to those used in the Soudanese wars of modern days. His brothers, Thomas, Duke of Clarence, and Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, commanded the forces which watched two of the city gates. He had also under his command the Earl of Warwick, Dorset, the High Admiral of England, and other great lords.

The story of the siege of Rouen is that of one of the most obstinate in history. In spite of the hunger by which the defenders were attacked at the end of the first month of the investment, the place held out for seven long months, during which furious counter-attacks were continually delivered on the English lines. The boldest spirit of the defence was the head of the crossbow-men, Alain Blanchart by name, and his efforts were well seconded by the Canon Delivet and other priests, who animated the courage of the inhabi-



JEAN POTON, SEIGNEUR DE XAINTRAILLES. MARÉCHAL DE FRANCE,

tants of Rouen, while pronouncing excommunication against the impious invader.

The siege continued through the whole of the winter of 1418—1419, and during this prolonged period embassies from the Dauphin and Jean Sans Peur arrived in the English camp to treat for peace. So long as no relieving force also arrived, Henry was perfectly ready to play with these Ambassadors from the rival parties and to keep each waiting as long as possible. He pretended to listen to the offers made to him of large cessions of territory by each of the rival parties in turn. These offers were amusing; for while Bourgogne expressed himself as willing to give Henry about three quarters of the French King's dominions in France, the Dauphin calmly offered about the half of those belonging to Jean Sans Peur, notably all of Flanders and Artois.

In the end Henry laughed at each set of Ambassadors. He told those from the Dauphin that he held his master's private letters to the Duc de Bourgogne, which proved his insincerity and connivance with his rival. To the Envoys of Jean Sans Peur he remarked tersely: "The King is a fool, the Dauphin a minor, and the Duc de Bourgogne not in a position to make any offers at all." Thereupon he sent them about their business, and continued the playful habit of hanging the prisoners that he had taken outside the walls of Rouen, to strike terror into the hearts of the stubborn inhabitants.

As winter advanced, famine obtained a still more terrible grip upon those within the doomed city. Then, in order to have the fewer useless mouths to feed, all the old men, women, and children were thrust out from

the city gates. By this time nearly all the horses, cats, and dogs had been eaten; a rat was fetching a large price, and even a mouse was worth its weight in silver. The difficulty was, however, to catch these small animals, there being no articles of food available for bait. Anything which, under ordinary circumstances, would have been thrown out on the dust-heap was now carefully preserved, and human beings fought with one another like wild animals over the smallest piece of carrion.

When the women and children were turned out of Rouen, it was hoped that the English would charitably receive and feed them. The charity of Henry V. consisted, however, in having the whole mass of starving old age, femininity and childhood thrust back into the dry ditch outside the walls.

There, feeding on such grass and weeds as they could find, these twelve thousand miserable beings lived and died; their piteous appeals for help, for mercy, for food, disregarded alike by their husbands, fathers, brothers, sons, within the city and the English soldiery without. On Christmas Day, however, the English priests went down and fed all with bread.

When a child was born in the ditch—and there were many such cases—the priests of Rouen lowered down a basket, hauled up the infant, baptized it, and then let it down again, to starve upon its starving mother's withered breast. And yet, even to preserve the lives of their loved ones, the Rouennais refused to yield, still kept up their dogged and fierce resistance. On two occasions they managed to send monks out as messengers to Charles VI., to beg for help.

One of these pronounced bitter curses upon the

King and Jean Sans Peur, telling them that, if they did not at once send aid, every man of Rouen who might survive would do his utmost to destroy them and all their race.

At length the Duc de Bourgogne made a show of taking the King with him to relieve Rouen. At the Abbey of Saint-Denis the mockery was enacted of presenting the King with the Oriflamme—the sacred banner of France. With the Oriflamme proudly waving before him, the King and his forces moved a little way—to Pontoise—and there halted. Some days later a last despairing messenger arrived, to say that fifty thousand were already dead of famine in and around Rouen. Jean Sans Peur seemed greatly grieved at this sad news. He sent back the messenger, with word that he was coming at once with succour. No sooner had he departed than the Duc de Bourgogne marched off the King and his army in the opposite direction to that of Rouen!

The end came, as it was bound to come. When the desperate inhabitants of Rouen threatened to blow down their walls and perish in a headlong charge upon the English, the Archbishop of Canterbury, to save life on both sides, went in and offered terms. These were life to all except five, who would be hanged for treason to their legitimate Sovereign.

The city of Rouen yielded on these terms, in January 1419, when of the five victims four, being rich, bought their lives for large sums. The noble Alain Blanchart could not, or was not allowed to, buy himself off—he died for all; and thus was the English Sovereignty vindicated. The whole of the inhabitants at Rouen were now confined as prisoners in the city

until, in two payments, they contrived to hand over the immense war indemnity of three hundred thousand golden crowns.

Any person who wished to go out was, however, allowed to do so, on purchasing from the officers of the guards at the various gates a ticket, for which he had to pay a very large price. This ingenious plan for raising money was found to be so productive that the English proceeded to employ it at the gates of all the Norman cities which had fallen into their hands. When Rouen had paid its immense fine, the magnanimous Henry announced that he restored to the city all the ancient privileges that it had enjoyed "before the usurpation of Philippe de Valois." This was Philippe known as Philippe VI. of France, and the first of the Valois Kings.

He was the son of Charles, Comte de Valois (who was the brother of Philippe IV.), and would not have been the legal heir to the Crown in any country where the Salic law had not prevailed. But for this law, after the death of three sons of Philippe IV., all of whom reigned, his daughter Isabelle, who married Edward II. of England and was the ancestress of Henry V., might have had a claim to the Crown. Even then it would not have been a good claim, as the eldest brother of this Isabelle (Louis X.) left a daughter Jeanne, who married the King of Navarre, and thus Jeanne's claim and that of her descendants would have been prior to Isabelle's claim and that of her descendants.

From the above explanation it will be seen how very shadowy was the claim of Henry V. of England to the Monarchy of France. Setting aside the cruelty,

also, how eminently unfair it was of him to hang, for high treason, those who did not acknowledge him as their Sovereign as Duke of Normandy! This Duchy became vested in the French Crown upon its capture in 1203 by Philippe II. from King John of England; and it was at times granted as an appanage to their sons by the French Kings. Only by his shadowy claim through Isabelle could Henry V. assert the claim to Normandy. It was one that was certainly too remote to justify him in butchering prisoners taken in lawful war against an invader, while declaring that they were guilty of *lèse-majesté*.

The ways of Henry V. were, however, but the ways of his times, and it must be remembered that if he was not the legitimate heir, by the strict law of primogeniture, to the Crown of France or Normandy, neither was he to the Crown of England. The rule of the day was that he who had the might to enforce his pretensions had the right to make them, and it was by following this rule that Henry V. became practically King of France.

CHAPTER XIII

The Dauphin murders Jean Sans Peur

1419

AFTER his triumph at Rouen, Henry's already ambitious views became still further enlarged. Not content with the project of obtaining the Crown of France for himself, he sought the aggrandisement of his House in other parts of Europe. A good plan for obtaining a footing in the German Empire seemed to him the acquisition of the Duchy of Lorraine. He accordingly made proposals for the marriage of his brother John, Duke of Bedford, with Isabelle, the only daughter and heiress of Duke Charles I. of Lorraine, Isabelle's mother being a daughter of the Emperor Robert. By this scheme there seemed a fair chance of Bedford eventually succeeding to the throne of the Holy Roman Empire, and the more so as Henry had already got several of the Archbishop-Princes, who were Electors of the Empire, directly under his thumb, and willing to pay him homage.

In Italy he also saw an opening, and proposed to Joanna II., the childless Queen of Naples, that she should adopt his young brother Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, as her heir, and in the meantime hand him over the Duchy of Calabria. This Henry proposed

to use as a base for a descent upon Syria and Jerusalem, of which he meditated the conquest.

As Alfonso V., King of Aragon, was also seeking to be adopted by Joanna, this ambitious scheme of Henry brought him into collision with Spain, and ships from both the kingdoms of Aragon and Castile began to threaten his possessions in Guyenne, notably the town of Bayonne, close to the Spanish frontier. A plan was even set on foot by which forty Castilian ships should bring Scotch troops from Scotland, and French troops of the Dauphin's (Armagnac) party from Belle Isle. Combined with the Aragonese, these ships and troops would besiege Bayonne. This combination of those maritime powers, Castile and Aragon with Scotland and France, would seem to put even England in peril.

Henry, however, disregarded all these dangers, and gaily went on his way. He held his head higher than ever, even snapping his fingers at his supposed foe, but secret ally, the Duc de Bourgogne.

We can but admire the courage and haughty spirit of this second of the Lancastrian Kings, by which his name became as much feared throughout Europe as, by his administrative talents, it became respected.

Jean Sans Peur soon came to seek an interview with Henry, and even brought with him, as a bait, the young Princess Catherine, daughter of Charles VI. He wished the King of England to have a look at this young girl and see, as she possessed already personal charms, if he thought her sufficiently attractive to marry. At the same time, Bourgogne offered to yield all of Guyenne and Normandy to the Englishman.

Henry expressed his satisfaction with the Princess

who was so shamefully dragged to the meeting to be offered in barter, but not with the terms. He said : "I will have Brittany also, as the dependence of Normandy. I will have likewise Maine, Anjou, and Touraine"—and this notwithstanding his recent treaty with the Queen of Sicily, to whom Maine and Anjou belonged ! He really had not the slightest intention of treating seriously, as he intended to have the whole of France for his portion. Finally he closed the meeting by insulting Jean Sans Peur, with the arrogant remark : "Beau cousin, we would have you understand this clearly : we will have the daughter of your King, and all the rest. Otherwise we will put both him and you straight out of this Kingdom !"

With this flea in his ear, and his King's daughter, Jean was compelled to take his leave, and upon his crestfallen return to Paris he found many influences at work to patch up the great quarrel which still kept the Kingdom divided.

The most successful negotiator was the immoral Queen Isabeau, and she worked upon Jean Sans Peur through another immoral but clever woman, whom she contrived to give him as a mistress. This was the bright, spirituelle, graceful, and sensitive young lady known as the Dame de Giac. That diplomatic chronicler, the Monk of Saint-Denis, goes so far as to call her the "respectable" Dame de Giac. He likewise calls her "prudent" !

Of her prudence her husband, the Sire de Giac, soon experienced the results. He is said, however, merely to have ascribed to the Devil—to whom he had vowed his right hand—the extraordinary good fortune which attended him. In the end, neither the

young and lively lady, nor her too lucky husband had much to boast of in the way of good fortune. The lady was first poisoned by her husband, and then compelled to gallop on a horse behind him for several leagues, until she died! The Sire de Giac was put to death, and his last prayer before being executed was that his hand should be first cut off, lest Satan should grab hold of it and drag his whole body to perdition after the hand.

In the meantime, before these tragic events, Madame de Giac wound herself around the Duc de Bourgogne like a cunning little serpent, and by her clever wiles won him to the required purpose. He became so enamoured of her charms that she had only to ask for him to comply. The result of her blandishments become apparent in the middle of July 1419. Then, upon the Bridge of Pouilly, was to be seen another of the periodical peace-makings between Armagnac and Burgundian. This time it was evidently intended to be sincere and durable.

In the midst of the old followers of the Duc Louis d'Orléans, whom, after taking the Communion with him, he had slain, was to be seen the powerful Duc de Bourgogne. There also were present the relations of those whose throats he had allowed to be cut in the Paris massacres. There likewise were assembled the kinsmen of those prisoners in England whom he had refused to assist at Agincourt. The Dauphin Charles (son of the murdered Prince?) headed all of these, and to him the proud Burgundian could not show himself too humble. Of his own accord, he went on his knee to his young cousin, and expressed his devotion—his never-ending friendship. An offensive and defensive

treaty was signed between these long-since-contending parties, these bitter opponents, in whose hearts for long past had rankled every evil passion, whose actions had been characterised by nought but envy, hatred, treachery, and deceit.

For how long could such a treaty of friendship endure? At all events, this marvellous reconciliation was not lost upon King Henry. Finding united the two great parties in whose division had lain his strength, he thought that the time had come for him to play the lover to the fresh young beauty who had so recently been brought to him for inspection, as a young slave-girl to the slave-market.

He had then said that he intended to have her, *coûte qui coûte*, but had not thought it worth his while to pay her any of those little attentions by which young feminine hearts may be won. He now repaired his negligence, by sending to the Princess, who was not even yet his fiancée, some magnificent presents. The Monk of Saint-Denis states that the jewels remitted to the humiliated maiden from the enemy of her country were worth at the very least a hundred thousand golden crowns.

The unfortunate part of the business, for the young Princess, was that the Dauphin caused them to be intercepted *en route*, as he thought that they would be more useful to himself. It is therefore doubtful if the young girl ever obtained any portion of the splendid gift, which had been intended for such a pleasant surprise and an adornment for her youthful charms.

Henry followed this up by another surprise. At Pontoise, on the river Oise, not far from Paris, was a large Burgundian detachment in garrison. Before the

end of that same month of July the English unexpectedly fell upon this place, routed with slaughter the forces of Jean Sans Peur, and captured it. The terror-stricken inhabitants of Pontoise came flying pell-mell into Paris, where the consternation was increased by the Duc de Bourgogne at once leaving the city in the lurch, and making off, with the King, the Queen, the Dauphin, and Madame de Giac, to the town of Troyes. As commandant of the city of Paris, the Duc left his fifteen-year-old nephew, the Comte de Saint-Pol, but only a few troops.

So strange were the politics of that day, as arranged between England and the Duc de Bourgogne, that, the very day before the surprise of Pontoise, the Duke of Bedford, who was acting as Regent in England, had signed a renewed treaty of truce between England and Flanders (July 28, 1419).

It is hardly to be wondered at if, when the news of the new treaty between the English King and Jean Sans Peur, Comte de Flandre, came to light the Dauphin and his followers cried out that they were being betrayed. Not only these but the deserted Parisians declared that the Duc and the English King understood one another only too well. The frightened bourgeois of Paris were able to make this assertion with all the more sincerity when, on August 9, the first of the English soldiers were seen skirmishing up to the very gates of the capital.

Needless to say that all the old Orleanist hate for Burgundy surged up anew, that the fickle people of Paris became once more all for the Dauphin and for Armagnac. They became all the more for the Dauphin Charles as his combination with Castile and

Aragon met with some success at this moment, some Spanish ships defeating an English fleet. Believing that, with the expected Scotch assistance, Henry would soon be done for, the Orleanists and the city hoped for speedy relief from the island invaders, and, in the meantime, determined to purge themselves from the crime of having shaken hands with Burgundy.

The sixteen-year-old Dauphin, Charles, was surrounded by wild and unprincipled counsellors—Breton gentlemen who made their living by the sword, bold Armagnac nobles from Gascony, who for ten years past had been little better than brigands, were mixed up with various great civil functionaries, such as his Chancellor, Maçon by name, and one Louvet, who was the President of the Parliament of Provence. These high magistrates were always only too ready to justify any deed of bloodshed committed by the Royal authority, with the plea that it was but the punishment for treason. To their unprincipled advice must be attributed the foolish and impolitic crime which the Dauphin was now about to commit.

The Dauphin sent to Jean Sans Peur, who was encamped at some little distance with the King, and surrounded by his great nobles and retainers, and requested him to come and meet him in a personal interview to be held at a place called Montereau.

Here there was a long bridge across the river Seine, and it was crooked and twisting, built of wood. Over this the Dauphin's people built a roof, forming a sort of gallery of the bridge, in the centre of which was the place of rendezvous. The retainers of the Duc de Bourgogne smelt a rat, and endeavoured to persuade him to give the bridge a wide berth, especially as it

had not, as was usual at meetings between different parties, had a barrier fixed across the middle. The little siren, Madame de Giac, was, however, a vile traitress. She persuaded her Princely paramour that he would have nothing to fear, and induced him to go and meet the Dauphin, by whom her treachery had evidently been bought.

Deceived by the words of this woman who had become so much to him, when, on September 10, 1419, one of the Dauphin's leading followers, named Tanneguy Duchâtel, came to fetch him, Jean acted up to his surname, and accompanied him "without fear."

He slapped Tanneguy on the back, and said: "Here is the man in whom I trust!"

On the way to the bridge Tanneguy Duchâtel told the Duc that he was late, that the Dauphin had been waiting a long time, and thus induced him to hurry on, leaving his followers behind. He had only with him, on reaching the bridge, the Sire de Navailles, whose brother, the famous Captal de Buch, was in the English service. It was this Captal de Buch who had indeed headed the troops which had recently taken Pontoise. He belonged to the great family of the Comtes de Foix. When the Duc and Navailles reached the centre of the bridge, the Dauphin's Knights spoke rudely, saying: "Hurry up Monseigneur! You have taken your time about coming." The Duc de Bourgogne replied in the same tone, saying that the Dauphin seemed to be in no hurry to repair the evils that existed in France, and further that the Dauphin should accompany him to the King, who should hear what there was to be said.

There were but few more words when, according to one account, that hot-headed member of the House of Foix, Navailles, laid his hand on the Dauphin's arm, saying that he should come to the King, whether he chose or no.

This action proved the signal for the murder, which had been premeditated ; some of those about the Dauphin fell upon Jean Sans Peur and Navailles and butchered them both. One of those who subsequently boasted of his share in the crime was the well-known soldier Le Bouteiller. This Knight declared that, while striking, he said to the Duc : " You cut off the wrist of my master, the Duc d'Orléans, and now I will cut off yours." It will be remembered that Louis d'Orléans had been hacked to pieces at the time of his assassination. His hand and wrist had subsequently been picked up at some distance from his arm.

Tanneguy Duchâtel, who had led Jean Sans Peur into the trap, subsequently asserted that he had no personal share in the actual murder by which Louis d'Orléans was avenged. Of the guilty participation of Madame de Giac in the crime there is apparently, however, no doubt, as immediately after its perpetration she fled and joined the Dauphin. Unhappy woman ! her fate was more terrible than that of the man whom she betrayed.

There had recently been no man more unpopular in France than the Duc de Bourgogne, but, as the Dauphin found to his sorrow and amazement, no sooner was he dead than he became a popular hero. Now every one was weeping and wailing for " le bon Duc," so foully done to death, and the Burgundian party became greatly reinforced. The Comte de Charolais,

the eldest son of Jean Sans Peur, now succeeded him as ruler of all his possessions and head of the party. This Prince became known as Philippe le Bon—Philip the Good—although in what particular line lay his goodness it would be hard to say. It could certainly not have been on account of his moral character that Philippe earned this flattering sobriquet. Of that we can best judge from the fact that, in addition to his three legitimate wives, by one of whom he was the father of Charles the Bold, he openly acknowledged twenty-four mistresses. To the sixteen bastards whom Philippe had by these two dozen ladies he was certainly “good,” as the archives of Burgundy are full of his official acts and deeds relating to the establishments and nurses of the mothers and the generous pensions accorded to the bastards. As in the case of Dunois, the Bastard of Orléans, this term carried no reproach with it and was commonly used.

CHAPTER XIV

The Greatness of Henry V

1420—1422

WE have now arrived at perhaps the most interesting crisis which ever occurred in the affairs of France. The murder of Jean Sans Peur had thrown the country into the arms of England—its results were to make of it an English State, ruled by an English King.

Whereas it had taken Henry several years of determined and bloody warfare to reduce the Duchy of Normandy to his subjection, that one day of the assassination at the Bridge of Montereau gave over into his hands all the rest of the Kingdom. Paris was dying of hunger by slow degrees, Philippe le Bon, the new ruler of the Duchy of Burgundy and its dependent States, had a great crime to avenge—his father's death. The shame implied by calling in the foreigner to alleviate the distress of France would be concealed under shape of an appeal for assistance in obtaining vengeance for a terrible crime. Why, then, should not the Duc de Bourgogne, a younger off-shoot of the Royal line of France, at the same time serve his own interests, and take his opportunity of abasing the elder line, by calling in a King, himself the descendant of a younger branch, to his aid?



STATUE OF JOAN OF ARC BY V. DUBOIS.

Would not, moreover, a King whose principal interests lay on the other side of the Channel be more than likely to leave the greater part of the management of France in the hands of the Duc de Bourgogne?

Arguing thus, the Duc Philippe, who had still the command of Paris, had no difficulty in getting the approval of the Parisians when he suggested the advisability of at once sending for the English King. In the name of the City, the Clergy, and the Commune, he despatched his juvenile relative, the Comte de Saint-Pol, to Henry V. He was received with the greatest courtesy, Henry saying that all that he required was to maintain the independent possession of what he had conquered and the Princess Catherine for his bride. He pointed out that he was of the same blood as the French Kings, and vowed to defend the kingdom for Charles VI.

In spite of the apparent modesty of these demands, Henry sent his Ambassadors to the new Duc de Bourgogne, asserting his right to the throne of France, which right was formally recognised by Philippe on December 2, 1419.

Almost directly afterwards, in the beginning of 1420, the Treaty of Troyes, signed between Charles VI. and Henry, practically delivered the Monarchy of France into the hands of this latter, while at the same time it proscribed and disinherited the Dauphin Charles. After according to Henry his daughter's hand and the succession to the kingdom, Charles VI. declared in this treaty: "It is granted that immediately after our death the Crown and the Kingdom of France shall remain and perpetually belong to our said son, the King Henry and his heirs." It went on to say

that during the life-time of Charles the government of the Kingdom was vested in Henry, in every possible respect, as Regent; further that, on account of his horrible crimes, neither King Charles himself nor "our said son the King, nor our very dear son Philippe, Duc de Bourgogne, shall in any way whatever treat for peace or concord with the *soi-disant* Dauphin de Viennois, Charles."

The title of "Dauphin de Viennois," it may be as well to mention, was originally that of a Prince of Vienne, in the south of France, who bore a Dolphin as his crest. He left his title, with his dominions, in 1349 to Philippe VI., the first Valois King of France, who transferred the title to his eldest son. From that time until the year 1830 the eldest son of France was always known as the Dauphin, just as, ever since Edward I. conquered and killed the Welsh Prince Llewelyn in 1282, the eldest sons of England have been known by the title of "Prince of Wales."

The Queen Isabeau agreed to this treaty, by which her daughter was handed over to the conqueror and her son Charles branded as illegitimate. In return for her compliance, she was accorded a large annual pension, to be levied on the city of Troyes.

The young Princess was handed over to the triumphant English King in June 1420; but, having satisfied his ambition, Henry showed so little interest in the youthful Catherine's charms that he left her on the morning after his nuptials.

A tournament had been arranged in celebration of the marriage, when Henry announced to King Charles and the nobles of the Court that he was going off at once to lay siege to the city of Sens, but that all could

follow him there, and then the jousting could be carried out by those who wished to do so. Having taken Sens, Henry found himself unable to reduce the Armagnacs in the Château of Montereau, when it became evident that the fact of having so recently espoused a young and charming bride had by no means tended to render him soft-hearted. Monstrelet states: "At the said place the King of England caused a gallows to be erected, upon which the said prisoners were all hanged in sight of the castle."

The subsequent siege of Melun was a very lengthy and troublesome affair, as the Armagnacs, under the bold leader Barbazan, fought with a determination similar to that of the inhabitants of Rouen. They had no intention whatever of acknowledging the supremacy in France of a foreign King, whom the adhesion of the Burgundian party had raised so absolutely to the throne that he even employed the French King's seals as Regent.

The siege of Melun was remarkable from the fact that the fighting was carried on both above and below ground, no man exposing himself more to danger than the courageous English King. Even at that early date, the engineers of Henry constructed mines to blow up the walls. The defenders were no less adroit, and made counter-mines, and in these underground tunnels attackers and defenders met and savagely tore one another to pieces, like wild animals, in the bowels of the earth. Outside the walls, and close up to the walls, numerous fierce encounters daily took place, but still the bold Barbazan and his Gascons and Scotsmen defied the English might. Henry now thought it time to play the good Frenchman. He sent repre-

sentations to the inhabitants that he was the son-in-law and best friend of Charles VI. ; he even brought his young wife, and caused her to use her influence. The only result was that Barbazan and the people of Melun smiled derisively. In the end starvation, as usual, did its work. When the famine-stricken town of Melun at length was compelled to yield, Henry was more cruel than usual. Not only did he cause the usual batch of prominent bourgeois to be hanged for treason, but he caused every Scotsman found in the place to be put to the sword.

While this siege had been going on, Paris, which was some forty miles lower down the Seine, had been handed over to Henry's troops by the Burgundian garrison.

The real King of France, with Charles VI. to one side of him and the Duc de Bourgogne on the other, Henry proudly made his official entry into the capital in the month of December 1420. Behind the King rode his brothers of Bedford and Clarence, the Duke of Exeter, the Earl of Warwick, and all the chivalry of England. With all their banners displayed, the English Knights made a gallant show as they thus took possession of their new capital, established themselves as the lords of France no less than the lords of England. The personal banner of Henry V. bore the modest device of a fox's brush. Upon his entry to Rouen, it had been the veritable tail of a fox, attached as a pennon to a lance, which he had employed. With regard to his use of this device, Monstrelet shrewdly remarks : " En quoi aucuns sages notoient moult de choses "—" In which the wise noted many things." These " many things " doubtless were

that Henry was now hunting down the Frenchman as formerly he had hunted the fox.

The English King received a remarkably warm welcome in Paris, where he was looked upon in the light of a personal friend, come to relieve the city from starvation and from the alternate ravages and murders of Armagnac and Burgundian. He immediately acted as Monarch, and, having assembled the Estates of the kingdom, caused these notables to ratify the Treaty of Troyes, by which France became his property and that of his heirs, upon the death of the imbecile Charles VI.

He had established himself in the Royal residence of the Louvre, while Charles VI. retired to his Hôtel de Saint-Paul. A solemn scene was witnessed in this last-named palace when, with the two Kings Henry and Charles sitting side by side on the same throne, an official appeal for justice was made "for the piteous death of the late Duc Jean de Bourgogne."

The spokesman for the Duc Philippe and his mother demanded that the *soi-disant* Dauphin, Tanne-guy Duchâtel, and others of the assassins of Jean Sans Peur, should be dragged disgracefully round the city in tumbrils, torch in hand, to make the *amende honorable*. Charles VI. supported this demand, and likewise the University of Paris.

Charles the Dauphin, who was, like a fox, elsewhere taking shelter, failed to appear when summoned before the Parliament to meet his doom. His father then authorised his pursuit, he was solemnly, as a treacherous assassin, deprived of all rights to the Crown, and his property, and that of all his followers confiscated. This sentence was, naturally, all the more

popular in Paris, from the fact that the various moneys owing to the citizens were ordered to be defrayed from the goods of the proscribed Prince and nobles.

Throughout the following year and nine months (January 1421—August 1422), Henry ruled in Royal State at the Louvre, exercising all the powers of a King of France of whatever description that they might be. To him the people came for justice, by him were the Royal appointments filled and the Royal edicts signed. Great indeed was the position to which the unlawful occupant of the throne of England had attained in France.

As a Monarch, however, Henry V. was worthy of his exalted station and filled it well. His air was noble and majestic; while proud in his bearing, he did not forget to be courteous and conciliating; his speech, of which he was sparing, was dignified and devoid of the oaths then so commonly used; to the dignitaries of the Church he was, while respectful, by no means obsequious; and of his personal bravery he had given a hundred proofs. Further, when any bad news was brought to him he never showed signs of being either excited or downcast, but only at once took careful measures to repair any damage done and avert future calamities. What more could be required in a King?

The result of the high bearing and the success of Henry was to make him not only everywhere feared but also respected. Nor was this respect confined to France alone, but it became imposed also upon the minds of the great German Princes. Among the great prisoners who always followed in his train, in company of his devoted servant, the powerful Duc de Bourgogne,

were a King—James I. of Scotland—and two Princes: the Duc de Bourbon and the young Arthur, eventually to become Duke of Brittany.

Ambassadors from every Christian State likewise thronged to Henry's Court of Paris, for was he not the greatest Prince in Christendom?

So mighty was he that, no doubt in return for subsidies which he bestowed, the great Archbishop-Princes of Trèves and Mayence paid him homage, while the Elector Palatine and other German Princes placed their affairs in his hands, and begged him to be the arbiter of their personal concerns and dissensions.

No ruler of England had ever carried the name of England so high as had the bold Henry V. by the year 1421; and from the foregoing it will be remarked that he attained more nearly to the dignity of the Imperial throne than the actual wearer of the Crown of the Holy Roman Empire.

One of the greatest factors in the grandeur of this great English King, of whose name we even yet may boast, was his diplomatic continuance of the alliance with the Church which had been commenced by his father, Henry IV. Those two great powers, the Crown and the Church, having so amicably combined for the conquest and reform of schismatic France, affairs became far easier for the wearer of the crown. The English Church, which had already to a great extent emancipated itself from the Papal authority in the matter of ecclesiastical elections, naturally did not care to be rendered subservient to a French Pope, kept under the thumb of the French Monarchy at Avignon. One only and an universal Pope was

enough for England, and, accordingly, the churchmen were only too ready to join with the King in reducing the French Monarchy which had supported Benedict XIII. at Avignon. With this idea in view, the great dignitaries of the English Church had opened their money-bags freely to help Henry to subdue a schismatic Royalty which, for its own selfish reasons, maintained the supremacy of a schismatic Pope.

The time had, however, arrived when the close tie between the English Church and the English King had become somewhat loosened. In the year 1415 the Council of Constance, in which the English Church had been strongly represented, had induced Gregory XII. of Rome to resign, Benedict of Avignon being already in flight. John XXIII. of Rome had also been deposed, and was held for some time as a captive by Henry Beaufort, Cardinal-Bishop of Winchester, the uncle of Henry V.

Then, in November 1417, the Council of Constance elected as universal Pope, Otto Colonna, who reigned as Martin V., and after this the English churchmen had lost their main reason for the subjugation of France, to which country they had followed the King. In addition, they were not over-pleased with his politic treatment of the French priesthood, with whom he was too lenient, allowing them to retain all their cures or bishoprics, provided only that they recognised his authority. All of these benefices the greedy English churchmen wished to obtain for themselves.

When they found that the French churchmen were priests first and only Frenchmen afterwards, and consequently willing to submit to Henry, the English ecclesiastics became disappointed and discontented.

There were a number of churchmen in the Council of Henry, and they soon showed that they disliked the French priests, even to the extent of procuring the hanging of several of those who took part in the defence of the Norman cities reduced by the King. It will be remembered that the Archbishop of Canterbury it was who arranged the terms for the capitulation of Rouen. In these terms he expressly excepted a certain Canon de Livet. The Canon, being rich, managed to buy his life, but he was roughly treated and sent as a prisoner to England. Two monks were, moreover, hanged on the capture of Melun.

Among the French hangers-on of the Cardinal of Winchester was a certain Bishop of Meaux, Cauchon by name, of whom, as Bishop of Beauvais, we shall hear much later on. This miserable tool of Henry Beaufort threw various monks of Saint-Denis into horrible dungeons for having assisted at the defence of Meaux. It was only by the humble prayers of the Abbot of Saint-Denis that their lives were spared ; but they might far better have died than lived to experience the terrible fate of perpetual imprisonment in a damp and dark *in pace* underneath a monastery.

While there was money to be made out of the annexation of the foreign benefices for their own benefit, the great English Church dignitaries hung on tightly enough to the skirts of Henry the Conqueror. Not troubling themselves in the least about the concerns of their flocks in England, they were ever to be found in the King's camp. It will be remembered that the Bishop of Norwich died before Harfleur at the time of the siege of that place.

Before Henry's second expedition into France, it was in the hands of Henry Beaufort and the Archbishop of Canterbury that he left the raising of all kinds of feudal rights and forfeitures, in order to procure him the money he needed. It is not to be supposed that the wily churchmen let slip the opportunity of greatly enriching themselves. The Cardinal of Winchester became, it is supposed, the richest man in the world. So wealthy, indeed, was the uncle of the King, that he was to be found advancing to the Crown such immense sums as fifty thousand pounds at a time; and it must be remembered that fifty thousand then was worth as much as two hundred and fifty thousand to-day.

There was a certain amount of cunning in the cruel treatment of the French priests by the English Bishops, as, naturally, it was calculated to make those who had absented themselves from their benefices stop away. Their absence made it impossible for Henry to confirm them in their charges, although he lost no opportunity of recalling them.

In their continued absence, their benefices were declared vacant, when the English prelates seized them for themselves, and gave or sold them to their creatures. An instance of this sort was seen when Henry marched into Paris. The Bishop of that city, Jean Courtecuisse by name, made himself scarce; and so frightened was he that no representations or threats of Henry could induce him to return.

It was when the Royalty of the Church no longer marched hand in hand with the Royalty of the Monarchy that tension arose between the two. This

irritation first commenced between Henry and his uncle, the Cardinal of Winchester, in the year 1417. He then publicly accused the priest of mal-administration of public moneys, and even of striking counterfeit coin! In June, however, Henry, who wished to conciliate this arrogant priest, accorded him letters of pardon. During the remainder of the King's life, however, the situation remained strained, and, at a time when the King found how difficult it was to extract money from an exhausted and ruined France, he found it also impossible, as hitherto, to have recourse to the almost limitless pockets of the Church.

The English Bishops, heretofore, while lending money, had always extracted guarantees from the King for its repayment out of French benefices. When Henry, in his endeavour to rule France justly, gave to the French clergy the opportunity of themselves retaining their benefices, by submission, the covetous English ecclesiastics put their hands in their pockets—and kept them there!

In the year 1421 the Armagnacs, under their discredited leader, Charles the Dauphin, the assassin of Jean Sans Peur, occupied the city of Meaux, and also laid siege to Chartres.

In order to subdue them, Henry found himself greatly in need of money. The Church failing him, he was obliged to resort to all kinds of more or less arbitrary measures, both in France and in England. In this latter country, where the farce was gone through of asking for a so-called voluntary loan, which had to be paid most involuntarily, there was great discontent.

The English people, mindful of the past, had

expected France to pay them—they did not in the least appreciate having to pay for the pleasure of holding France, of the maintenance there of an immense and expensive army.

This army became, however, more than ever a necessity after the defeat, in March 1421, of an English force in the province of Anjou. It was commanded by Thomas, Duke of Clarence, and this young Prince, with several thousand English soldiers, lost their lives in this disastrous battle of Beaugé.

After this reverse, several doughty soldiers of Picardy and Brittany—the Comte d'Harcourt, and the free-lances Poton de Xaintrailles and La Hire—joined the Dauphin, also many other gentlemen of less note, and as these indulged in sudden bold expeditions and raids, France was once more alive with armed men, from whose pillage, burning, and outrage the wretched people suffered terribly. The old ferocity of the Armagnacs broke out anew, and, as all was fish that came to the net of these Gascon adventurers, no man's house or possessions were safe, no man's wife or daughters secure from the brutal ravisher.

One of the most terrible of the Armagnac captains was the Bastard of Vaurus. He has been described by Monstrelet and Pierre de Fenin as "a perfect ogre."

So detested and detestable was he that, so say these Burgundian chroniclers, many of the people armed and joined the English. The Bastard of Vaurus was the Dauphin's commandant of the city of Meaux. Making of this place his headquarters, he would sally forth and waste the country round, to a considerable distance, with fire and sword.

Wisely, Henry determined that he must, no matter at what cost, suppress this red-handed brigand; and his declaration of his intention of besieging Meaux considerably increased his popularity in France.

The Bastard of Vaurus knew from his crimes that he could expect no mercy if captured—mercy being a commodity he had himself never been wont to deal in. He and his blood-thirsty associates in Meaux defended themselves therefore like tigers.

Henry V. being, as usual, present in command of his forces, the Bastard used to assail him from the ramparts not only with every other weapon at his command, but likewise his tongue. With the foulest of language and bitter invective, the Armagnac captain jeered at the English King, and, the better to insult the besieger, placed a crowned jackass upon the walls, with a label on its neck stating that it was the King of England. To give more point to the jest, the Gascon soldiers were in the habit of soundly cudgelling the unfortunate animal.

These bold bandits from the south cared nothing for France, but fought merely for what they could make out of warfare. None the less, they aided the country considerably by their determined resistance, which kept Henry before the walls of Meaux from October 1421 until June 1422. Finding his army wasting away, from cold, hunger, and that terrible scourge, then so common, the plague, Henry was at his wits' end for fresh soldiers to replace the Englishmen who had succumbed. The Dauphin was already writing to Germany for mercenary soldiers, but Henry wrote also, and outbid him with success; he also obtained some troops from Portugal.

Although the Duc Philippe had, some months earlier, gained a brilliant success upon his own account, defeating the Armagnacs under Xaintrailles in Picardy, he not only gave little assistance to Henry before Meaux, but caused the King to suspect his fidelity. This young Prince came to the army before Meaux for a short time only, and then he left, on a plausible excuse, to go to his Duchy of Burgundy. When he had gone, Henry had every cause to believe that the Duc de Bourgogne had himself instigated the agitation which he said existed in Burgundy against the treaty of Troyes. If this were true it was but natural, since by that treaty not only the Dauphin but also Burgundy, the junior branch of the Royal family of France, was for ever excluded from the succession in favour of England.

Meaux fell into Henry's hands at last, but he paid dearly for his acquisition, for during the long siege he had laid the seeds of a bowel complaint that was to cause his death before the end of the year. While before Meaux he learned that his young Queen had given birth to a son at Windsor. Thereupon he remarked sadly, "Henry of Monmouth has reigned a short time and conquered much. Henry of Windsor will reign long and lose all."

CHAPTER XV

The Awful Condition of France

1420—1422

ALTHOUGH Henry V. and his English followers had been received so well upon their first entry into Paris, as time went on they to a great extent wore out their welcome. The cause for this change is in a great measure to be ascribed to the friction which arose in many little ways between the English and the Burgundians, the reflection of which spread to the people.

There were, of course, faults on both sides, and the greatest Seigneurs were chiefly to blame. One of the first to insult the Burgundians, even before the accession of Philippe to the Dukedom, had been Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester. This Prince was at the Court of Jean Sans Peur in the position of a hostage, when Philippe, then Comte de Charolais, entered the room where he was talking to some other English nobles. Gloucester did not trouble himself to show any politeness to the young Prince, but abruptly said "Good morning," without even turning round. This was an insult which was not forgotten by Philippe later on. The next insult to be chronicled was one from the Burgundian Sire de l'Isle-Adam to King Henry. Isle-Adam arrived in the King's presence in a dirty and

shabby old coat of mail. Henry was annoyed at this apparent want of respect.

“What, Sir,” he remarked, “is that a becoming dress for one who is a Maréchal de France?”

While looking the King in the face in an insolent manner, Isle-Adam answered that he had donned this rusty coat of mail expressly to travel on the river Seine. His defiant glance angered the King, who returned haughtily: “Do you dare thus to look a Prince in the face when you address him.”

“Sire,” replied the Frenchman, with no less hauteur, “that is the custom of us Frenchmen. When speaking to a man, of no matter what rank, we look him straight in the face. Were we not to do so we should deem ourselves of but little account.”

“Then it is not the custom in England,” angrily replied the King, and shortly afterwards, when Isle-Adam committed some fresh act of impertinence, the Duke of Exeter, then Captain of Paris, dragged him off to the Bastille.

As there was an attempt on the part of a tumultuous mob to rescue the insolent Maréchal on his way to the prison, the English soldiers forming the escort savagely charged the people, and killed and wounded a number of them. It was only owing to the intercession of the Duc Philippe that Isle-Adam then escaped with his life, as Henry declared his intention of putting to death this man, who had himself connived at the barbarous slaughter of so many at the time of the Paris massacres.

As the friction went on increasing, Henry became convinced that he could no longer count on the genuine alliance of the man who had begged him for

help in his vengeance on his father's murderers. He accordingly sought to gain a *point d'appui* against Philippe in Flanders, and, just as Louis, Duc d'Orléans had formerly done, entered into treaty with the King of the Romans for the acquisition of the Duchy of Luxembourg, which was subject to the Empire. As, after this, Henry also endeavoured to establish a very close friendship with the citizens of Liége, these actions changed into hatred the former friendship of Philippe de Bourgogne.

In spite of increasing mutual jealousy, there was, however, no open rupture between the King and the young Burgundian Duc. The jealousy was, however, bad enough in itself, and it became the cause of the greatest calamity to England. In the late summer of 1422 the Duc de Bourgogne summoned Henry to lend him a hand in a battle which he intended to deliver upon the followers of the Dauphin. The King had never recovered from the bowel complaint contracted at the siege of Meaux.

This peculiar, irritating disease was very prevalent at that time among the soldiers, with whom it went by the name of "the fire of Saint-Anthony." This illness at length had developed, in the King's case, into dysentery. Nevertheless, when called upon for succour, he was afraid lest Philippe should, if it were refused, win a second battle single-handed, as he had already done in Picardy.

The King was urged to send the required reinforcements, but, ill as he was, he insisted upon going with them in person, being carried in a litter.

Henry's sickness increased so much on the way that he was never able to join the Burgundian forces,

but had to be carried back to the Tower of Vincennes.

There the physicians informed him that he had not long to live, whereupon the King faced his approaching end with the same courage that he had displayed throughout his life. While commending his infant son to the care of his brothers of Bedford and Gloucester, he also gave them the good advice particularly to endeavour to keep on friendly terms with the Duc de Bourgogne. However badly affairs might possibly turn out in the war against the Dauphin, Henry enjoined them, in the event of a peace, to insist upon retaining the whole of the Duchy of Normandy.

Henry's only lament was, in dying, that God had not allowed him to live to his full age, in order to finish off the war in France, and then undertake the conquest of the Holy Land.

Upon August 31, 1422, this brave Prince breathed his last, and his remains were transported to Westminster, where he was solemnly interred amid the unfeigned mourning of the whole of the English nation. Had Henry V. lived but two months longer, he would actually have assumed the Crown of that France of which for nearly two years he occupied the throne, as Charles VI. followed him to the tomb before the end of October of that same year.

While in England the people were still lamenting the death of their triumphant hero, in France the French people grieved no less deeply for the loss of their imbecile King.

The lower orders of Paris particularly showed how

dear to them had been Charles VI.—“their good Prince!” Never, they said, would they see again one like him. And now that he was gone to his repose they were to be left to nothing but perpetual trouble—endless wars!

Charles was carried off to Saint-Denis, the mausoleum of the Kings of France, but his funeral was poorly attended by the great ones of the earth. The only Prince of Royal blood to follow him to the tomb was a foreigner—John, Duke of Bedford. Of his numerous family all were dead or absent. The daughter who had married Philippe when Duc de Charolais was dead, another was now the widow of the King of England; a third, after having been the wife of Richard II. of England, had married Charles, Duc d’Orléans, a perpetual prisoner in a foreign country. Four sons were dead, and the only surviving son, Charles le Dauphin, was not even legally Dauphin, since he had been banished and disinherited by his father on account of his crimes.

After the body of Charles VI. had been lowered into the grave, the Herald King-at-Arms of France solemnly proclaimed Henry VI., the infant son of Henry V., in the following words: “God grant long life to Henry, by the grace of God King of France and England, our Sovereign Lord.”

The accession of the new, and English, King found France in a condition of moral death and physical dissolution. By the defeat at Agincourt the Armagnacs had been very hard hit, and by the massacres in 1418 they had been yet more sorely smitten. The practical death-blow to the party had, however, been dealt to themselves by their own

hands, when the Dauphin and his associates murdered Jean Sans Peur at the Bridge of Montereau. The Burgundian party was in but little better case. The University, the bourgeois, the Cabochiens of Paris had been obliged to own that they had been duped by their leader, the Duc de Bourgogne, who had delivered them over into the hands of the English. It was true that the new King of France was the son of a French Princess, and grandson of their beloved Charles VI., but for the people he was, and remained, an Englishman; his assumption of the Crown cut out their own Royal line of France. Thus the great majority of the people could but feel down-cast and saddened.

As for the actual condition of the country, it was indeed deplorable; the depopulation from the time of the first invasion of Henry V. had increased monthly and yearly, by war, famine, and plague, until whole districts had become but solitary wastes. The land remained uncultivated, and the wretched peasants, tired of sowing only that others might reap, had thrown away their farm implements, deserted wives and children, and taken to the woods, there to worship Satan, while expressing their intention of doing all the evil in their power.

Famine had brought the plague, and the plague famine again in its train, time after time during the last four years. The epidemic in Paris in 1418, the year of the massacres of the Armagnacs, is said by Monstrelet, and the "Journal d'un Bourgeois de Paris," to have carried off eighty thousand souls in the city alone! The Bourgeois de Paris, in his quaint chronicle, describes the dead in that year as being

buried "in layers of thirty and forty corpses together, like packing bacon!"

When in 1420 the English had marched into Paris, it had been hoped that their arrival would result in not only the re-establishment of order, but a cessation from the terrible pangs of hunger. The starving people were soon undeceived. "All through Paris," says the Bourgeois, "you could hear the pitiable lamentation of the little children, who cried out, 'I am dying of hunger.' One saw upon one dung-heap twenty, thirty children, boys and girls, dying of hunger and of cold. No heart was so hard but had great pity upon hearing their piteous cry throughout the night: 'I die of starvation.'"

In the following year, 1421, there was no cessation of this terrible starvation. Then the dog-killer was followed in the streets by the famished populace, which fell upon the slaughtered dogs and devoured everything—flesh, skin, and entrails!

Meanwhile the wolves, finding nothing to eat in the deserted country, nightly invaded the city of Paris, to dig up the corpses, which were scarcely covered, and devour them.

As life was rendered even yet more insupportable by the merciless taxes, and the swarms of starving beggars who had thronged to the city, all who could do so fled from Paris, leaving the streets and their deserted homes to the undisputed possession of the awful beggars, whose menaces were scarcely worse to listen to than their prayers.

It is scarcely to be wondered at that when Death was thus supreme everywhere he should have been celebrated in that extraordinary dance, said to have

been introduced by the English, the "danse macabre," or Dance of Death, which used at this time to be participated in by sick and well alike in the cemeteries. In this terrible dance Death, the lord of all, was represented by a grinning skeleton, and the dances were continued for several months. The Cemetery of the Innocents, to which, in the second year of the reign of Henry VI., the frenzied people particularly resorted to dance callously on the bones of all who had been dear to them, was bulging to overflowing. Nobody was able to remain buried for long, as no place could be found for the newly dead among the masses of decaying humanity.

Accordingly charnel-houses were built all around it, in which, above an arched gallery used as a burying-place, were lofts or granaries. In these terrible granaries, instead of the wheat so greatly required, were stored the half-rotten bones thrown out by the grave-diggers when burying the fresh corpses. Eventually the soil of this cemetery, entirely composed of human remains, became so piled up that its surface attained to a height of eight feet above the surrounding streets.

With a France in the state of misery above described it is no subject for marvel if the people of England were bitterly deceived in the hopes in which they had indulged before Agincourt that the country would prove a mine of gold to be exploited for their benefit. While their new King succeeded to this barren heritage they would on the contrary find, as already in the time of his gallant father, that English Sovereignty would have to be maintained in France with English gold.

CHAPTER XVI

Gilles de Retz, Devil-worshipper

1422 and Later

WHILE the general state of affairs was as above detailed the condition of the Seigniorial Barons in France was one of absolute lawlessness and unrestraint during the first half of the fifteenth century. The country was then still divided in its allegiance to the King of France, the King of England, the great Dukes of Burgundy and of Brittany, even to lesser potentates such as the Duc d'Anjou and the Comte d'Armagnac. Those border independent rulers, the Kings of Navarre and Dukes of Lorraine, at times laying claim to and seizing portions of French territory, the Comtes de Foix also founding a semi-independent kingdom in Languedoc, all was confusion in the ancient land of Gaul.

The feudality of the great nobles, in a country of which portions were always changing hands, was shaken to its roots. No Seigneur knew for long who was his proper liege-lord to whom he should render homage and feudal service for his fiefs; the chances of the continual wars making the vassal of one great Prince to-day liable to become the vassal of another to-morrow. Under these circumstances

there was but little fidelity observable among the Seigneurs and Barons. Many of these, assuming an independent attitude, fortified themselves in their castles, refusing to render feudal service to the one party or the other until compelled to submission by force, and treating the surrounding country as their lawful prey, the lives and honour of the peasantry being at their mercy.

Others, and they were an increasing number, lived by war and pillage. Raising large bands of their retainers, enlisting also under their banners a lawless soldiery of mixed nationalities, they formed "companies" of terrible free-lances, with whom they sold themselves to the highest bidder, were he French or English, Breton or Burgundian. Nationality counted for nothing. In this way we see those redoubtable Breton warriors, Du Guesclin and Olivier de Clisson, becoming Constables of France, and warring against their own Dukes of Brittany, when it suited them to do so, quite as light-heartedly as they led their cut-throat bands against a King of Castile or a King of Aragon.

Up to the end of the fourteenth century, when the Barons, although proud and domineering, had resided more commonly upon their fiefs, their cruelties and exactions had in a measure been restrained by an unwritten law—that of *custom*. In his most violent moments the Seigneur was liable to find himself visited by his men, who would say to him respectfully: "Messire, it is not 'the custom' of the good people of these parts." The old men, the *prud'hommes* of the country, as living examples of ancient custom, were conducted to his presence, and

the wildness of the passion of the brutal young Baron fell before their representations.

In the fifteenth century, however, both the fear of God and the fear of custom had greatly fallen into disuse. The Seigneur, no longer a resident in permanency, cared nothing for his people or their customs. He went off with his soldiers to make money; only returning at times with those soldiers to exact the last farthing from the peasantry on his estates. These descents were often made suddenly, so as to surprise his tenantry, as, if forewarned, so great was the fear of their lord, the whole agricultural population was apt to take to the woods and mountains at his approach.

These seigniorial captains, such as the Bastard of Bourbon, the Bastard of Vaurus, Chabannes, and the celebrated and ungodly La Hire, of Orléans fame, were indeed scarcely Christians. All know the story of how the Maid of Orléans, finding it almost impossible for La Hire to speak without uttering an oath or a blasphemy, was compelled to allow him to swear at least by his walking-stick.

They were flayers, skimmers, the ruiners of what was already ruined, the robbers of the very shirt which the brigands before them might have left upon an unfortunate man's back.

How barbarous were their methods may be understood by their treatment of their own parents and relations. Family ties meant nothing—to be a father or a brother was often merely to be the more regarded as an enemy, and more so to be a wife.

The Comte d'Harcourt imprisoned his father for life, while the Comtesse de Foix poisoned her sister; the story of how the Sire de Giac treated his wife,

which we have already given, is more horrible still. When, after having given her poison, he compelled her to gallop fifteen miles behind him until she died, it was for love of another woman, a certain Madame de Tonnerre, that the Sire de Giac committed this atrocity. One of the Dukes of Brittany, again, starved his brother to death ; his piteous cries for bread could be heard by people outside the fortress where he was imprisoned !

That Border noble, Adolfe de Gueldre, treated his father more cruelly even than the Comte d'Harcourt. Under the excuse that parricide was the rule in the family, Adolfe dragged his father from his bed, compelled him to walk naked five miles, and then threw him down into a horrible dungeon to die ! Instances of similar inhumanities to their relations might be quoted from other great families, such as Luxembourg, Bar, Verdun, and, of course, Armagnac ; but it is now our purpose to relate the cruelties, almost surpassing all belief, of a great noble ; which cruelties were not, however, directed towards members of his own family, but to helpless and inoffending children.

In the times of Charles VI., the crazy King of France, and of his son, Charles VII., there was no greater Seigneur in the whole of the land of France than the Maréchal Gilles de Retz, Baron de Laval. Born about 1396, he distinguished himself as a youth against the English, and fought against them subsequently at the siege of Orléans. It was for his brilliant services under Joan of Arc that he received his Marshal's bâton from Charles VII.

The House of Laval, to which de Retz belonged, was a branch of that of de Montfort, the reigning ducal

family in Brittany. Gilles himself was rich, not only in his own family and by his marriage into the family of de Thouars, but also as the heir of Jean de Craon, his maternal grandfather. From de Craon, who had been the Seigneur of Suze, of Chantocé and Ingrande, all of those places, on the Marches of Maine, Brittany, and Poitou, had descended to de Retz. It was precisely these Barons of the marches, who were neither under one jurisdiction nor the other, that remained floating between the King of France and the Duke of Brittany. They existed, as a rule, free from the judgment of either. An instance of this immunity had been seen in the person of Pierre de Craon four years before the birth of Gilles de Retz, who, as will be remembered, in the war of Naples, robbed the war-chest of his master, Louis I., Duc d'Anjou, who claimed the Neapolitan Crown. The result of his villainy was that the Duc d'Anjou perished miserably. At that time one of the most redoubtable men was de Clisson, the Breton. In France he was Constable of the Kingdom—the King's sword, by which the nobles were held in restraint. In Brittany, on the other hand, de Clisson was the chief of the discontented nobles, who were against their Duke chiefly on account of his close connection with the English.

When, in accordance with the playful customs of the day, the Duke of Brittany sought to murder de Clisson, de Craon, who had suffered from the Constable's unconcealed disdain, volunteered, as we have already related, to perform the deed.

After his unsuccessful attempt at assassination, Pierre de Craon galloped off to his castle of Sablé in Maine, and thence over the border into Brittany,

and eventually escaped without any punishment for his crime.

As for Gilles de Retz, the nephew of Pierre de Craon, with whom we are now concerned, his manner was such as to gain confidence. He is described as having been of noble and handsome presence, with agreeable manners; well-read also, and greatly appreciating those who spoke the Latin tongue with elegance. So much was he appreciated by the young King Charles VII. that, at the time of his consecration at Reims, Charles selected this Seigneur of the borderlands as the bearer of the holy oil with which he was to be anointed.

Although Retz was on very bad terms with Jean de Maléstrait, Bishop of Nantes, the cousin and Chancellor of the Duke of Brittany, he was reckoned as a religious and devout noble; his claims to devotion chiefly resting upon the fact that he had built a splendid chapel, in which he maintained a choir of numerous choristers at his own expense. At that epoch church music, imported from Flanders, had become very popular owing to the encouragement of the King's uncles and cousins, the Dukes of Burgundy, who were also Counts of Flanders. De Retz caused himself to be considered a patron of the Church therefore when he appeared everywhere followed by an orchestra and troops of white-robed choir-boys.

Nevertheless, his name was very greatly feared, his high lineage and deeds of arms alike having made the Baron de Laval an object of reverence and awe.

In spite, however, of his reputed devotion, for the period of some fourteen years there were certain sinister and strange reports whispered concerning this

noble Seigneur. These, for the time, no man dared to utter aloud, especially as the King had elevated the rank of this great lord, transforming his Barony of Laval into a County.

At length a strange accusation came to the ears of de Montfort, the Duke of Brittany, and his cousin, the Bishop of Nantes. It concerned this Laval, issue of the Montforts, and it related at first to the proceedings of an old woman, named la Meffraie. It was reported that this hag, wandering about the country fields and moorlands of Brittany, approached and made up to little children of either sex who were keeping the sheép or begging. She enticed them with flattering words and little presents to follow her, while all the time keeping her face partly concealed. La Meffraie contrived to lead these children as far as the castle of Gilles de Retz, and when once they had entered those portals they were never seen again.

No actual complaints had ever been made while only the children of poor peasants, or those deserted by their parents, were thus decoyed away ; but by degrees the same fate befel children who were the inhabitants of towns. Even in the great Breton city of Nantes, in a respectable family, a child was kid-napped. The wife of a painter, having yielded up her young brother to emissaries of Retz, who promised to make of him a choir-boy, the child was never heard of more.

The Duke of Brittany lent a ready ear to the complaints, while the Bishop of Nantes was delighted to have an opportunity of striking at the family of Laval. For the Sire de Retz, in his pride and lawlessness, had even by force of arms broken into

one of the Bishop's churches, ignoring utterly the rights of sanctuary which had been afforded to some of his enemies who had taken shelter therein.

It was decided to form a high tribunal and cite the Sire de Retz to appear before it. This tribunal consisted of the Bishop, Chancellor of Brittany, of the Vicar of the Inquisition, and of Pierre de l'Hospital, the Chief Judge of the Duchy. Gilles de Retz could have fled had he so chosen, but, deeming himself too powerful for punishment, he boldly surrendered himself for his trial.

He commenced by openly challenging the justice of his Judges, all of whom he declared to be his known enemies. He was not, however, able in a similar manner to challenge the truth of the witnesses, who appeared in crowds to testify as to his iniquities.

Weeping and wailing, one after another these poor people detailed the carrying off of their children. Nor did the miserable tools whom Retz had employed, la Meffraie and others, attempt to shield the lord whom they now saw in misfortune. Thereupon de Retz ceased to deny the accusations made. He burst into tears and made a full confession. So horrible, so awful were the details of this confession that the Judges trembled and crossed themselves with fear. For the terrors of Nero, the sacrifices to Moloch of old, revealed no such horrors of cruelty as those which had been perpetrated by Gilles de Retz in his Seigniorial castles.

Investigation in the courtyard of his castle of Chantocé revealed an enormous heap of half-burned bones of children; in the vaulted sewers of the Castle

of Suze was found a similar pile of the bones of children of all ages. In all the other castles also of which the Lord of Laval had made temporary resting-places heaps of bones, burned and unburned, were discovered. One servant alone, a valet de chambre named Henriot, testified to having delivered over forty children to their death. About three hundred were accounted for altogether! Now what was the cause of this awful butchery of infants, this wholesale slaughter of the innocents, by the high and puissant Seigneur, Gilles de Retz? Terrible, indeed, was the cause of their bloody destruction. They were sacrificed as offerings to the Devil!

De Retz had associated with himself a young priest, who came to him from Pistoïa in Italy, and who promised to make him see various demons. Together they invoked devils, under the names of Barron, Orient, Beelzebub, Satan, and Belial, praying to them for "gold, knowledge, and power." In addition to the Italian priest, Gilles de Retz is said to have had an English retainer to assist him in his sorceries and charms, but he himself took the greatest delight in the rites of the bloody sacrifices. One of the witnesses testified—and all the testimony is still extant in the archives of Nantes—that: "The said Sire took the greatest pleasure in cutting their throats, or in causing their throats to be cut"; and further, "He caused their necks to be cut from behind, that they might die more slowly." At times he offered up on his altars to Satan not only the blood of a child, but his hands, his eyes, or his heart, or he offered them as a sacrament to be taken by his magician.

These atrocious sacrifices were accompanied by

the solemn singing of the Mass of All Saints in honour of the malignant spirits. The evidence all tended to show that the nature of this sacrificer to devils had, by degrees, itself actually become that of a devil.

Delighting in death, Retz still more enjoyed witnessing its prolonged agonies. He laughed to see the grimaces of the dying faces, and, according to one witness, his accomplice, Griart, this horrible vampire or ghoul, even seated himself upon the palpitating bodies of his miserable child-victims during their last convulsions.

The most extraordinary circumstance in connection with Gilles de Retz is that, although so utterly lost to all ideas of right or wrong, he nevertheless reckoned upon having gained the salvation of his soul!

For, while praying and sacrificing to the Devil, he also prayed to God, trying as it were to make a bargain with both, while hoping to deceive both. To Satan he promised everything, "except his life and his soul"; to God he caused Masses to be celebrated, and gorgeous processions to be instituted in His honour.

That his mind was at ease upon his approaching end is evident from his last words to his magician, the Italian priest: "Adieu, François, my friend; I pray God that He may give you good patience and knowledge; be certain that, provided you have good patience and hope in God, we shall meet again in the great joys of Paradise."

Although condemned to the stake and placed upon the fagots, Gilles de Retz was not burned.

Out of consideration for his rank, and for the nobility in general, he was strangled before the flames reached his body. Nor was his body consumed.



JOAN WOUNDED AT THE SIEGE OF PARIS.

Some noble *damoiselles* came to the field outside Nantes where it lay upon the but partially burned fagots. With their noble hands they washed the mortal remains of this awful sinner, and, aided by some nuns, gave them a very honourable burial in the church of the Carmelites. His execution is the first recorded as having taken place upon the person of a great noble in France for the mere crime of inhumanity and cruelty.

Although for the full space of fourteen years this Satan-worshipping noble (whose evil doings were the origin of the story of Blue Beard) had practised his nefarious sorceries, he only owed it to a singular chance that he ever found himself accused or punished for his horrible crimes.

This was the most unusual circumstance that three parties usually opposed, those of the Duke of Brittany, the Bishops of Nantes, and the King of France, had combined together to bring about his punishment.

The Duke was jealous of the strong position of the Lavals and the branches of Retz, in their line of fortresses on the marches of Poitou, Maine, and Brittany; the King had determined no longer to defend the brigands who brought him such an ill name; and the Bishop was the personal enemy of the Devil-worshipping Grand Seigneur.

Inspired by the Constable of France, de Richemont, who was the brother of the Duke of Brittany, the King had already two years earlier sent an armed force to seize one of the lieutenants of de Retz, for his lawless conduct upon the marches of Poitou. This rigour on the part of the King of France had prepared the way for the downfall of the Maréchal himself,

since it emboldened his enemies to set in motion the Bishop and the Inquisitor against him.

There was, however, in those days no other example of a man of his rank being punished, although many were almost as guilty as the Maréchal Gilles de Retz. Other men of blood, like himself returning from the wars to their fortified castles, continued the most atrocious warfare upon the poor and defenceless; while also employing the most treacherous means to take at a disadvantage and destroy, by fire, assault, violence, and rapine, other noble Seigneurs, their wives and daughters, their children and their grandchildren.

Such remained the horrible manners of the country nobility of France in many districts, until, two hundred years later, Cardinal de Richelieu, by the institution of the roving commission of the "Grands Jours," made a determined effort to suppress the unpunished atrocities of the Barons. And even then, with merely one or two exceptions, the most cruel escaped with impunity.

CHAPTER XVII

The Diplomacy of Yolande

1422-1428

THE old historian Walsingham, speaking of Henry V., has called him by the title of *Princeps Presbyterorum*—the Prince of the Priests, and, when we recall to mind his pious homilies to the Herald of France and his prisoners after Agincourt, the name seems by no means inappropriately applied. While commenting on this, in a disquisition upon “The Imitation of Jesus Christ,” a French writer of the last century has affirmed that the real Kings of England were its prelates, in whom dwelt the wisdom but not the Spirit of God. After the death of Henry V.—the King-Priest, says this writer, while probably chiefly thinking of the Cardinal of Winchester—England experienced the strange spectacle of the Priest-King, “the Royalty of usury in the man of the Church, murderous violence in the garb of a Pharisee; a Satan! but under an entirely new form; no longer that old figure of a shameful and fugitive Satan. No, Satan authorised, decent, respectable, Satan rich, fat on his Bishop’s throne, dogmatically judging and reforming the Saints.

“Satan having become this venerable personage,

the opposing rôle remained to our Lord. It was necessary that He should be dragged by the constables before this grave Chief Justice, just as though he were a wretched parish ne'er-do-weel—what do I say? Like a heretic or a sorcerer, as being strongly suspected of either being in relation with the demon, or the demon himself. It became necessary that our Lord should allow himself to be condemned and burnt, as devil, by the Devil.

“ Things have to go to that length. It is then only that the marvelling audience will see this good-fellow of a judge lose countenance and writhe in his ermines. Then each one will resume his natural rôle ; the drama will be completed, the mystery accomplished.”

We had read and re-read the above on various occasions without ever being able to fathom the exact idea at the back of the mind of our author, nor just how his words applied to the times immediately succeeding the death of Henry V. Then a glimmer of light dawned—he must surely be thinking of Joan of Arc—of her treatment by the English Cardinal of Winchester and his myrmidon, Cauchon, the French Bishop of Beauvais !

Had we but read further, instead of needlessly puzzling our brains over these words, every now and again, at intervals of several years, we should have learned long since that this was the actual meaning of these remarks concerning Satan in the garb of an English churchman. But a little below we eventually found the following :

“ The Imitation of Jesus-Christ, his Passion reproduced in the Pucelle, such was the Redemption of France ! ”

And then our author proceeds to explain that if the spirit of "The Imitation," resignation, were not found in Joan there was a good reason for the anomaly.

This reason given is that with resignation comes hope, which is also of God, and with hope faith in justice. While, for clerical readers, "The Imitation" preaches patience and passion, for the people, for the simple of heart, it teaches the lesson of action.

Therefore must we not marvel if in Joan we find one of the people who, to quote her own words, "for the sake of the pity that there was in the Kingdom of France," had cast aside the womanly virtue of patience and assumed the manly attributes of action and war; if, in short, the saint became a soldier, and, sword in hand, fought for the redemption of her country. Whether we marvel or no when we read of her wonderful career, we shall surely not condemn her for the manner in which, could she have read, she would have translated the teachings of "The Imitation of Jesus Christ."

It will not now be long before we are enabled to judge of Joan's activities and heroic deeds, but it will not be from the bigoted point of view of Satan in the guise of the English churchman of her day.

* * * * *

With the passing from the scene of Henry V. and Charles VI., with the advent of the infant Henry VI. to the thrones of France and England, a new epoch commences.

The Dauphin Charles must not yet be considered in the light of Charles VII., King of France, since not he but the English boy it was who had been solemnly

proclaimed at Saint-Denis over the open tomb of Charles VI. And yet, for the sake of convenience, and because the histories give the date of the accession of this Prince from the year 1422, we also will now speak of him as Charles VII., a style to which he only became entitled, even in the eyes of Joan of Arc, some seven years later, when crowned at Reims. Charles VII., who had been born of Isabeau of Bavaria at Paris in February 1403, was the fifth and only surviving son of Charles VI. and consequently nineteen years old when, discredited by the illegitimacy with which he had been branded by the Treaty of Troyes, he found himself in the position of a King without a Kingdom. He was still unmarried, though shortly to be provided with an amiable young wife through the scheming abilities of Yolande, Duchesse d'Anjou, Queen of Sicily.

To this spouse, however, he was by no means faithful, and his famous and agreeable mistress Agnès Sorel, who was one of her maids of honour, not only usurped the Queen's place in his affections but also robbed her in another manner. To Agnès Sorel has been unjustly ascribed the credit of that which belonged to the Queen, Marie d'Anjou, namely the honour of having maintained the courage of Charles VII. when he was on the point of giving way and throwing up the sponge in the contest with his enemies. Agnès had four daughters by Charles, and was known at the French Court as *La Dame de Beauté*.

Charles had also another mistress, in the person of Antoinette de Maignelais, the first cousin of Agnès Sorel, who introduced her to the Prince her paramour. Antoinette, who married the King's Chamberlain, the

Baron de Villecquier, enjoyed the unenviable notoriety of becoming the procuress for Charles VII. This arrogant woman eventually became the mistress of Francis II., Duke of Brittany. At his Court she became most powerful, and, having associated herself with him in his movement against Louis XI., Antoinette became deprived of her French estates, which were very large.

The Baroness de Villecquier had no children acknowledged by Charles VII., but had five by the Duke of Brittany, in addition to two born while living at the French Court with her husband. As an example of the manner in which then, as later, vice prospered at the French Courts, while three of Agnès Sorel's children were legitimised, the eldest son of Antoinette and the Duke of Brittany was not only legitimised but created the Premier Baron of that Duchy.

The young Charles VII, did not start by enjoying the popularity of the people of his country; he had too long been associated with the pillaging Armagnacs, by whom he had been surrounded from childhood. Nor was his crime of the murder of Jean Sans Peur to be readily forgiven. In the north of France not only was the influence of Burgundy paramount but the Armagnacs, the Gascons, were loathed and detested as foreigners with whom there could be nothing in common.

Failing any afflux of Frenchmen to his standard, Charles went to Scotland, the enemy of England, for his soldiers, and soon his army was filled with adventurers who came from the north of the Tweed to seek fame and fortune in France. Nor were many of

them disappointed; great posts and titles fell to the lot of needy lads of good Scotch families, while those of lesser rank in many instances enriched themselves by the results of pillage, as formerly in their border warfare at home.

While the great position of Constable of France became actually held by a Scotsman, another was exalted to the titles and estates of the Comte de Touraine. Yet were not these Scotsmen by any means always successful when they met the Englishmen in France. They had frequently been defeated, and were before long to find dire disaster once more overtaking them upon the bloody field of Crévant in 1423, and again at Verneuil in 1424, where the English, under Bedford, cut them up to the last man.

After the death of Henry V., while Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, became Protector in England, his brother John, Duke of Bedford, was Regent for his young nephew in France. These two brothers did not at all agree in their attitude towards Philippe, Duc de Bourgogne. Consequently, we soon find Gloucester doing his best to damage English interests by quarrelling with Philippe, while at the same moment Bedford was taking Philippe's young sister to wife.

We have already mentioned how Burgundy had endeavoured to round off her Flemish possessions by judicious marriages with the heirs to the two Counties of Holland and Hainaut. The eventual heiress to both of these became the young Comtesse Jacqueline. After a child-marriage with the Dauphin Jean of France, who died in his eighteenth year, Jacqueline became once more *à marier*. Thereupon Jean Sans

Peur, then omnipotent in France, gave her in marriage to his cousin, Jean IV., Duc de Brabant, a sickly boy, hoping that she would have no heir, and that his son Philippe would succeed to Jacqueline's dominions.

The young mistress of Holland and Hainaut, who was a strong, handsome girl of an ardent temperament, had other views for herself. Saying that she required a man, not an invalid for a husband, Jacqueline deserted her Duc de Brabant, went over to England, and merrily told Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, that she wished both for a husband and an heir; adding that, if he liked her, he could take her himself. Gloucester, who did like her, did not wait for a second proposal. His ambition was also at stake. In England he found his power as Protector altogether overshadowed by that of his immensely wealthy and arrogant uncle, Henry Beaufort, Cardinal of Winchester; likewise he had failed in his attempt to become adopted by Joanna II., Queen of Naples. Again, Humphrey was jealous of the position of his brother, Bedford, in France. He thought that by taking Jacqueline of Hainaut at her word he might also procure her domains, and become himself some one of importance as the ruling Comte of Holland and Hainaut.

Accordingly, Humphrey contracted a bigamous marriage with this very volatile Princess, and in 1423, having taken her to his bed, took in hand also her quarrel with Philippe de Bourgogne, with whom he went to war for the possession of her dominions.

This war begun in Flanders with Philippe, the Comte de Flandre, was of all things the most impolitic for English interests in France. For his brother Bedford, however, and France, in which he had no

share, Gloucester cared nothing at all, and yet it was upon Bedford, his brother-in-law, that the Duc de Bourgogne at once was able to visit his displeasure.

This displeasure resulted in the considerable crippling of Bedford in France, since, to begin with, Philippe asked for two large sums of money. The first of these was the unpaid dowry of his first wife, who had been a daughter of Charles VI., and the second a large annual pension promised to Philippe by Henry V. in return for the acknowledgment of the justice of Henry's claim to the throne of France.

Being unable to find the immense sums required to satisfy these claims, Bedford, in September 1423, yielded up to Bourgogne a whole string of places, including Tournai, which formed the northern defences of France.

A little later, the young Duke of Gloucester was guilty of a fresh act of extravagance. Proclaiming himself Jacqueline's knight, he challenged Philippe to mortal combat on her behalf. Thereupon Bourgogne came down upon his brother-in-law once more, when the latter, in order to keep on terms of amity, mortgaged to him, as security for his debt, some strong places on the French eastern frontier.

The Armagnac faction of Charles VII. took advantage of the mutual difficulties of Burgundy and England to raid the English possessions in France—notably Normandy. They only suffered severely for their pains, as Bedford administered to them the crushing defeat of Verneuil, in which the Scotch suffered so terribly.

While the Duc de Bourgogne was thus picking up piece-meal all of northern France, Humphrey

suddenly changed his tactics. Having seen some one whom he liked better than Jacqueline, who had not, by the by, been gratified with the hoped-for heir, he deserted this frivolous young lady, just as she had deserted the Duc de Brabant. Leaving the fair Comtesse of Holland to fight her own battles while besieged by Burgundy in the city of Bergues, he married a handsome young English lady named Eleanor Cobham.

In London the curious spectacle was now witnessed of some great English ladies, instigated by the Cardinal of Winchester, petitioning the House of Lords in favour of Jacqueline; but while Henry Beaufort was thus trying to damage his nephew's credit in England, in France matters took a turn.

Delighted at the manner in which Gloucester had left Jacqueline in the lurch, Philippe became once more friendly with Bedford, who cemented the friendship by advising him to occupy, not only Jacqueline's possessions of Holland and Hainaut, but those of her previous and sickly husband Jean IV. de Brabant, who had not long to live.

Thus it will be noticed that the young Charles VII. and his party did not gain very materially by the dissensions between Bedford and the Duc de Bourgogne, brought about by the follies of Humphrey of Gloucester. Yet one advantage they obtained, which was that, thinking that the alliance between England and Burgundy was coming to an end, one of the greatest Seigneurs in France ratted, deserted both the English and Burgundians, and went over to Charles VII.

The Comte de Foix, the princely owner of the

County of Foix, on the borders of Navarre, the close relation of the Captal de Buch, who had taken Pontoise for the English, and the Sire de Navailles, who had been murdered with Jean Sans Peur, was also the Governor of Languedoc. Of this great province he was practically King.

During the above-mentioned quarrel between the allies, this Comte de Foix wrote that, having caused a celebrated Judge of Foix to carefully examine the rival claims of Henry and Charles to the Crown of France, he had come to the conclusion that Charles VII. was the lawful King of the country. To this Prince he accordingly offered the allegiance of Languedoc, but on the express understanding that he was not to be interfered with there in any way, nor that either money or men should be asked for from the province.

Although the Comte de Foix took no material advantages with him to Charles, yet was his desertion looked upon as a considerable loss of prestige to England and her friends in France. More advantageous than this gain of prestige proved to Charles the machinations of that clever woman, Yolande of Aragon, Duchesse d'Anjou and nominal Queen of Sicily, who was also ruling Comtesse of the great southern province of Provence.

This Princess, with so many great interests, the claimant of the throne of Naples, had had for mother a lady who came of the Bar branch of the ducal family of Lorraine. She had been considerably disturbed by the efforts of the Duke of Gloucester to procure his adoption by Joanna II., Queen of Naples, and resolved in consequence to form against the

English a combination by which Lorraine and Anjou should become closely connected with Charles VII.

Her first move was a successful one, as she gave her seventeen-year-old daughter Marie to this young pretender to the French Crown in the year 1422.

Her next efforts were directed towards securing for her second son René the succession of the independent Duchy of Lorraine, which was then ruled by a Prince named Charles le Hardi—Charles the Bold. The Duc Charles was the determined enemy of the whole Orleanist faction, and, naturally, therefore of Charles VII. This Prince was closely connected by marriage with Philippe of Burgundy, and in consequence the ambition of Yolande was not easy of fulfilment.

Her scheme, however, resulted in a second triumph for Yolande. Her mother's brother, the reigning Duc de Bar, was an old Cardinal, and, although he had been previously at war with the Duc de Lorraine, he was ready for a reconciliation. This reconciliation was arranged upon the conditions that the Cardinal would leave his dominions of Bar to his great-nephew René if Charles le Hardi would give him in marriage his only daughter, Isabelle, the heiress of Lorraine. Thus would the two Duchies, previously rivals, become united. In order to gain the Duc de Lorraine over to this arrangement, Yolande worked upon a French lady named Alizon du May, one whom she is herself suspected of having given as mistress to the elderly Charles le Hardi. Alizon, in turn, persuaded her ducal paramour to agree to this plan, by which, while eternal peace was assured, the united Duchies of Bar and Lorraine would pass to a French Prince.

The bargain, which united Anjou and Lorraine to the party of Charles VII., was the more easily carried out owing to the fact that Henry V. had previously grossly insulted the Duc de Lorraine in the person of his daughter. Having asked for the hand of Isabelle for himself, Henry had thrown over the princely maiden and taken to wife instead the fair young Catherine of France.

The town of Guise in Picardy, which later gave its name to the famous Ducs de Guise, belonged to the Duc de Lorraine, and the anger of Charles le Hardi was therefore increased against England and Burgundy when, in the year 1424, the troops of Philippe seized upon this city. This irritation definitely settled the matter of his alliance with Anjou, and, through Anjou, with Charles VII. The Duc de Lorraine formally caused the Estates of his realm, assembled in session, to recognise Lorraine as descending in the female line through his daughter Isabelle, and as passing to her and her husband René on his death.

In spite of this useful alliance, Yolande was too clever a woman to at once break openly with England. She thought that until she found herself a little stronger, both in Lorraine and in the Kingdom of Naples, she would do well not to provoke Bedford, not to cause her French provinces to be overrun with his English armies. But she was useful to her son-in-law Charles VII. in many ways. By her sound advice, she induced him to get the Duke of Brittany on his side by giving the sword of the Constable of France once more into the hand of a Breton. This was Arthur, Comte de Richemont, brother to the

Duc Jean V. of Brittany. As Jean V. also married the Princess Jeanne, sister to Charles VII., a very useful alliance was thus arranged.

More good advice had Yolande at her disposal. This was that her son-in-law Charles VII. would do well to get rid of his old Armagnac partisans. As the Comte de Richemont likewise refused to accept the post of Constable of France unless all concerned in the murder of Jean Sans Peur were sent away, Yolande's advice was listened to. The party of Charles became, in consequence, the more acceptable to all of those who refused to join him so long as he retained these cut-throat Armagnac nobles about his person.

Once they had been discharged the Dauphin, as Charles was still called, commenced to be looked upon as quite a respectable personage, and he soon found many new adherents flocking to his standard. Through the influence of the diplomatic Yolande, he was reinforced by Spaniards from Aragon and by Lombards from Italy. By giving him Richemont as Constable, she also supplied him with many Bretons, while many of the Gascons who had served formerly under the discharged Armagnac leaders also remained in his service.

Although his forces were thus increased, his state of impecuniosity was the cause of his being able to effect at first little or nothing. He was, moreover, a foolish youth, who surrounded himself with despicable favourites, whose effete counsels he listened to while disregarding the Comte de Richemont. The brother of the Duke of Brittany proved, however, for a time the stronger, and, using his strength, he put half a

dozen of these men, including the ignoble Sire de Giac, to death, without any form of trial.

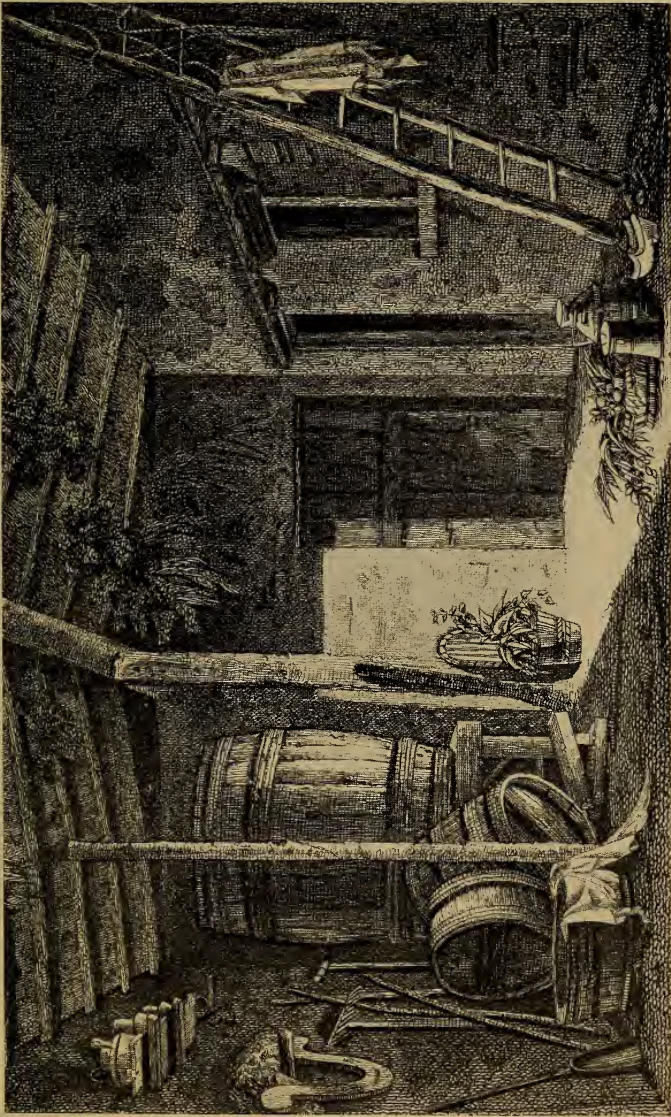
Thinking that if Charles were to have favourites he would, instead of killing them off in succession, do better to supply them himself, the Constable now brought to the Prince the young noble Georges de la Trémouille, while suggesting that he would find in him a suitable friend.

Charles seems at first to have had his doubts of la Trémouille, and remarked to Richemont: "You give him to me, beau cousin, but you will repent of it, for I know him better than you do."

Richemont soon did repent of it, for Georges de la Trémouille at once ungratefully formed a party against the Constable. Matters soon arrived at such a pitch that, while Charles gave to the Comte de Richemont the extraordinary order that he was not to draw the sword in his service, the followers of the young King and those of the Constable were constantly to be seen flying at one another's throats.

For the space of five years (1427-1432) Richemont and Trémouille waged private war with each other. Thus, in spite of all the well-calculated diplomacy of that woman of brains, Yolande of Aragon, in spite of the adherence of the great Comte de Foix, and notwithstanding the cooling off of Burgundy towards England, the party of Charles remained weak and powerless in France.

Bedford, who was well informed of their state of division, now thought the time had arrived to push to the south across the Loire, and, as the first step in this direction, assembled all of the fighting men at his disposal before the city of Orléans.



ENTRANCE TO JOAN'S SLEEPING-ROOM.

CHAPTER XVIII

“The Battle of the Herrings”

1429

OWING to his difficulty in raising sufficient money in an exhausted France, Bedford found it impossible to retain the great English lords in his service without continually making them grants of French estates and fiefs. He could not help himself, as at home the violent quarrels between his brother Gloucester and his uncle the Cardinal disorganised affairs and thus prevented the raising of English supplies.

This action irritated more and more the French nobles of the English party until, at length, but few French gentlemen remained attached to Bedford and the cause of Henry VI. The result was that the army which Bedford could put before Orléans was by no means large, being only between ten and eleven thousand men in all.

In addition to not forgetting to help himself, the Regent handed over estates to all of his principal leaders. These included the aged Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, and the Earls of Warwick, Suffolk, Arundel, and Salisbury.

The soldiers serving under these commanders were, if few in number, all good men and true, who had been

well tried in many a combat. They were also indefatigable, and soon raised around the city of Orléans on the Loire a series of forts, which were called bastilles. Owing to want of numbers, the besieging army, which opened operations on October 12, 1428, was unable to connect these forts; they therefore remained isolated, and, consequently, weaker than if they had formed part of a continuous enceinte.

The Earl of Salisbury was the Commander-in-Chief of the English force at the commencement of the investment, while each of the bastilles was under the command of a separate chief. Of these, both Suffolk and Talbot were noted for their bravery, while a third leader, who was celebrated not only for his fierce courage but his ferocious hatred of the French, was Sir William Glansdale.

Glansdale commanded the most dangerous point of all, the strong bastille across the Loire to the south of the beleaguered city, and he savagely announced his intention of killing all of the inhabitants without exception, should he succeed in penetrating into Orléans.

Each of these bastilles was named after a town; such as the Bastille of London, the Bastille of Rouen, and the Bastille of Paris. They were armed with artillery which fired large stone cannon-balls, some of which projectiles weighed up to a hundred and sixty pounds. In addition to these places close to the city, there were half a dozen other spots in the vicinity which had been seized and fortified, and were held by the English.

There was a good reason for the attack of this city of the Loire, which formed the key to the south of France, for Orléans had, when other places changed,

remained throughout Armagnac to the core, the centre of the long-standing opposition to Burgundy and England.

The citizens of the place, inspired by old-time hatred, determined from the first to leave no stone unturned in its defence, to spare no effort, no self-sacrifice. In this self-sacrificing spirit, they at once burned and destroyed the large suburbs which might have served as cover to the attacking force, and which contained numerous churches and convents. At the same time, they set to work to cast cannon and manufacture ammunition for their guns, while welcoming within their walls any old soldiers of the Armagnac party who chose to come and offer their assistance.

In this manner, while they soon had sixty guns in position, the Orléannais were reinforced not only by Italians, Spaniards from Aragon, and Scotsmen, commanded by a Stewart, but also by all of the savage Gascon soldiery, with Albret, La Hire, and Xaintrailles as leaders. As a result of the recent union of René d'Anjou, soon to become Duc de Bar, with the heiress of Lorraine, some gentlemen from those border Duchies also came to join in the defence.

The Orléannais were in good spirits, and, as the English had not been able to close all of the approaches to the city, they were well supplied with provisions. They laughed at the English cannonballs, which they declared killed nobody. The most serious accident which occurred, they asserted, was when a missile from an English cannon tore a shoe from the foot of a citizen without damaging its wearer.

Their own guns were well served, especially one culverin, of which the gunner was a certain Jean

from Lorraine. This Jean was remarkably daring, and, while recklessly exposing himself on the walls, was in the habit of mocking the English, by whom he was well known. One of the tricks of Gunner Jean was occasionally to pretend to fall, shot dead. After causing himself to be carried away as a corpse by his comrades, he would reappear, and, with derisive laughter, commence to serve his gun once more with deadly effect.

One of the principal men, if not the actual commander of the besieged forces, was Dunois, the famous Bastard of Orléans. As the siege dragged on, occasional complimentary messages and gifts would pass between Dunois and the English leaders. We learn that on one occasion he was even polite enough to send to the Earl of Suffolk a good fur coat, whereupon Suffolk sent him in return a basket of figs, which were scarce, as the season was advanced.

There was great joy in Orléans when one day, by a lucky shot, the English Commander-in-Chief was killed. The Earl of Salisbury was making a tour of inspection of his works, and, while standing on the walls of the bastille commanded by Glansdale, the latter was pointing out to him the city, while assuring him that it would soon be his. In the meantime, on a tower of the defences which had been christened Nôtre-Dame, there happened to be a boy, the son of one of the gunners who had gone to his dinner. Ambitious to become a gunner upon his own account, this lad carefully trained his father's piece upon the two English Generals. He fired the gun, when, to his delight, the Earl of Salisbury fell dead, the top of his head having been blown off.

A siege in those days was apt to be more amusing than one in modern times. Owing to the shortness of range of the cannon, and the bows and cross-bows employed, the attackers and defenders were often near enough to recognise one another easily, and even to shout to one another. To enliven the proceedings, upon days when there was no sharp fighting, such as when the defenders made a sortie, or when a combat occurred to prevent the entrance of a convoy of provisions, duels were frequent.

While these took place in front of the walls, all other fighting was suspended, and all on both sides assembled to see the sport.

Upon one such occasion the English pages challenged the French pages to mortal combat. There was a most spirited encounter, during which these gay-hearted lads afforded much entertainment to the Knights their masters. Many of these were, however, hard put to it to don and doff their armour later, having lost their young servitors in this mimic battle. The English pages proved the conquerors upon this occasion, but when, in another duel, two Gascon gentlemen challenged two Englishmen, the Gascons won the day.

As the siege of Orléans slowly dragged on without any apparent advantage to either side, the English elsewhere were overrunning the country at their ease. Living upon the districts which they traversed, they devastated the three adjoining central provinces of Bourbonnais, Berri, and Poitou.

The youthful Comte de Clermont was now sent by his father, Louis II., Duc de Bourbon, to reinforce the people of Orléans. At the head of a chivalrous

band of gentlemen of Auvergne, Touraine, and Anjou, accompanied also by some Scotch Knights and men-at-arms, he brought with him a convoy of provisions.

The instructions given to this young Prince by his father were also to prevent the English from revictualling their lines. Clermont succeeded in getting his own convoy safely into the city, and had not been there long when news arrived that the Duke of Bedford was also sending a large supply of food from Paris to the besiegers.

The Duke had cleverly taken advantage of the old hatred of the Burgundian butchers of Paris, the Cabochiens, for the Armagnacs, by means of which he readily found a fine body of bourgeois, chiefly cross-bowmen, willing to go with his English against the detested city in which their wives and daughters had been imprisoned after being so ill-treated by the soldiers who conducted them thither.

The commander of the party was a certain Sir John Fastolfe, who was on a subsequent occasion accused of cowardice by Talbot, but whose previous record had been that of a noble and gallant Knight. Fastolfe had with him several hundred carts laden with munitions of war and provisions, these being chiefly herrings for the Lenten season. With all his carts strung out one behind the other, and his force divided in order to protect the convoy throughout its length, Fastolfe ran a great risk of being intercepted had a bold attack been promptly made upon him by the Comte de Clermont.

It was certainly not the English commander nor any member of his force that played the coward in the action that took place as he was approaching

Orléans. There his heavily burdened wagons, with their straggling escort, had been seen from the walls, when that bold Gascon freebooter, La Hire, wished to fall upon them at once.

The young cousin of Charles VII., however, after assembling his troops outside the walls, forbade his followers to make an immediate attack, and kept them halted.

Fastolfe, in the meantime, showed himself a capable commander. Having seen his imminent danger, he took advantage of the delay to form up his three hundred carts into a rough oblong or “laager.” Outside of the carts he caused all of his men to plant the sharp-pointed stakes which they carried with them, in the same way as these useful stakes had been employed at Agincourt.

To the right of his wagons he placed his trusty English soldiers, and to their left the bold Cabochiens of Paris, with their crossbows. The Parisians were commanded by the Provost of the Merchants in person, and, although not soldiers accustomed to war, they maintained a bold front when they saw themselves confronted by the hated Armagnacs.

These latter were carried away by hatred likewise, and, while the cannon from the walls of Orléans pounded into the wagons of herrings, they broke away from the Comte de Clermont. Headed by the Scotch men-at-arms, who threw themselves from their horses the better to get at their enemies, La Hire and the Gascons of Clermont’s force rushed to the attack. Upon neither side could the Gascons of La Hire or the Scotsmen make the slightest impression. The Parisians stood as firm as the English, and the

attackers, suffering terribly, fell into confusion. Then Fastolfe gave the order to charge, and, issuing from among the baggage-wagons, English and Cabochiens fell with fury upon Clermont's men, and drove them back headlong towards the city.

The young Comte, with the remainder of his men, remained motionless near the walls of Orléans.

Having seen some four or five hundred of his men cut down upon the field, La Hire became mad with rage. Observing how the English had become scattered in the ardour of pursuit, he rallied a few of his men, and, returning, cut down in detail a few of his victorious foes before being eventually driven right back, first upon Clermont, and then pell-mell into the city.

Many of the herring-barrels had been burst by the cannon-balls, and thousands of herrings littered the plain among the dead and dying men. In consequence, this action, in which Sir John Fastolfe and his men behaved so bravely, and Clermont in such a cowardly manner, became known, derisively, as "The Battle of the Herrings."

After this battle the people of Orléans lost courage, and some of their leaders, notably two dignitaries of the Church, in despair of rescue, left them in the lurch, and departed to a place of safety. These churchmen were Regnault de Chartres, Archbishop of Reims, and the Bishop of Orléans, who, in hurriedly leaving the city in the middle of February 1429, assured their devoted flock that they would soon return and bring assistance with them.

Others who deserted Orléans at this crisis were the Chancellor and the Admiral of France, and last,

but not least, the Comte de Clermont, with the two thousand men who remained to him after his defeat.

One man there was, however, who remained behind to protect the appanage of the great House of which he was a representative, the only representative, if illegitimate, that remained upon the soil of France. This was Dunois, Bastard of Orléans.

Dunois had already, before the Archbishop of Reims took flight, assured this prelate and the people of the city that assistance was coming, assistance of a most miraculous nature. There was, he said, a certain virgin maid of whom he had heard upon the borders of Lorraine, one who had promised to come and save the city, and upon her he pinned his faith.

The Archbishop of Reims was a man of the world, a diplomat who had been to Rome and there learned how miracles were manufactured. He snapped his fingers in the face of Dunois, and told him that he did not believe that in his virgin maid! And then he wished him a very good day. The people of the city also informed the gallant Bastard that they were not inclined to listen to his fairy-tales.

CHAPTER XIX

Charles and the Maid

1428—1429

AT the same time that the bold Bastard of Orléans was getting himself laughed at with his talk about a miraculous maid, he was taking more material means to improve the situation at the besieged town of Orléans.

Philippe le Bon had some troops with those of the English before the city when Dunois conceived the idea of writing to him to ask him, as a relation of the captive Charles, Duc d'Orléans, to take that Prince's appanage under his protection.

It was an original idea, certainly, to ask the son of Jean Sans Peur to join in protecting the interests of the son of the man whom Jean Sans Peur had murdered, but apparently Dunois knew his Philippe.

He was well aware that the Duc de Bourgogne had just grabbed Holland and Hainaut from Jacqueline; why, then, might he not be pleased with the idea of occupying Orléans also?

As a bait, Dunois suggested that Philippe should seize upon the centre of France for his own benefit.

The Duc de Bourgogne was tempted, but before doing anything he loyally went to his brother-in-law,

Bedford, in Paris, and told him of the offers made to him by the Bastard.

The Regent for Henry VI. in France did not take the matter at all kindly, but roughly told his brother-in-law that it was not for his benefit that he had been working for so long. Thereupon Bourgogne got into a huff, and, leaving Bedford abruptly, recalled all of his troops from before Orléans. There, however, the English do not appear to have missed the Burgundians, as by the time of their departure they had just completed their series of forts around the city, notably by a bastille called Saint-Jean-le-Blanc, which closed the river Loire to the passage of provisions into Orléans.

Within the walls discontent and even treason now became rife among the hungry citizens, many of whom, tired of fighting for their absent Prince, were ready to join the English. So far did treason go that Dunois discovered that a large hole had been made in the walls of the town.

During the whole of this long period, from the middle of October 1428 until the end of April 1429, Charles VII. appeared not to take the slightest interest in the fate of Orléans. Since his father's death he had resided chiefly at a place called Mehun-sur-Yèvre, but when in 1428 he summoned the Estates to that place to vote him men and money neither did the feudal vassals called upon to serve put in an appearance nor was the money voted by the Estates paid in to the exchequer of the Prince.

The Dauphin seems, indeed, to have been found in very bad case when Dunois sent La Hire to him to ask for aid. Upon his return the Gascon leader

reported that Charles VII. had been only able to regale him with the very scraggiest kind of a dinner, of which a sheep's tail formed the *pièce de résistance*.

In his anxiety to counteract the domination of the English and to obtain money, Charles now made treaties with the Scotch, by which the County of Saintonge, containing the important seaport of La Rochelle, was ceded to the King of Scotland and his heirs-male, on condition of their giving homage for the same as peers of France. He even went so far as to offer to cede also to Scotland the Duchy of Berri, but the price which he asked for this was too large for the deal to be effected.

The divisions of his party, the quarrels between the Constable Richemont and the favourite Trémouille, still more helped to disorganise matters. Some of the old Armagnac leaders, who were taken again into favour, even wished Charles altogether to abandon the rest of France, and to form a monarchy in the south, at Grenobles, in Dauphiné. Charles was the more hampered owing to the fact that his intriguing mother-in-law did not go whole-heartedly with him. In her anxiety not to offend the English too far she was for ever treating with Bedford with a view to the recognition of her son René's prospective accession to the Duchy of Lorraine. This she did by her usual diplomatic methods, often indirectly. For instance, when in the spring of 1429 affairs looked their blackest at Orléans, she induced the old Cardinal-Duc de Bar to negotiate with Bedford, in René's name. Should affairs take a turn for the better with Charles this left René in a position to be able to say that he had had nothing to do with either the

Cardinal's or his mother's engagements entered into nominally on his behalf.

Notwithstanding the indifference shown to the fate of Orléans by Charles, a great part of France remained by no means indifferent. Towns anywhere in the neighbourhood of the river Loire, fearing to see the English establish themselves to the south of that river, exerted themselves to the utmost to send provisions, and saltpetre for making powder. From distant Languedoc came sulphur and steel, while La Rochelle sent money to the besieged. It was not that the country, in making these efforts, was fighting for the hand of Charles VII., but simply pity for the gallant Orléannais and their imprisoned Duc Charles which prompted this assistance. The inhabitants of France at large felt that the English were behaving cruelly towards the captive Prince, and, by endeavouring to seize his appanage, not only seeking to ruin him, but also his defenceless children. This sentiment became notably apparent when Joan of Arc announced her mission. She said that this was not only to deliver Orléans, but also Charles, Duc d'Orléans. Even when a great portion of France appeared indifferent as to whether it should be ruled by a French or an English Prince the majority of the women remained French in their feelings. An instance of this was to be seen in the case of a noble young widow, the Dame de la Roche-Guyon, who valiantly defended her castle against the English. When compelled to yield she was given the opportunity of retaining her possessions provided that she would marry Gui le Bouteiller, who was the partisan of the English, and whom they installed in

La Roche-Guyon. The courageous châtelaine refused to accept one whom she named a traitor; refused also to render homage to Henry VI., and preferred to wander away homeless and poverty-stricken with her small children.

It was, however, when Bedford attempted to touch the goods of the Church that he found many of the French priesthood, who had previously been good Englishmen, suddenly become far more French even than the women. To attempt to touch the pocket of the Church either in France or in England was a dangerous matter. Henry IV. and Henry V. had both realised this from the moment of the advent of the House of Lancaster. They had accordingly acted warily, Henry IV. declaring that he wished for nothing but its prayers from the Church. How Henry V. did his utmost to conciliate the French priesthood has been already explained; the needs of Bedford, however, made it necessary for him to endeavour to tap the only possible source of money supply. Unfortunately, he did it far too roughly to have any possible chance of success in obtaining the funds wherewith to carry on the war. When the English Regent calmly requested the French Church to hand over to him all the estates and all of the incomes which it had received during the last forty years the very bristles stood up around the tonsured crowns of the priests. Exclaiming that it would be paying a bit too highly for the pleasure of being the subjects of King Henry VI., they further declared that the English were no better than those brigands the Armagnacs, who pillaged the churches.

By this ill-advised request Bedford lost a number

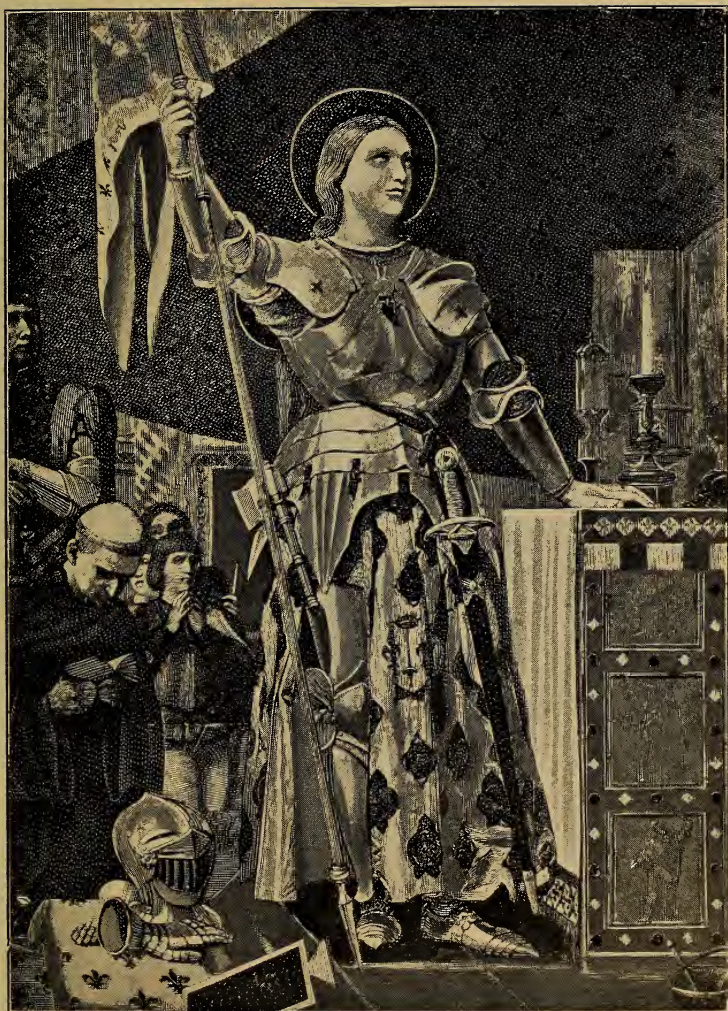
of friends among his brother churchmen—for we had forgotten to mention that the Duke had long since caused himself to be enrolled among the Canons of the Cathedral of Rouen. That this persecutor of the Armagnacs should be compared to his enemies of that detested faction was, however, amusing. His Government, as one means of raising money, had for long past been according pardons, against cash received, to all sorts of unfortunate people suspected in any way of being connected with these adventurers from the south. For instance, we find a schoolmaster, who had taught an Armagnac, being let off with a fine of thirty-two golden crowns, while a monk who had nursed a wounded Armagnac was made to suffer also. One of the most extraordinary pardons we find accorded by Bedford was that of two brothers, imprisoned because an Armagnac man-at-arms had entered their house by the window and ill-treated them!

While the people were many of them hovering in their allegiance between Charles VII., the uncle, and Henry VI., the nephew, a considerable point in favour of the latter was that his mother, Catherine de France, was supposed by the people to be the daughter of that beloved simpleton, King Charles VI. The Dauphin, on the other hand, had been denied as his son by Charles VI., with the connivance of the lad's own mother, Queen Isabeau. He had been born at the time of her greatest intimacy with her brother-in-law Louis, Duc d'Orléans, and, although she remained in France, the unprincipled woman had made no effort to withdraw the brand of illegitimacy which she had, at the time of the Treaty of Troyes, assisted in placing upon her son.

Thus the knotty question of the legitimate heirship to the throne had been entangled by this evil-living woman, the grandmother of the English and mother of the French claimant of the Crown, and that to such an extent that the Dauphin himself was inclined to join with most of the inhabitants of France in considering himself the son, not of Charles VI., but of Louis, Duc d'Orléans. While one woman, and she his mother, had thus, apparently wilfully, muddled up the question of his birth, it must have seemed to the unfortunate Prince as if never, so long as he lived, could matters possibly be straightened out for him in a manner to enable him to hold up his head as the rightful heir.

There was, however, although he knew it not, another woman in France about to come to his assistance, one who was ready decisively to cut the tangled skein. Joan of Arc, in her little country village, was even now getting ready to set out upon her travels, and, backed by the weight of divine authority, to come and assure the Dauphin that he need doubt no longer, for that he was indeed the legitimate son of Charles VI.

In the meantime, neither of the Kings had been crowned, or "consecrated" as the ceremony of crowning was then termed; and until a Prince was actually consecrated as well as acknowledged to be legitimate the people in the France of that day were unwilling to accept him as their lawful King. When Joan boldly declared, "in the name of God," that Charles was the lawful heir, she had already won half the battle. Then, being a girl endowed with most excellent common sense as well as a faculty for seeing visions,



FROM THE PAINTING BY INGRES IN THE MUSÉE DU LOUVRE, PARIS.

she won the other half, by doing that which the English should have already done with Henry VI., namely by taking him to be anointed with the holy oil at Reims.

It was in thus being endowed with the gift of common sense rather than in any other way that Joan showed the originality which has caused her to stand out for all time as one apart from other seers of visions, other dreamers of dreams. There were many such inspired persons seen in France both before and after her time. The hunger and misery of the people, the fierce revivalist sermons of the priests, by combining to excite the imagination, produced many such visionaries. Some of these were boys: such a one was the shepherd whom Xaintrailles brought with him from Brittany. This supposedly inspired lad was marked, like our Lord, with the marks of the nails on the hands and the feet; on holy days these marks became bleeding wounds. From Brittany also came the girl named Pierrette, who was believed to hold frequent conversations with Christ.

From Avignon, the southern town of the Popes, came an inspired maiden named Marie, like the Virgin. The rough, seafaring population of La Rochelle were wonder-stricken when they found another such marvellous girl in their midst—she was named after Saint Catherine.

Jeanne Darc, or d'Arc, the beautiful girl who was named after Saint-Jean, came from the opposite side of France to La Rochelle, from Dom-Remy, a little village between the Duchy of Lorraine and the County of Champagne. In the clearings of the forests fringing the slopes of the mountains of the Vosges, in Lorraine,

were reared various stately abbeys from early times. The principal of these, named the Abbaye de Remiremont, was formerly governed by an Abbess who was a Princess of the Holy Roman Empire. This exalted lady held her own Court in right Royal fashion, having her Chamberlains, Grand Masters, and Seneschals, who bore the sword of office before the saintly and high-born maid, ruler of vast domains. Not far from the ancient feudal domains of Remiremont were no less than four villages bearing the name of Dom-Remy, all four being situated at various distances from one another on the banks of the river Meuse, which formed the boundary line between Champagne and Lorraine. The village in which Jeanne, or Joan, was born had at a more remote date been a fief of the more distant Abbey of Saint-Remi of Reims, and it was situated just in the debatable land which was so often the cause of quarrel between the Ducs de Lorraine and the Kings of France. Her father, Jacques Darc, was a worthy labourer of Champagne, a man who seems to have been endowed with shrewd sense and to have been devoid of the narrow greed by which to this day so many of the French peasantry are marked. His daughter resembled her father in this respect, her nature being remarkable for a kind of clever cunning which lay concealed beneath an engaging *naïveté* of manner.

Had Joan been born at a much earlier date she would have been a serf of the Abbey of Saint-Remi, and later a serf of the Sires de Joinville, by whom the fief of Vaucouleurs, upon which Dom-Remy depended, was held until the year 1335. In that year, however, King Philippe VI. compelled the Sires de Joinville to

yield up to him the Seignery of Vaucouleurs, which contained the town of that name and much of the surrounding country. Joan was therefore born upon a Royal fief, Vaucouleurs having been inseparably attached to the Crown by Charles V. in 1365. Long prior to the year 1335 King Philippe le Bel and the Emperor of Germany, Albert, had endeavoured to settle the ownership of this much-debated district, by together planting boundary-stones near Vaucouleurs. These stones had, however, been disregarded and the country frequently overrun by the soldiers of the various factions by whom France was devastated.

The Burgundians also owned a border village not far from Dom-Remy ; thus from childhood Joan was accustomed to see raiding parties from France, Lorraine, Burgundy, or Germany roaming sword in hand in the neighbourhood of her home. This formed, as it were, the central point where three countries met, while the direct road to Germany from Champagne passed likewise through Vaucouleurs.

Although the people of this border Seignery belonged nominally to the King, it will be well understood that, being where they were, they practically had no Seigneur at all to whom they could look for protection. With Burgundian and Armagnac, Lorrainer or German, traversing their district at will, sometimes one being the stronger, sometimes the other, they virtually remained in the position of being the vassals of nobody.

Many a time in her childhood Joan saw men flying from their foes through her native village, and on several occasions she succoured the wounded, yielding up her own bed to some unhappy sufferer, and sleeping

in the barn. Upon one occasion her father and mother were compelled to fly from their home before a party of marauding soldiery. When they returned they found their house burned to the ground and all their possessions stolen; even the village church had been destroyed by fire.

Being brought up in the midst of scenes like this, we can imagine something of what Joan intended to convey when she talked of "the pity that there was in the country of France."

It was "a pity" to which she was but too well accustomed, a pity which she and all the dwellers in that border-land were compelled to meet with patient resignation.

The family of Jacques Darc—the name was not written "d'Arc" until a later period—consisted of his wife and five children—three girls and two sons. His wife's name was Isabelle Romée, this name Romée having been often assumed in the time of the Middle Ages by those who had made the pilgrimage to Rome. The sons were named Jacques and Pierre, and Joan was the youngest of the three daughters. One of the sons was subsequently ennobled under the name of Du Lis, when he was granted the symbolical arms of a star and three ploughshares to denote his humble origin.

It has been customary to describe Joan as a girl who was in the habit of going out to the fields to herd her father's sheep, but her own evidence, given before her judges at Rouen, proves this to have been a fallacy. Being questioned as to whether she had learned any art or trade, she replied :

"Yes, and that her mother had taught her to sew,

and that she did not believe that there was any woman in Rouen who could teach her anything more in that respect. She did not go to the fields to keep the sheep or other beasts. Since she had been of an age to understand anything she had not kept them ; if she had done so before that time she had no recollection of it. She had never been taught to read or write, and her instruction in religion had been given her by her mother alone."

That she was both good-hearted and religiously inclined was proved by a village girl named Haumette, who was the friend of her girlhood. She was simple and sweet-tempered ; spun, did the housework, and did as other girls do—went often to church, and to the holy shrines. Haumette, who said that she had often slept with Joan in good friendship, stated also that Joan went often to confession, and, being very modest, would blush upon being twitted upon going too often to the church.

As for her kindly disposition, we have already mentioned how she was in the habit of giving up her own bed to wounded soldiers. These were not, however, the only ones to whom she showed her charitable and kind disposition, as a peasant described how in his childhood she had nursed him in his illness.

As Joan grew up, she was both handsome and robust in person, and remained pure in mind. Being born, however, in a country rich in legends, her mind became imbued with stories of the apparitions of the saints, and likewise of the fairies who haunted its woods and valleys.

CHAPTER XX

Joan's Début

1429

AMONG the legends of those who dwelt upon the borders of the forests of the Vosges was one to the effect that a great wood of oak-trees was the resort of fairies who were known as "Les Dames." These "good ladies," who were the mistresses of the woods, particularly affected a pellucid spring near a great beech-tree—they were, in fact, naiads, the water-nymphs of the pagans. In honour of these naiads, who were supposed for their sins to be no longer able to assume their bodily forms, the girls and boys of the neighbourhood of Dom-Remy were wont to repair to the sylvan glades, to hang up crowns of flowers on the hoary beech and dance around its bole.

Although the village Curé repaired yearly to the fountain, to say a Mass to exorcise these woodland divinities, his action was only the more calculated to impress the reality of their existence upon the youthful mind of Joan. It was a poetic belief, this of the nymphs that haunted the woodland glades, the running waters, and in Joan's poetic mind they assumed the actual shapes given to it by her creative ideas.

In a war-worn country, in which savage men revelled in deeds of bloodshed, it came as balm to the young girl's mind to imagine that some supernatural beings, beneficent rather than belligerent, were ever at her elbow, ready, perchance, to give soothing aid to harassed mortals in their distress.

It was but one step from the fauns and fairies that dwelt in the flower-strewn openings of the trees, the naiads that laved their shining forms in the glistening fountain, to the blessed saints, the celestial beings, the good spirits that are our guardian angels.

If the ones were real, why not the others? To the virgin-maid of Dom-Remy real indeed became these blessed beings from celestial spheres, creatures who, by their power and glorious radiance, paled the miserable actualities of this wretched world with visions of a heaven beyond.

From the religious teachings of her pious mother, well was the maiden aware of the great deeds done by women in the past. While wandering in the woods and vaguely hoping that a liberator might be found for the distressed country in which she dwelt, the half-formed hope sprang into existence that God might in His goodness select her as that liberator.

Why should not she be perchance permitted to do something as grand as the Biblical Judith, who saved her country by cutting off the head of Holofernes? Did not Sainte Marguerite assist Saint Michael in trampling the Devil, in form of a dragon, under-foot? Had not Sainte Marguerite also, after driving off the Devil by making the sign of the cross in his face, cut off her hair and escaped from her husband's house clothed as a man? Why should not she, Jeanne, the

village maid, imitate the example of this glorious woman, and fight in the good cause? It was nothing new for women to take up the sword, even at that time. Does not Enguerrand de Monstrelet relate how the Bohemian women of the Hussites armed themselves and fought for their religion as fiercely as the men? indeed, the chronicler says, "like devils (*ainsi que diables*)."

In how many sieges had not women of every degree mounted the ramparts to repel the invader? We have just related the gallant defence of her *château* made by that brave lady La Dame de Roche-Guyon.

To aid Joan in her dreams came the remembrance of the fact that, while all the world was saying that France had been lost by a woman, Isabeau the Queen, there was an old prophecy of the Wizard Merlin that it would also be saved by a woman. In Lorraine and the districts adjoining, this old prophecy had been modified and improved into "France would be saved by a virgin maid from the hoary oak wood in the marches of Lorraine." Since she was a virgin maid from the very district named, might not the prophecy apply to herself?

With these ideas becoming ever stronger in her mind, as Joan was one day loitering in her garden near the village church, she received her first supernatural warning. Between herself and the church she beheld a brilliant light, from the midst of which came a voice, saying: "Joan, be a virtuous and good girl, and go to the church frequently." Her second vision, which occurred not long after, was more remarkable. Several shining figures of noble appearance were suddenly beside her. Of these, one was of

a wise-looking being who had wings upon his shoulders. This *sage prud'homme* distinctly instructed her as to her mission, saying : "Joan, go to the aid of the King of France, and thou wilt return to him his kingdom."

To this the awe-stricken village girl replied : "Messire, I am only a poor girl, and neither know how to ride nor how to lead men-at-arms."

The winged Archangel Michael, whom Joan had now recognised, thereupon answered : "Go to Messire de Baudricourt, the Captain of Vancouleurs, and he will cause thee to be led to the King. Sainte Catherine and Sainte Marguerite will come to thine aid."

The heavenly beings left her, and Joan wept. However she soon saw Saint-Michael again, when the mighty Archangel talked to her of the pity that there was in the Kingdom of France, and encouraged her to perform her mission. Many other saints of both sexes, luminous creatures wearing golden crowns, now visited her frequently, and when they left her the maiden would weep that they had not taken her with them.

The frequent apparition of these angels and saints had an immense effect upon the young girl. She, who had always been so retiring and modest, and who had never listened to any other commands than those of her father and mother, now began to think seriously of leading armed warriors to the tented field, while obeying only her celestial monitors. She must leave the sound of those church bells that she cherished, leave her garden and her birds that fed from her hand, leave her father, mother, sisters, friends, and

boldly sally forth into the world to obey the divine behest.

Several years, however, elapsed, four or five in all, before Joan, then aged almost nineteen, eventually was to leave her home for the first time. In the meantime, she had been forced to undergo a constant struggle in her humble dwelling at Dom-Remy, the authority of her parents being opposed to that of her celestial visitants. While all her saints, and especially Saint Michael, urged the maiden to take up arms and ride about the country, her father—good, honest soul!—swore by all his saints that, rather than see his daughter go traipsing about with a parcel of men-at-arms he would drown her with his own hands.

As an inducement to stay at home, Joan was offered a husband, the wise people of Dom-Remy having decided that marriage was what was necessary to bring the foolish girl to her right senses and restore the balance of her ideas.

When Joan would have none of the husband proposed, a respectable young fellow from the neighbourhood, her parents put the young man up to bringing an action of breach of promise against her. He summoned her before the ecclesiastical judge of the city of Toul, alleging a betrothal in childhood. To the astonishment of all who knew her, the modest Joan did not hesitate to go to Toul and plead in her own defence. It had been imagined that rather than take so bold a step she would have allowed judgment to go against her by default, and permitted herself to be married.

Joan found a friend at last, in the shape of an uncle, whom she had been able to convince not only

of her sincerity but the sacredness of her cause. It was, however, only by a trick that Joan was able to join her uncle when he offered to take her to the Sire de Baudricourt, the Captain of Vaucouleurs. His wife was about to be confined, and it was upon the pretence that he required his niece's services at the critical moment that her uncle was able to convey her to his dwelling. The peasant then went to Vaucouleurs to ask permission to take her there, but the first visit of Joan's uncle to de Baudricourt was not a success, as the valiant Captain roughly told him that the best thing that he could do would be to "give the wench a good smacking and take her back to her father."

In spite of this rebuff, Joan insisted upon being taken to Baudricourt. She took a tender farewell of all her friends in the village, with the exception of Haumette, to whom she could not bear to say good-bye, and went to Vaucouleurs, where she arrived clad in her rough peasant-girl's clothing, and went to lodge with the wife of a wheelwright of her acquaintance.

The Sire de Baudricourt was a very great lord, and when he saw the robust peasant-girl appear before him, in spite of his rough advice to her uncle, he was astonished. Still more astounded was this noble when, in earnest tones which compelled him to listen, she addressed him :

"Sir," said Joan, "I come to you on behalf of our Lord, in order that you may send word to the Dauphin not to risk a battle with his enemies, because in the middle of Lent his Lord will send him succour. The Kingdom does not belong to the Dauphin, but

to his Lord ; none the less his Lord desires that the Dauphin should become King and have this Kingdom in his keeping."

The worthy Captain of Vaucouleurs stared in amazement, and so did those around him, but their amazement increased when this handsome country girl who, for all her boldness of speech, did not appear by any means bold or brazen-faced, calmly continued : "I would also have you assure the Dauphin that, notwithstanding his enemies, he shall be made King, for I will lead him to be consecrated."

The Sire de Baudricourt did not know what to make of it, and well can we understand his perplexity. He sent for the Curé of Vaucouleurs, and expressed to him his fears that the Devil was at the bottom of it all, when the Curé agreed with him thoroughly.

"What, then, do you think we had better do about it?" inquired the nobleman.

"I suggest, Messire, that you come with me while I exorcise her to find out if she is a witch," replied the Curé.

Accordingly the great Captain of the Seigneury and the Curé of the parish, armed with all his holy instruments, repaired, not without a certain amount of trepidation on their part, to the wheelwright's house. While the Captain's guard remained at the door, accompanied by only one or two gentlemen they entered the building, where they found Joan. Then, spreading his stole out before him as a protection, and having sprinkled holy water freely around, so that he might not be suddenly flown away with to regions of darkness, the good Curé valiantly adjured the very suspicious peasant-girl, if she were a witch and

possessed of the Devil, to go quietly away without doing any harm.

So frank, however, appeared the supposed witch, so certain, moreover, of what she said, so lucid in her replies, that, although de Baudricourt could not at once make up his mind to take the serious step of sending her to the Dauphin, both he and the Curé decided that there was no harm in her, and that perhaps there might be more truth in her words than at first appeared.

While Joan was in despair at the delay, the people all began to believe firmly in the sanctity of her mission, and two gentlemen of distinction, one young, the other somewhat older, who came to banter her, thinking her fair game for sport, were quite won over to her side. These were the Sires Jean de Metz and Bertram de Poulengy.

The former began by teasing her: "Well, my dear, so the King will be driven out, and we shall all have to become Englishmen, I hear?"

Joan met this badinage good-temperedly, but soon became serious and emphatic, saying how grieved she was that she could obtain no aid from Baudricourt, for that even if she walked all across France, and wore her feet to the bone, it was imperative that she should join the Dauphin by Mid-Lent.

"For," she said, "no one in this world, neither King, nor Ducs, nor daughter of the King of Scotland can retake this Kingdom of France. There is only for him help to be found in myself. Yet much rather would I remain to spin by the side of my poor mother, for this is not my work. Yet must I go and must I do it, for so it is that the Lord wills."

The two nobles were quite convinced. They gave her their hands, and promised to go with her to the King.

In the meantime Baudricourt had himself sent off to the Dauphin to demand permission to send to him this extraordinary girl. But, while waiting for a reply, he took Joan with him to see the ruling Duc de Lorraine, Charles I., the father-in-law of René d'Anjou. The Duc Charles, who was ill, wished to consult Joan, doubtless thinking that he would obtain a charm which would cure his sickness. Joan, who knew of the immoral life that this Prince was leading with the Lady Alizon du May, quietly informed him that what he had better do was to become reconciled to God by becoming reconciled to his wife. Charles, who was not in the least offended at her outspokenness, told Joan that she had all his good wishes. With this encouragement Joan returned to Vaucouleurs, where she found a messenger from the Dauphin saying that she might be sent to him.

The people of Vaucouleurs were now all the more predisposed to believe in the mission of the peasant-girl of Dom-Remy, from the circumstance that she had announced the defeat of the Battle of the Herrings on the very day of that encounter. Accordingly they banded themselves together, and bought her clothes and a horse. De Baudricourt, for his part, presented the girl with a sword, which he very much doubted if she would either know how or have the courage to use.

The two gentlemen above mentioned had announced their willingness, with a few men-at-arms, to escort Joan to Charles VII., and all was ready

for her departure, when she was put to a terrible proof. Her parents arrived from Dom-Remy half-distracted, and by every means in their power endeavoured to prevent her departure. Prayers, supplications, orders, threats, curses, all were in vain; nothing could shake Joan from her purpose. Her will could not be bent, and although she grieved for the distress of those so dear to her, she could not be induced to remain at Vaucouleurs. She departed with her escort of five or six men-at-arms, of whom two were Jean de Metz and Bertram de Poulengy, on February 13, 1429.

There was considerable danger for a young and attractive girl thus to trust herself alone in the company of a body of unknown soldiers for a ride all across France, and, recognising this danger, Joan from the first clothed herself in man's attire, which promised her greater security from possible outrage, as well as being more convenient for the saddle. Her greatest safeguard, however, at this the outset of her career, was her very purity and the sacredness of her mission, which made her seem half-divine to her lawless companions. Although she was young and beautiful, one of the young gentlemen who accompanied her declared at her trial that even while lying by her side no evil thought ever entered his head.

We have said that Joan's companions, the men-at-arms, thought her half-divine, but there is no doubt that they also imagined her to be half a witch. Nevertheless, during the eleven days that their journey lasted, they became much attached to their girl companion. The country being full of armed men, the small party was at times in considerable danger, in

spite of which she caused the men-at-arms considerable anxiety by her frequent delays in order to hear Mass when passing churches on her way.

Her arrival was expected at Chinon, where Charles VII. was, and quite near that place some of those about the Prince endeavoured to waylay this so-called Pucelle, suspected by the opposing courtiers of being an unfriendly emissary from the Duc de Lorraine. From this ambushade, however, Joan and her soldier-comrades escaped by the purest chance. Although the party of Yolande, that of Anjou, was certainly fortified by the arrival of an inspired maiden, who came with the sanction, openly expressed, of Charles of Lorraine, the opposing influences in the Court of Charles VII. were very great against the reception by the King of "this impostor—this witch."

For several days serious debates were carried on concerning her in the Council, and, had it not been for Queen Yolande of Sicily and her daughter, Queen Marie, Joan might never have been allowed to see the young King at all. But while the opposing courtiers were purposely creating delay, by sending all the way back to Lorraine to inquire if Joan were indeed as virtuous as she represented herself, messengers arrived from Dunois and the people of Orléans saying that they wished her to be sent to them. By the two Queens' advice Charles then consented to receive the girl whom his favourites sneered at. Great was the assemblage which surrounded the Dauphin Charles on a night at the end of February 1429.

While the great hall was illumined by numberless torches, many great Seigneurs and three hundred other Knights were present. All were curious to be-



THE EXCHANGE OF RAIMENT.

hold one who might possibly be inspired but who, if not a mere arrant impostor, was more likely to prove a witch. The greater number of those assembled openly expressed their wishes to see the sorceress unmasked, and, the better to ensure this effect, they disguised him whom they called their King in the garb of one of his own Knights. Those who expected the eighteen-year-old girl to be disconcerted were, however, sadly disappointed. Instead of an ugly crone they beheld a pretty girl, well built, with a good figure, one whose expression was amiable and the tones of whose voice were sweet and penetrating.

Modest and humble in her bearing, although with no signs of alarm, Joan stood for a moment in the midst of the brilliant assembly, and then she did a wonderful thing, one which has never been denied even by her enemies. Casting a glance in the direction of a group of Knights, she moved swiftly towards them, and, brushing past those in her way, advanced to Charles VII., she threw herself at his feet, and grasped him round the knees.

“Gentil Dauphin, j'ai nom Jehanne la Pucelle (Gentle Dauphin, I am called Joan the Maid).” Such was her greeting to the Prince. In vain he maintained that he was not the Prince she sought—that she must seek the King elsewhere.

Not in the least abashed, and disregarding the title of King, which she did not recognise, Charles not having been crowned, Joan continued: “Gentil Dauphin, the King of the Heavens informs you, through me, that you will be consecrated and crowned at Reims, and you will be the Lieutenant of the King of the Heavens, who is the King of France.”

Charles then took her a little apart to speak to him, when those who were near enough were astonished to hear her say : “ I tell thee, on behalf of the Messiah, that thou art the real heir of France and *the son of the King.*”

In this remarkable manner did Joan pronounce the legitimacy of Charles VII.

CHAPTER XXI

Joan's Exploits at Orléans

May 1429

IN addition to the marvellous manner in which Joan recognised the Dauphin, there are various other seemingly supernatural circumstances related concerning her at this epoch, which have been gathered from the manuscripts containing the depositions made at her trial. One of these is to the effect that, the better to assure Charles VII. of his legitimacy, she recalled to him a circumstance known only to himself. This was that one morning, in his oratory, he had demanded from God "grace to recover his Crown, if he were the legitimate heir," and, further, that he had prayed that he might not fall captive into his enemies' hands, but be able to find a refuge in Spain or with the King of Scotland.

One remarkable incident, which greatly impressed the popular mind and caused her to be looked upon by many in the light of a prophetess, was as follows. A soldier, perceiving that Joan was handsome and desirable, brutally expressed his desire to possess her, swearing at the same time by the name of God. Thereupon Joan reproved him sadly. "Alas! how can you take God's name in vain like that? and you,

too, so near your end!" Almost immediately after this occurrence, the soldier fell into the castle moat and was drowned.

The numerous enemies of Joan declared, however, that if she were indeed inspired with the gift of prophecy she had it from the Devil, and these insisted that she must be examined by a commission of Bishops. For this purpose Joan was sent to Poitiers, where the Archbishop of Reims, Chancellor of France for Charles VII., summoned a number of Doctors of Theology, belonging to the University of that place, and some monks, to question the Pucelle.

To this commission Joan related all her spiritual visions and her messages from the saints. One monk—a Dominican—observed to her: "Joan, you say that God wishes to deliver the people of France; if such be His will, what need is there for men-at-arms?" Joan was usually pithy and clever in her replies to inconvenient questions, but upon this occasion her reply can scarcely, we think, have convinced the monk; it was: "Ah, *Mon Dieu!* the men-at-arms will fight and God will give them the victory."

Her response was somewhat smarter to a Professor of Theology who spoke a bad Limousin French. His name was Séguin, and he was described as a very bitter man. When Séguin had been heckling Joan for some time, he asked: "And in what tongue did these supposed heavenly voices speak to you?" "One far better than yours," answered Joan pertly. Séguin thereupon became enraged, and told the pert maiden that, without giving a sign from God, she could not expect to be believed in. Judging by after-events, Joan's reply was now really admirable:

“ I did not come to Poitiers to work signs or miracles ; my sign will be the raising of the siege of Orléans. Only let me be given men-at-arms, few or many, and I will go there.”

While the Doctors were thus bullying Joan the people of Poitiers, especially the women of all ranks who visited her, accepted her without question, all declaring that she was certainly sent from God. The learned Doctors meanwhile, thinking to prove to Joan, by the book, that she could not possibly have a divine mission, made to her all sorts of quotations from scriptural works in support of their case. Asked what reply she could make to these lengthy citations, the village-girl from Dom-Remy, who was getting tired of this folly, answered very much to the point.

“ Listen ; there is more in God's book than in your books. I do not know A from B, but this I do know, that I come on behalf of God to cause the siege of Orléans to be raised, and to consecrate the Dauphin at Reims.”

The Judges were quelled, and when she said that she must take the preliminary step of writing to the English leaders to desist from the siege they took the pen on her behalf. Joan dictated while the Doctors wrote, summoning the various commanders, Suffolk, Glansdale, and others by name, in the name of God, to leave the beleaguered city and to retire to England.

While two more messengers arrived from Dunois, demanding that the maid from Dom-Remy should be sent without delay, the Doctors who had been examining Joan requested the opinion of a great dignitary of the Church, the Archbishop of Embrun,

as to whether or no she should be employed. This sapient prelate replied that, Satan being unable to make a compact with virgins, it all depended upon the fact if she were a virgin or no. Joan having been handed over to the Queen of Sicily and a committee of matrons, these great ladies declared her to be indeed a pure maiden whose honour was intact, and, this matter having been settled in Joan's favour, it was decided at length to send her to Orléans. As a preliminary step she was fitted out with a war-horse, armour, a sacred banner, and a household of her own. For her squire she was supplied with an excellent middle-aged Knight, Jean de Daulon by name ; her two pages were of noble birth. She had two Heralds, a confessor named Jean Pasquerel, two valets, and other followers, among whom were her brothers, Pierre and Jean Darc.

Jean de Daulon, who was a particularly honourable and trustworthy gentleman, had been sent to her as steward by the Bastard of Orléans, and, for a peasant-girl, Joan was indeed now honourably equipped.

Her sacred banner was of beautiful white silk. Upon this a white field scattered with fleur-de-lys bore a representation of God holding the world in His hand, the image of the Almighty being flanked with two angels, each holding a fleur-de-lys.

The armour with which Joan had been supplied was white, like silver ; she carried a little battle-axe and a sword, which latter she obtained in a marvellous manner. Having declared that a sword would be found hidden behind the altar in the church of Sainte Catherine at Fierbois, Joan caused search to be made, when the sword was found where she had

indicated. Having girt herself with her sword Joan, who had at this period a horror of shedding blood, declared that she never would use it. To this resolution, as she became hardened with scenes of warfare, the Pucelle did not, however, adhere. Joan eventually broke this holy sword, not while using it to strike down her foes, but when she was striking with its flat side a girl of bad character whom she found in the camp. As it could not be mended so as to be made again serviceable, Joan was compelled to procure another sword.

That the peasant-girl, decked out in her trappings as a Knight, made indeed an attractive picture when mounted on her great black charger we learn from a letter to his mother written by Gui de Laval, a young noble related to Gilles de Retz. He describes her as "seeming something quite divine both to see and to hear."

With her "gracieux paige" bearing her banner before her, after first addressing the priests and commanding them to make prayers to God, Laval describes her as giving the order to march in the words, "Tirez avant! Tirez avant!" while carrying her little axe in her hand.

While Joan, with a considerable armed following, is on the line of march to Orléans let us consider the position and numbers of the force before that place. That it was not such a terrible feat that Joan was to be called on to perform becomes evident when we learn that the English troops had now melted away to at the outside three thousand men. Probably there were not left more than two thousand or two thousand five hundred, and although, had these been

all gathered together in one place, they would have formed a formidable body, it must be remembered that they were scattered about in small parties in the various bastilles.

One of the early causes of the depletion of the English force had been that, on the death of the Earl of Salisbury, all of the men-at-arms personally engaged by him had considered themselves at liberty to depart. Then the Burgundians had left also, and during the long winter many had died or become incapacitated by wounds or sickness. At the end of the siege, when the chief of the English works was forced, it was found not to contain more than five hundred men, of whom a good number were Frenchmen. These five hundred represented the garrisons of several of the other bastilles, who had been driven out and had taken refuge in this principal fort.

It will be wondered why it was that, without waiting for the advent of Joan of Arc, the defenders had not relieved themselves. They had among them a number of noted leaders. There was the Maréchal Gilles de Retz, with the Bretons, and there were also Dunois, La Hire, and Xaintrailles. There was the new Comte d'Armagnac and six or seven other Gascon commanders, including the Maréchal de Saint-Sévère. Under these, apart from the citizens of Orléans, were enrolled a quantity of nobles from the vicinity, and others who had come from all parts of France. With all of the men-at-arms and others at the beck and call of these leaders, surely they would have been strong enough, had they made a determined effort, to drive the small English force away, and no miraculous maid should have been necessary to help them.

Why, then, was it that they made no such effort? To this there are two replies. The first is that, since Agincourt and various later victories, the English had become greatly feared. The other, and it is the principal one, is that the French had no cohesion—they were not united.

The various leaders had no supreme chief. They did not even recognise the authority of Charles VII. as King of France; much less, then, would one of them subordinate himself to another. If they could indeed be said to be fighting for any one in particular, it was for the absent Prince, Charles d'Orléans, but he was far away in England, under restraint, and unable to give them orders.

Being thus leaderless and full of divisions and jealousies, although numerically so much superior to the English that they could easily have turned the tables by besieging the English in their bastilles, they had no chance of success. If the Maréchal de Retz, with the Bretons, made an attack upon one fort, instead of helping him, the Maréchal de Saint-Sévère with the Gascons, went off in another direction. Of all the French commanders present in Orléans, the Bastard of Orléans was undoubtedly the most able; but no one would obey Dunois.

Each of the leaders—and all were little better than ferocious savages—fought in his own savage, untrained fashion, merely according to his own ideas, and for his own hand alone.

Had it not been for the coming of Joan, the siege therefore would not have lasted much longer, for the various French commanders, getting tired of starving in Orléans, would have marched out in turn between

the English bastilles, and gone off to ravage some section of the country where food was more plentiful.

The arrival of Joan supplied, however, a new element at Orléans—a supreme commander, who came with the mandate of Heaven, and who must, therefore, be obeyed. It was an age when men worshipped the Virgin more than God. Joan was a virgin, and by this time popularly supposed to be one sent from Heaven—in her person the greater number of these savage warriors recognised an avatar of the Blessed Mother of Christ. Therefore they were inclined to obey her, not as a woman, but as a saint.

That, with their narrow ideas, they yet endeavoured at first to trick her is nothing—that they soon obeyed her is evident.

Her power became so complete over these barbarous soldiers that they obeyed her even when she ordered them to send away their gay female companions, the face of one of whom Joan slapped violently, while upbraiding her.

She soon effected such a revolution in the morals and manners of the camp that men who never previously opened their lips without a blasphemy did not even venture to utter an oath in her presence. The story about her allowing the Gascon, La Hire, to swear by his walking-stick is no farce, but true. This ferocious brigand humbly begged her to allow him to swear by something.

“Very well, then,” said Joan; “you may swear by your stick.”

The extraordinary remarks and prayers of this irreligious Gascon have come down to us.

“If God transformed Himself into a man-at-arms He would be a pillager.”

And again, “Sire Dieu, I pray Thee to do for La Hire what La Hire would do for Thee if Thou wert a Captain, and La Hire were God!”

When Joan was able to subdue a ruffian like this, and to lead him, with all his fellows, to partake of the Holy Communion, must she not indeed have seemed to all to possess some supernatural qualities? Must not we, even in this sceptical age, still think that she was not as other women? And yet what great service was she rendering to France by relieving Orléans, and by putting upon the throne a King who was no better than his fellows? Why should we suppose, judging by the career of Charles VII., that an Almighty Power should have desired that Charles, rather than his nephew Henry VI., should become seated on the throne of France, which had been so ably occupied for a time by his father, Henry V.? The continued English Government of either Orléans or the whole of France would probably have given far greater security to life and property than did, subsequently, that of Charles VII. Thinking this out, and, moreover, the fact that no heavenly aid came to Joan in the end, when she most needed it, remembering also that Charles VII. never lifted a hand to save or ransom her, it becomes almost impossible for us to believe that Joan was either inspired or endowed with a divine mission. She was simply a good and extraordinary girl, with a great force of character, one who saw visions, and who succeeded for a time because she firmly believed in them herself.

Believing in her visions, her voices, of whatever

kind they may have been, this shrinking girl, who formerly blushed at a word, became endowed with the qualities of a leader, especially that of personal courage. Her good common sense was remarkable, and when it dictated a certain mode of action it proved successful—when others did distinctly that which she told them not to do, they failed.

Joan, moreover, knew her own limitations; the task which she had set herself to perform was to relieve Orléans first, then to crown the King. Having done this, she declined all further responsibility, and wished to go home. Had she been allowed to do so, she might have been provided with a husband, possibly after her feats a noble would have been glad to marry her; she might have been the mother of warlike children, to carry down her glorious name to posterity, while emulating their mother's noble deeds.

The voices, however, which in the first instance prompted her, evidently lost their power over her imagination; they were not loud enough to endow her with sufficient determination to resist those who insisted that she must continue to take a leading part in the war after her task was done. Therefore, for the brave and handsome girl there were to be no womanly joys, no husband, no children, no home! Instead she was, poor creature, to find herself deserted by all, heavenly and human alike. Deserted by her saints, by those whom she had come to save, by the wretched King whom she had placed upon his throne, by the ecclesiastics of the Church whose tenets she had upheld, the sole reward for her valour was that her tender limbs were consigned to the horrible flames in the market-place of Rouen!

As Joan, with her sacred banner deployed before her by her gentle page, proudly rode to Orléans, who could have anticipated for her such a terrible fate? French and English alike beheld her arrival with a superstitious dread. Dunois rode out with all his chivalry to meet her, for the English were not strong enough to prevent him ; moreover, she arrived by the southern side of the river, on which they were in the least force.

She met Dunois with the grandiloquent words that she came from the King of Heaven, with heavenly help sent at the request of Saint Louis (Louis IX.), and Saint Charlemagne. The King of the Heavens had, she told the Bastard, had pity on the town of Orléans, and had not willed that the enemy should, at the same time, have possession of the body of the Duc d'Orléans and of his city.

It was a beautiful spring evening in the last days of April as Joan rode into the city. Upon her journey thither, being alone with men, Joan had at first slept in her armour, from which her tender limbs suffered terribly ; she was now, however, received as a woman in the bed of Charlotte, a daughter of Millet, the Treasurer of the Duc d'Orléans.

She had brought a convoy of provisions with her, but, with the exception of two hundred men, the army which had escorted her and them did not remain, but left at once for Blois. In spite of the departure of these troops, burning with martial ardour, the young girl endeavoured at once to persuade those in the city to follow her in an attack on the English fortified posts. According to the subsequent deposition of Dunois, her strength and powers of

endurance were more than those of a woman : " She seemed, at the least, an angel, a creature devoid of physical needs. She remained at times a whole day on horseback, without dismounting or eating or drinking, except at night a little bread and wine mixed with water."

Not being allowed to attack immediately, Joan sent summonses to the English in the northern bastilles, and, crossing the bridge over the Loire, rode in person to summon Glansdale in the large southern fort to depart.

In their fear of the sorceress, the English abused her vilely ; Sir William Glansdale called out to her that she was " a cow-girl, a ribald woman, the prostitute of the Armagnacs ! " And he detained her Herald a prisoner.

Joan was not sufficiently a woman of the world to treat their insults with the contempt that they merited. They cut the poor girl to the quick, and she wept bitterly. That she had no personal animosity against the English is proved by the fact that she had written and asked them to join with the French in an expedition to Jerusalem, and thus these cutting words hurt her all the more. When she heard the vile expression applied to herself of " la putain des Armagnacs," she defended herself from the imputation, calling God to witness that she was no such thing.

When, however, she was informed that, thinking that to do so would break the power of her charm, Glansdale would burn her Herald, she regained her courage and threatened Glansdale with reprisals. Dunois had likewise some Heralds in his hands, and swore that he would kill them all.

The Herald was not burned, as, before taking so serious a step, Glansdale sent to consult the University of Paris about the matter of the efficacy of such a proceeding; and in the meantime Joan sent another Herald with a cartel of defiance to Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury. In this she told Talbot that, if he could take her, he could burn her and welcome.

Dunois, going off to fetch back the army from Blois, left Joan in command at Orléans, where all obeyed her and followed her wherever she rode. She visited the fortifications of the city, and then, still followed by a crowd containing many women and children, rode to have a good look at the various English bastilles in turn. The English, from their ramparts, observed the warrior maid with interest, but made no effort to molest her or her following.

While, in Orléans, the people were following Joan to the churches, and weeping with religious enthusiasm when she wept, at Blois Dunois met with resistance from the Archbishop of Reims, who would not at first send back the small army to Joan. He could not, however, help himself in the end, and Joan, followed by the priests and the people of the city, solemnly chanting hymns, went out and personally conducted this force into the city on May 4, 1429, the English again fearing to attack the witch.

Joan now found that the leaders were endeavouring to act without her, in the matter of attacking an English force reported as advancing under Sir John Fastolfe. She became angry with Dunois, and said to him: "Bastard, Bastard, if you do not inform me of the coming of Fastolfe, or if you let him pass without letting me know, I will have your head cut off!"

The leaders still sought to deceive her, but Joan, even while sleeping with Charlotte Millet, could not be deceived. She jumped up in her bed, declaring that French blood was flowing, called for her arms and horse, and, after scolding her page for leaving her in the dark, galloped off, only to meet many wounded Frenchmen being carried into the city.

Dunois, who had also not been informed of what was taking place, followed Joan. The fugitive French turned back, and, with Joan at their head, making a new attack upon the English fort from which they had been repulsed, took it by assault. During the combat, the first in which Joan was engaged, Talbot came with a relieving force to assist, but the victorious village-girl drove him back again to his lines.

While rescuing the English prisoners from her brutal followers, who would have cut their throats, Joan wept to see lying dead upon the field so many who had perished without confession. The next day she devoted to prayer and receiving the Communion, and while so employed those of the leaders who were jealous of Joan arranged again to deceive her, by making a different attack from that which they informed her they were about to make. Dunois, however, informed Joan of the real object of attack, which was the great Bastille Saint-Jean-le Blanc, situated to the south of the Loire, and the Pucelle was accordingly present to head the onslaught.

This second combat of Joan's proved to be a day of most determined fighting on both sides. The English had at first concentrated their forces, and then, after burning the bastille which was to be attacked, had strongly occupied two others, called

the Bastille des Augustins and the Bastille des Tournelles.

Joan headed the struggle at the Augustins, and, although it was eventually taken by her, she and La Hire were at first carried away back across the bridge of boats over the river by a large number of Frenchmen, who were driven back in a wild panic. She and La Hire extricated themselves, however, from the mass of fugitives, and, recrossing the river in boats with those whom they could rally, fell upon the seemingly victorious English in flank, and routed them.

The fort of the Tournelles could not, however, be taken before night fell, and now once more the leaders endeavoured to act without Joan, they wishing alone to have the honour of capturing this bastille, around which there had been a whole day's desperate fighting. In the evening of that day, a fast-day, during the whole of which Joan had been without food, the Council assembled without her; and then the brave girl was falsely informed that, although the bulk of the French troops had been left encamped for the night before Les Tournelles, no further attack would be made until reinforcements came. Once more, however, Joan's spirit of prophecy had come to her aid, and she speedily disconcerted the disloyal leaders.

Her Confessor, Frère Jean Pasquerel, deposed later that she met them calmly, with the words: "You have been in your council, and I in mine!"

Then she ordered Brother Pasquerel to call her at daybreak and not to leave her, adding, "I shall have plenty to do. Blood will flow from my body: I shall be wounded above the bosom."

We hope that the worthy Confessor was not merely drawing upon his imagination when recounting this incident, which is on a par with three or four already related in showing the girl's strange powers of divination. But, alas! if any or all of them as recorded were true, why did not her spirit of prophecy warn her, in time to avert them, of the more serious dangers awaiting her in the future?

We now must be allowed a seeming digression, although in fact it refers to the Pucelle. Many an Englishman, wandering in an out-of-the-way district of France, may remember to have had his ears shocked and astonished by being assailed with insulting cries of "Goddam!" from the village urchins. We ourselves in our childhood, so long ago as in the year 1862, can remember to have been repeatedly thus insulted by the street-boys of Dunkirk in French Flanders. Some eight or ten years later, while residing with a respectable Swiss family, we found it impossible to convince the members of that family that "Goddam" was not among Englishmen an expression so continually used that it might almost as well have been "Good morning"—indeed, to them it was almost synonymous with Englishman.

Those dwellers on the Continent who, not knowing the meaning of what they are saying, so blithely cry out "Goddam!" while meaning Englishman, would not, if asked, be in the least able to explain how the idea had been conceived, nor when it first originated. From a study of the history of Joan of Arc, we think that we could, however, enlighten them on the matter. That the expression must have been one commonly used by the English men-at-arms serving in the

European wars before the time of Joan of Arc becomes evident on reading the deposition made at Joan's trial by Colette, the wife of the Treasurer Millet, at whose house Joan resided in Orléans.

Upon the morning in May 1429 that Joan announced to her Confessor that she would be wounded, Madame Millet endeavoured to retain her in the house, by informing her that she had a fine fish to give her, which had just been caught in the Loire, and which was in the pink of condition. We are inclined to think that they must have had salmon or trout in the Loire in those days, as, had this denizen of the Loire been a mere plebeian pike, it would not have been in condition in May.

Whatever the fish, it was sufficiently attractive to excite Joan's interest, so much so that, after having admired it duly, she merrily remarked to the amiable Colette: "Keep it, I pray, until this evening. Then, when I recross the bridge after having taken Les Tournelles, I will bring you back a 'Godden' with me, and he shall eat his share of it."

As upon other occasions this word "Godden" (not "God-dam") is found in Joan's mouth when speaking of Englishmen, we hope that it will be conceded that we have proved our point.

Although duly awakened by her dutiful Chaplain, duly armed by her pages and mounted, with the honest Daulon in attendance to squire her to the field of battle, it was not without a struggle that Joan escaped from the city of Orléans. For at the Porte de Bourgogne, or Burgundy Gate, her way was blocked by the Sire de Gaucourt, the King's Grand Master. While Gaucourt very impolitely barred the

way, he refused to unbar the door for the passage of the Pucelle.

Joan threatened in vain to force the exit with her men-at-arms, for the Grand Master would not budge. A furious crowd, however, supported Joan, and, while the Grand Master narrowly escaped with his life, the guard under his command stood aside and allowed the gate to be forced.

In the ensuing assault upon the Bastille des Tournelles, after some furious fighting the French with Joan began to give way. Then, strong, lusty girl as she was, she seized a scaling-ladder, jumped down into the ditch of the work, put her ladder against the parapet and commenced to mount. An English archer at that moment drew on her from above, and, missing her head, shot Joan through the shoulder, a little above the bosom. She fell, and the English rushed down to secure her, but her people, rallying around Joan, managed to rescue her, carry her off, lay her on the grass, and remove her armour. The arrow had transfixed the shoulder ; but only when Joan saw how deep was the wound did she, like any other girl of her age, burst into tears. The arrow was pulled out, Joan regained her courage, had some oil applied to the wound, and confessed her sins to her Chaplain.

Joan refused to leave the field, but, while saying her prayers in a vineyard, was informed by Dunois that the assault had failed and that he was about to sound the order to retire. Joan begged him not to retreat, but to allow his men to rest and refresh themselves with food and drink ; and this was done. Then Joan, forgetting her wound, returned with them to the

assault, and at the same time Les Tournelles was attacked by another large party from the rear.

Thus hardly pressed at the end of this second day's fighting, the Englishmen in the bastille were still valiantly holding their own, and the French losses were very heavy, when Joan had an inspiration. Calling a Basque soldier to her, she told him to take her sacred banner from the hands of her squire Jean de Daulon and with it to touch the parapet of the English earth-work. "Then," she said, "you can enter the bastille ; there will be no more difficulty."

As Joan foretold, so matters were accomplished.

The valiant Basque leapt down into the ditch and struck the wall of the parapet with the great silken banner. Awe-stricken at beholding the image of God and his supporting angels so close to them, the wearied English soldiers defending that part of the parapet drew back. "Enter now!" cried Joan. With a rush, the assailants raised their scaling-ladders to the wall and poured into the fort. Inside, however, the fighting continued hand to hand, in every square yard of ground, in every corner.

Presently all of the inhabitants of Orléans, hastily repairing a broken arch of the bridge, came swarming over. The first to cross, on a mere gutter-spout, was a Knight of Saint John of Jerusalem, in full armour. When the English saw the multitude advancing they lost heart and head and cried out that the Archangel Michael was heading a host to assist Joan. They broke their ranks and scarcely made any more defence. Sir William Glansdale was, with others, escaping to another small bastille by a wooden bridge, when a cannon-ball broke it and he fell into the river. Then

Joan, who saw him drowning, cried out to him, "Glansdale! Glansdale! you called me prostitute! Ah! how I pity your unfortunate soul!" While the English leader was drowning, more and more men were pouring in over all sides of the earthworks, when the whole of the defenders of the Bastille des Tournelles, the greater number of whom were English, were stricken down and put to the sword. Not one was left alive for Joan to take home with her to share the awaiting fish dinner, and there was now not an Englishman left on the southern bank of the Loire.

CHAPTER XXII

Joan Fights, Conquers—and Fails

1429—1430

ON the day after the fall of Les Tournelles and the massacre of its defenders, all of the English in the forts on the northern side of the Loire evacuated their positions. Under the command of Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, and the Earl of Suffolk, they marched out and retreated in an orderly manner, while leaving behind them their sick, their prisoners, and their artillery.

Joan had entered Orléans on April 29, and it was Sunday, May 8, 1429, when the English thus abandoned the siege, acknowledging themselves to have been defeated by a mere ignorant peasant-girl, one who did not know A from B. Joan gave orders that, as they retired voluntarily there was to be no pursuit, but, as they were moving out from their positions on that Sabbath morn, the Pucelle caused an altar to be raised in full sight of the retiring foe, and at this a solemn Mass was celebrated for the deliverance of the city of Orléans. The result of this remarkable success was that Joan's power became immensely increased. While many still believed that her victories were the result of her intimate con-

nection with the Devil, many others that she was inspired from on High, all alike were convinced that this young woman, who had worked such miracles, must be endowed with some kind of supernatural faculties.

It was not likely that those of the defenders of Orléans who had been present in the city from the commencement of the seven months' siege, were going to confess that it was owing to their own ineptitude that they had failed themselves to drive off the besiegers. Again, it was not likely that the English, whose prestige was so greatly lowered at the end of that siege, where until Joan's arrival they had had it all their own way, would confess that they had been defeated in an ordinary manner. Therefore, all alike, of both parties, agreed that Joan was possessed of *something*, be it the saints of heaven or be it Satan, lord of hell.

All of the Christian world of the day began to give itself over to writing learned disquisitions on the subject of the Maid of Orléans. Arguments for and against her were published broadcast; but even those written by the Priesthood of the Burgundian faction were, on the whole, more favourable to Joan than otherwise.

Meanwhile, as the English had never as yet had the good sense to cause the consecration of their infant Henry VI., it was evident that the throne of France remained unoccupied, that it lay in the grasp of him who could the sooner get himself crowned. When we say that it was evident we mean that it was evident to one person only—to all the rest of the interested parties, English, Burgundian, or French,

it was not evident at all. The one person to whom it was evident was the one who alone possessed common sense—namely, Joan of Arc, the maid from the village of Dom-Remy, on the borders of Lorraine.

The mixed councils of those opposed to Joan resulted therefore in delay. The favourite La Trémouille recommended the siege of various small places near the Loire, while the Duc d'Alençon demanded the immediate reconquest of his town of Alençon in Normandy. It is related that at the siege of Alençon, when the Duc was afraid of commencing the assault, Joan said to this Prince of the Blood, "Ah! gentil Duc, art thou frightened? Dost not know that I have promised thy wife to bring thee back to her safe and sound?"

The tide of success now swept on for France. The Earl of Suffolk was wounded and taken prisoner in a place called Jargeau, while Talbot was unable to reinforce Beaugency before it also fell into the hands of his enemies.

Meanwhile the Constable de Richemont, the enemy of the King's favourites, being jealous of the reputation of Joan, determined, in spite of all who opposed him, to emerge from his sulky retirement, and to take a hand in the game of hunting down the small English forces left in the field.

Talbot was burning to retrieve, by a successful battle, his reputation lost before Orléans. He had been joined by Sir John Fastolfe, the conqueror at the Battle of the Herrings, and together they were wandering about in the province of Beauce, which lay between Orléans and Paris. In this thickly wooded country, as some members of the advanced

guard of Richemont's army were galloping after a stag, they suddenly discovered Talbot's forces, of whose whereabouts they had been unaware. A quarrel at once took place between Talbot and Fastolfe. While this latter strongly urged that, with a beaten and discouraged force, it would be wiser to stand strictly on the defensive, the former was for making an attack upon the pursuing French forces. Meanwhile, none of the usual precautions of fixing in the ground their sharp-pointed stakes were taken by the English archers, and the troops remained on the line of march as their leaders continued their angry discussion. In the midst of this the French men-at-arms arrived in force, and charged the unprepared English, who, although Talbot made a furious resistance, were cut to pieces, and their leader taken, two thousand of the English being killed.

From this field of Patay Sir John Fastolfe, and many others, fled. He was the Duke of Bedford's Grand Maître d'Hôtel, and a Knight of the Garter, from which Order he was degraded on account of his conduct during this affair. Had Talbot but listened to his sensible advice matters might, however, have gone all the other way, and, this being recognised later, Sir John was rehabilitated in his dignities.

The cruelties practised on the English prisoners of Patay, which battle took place on June 28, 1429, caused the tears of Joan to flow. With horror the humane girl beheld the French soldiers knocking on the head all of those who were not in a position to pay their ransom.

Seeing one of these unfortunate men fall dying, Joan leapt from her horse, held his head in her lap,

called a priest to hear his confession, and supported him in her arms until he died.

Notwithstanding the presence of the Constable, it was to Joan that the people ascribed the victory of Patay, after which recruits flocked to her standard from all parts of the country. She now determined accordingly, in spite of the continued opposition of interested parties, to carry Charles VII. with her through English and Burgundian France to Reims. The indolence of the Prince himself was the greatest obstacle in the way, but when her forces had swelled to twelve thousand men, who echoed Joan's desire, the Dauphin was no longer able to resist the popular cry that he should be consecrated and anointed King.

Just two months later than she had reached Orléans, Joan started from Gien with Charles, and, moving in a northerly direction, she passed by, without attacking it, the town of Auxerre, held by a garrison of Burgundians. Troyes, the place where the treaty disinheriting the Dauphin had been signed, was next reached by Joan's army, which was without artillery. The city was strongly held by both English and Burgundians, and all of the French leaders, with one exception, wished to give it a wide berth. An old Armagnac, named Maçon, however, argued against this in the Council. He said that it was not on force of arms but on Joan's promises that all relied in this march to Reims; if Joan therefore said that Troyes could be taken it would be taken! Called to the Council, Joan first declared that a delay of three days would be sufficient, then, correcting herself, asserted boldly, "You can take the town to-morrow!"

With her standard in her hand she boldly led the way to the ditch without the walls, and ordered her men to fill it up. Every kind of portable object, such as doors, tables, fascines, beams, was hurled into the ditch. In spite of the artillery-fire and arrows of the garrison, this became filled up so fast that both the garrison and the inhabitants of the town began to imagine that they saw Saint Michael and all of Joan's saints aiding in the work. Around the magical standard their dazzled eyes beheld also swarms of golden butterflies. This settled the matter! and accordingly the commanders of the garrison sent Heralds to demand favourable terms for the surrender of the city. The advisers of Charles, glad to accept any terms to ensure such an easy victory, agreed incontinently, and without consulting Joan, to allow all those of the garrison to march out with everything that they possessed. When, in accordance with these easy terms, Joan beheld the English and Burgundians departing with long strings of French prisoners she could not bear the sight. She insisted that the King should pay the ransom of every one of these prisoners. How the money was procured to do this is not recorded, but the captives were all bought off, and the English and Burgundian soldiers, glad to be rid of them, marched off joyfully with their pockets full of money.

Eight days later, after first writing to Duc Philippe of Burgundy, to beg him to bury the hatchet and be reconciled to the Prince who had slain his father, Joan caused Charles VII. to be consecrated and crowned at Reims (July 17, 1429).

With all the ancient ceremonial, and with the

holy oil preserved at the Abbey of Saint-Remy, the solemn rites were accomplished. At their conclusion Joan threw herself at the knees of the Prince whom she had made King, and wept while she solemnly announced to him that she had accomplished God's will, and that now the Kingdom of France was his indeed.

All present relieved their wrought-up feelings by following Joan's example and bursting into tears upon this joyous occasion, the result of the miracles of a simple peasant-maiden.

After the ceremony, this maiden, who had become the leading figure in France, told the Archbishop of Reims that, having done that which our Lord had commanded her, she would prefer to return to her home and keep the sheep with her brothers and sisters. She does not, however, appear to have made any serious effort to depart, and the subsequent march in which she took part with the King across the north of France was a triumphal procession, without any opposition. As the march was continued into Picardy, halts were made at all the great towns, which opened their gates, while solemn services of thanksgiving were celebrated at Soissons and Laon.

In Paris at this time the Duke of Bedford was in a situation of considerable distress for want of funds. So short of money was he that he was unable to pay the Magistrates composing the Parliament of Paris, unable also to buy the parchments which would be necessary for the inscription of the registers should Henry VI. make a Royal entry into the city.

He sent for the Duc de Bourgogne, but although Philippe came to him he brought to his brother-in-law

but little assistance in the way of men. After having openly repeated the story of his wrongs before the Regent and the assembled notables, Philippe again departed, leaving a few Picard men-at-arms behind him, in return for whom Bedford was compelled to mortgage the city of Meaux to the Duc de Bourgogne.

There now seemed no hope for Bedford but in his rich uncle, the Cardinal-Bishop of Winchester, whom he was constantly pressing to come at once to Paris, and to bring the infant Henry VI. with him.

The greedy Henry Beaufort would not come, however, without conditions by which he could still more line his pockets, and he was speculating on the delay while engaging ships for the passage.

At the beginning of July he signed a treaty settling the conditions upon which he consented to aid his great-nephew the King, but until after the crowning of Charles VII. the Cardinal still remained in England while fighting with his nephew Gloucester.

Over this nephew, the Protector, the Cardinal had by this time obtained the whip-hand, even to the extent of succeeding in cutting down his salary. This the Cardinal had been able to accomplish by filling the Council with ecclesiastics. The Archbishop of Canterbury and half a dozen Bishops, all creatures of the rich and powerful Cardinal, therefore at this time formed the real Royalty of England. To such an extent had this become evident that, although there were strict laws in England against Freemasonry, the Archbishop of Canterbury in this year, 1429, founded a Lodge of Freemasons, of which he constituted himself the head.

The Cardinal was not content with humbling his

nephew the Protector in England, but was desirous of also reducing the Regent of France to a position subservient to himself.

To this condition was Bedford actually reduced when compelled to beg his uncle Henry Beaufort, time after time, to bring an army to his assistance, in order that he might crown Henry VI. in France.

The Cardinal had sent the seven-year-old Henry over to Calais early in the year, but although he had made ready an army, one collected in England on the pretence of undertaking an expedition for the Pope against the Hussites in Bohemia, it was months before he made up his mind to employ it in France.

At length, however, the Cardinal came to Paris, with his army and the young Henry VI., the entry being attended by great magnificence. Bedford went off with this army at once to protect Normandy, and was engaged in several slight encounters with the forces of Charles VII. before the latter gave him the slip and marched off to lay siege to Paris.

This move was directly in opposition to the wishes of Joan, who declared that her voices had warned her to go no farther than Saint-Denis, the town which was the burial-place of the French Kings. Joan was, however, overruled, although, as the English held the Seine in force, both above and below Paris, and the people in the neighbourhood still in the main were favourable to their cause, the chance of success was but slight for Charles.

To take a huge city like Paris it would be necessary to starve it out, which was under the circumstances impossible. No sudden assault was likely to succeed, as the greater number of the inhabitants of Paris, who

had long since become compromised with the dominant English, were also Burgundian and anti-Armagnac. There was nothing that the Parisians dreaded, therefore, more than the possible sack of the city by the Armagnac faction, of which the newly crowned King was the head.

Nevertheless, in a furious assault headed by the Pucelle the outer ditch of one of the works was captured. There were two ditches, and Joan crossed over from the first to the second, but, whereas the first ditch had been dry, Joan was brought up short on finding the second one full of water.

Under a pitiless rain of arrows, the brave girl held her ground, while crying to those around her to bring fascines to fill up the ditch. She calmly took the depth of the water with a spear, and declared that to do this was quite possible.

There were, however, but few of her followers around her when an archer shot her, where she was unprotected by her armour, on the inside of her thigh. Joan was by this time too old a warrior to retreat for a mere arrow-wound, as she had done when before Orléans. Holding her ground, she remained to encourage the assailants, until the loss of blood compelled her to retire and take shelter in the outer ditch; nor could she be persuaded to move from thence until about eleven o'clock at night.

Meanwhile the attack proved a complete failure, at least fifteen hundred men being left dead and dying before the walls upon that unfortunate day, September 8, from which the downfall of Joan may be said to have commenced.



HENRY VI. OF ENGLAND.

The people of Paris of all classes were the more infuriated against the witch for her having delivered her attack on the holy day of the Nativity of Nôtre-Dame. To see what they thought about her, we have to study the "Journal of the Bourgeois de Paris," in the following paragraph :

"They were full of such great evil and such unbelief that upon the word of a creature in the form of a woman that they had with them, that they called the Maid (though what she was God wot!) they made a charm to assault Paris on the day of the Nativity of Nôtre-Dame."

Poor Joan! although she had endeavoured to prevent the attack, she had to bear the blame of friend as well as foe.

When she failed to succeed, those who had previously looked upon her with no very friendly eye, such as the Archbishop of Reims and others, declared that, after all, it was more probably the spirit of the Evil One than that of God that she had within her. In spite of Joan, who, having put her hand to the plough, was unwilling to turn back, this Archbishop, Regnault de Chartres, who was the King's Chancellor, treated with the defenders of Paris, among whom was the Duc de Bourgogne, and made a truce with them.

During the ensuing winter, although but poorly supported, the maid of Dom-Remy performed some daring feats while besieging various towns. Her squire, Daulon, deposed at her trial that at the siege of one of these places the retreat had been sounded when he found her almost alone before the walls. To his question why she remained thus alone, she

replied: "Not so, that she had fifty thousand of her people with her, and that they would not leave her until she had taken the said town. He said that, whatever she may have said, there were at the time not more than four or five with her."

With the few that she had, Joan delivered an assault upon this place, Saint-Pierre-le Moustier, and she took it! We can only imagine that, after Joan had gained the crest of the walls, some of those who had retreated must have returned to the support of the wonderful girl.

At another place, called La Charité, which was held by the English, Joan failed to find any support, as all of the French with her took panic, ran away, and abandoned the siege altogether.

Observing that the English were gradually weakening, the astute Duc Philippe now determined to help them in earnest, with the intention of keeping for Burgundy, not for England, any places that he might capture in Picardy. He was extremely wealthy, and made as much use of his gold as of his men-at-arms. Thus, by bribing the Governor of Soissons, he soon obtained possession of that important city. He then laid siege to Compiègne, of which place, although the Governor was also willing to be bribed, the people, who were Armagnac to the core, were not. Joan contrived to throw herself into Compiègne with a small reinforcement. No sooner was she within the walls than she was out again, heading a violent sortie which surprised the besiegers. Broken at first in the surprise, the Burgundians rallied and pushed the garrison back towards the bridge over the river. The bridge was obstructed, possibly owing to those

who had crossed first having closed the barrier on the other side, or possibly simply because the exit was too small; anyway, Joan gallantly remained behind to cover the retreat of the others.

Being mounted, it was easy enough, from her white armour, to recognise Joan. The Burgundians surrounded her, and, although she cut and slashed away like any other trooper, she was dragged from the saddle, thrown to the ground, and held there until, her struggles being exhausted, she had to yield to the superior strength of the man who held her down. This man was either the Bastard of Vendôme or an archer of Picardy; whoever he was, he sold his prisoner to a great noble, Jean de Ligny, of the House of Luxembourg. The date of Joan's capture was May 23, 1430.

What a glorious victory! An army of Burgundians, with whom were also some English, had, after being first compelled to fly before her onslaught, captured the witch, the sorceress whose name alone for the last year had inspired them with terror. Few, if any, of those with that army had ever seen her face. They crowded around her, and, after removing her helmet, her cuirass, gazed on her at their leisure. What did they behold? Merely a girl between eighteen and nineteen years of age, blooming in the early flower of womanhood. Was this, then, the sinister author of such terrible incantations? She did not look so bad; surely there must have been some mistake somewhere? Well, as even Saint Anthony was sorely tempted by female devils who looked no worse than this one, it might be as well to lock her up, and securely. Accordingly, after all had gazed their fill

upon the girl, who merely looked like any other girl when deprived of her armour and weapons, locked up she was.

But what were Joan's thoughts while being gazed on and talked over? And what, moreover, did she now think of her Archangel and her saints?

CHAPTER XXIII

How Joan was Sold

1430

THERE can be but little doubt of the fact that, during her year of almost continuous warfare, the character of Joan changed to a certain extent. As she became more of a Captain, the edge of her womanly nature became blunted, and certainly that of her saintliness. A nurse employed on the battle-field becomes accustomed to sights of blood, and hardened. We who write these lines remember one such, a day or two after the Battle of Tel-el-Kebir, after roughly throwing a hospital orderly on one side and abusing him for a timorous fool, boldly plunging her hand into a gaping wound which the trembling orderly had not the nerve to touch. The girl did not look older than was Joan of Arc at the time of her captivity, but for her the sight of blood had ceased to have any terrors whatever.

Thus was it with Joan. When she first assumed the sword of Sainte Catherine, she declared that nothing would induce her to use it. That sword, as will be remembered, became broken; its virginal steel, employed in a virginal hand, could not stand the shock of being employed in the ignoble use of striking

a prostitute, at whose presence in the camp its pure-minded wearer had become enraged. Later, Joan spoke with complacency of the sword which she had wielded at Compiègne.

Excellent, she declared, had she found its blade, both for striking and thrusting. When a woman has reached the stage of being able to speak as a connoisseur of the weapon with which she delivers death-dealing blows to her fellow-mortals, the bloom has been rubbed off the peach—she is less womanly, above all, less saintly.

One of the subjects of reproach brought by her enemies against Joan was that of delivering over to be hanged a Burgundian Captain, whom she had herself taken prisoner. He was, it is true, a brigand after the type of the Armagnac La Hire, one whose name, which was Franquet d'Arras, was detested in the districts which he terrorised, and yet public opinion was hardly in favour of Joan in the matter. She had at first kept this man with the intention of exchanging him against some prisoner of equal rank in the hands of the enemy, and had therefore in all probability promised him his freedom. Nevertheless, when the King's Bailli demanded him at her hands she gave over this prisoner taken in honourable war, to be hanged as though he were a common criminal, taken red-handed after the committal of his crime. However much this Franquet may have deserved his doom, Joan was living in the company of many who equally merited the rope, and it seems to detract from the holiness of her character that it should have been a notorious enemy whom she thus handed over to an ignoble death.

But how, it will be asked, was it possible for one exalted from her low estate to be the peer, the commander of Princes and Seigneurs, to retain her original simplicity of mind? Having been endowed with riches, ennobled, enjoying the favour of the King, she became herself on the level of those Seigneurs among whom she lived; their thoughts became her thoughts, their ways, to a certain extent, her ways—it was impossible for Joan, the leader of armies, to remain Joan the simple village-girl. The very fact that she was constantly compelled to pit her wits against those around her, anxious to take every advantage of her simplicity, should it become apparent, made it the more incumbent upon her to cast it off the better to meet the jealous nobles her fellows upon equal terms. And thus, more than ever, Joan the woman and Joan the saint was compelled, by the force of circumstances, to become Joan the courtier.

Having become Joan the noble and the courtier, she is found, like any other Seigneur of her day, pushing her own especial interests, asking for and obtaining favours for those near and dear to her. While one of her brothers was raised from his position as a peasant to fill the responsible post of Provost of Vaucouleurs, for Dom-Remy, the village of her birth, Joan obtained the privilege of the remission of taxation.

Thus, having become great, we find the saint becoming Seigneur. Not that we blame her for it—she surely had as much, if not more than any one in France, the right to those rewards which from the very earliest times have been the meed of the successful warrior. Is it not, even in our own day, the

custom to shower upon the lucky General, Barony and Viscounty, even Dukedom? likewise generous gifts amounting to £100,000 at a time? Consult the Peerage! the titles, if not the money grants, will be found there recorded.

Again, do not the brothers of the successful General become Generals in turn, when others, equally if not more deserving, are left, like the little boat in the race—a long way astern! Consult the Army List for the reply!

There is therefore no reproach against Joan if she did the same as the rest; we only assert that, by becoming one of the class which sought temporal advantages, favours other than those from Heaven, her pristine purity of mind could not remain at its original standard.

Another temptation to which Joan was exposed, and which was for her itself a danger, was that, in her saintliness, the people treated her as a saint or a prophet. She was asked to foretell the future, people touched her on her horse and trappings that they might draw virtue from her. To her, as to Christ of old, women brought children that she might lay her hands upon them. How difficult must it have been for this young woman not to believe that she was indeed all that the simple-minded folk imagined her to be and told her that she was! How hard, indeed, for her not to have too exalted an idea of herself!

Here, however, Joan seems not to have failed; her most excellent sense sustained her, prevented her from the folly of imagining herself to be possessed of divine powers, save perchance with reference to the raising of the siege of Orléans and the crowning of

the King. The deposition of Marguerite la Touroulde, with whom she stayed in that city, shows that at Bourges, when the women brought her crosses and rosaries in order that she might touch them, Joan said laughingly, "Touch them yourself, my good Marguerite ; it will do them just as much good."

Thus her common sense came to her aid and enabled her to resist those dictates of vanity from which scarcely another in her singular position could have escaped. It was this very common sense which, by enabling Joan to give wise replies to the sophistries of her judges, made them so hate her. They could not treat her as a crazy being, one not worthy of being listened to, when she closed their mouths upon their absurd questions with some reply which made evident their absurdity, and showed to all present that they were the fools, not she.

It was evident, from the time of her capture, that Joan would have but little chance of escaping alive from the hands of her enemies. Even at the time of the consecration of Charles at Reims she knew her constant danger. Her parents, who had come from Dom-Remy to be present at the ceremony, then asked her if she did not fear. "I only fear treason," was her reply ; and she had good reason for her fear.

It does not seem in the least unlikely that it was as the result of this very treason that, the bridge becoming blocked at Compiègne, Joan was left behind and captured. After taking the Holy Communion in the church at Compiègne before the fatal sortie, she declared to those around her : "There is a man who has sold me. I shall be betrayed and given over to death."

Why, indeed, should not the Duc de Bourgogne, who had been able to buy the Governor of the city of Soissons, have been able to buy, not one, but a hundred men in Compiègne? It would have been an easy matter for the Duc to win over some of those in responsible positions, able with their bribes to procure others to help to close the gates behind Joan, when, as they knew she would do, she sallied forth to battle. That others should suffer and be caught outside as well as Joan would matter little to these. If not the Duc de Bourgogne, why should not the gold of the English, of the rich Cardinal of Winchester, have been thus employed? Surely to the English the downfall of Joan had at this time become an absolute necessity. To our mind, there was something very suspicious in connection with that block at the bridge, but nothing that could not be easily accounted for by Burgundian or English gold.

In what manner was Joan treated after being captured by the enemies who had feared her as a witch and hated her for her success? It is bad enough for a man to be taken by the foe; but for a woman—one who, forgetting her sex, has taken arms in hand to kill men, how much worse! Would not the revengeful captors be apt to heap every indignity upon her, to show that she was but a woman after all, to humiliate the virgin whose great boast, publicly proclaimed, was her maidenhood? We know what the times were; was not Joan's risk of outrage far greater, therefore, even than of death? It was a period when, although there still remained that pretence of chivalry which included the protection of the honour of women and *damoiselles*, that honour was, as a fact, treated

as a mere negligible quantity. We well know the manners, the sensuality of the great ones of the earth during the fifteenth century on the Continent. That the most powerful Princes led lives of the greatest immorality is evident, if only from the fact that Philippe de Bourgogne had so many natural children, while the dignitaries of the Church were no better. A priestly relation of the ruler of Burgundy, Jean de Bourgogne, the Prince-Bishop of Cambrai, seems to have openly gloried in his vice, since he was served at the altar of his cathedral by thirty-six illegitimate sons. One of the border rulers of the day outdid either of these neighbouring Princes—this was the Comte de Clèves, who boasted of the paternity of sixty-three children born out of wedlock. Never, indeed, was there a period when in France and the neighbouring States men gave a more unbridled rein to the gratification of their evil passions.

Things being thus, what were the chances for Joan, after having fallen into the hands of a band of savages, of being able to preserve her honour? Is it any wonder that the trembling girl clung with desperation, even although to do so were to cause her death, to the man's clothing which was her greatest protection?

The ecclesiastics who tried her later pretended to see but an additional proof of Joan's sorcery in her insistence in thus clinging to male attire; but they knew better. Then, in order to remove her defence and subject her to the last outrage, they took away her man's clothing, after which this last outrage was certainly attempted, if not accomplished, upon the poor, helpless girl, who was attached by a chain to a

beam in her prison. It was to the interest of her inhuman Judges to prove that Joan was in league with the Devil, but it had previously been publicly stated by the Archbishop of Embrun that the Devil could make no compact with a pure maiden. To rob her of her purity, an English noble is said to have entered her chamber. Joan's Confessor left two statements on this subject, from revelations made to him by the unhappy girl herself. These statements vary on the main point of the actual outrage. In the first the Confessor records: "On l'avoit tourmentée violement en la prison, molestée, battue, et déchoullée, et qu'un millourt [milord] d'Angleterre l'avoit forcée." The second deposition of Frère Pasquerel, which is recorded in Latin, runs: "Eam *temptavit* vi opprimere"—only the attempt being stated. In both depositions, however, it becomes evident that the poor girl was cruelly beaten by the would-be ravisher.

When subjected to these horrors and cruelties, is it any wonder that Joan resumed the male attire which was intentionally left temptingly near her?

Whatever may have been the actual facts of the incident above recorded, we are inclined to think that the priest Pasquerel was actuated by his animus against the English in representing an English noble, a "milord," as having been miscreant enough thus to play into the hands of the cruel French ecclesiastics, headed by a French Bishop, who sought thus to deprive a pure maid of her defence against Satan. We know that she was left alone in her prison with three of the ruffianly soldiers of the day, common men, and it is far more probable that these it was who were instigated to the commission of the crime.

These events do not, however, bear upon the treatment of Joan when, after a violent struggle, she was captured by a member of the Burgundian force. How long did she remain in the hands of this man-at-arms before she was purchased from her captor by Jean de Ligny, and to what amount of insult was she subjected when, deprived of her armour, she was at the mercy of the brutal soldiery who were restrained by no laws of chivalry? We can imagine the coarse laughter, the vulgar sarcasm, the enforced kisses of these bloody men in their moment of triumph.

Once in the hands of the Duc de Ligny, we have no cause to imagine that Joan was subjected to ill-treatment. It was to his interest to protect her, for she would prove a powerful factor in his hands in the pursuit of his ambitious views. He was a vassal of the Duc de Bourgogne, and, just as his master was in his greed seizing upon Brabant, while sacrificing the rights of his wards, who were the rightful heirs, so also had the Duc Jean de Ligny an ambition to realise.

Although of very high birth, being connected with the Emperor Henry VII. and with the King of Bohemia, Jean was the younger son of a younger son. His father was Jean, Seigneur de Beaurevoir, who had himself been the son of Gui, Comte de Ligny. Being thus nothing but the cadet of a very noble house, Jean de Ligny, who had his way to make in the world, had succeeded in getting himself adopted as her heir by his rich great-aunt, the proprietress of the Counties of Ligny and Saint-Pol.

As the aunt was on the point of death and his elder brother disputed his succession, it became im-

perative upon Jean to obtain the active support of his Suzerain, the Duc Philippe, at whose beck and call he humbly stood.

Having obtained possession of Joan's person, he knew that, in order to retain his favour, he would do wisely to give her up only to his Suzerain, who could make what bargain he liked in turn with the English before yielding to them the captive girl whom they hated worse than the hell from which they said she came.

In the meantime the English, who were determined to have Joan at once, first endeavoured to bribe and then threatened Jean de Ligny. They wished to wreak their vengeance at once, and, by burning her as a witch, to prove that Charles VII. had consorted with the Evil One, that his so-called consecration had been merely the act of Satan. Jean, having locked Joan up in a tower called Beaulieu, in Picardy, found that he was in great danger from the English, who threatened to capture this tower, and to take the girl from him by force.

To lose Joan at such a juncture would mean ruin instead of fortune for the young noble of Luxembourg. He determined to disappoint the English, and, as he owned a castle near Cambrai, in the territory of the Empire, called Beaufort, he suddenly sent the young woman off to this place with a strong escort.

The English might now rage as they pleased, the girl was safe from their clutches, and Jean would at his leisure make his own terms with his liege lord, the Duc de Bourgogne, on whose behalf he retained her in security.

The English had been beaten on several occasions

in fair fight since Joan had taken up arms against them, and these defeats had in a measure been caused by the superstitious awe with which the soldiery regarded the young peasant of Dom-Remy, and the sacred standard which waved in front of her in the moment of conflict. When Joan had been taken, the English Government of the Cardinal and his Bishops plainly saw that it would be necessary to utterly discredit her victories, to prove that she was a mere limb of Satan in order to show that God was not, as people said, on the side against them. If this could be done, then the people of France would say that they had been in error, would own that the Devil had, after all, been on the side of a presumptuous and irreligious strumpet, and had enabled her to work wonders by horrid charms and wicked incantations.

As after the arrival of Winchester in France the war still dragged on, and he found that money was getting short, he began to feel that he there presented but a ridiculous figure, unable to accomplish anything—not even the Coronation of Henry VI. He had, for a wonder, been spending a considerable quantity of his own ill-earned cash since crossing the Channel, and this, above all things, went to his heart, and determined him as soon as possible to crush the witch who by her sorceries had cost him so much money.

If only he could obtain possession of her person, he would hand her over to the Church—the French Church. He had ready to his hand a French Bishop who would suit his purpose admirably, one prepared even to lick his boots if so ordered. This prelate

was Pierre Cauchon, the Bishop of Beauvais, a man of considerable parts, who lived at the Cardinal's table.

Cauchon was of the Burgundian faction; he had indeed been formerly, as a Doctor of the University, one of the ardent supporters of the Cabochiens of Paris, from which place he had been hunted out upon the occasion of the Armagnac reaction.

Under the Burgundian Duke he had been able to return to Paris, and then had been given the See of Beauvais, which town he had held for the Regent Bedford until, upon the fall of Orléans, the people of Beauvais had opened their gates to Charles VII.

Cauchon then went to England, and, the better to pay his court to the Cardinal of Winchester, learned to speak the English language. The Cardinal, seeing how useful this clever ex-Doctor of the University might become to him, wrote and proposed Cauchon to the Pope for the Archbishopric of Rouen, which was about to be vacated. Unfortunately, the Pope did not hurry himself to confer the appointment, and, owing to the divisions between the University of Rouen and that of Paris, Rouen also did not support Cauchon's nomination.

While waiting for something to turn up to his advantage, the Bishop of Beauvais remained at Rouen as the hanger-on of the Cardinal and his humble slave.

Of Rouen, which had remained an English city, the Earl of Warwick, the Governor and Preceptor of Henry VI., was the ruling Captain. Under his thumb in that place he had the Vicar of the Inquisi-



JOAN OF ARC.

From a Painting by M. Raymond Balze.

tion in France, and when Jean de Ligny and the Duc de Bourgogne showed but little inclination to hand over the person of the captive Joan, Warwick caused the Vicar, who was but a humble monk, to write and demand her surrender in the name of the Inquisition.

The Duke of Bedford caused the University of Paris to write to the same effect, although, as that body was in violent discussion with the Pope on the question of episcopal benefices, it was not inclined to favour the Papal Inquisition where Joan was concerned.

A commission of Bishops was also the idea of the Cardinal of Winchester; but he had to catch Joan first before he could try her for sorcery, and Ligny and Bourgogne hung on to her tight. While waiting for these to deliver her over, in order that there should be no divided authority, Cauchon was caused to write to the King (Henry VI.) and represent that the spot where Joan had been taken was on the boundaries of his diocese, and that therefore he claimed to be her Judge. To this the King replied, in a Royal letter to the University of Rouen, that the Bishop of Beauvais and the Vicar of the Inquisition should combine forces and try the sacrilegious girl together.

This decision appeared to give general satisfaction, but, as it was impossible to commence a trial without a prisoner, Cauchon, the future Judge, went off in person with letters from Bedford and Winchester to the Ducs de Bourgogne and de Ligny.

While representing his right to jurisdiction as Bishop, which was false, as Joan had not been actually taken in his See, Cauchon fulfilled also another rôle

—that of purchaser. He bargained for Joan's person, offering an income of three hundred livres yearly to the Bastard of Vendôme, and the sum of six thousand livres at first to Ligny and Bourgogne. These sums not being entertained, the Bishop of Beauvais raised his price to ten thousand livres, which was, he said, as much as, according to the customs of France, would be given for a King's ransom. As these offers did not appear sufficiently tempting, England put on the screw in another manner, and with success. When, on July 19, 1430, the English merchants were forbidden to traffic with Flanders, Philippe, as Comte de Flandre, was brought to his knees! All opposition was withdrawn, and the sale of Joan was agreed to.

CHAPTER XXIV

Joan in her Chains

1430—1431

DURING the months of negotiation, from the end of May, when Joan was taken prisoner, until October 26, when her ransom was paid to Jean de Ligny, what was the man doing for whose sake Joan had left her peaceful life at Dom-Remy on the Meuse? Surely Charles VII., who had plenty of prisoners in his hands whom he could offer in exchange for the girl who had given him his Crown, was making arrangements to carry out some such exchange? Or perhaps he, too, was treating for a ransom, realising the value to his arms of the leader whom he had lost, offering a sum which was even greater than a King's ransom for the brave maiden who had consecrated him a Monarch.

Nothing of the kind! Charles VII., miserable wretch that he was, never showed by any sign that he gave Joan so much as a thought. He had recently, through his Chancellor, the Archbishop of Reims, been making some negotiations having reference to a truce or peace, but in them there was not a single word concerning the young girl. Not the faintest effort was made for Joan, who had reassured the doubting by declaring his legitimacy, brought him

from dishonour to honour, saved him, given him everything, placed him on the throne when he was little better than an outcast, or a dog without a kennel.

Seeing in Charles such a miserable ingrate, does it not appear as if Joan were mistaken from the first? Surely, the Archangel Michael, Sainte Catherine and Sainte Marguerite, Saint Louis and Saint Charlemagne, must all have forgotten whom they were talking about, when they urged her to risk her life and honour for the elevation of such a despicable wretch as this Charles! Possibly, coming to earthly regions from the realms of Eternity, where to-morrow is as yesterday, these well-meaning saints had miscalculated the date altogether, and were thinking of another Charles the Dauphin—the poor little boy, Charles Louis, who died of starvation and ill-treatment in the Temple in Paris nearly four hundred years later. If so, alas! owing to their error, no celestial aid came opportunely to set that tortured child upon his throne, or to save his young life, which was slowly kicked and beaten out of his little emaciated body!

Had it been but for a man that was a man, some one noble, a being with an idea of right and wrong or of humanity, that Joan was to be called upon to suffer, there might have been some sense in her apparitions—her voices.

But for a Charles VII.! Maybe that those who declared that the visions were those of maleficent spirits were not so far wrong, after all, since the result of their appearance was, after many months spent in solitude and base neglect, merely to cause the most awful and agonising death to one of the purest

women who ever brightened this earth by her presence.

Well, Charles VII., Charles the murderer, who later, for his own selfish reasons, humbled himself to the Duc de Bourgogne, whose father he had killed, did nothing for Joan; but what did his wife Marie, or his mother-in-law, Queen Yolande of Sicily, for the girl whom at first they had protected? They did nothing also. Yolande was otherwise employed; she had something else to think about just then. Her schemes for the joining of Anjou to Lorraine were just at that moment in jeopardy; the Duc de Lorraine was dying, and there was in the field a rival to her son René. No; clearly she had neither time nor money to spare—it was perhaps a pity about the Pucelle; but, well, there were other things much more important to be considered than a girl who was, after all, merely one of the King's serfs from a distant province. There was, therefore, no help for Joan in this direction either; but one good-hearted woman there was who endeavoured to save her. This was the young wife of Jean de Ligny.

This amiable *grande dame* threw herself on her knees to Jean, and begged him not to be guilty of an act so dishonouring as to give up Joan. The young Duc de Ligny excused himself to his wife. He was very sorry, he could not help himself, part of the ransom had indeed for some time past been in his pocket; and then there was his Suzerain, the Duc de Bourgogne, whom he could not possibly offend. Accordingly Jean de Ligny gave Joan up, not directly to the English it is true, but to Philippe, surnamed "le Bon." Had it not been for the trouble

about the succession of the territories of Ligny and Saint-Pol it seems possible that, moved by his tender-hearted wife's entreaties, Jean would not have delivered Joan over to the Duc de Bourgogne. He gave the excuse of acting under compulsion, and, to exemplify this, chose a strange addition to his coat of arms. This consisted of a camel (an animal, by the way, he had probably never seen), with its back giving way under a load. Underneath he chose for his motto, "No one is bound to do the impossible (Nul n'est tenu à l'impossible)."

While shut up at Beurevoir the unhappy Joan, terrified at the idea of being handed over to the English, called upon her familiar spirits for assistance. The saints came to her call, but the reply that they gave was not very reassuring. They told her that she could not be delivered until she had seen the English King.

More than her own fate she was troubled about the prospective fate of the poor people still besieged in the town of Compiègne. With the intention of flying to their assistance, and saving herself at the same time, she threw herself from the window of the tower in which she was confined. Although she is said to have been insensible when picked up, this cannot have been very high, as, although she refused her food for two days after her fall, she had no bones broken. Owing to the kind nursing of the ladies of the Ligny family, Joan was soon well enough to be sent to the Duc de Bourgogne, who took her with him to Arras, and then to the tower of Crotoy, on the English Channel. In the course of her examination on March 12 in the following year (1431)

Joan admitted that, while gazing across the sea, she could distinguish the English coast, and thought sorrowfully of her vain dreams to invade that hostile land in order to rescue the Duc d'Orléans.

At Crotoy Joan passed her time in hearing Mass and in prayer, chiefly for the relief of Compiègne. We are now asked to believe that the saints, who so vainly told her that she would be delivered upon seeing the young English King, gave her some more trustworthy information, namely, that Compiègne would be delivered upon November 1, 1430. This Joan announced beforehand, and on the day that she had foretold the city was indeed rescued from the besieging Burgundians. Philippe was not present in person when his troops were driven away from Compiègne, but he suffered a severe defeat himself three weeks later at a place called Germiny, after which he was obliged to hold himself strictly on the defensive.

He had not, perhaps, quite made up his mind to give Joan up before these reverses, but they decided Philippe to draw tighter his alliance with the English, with whom, above all, he wished to renew his profitable Flemish trade. Should this, owing to his action, remain interrupted, there seemed every probability of the fact that, in addition to his war in France, the Duc de Bourgogne would find himself called upon to face a revolt of his discontented Flemish subjects.

Accordingly, chiefly in order to quiet the traders, the cloth-makers, and linen-weavers of the Low Countries, the chivalrous Duc de Bourgogne, who had but recently founded the noble Order of the

Golden Fleece, gave over the helpless maiden, his captive, into the hands of those—who were loudly crying for her blood—a knightly action, indeed!

Joan was taken to Rouen by the English in the winter months of 1430, and, as at that time matters were going badly for Bedford in various directions, the University of Paris, where the eight-year-old Henry VI. now was, wrote to Bishop Cauchon to hurry up and commence his trial of the sorceress.

This the Bishop of Beauvais was not, however, inclined to do until he was sure of his pay as ecclesiastical Judge while conducting the proceedings. He therefore procrastinated until the 9th day of January of 1431 before opening the proceedings, which he commenced with the Vicar of the Inquisition seated on the bench beside him.

Then a month was taken up in a preliminary investigation, during which the Bishop submitted to a Court composed of eight Doctors of Law and Arts of Rouen the various statements which he had collected concerning Joan's character and antecedents. The result of this investigation was that the Doctors decided that it would not be sufficient to try Joan on a charge of magic alone; it would not, they said, be grave enough, but must be amended to one of heresy and schism, for which the punishment would be as exemplary as the terrible crime deserved.

During the month previous to the opening of these proceedings the child-King Henry VI. had been crowned at Nôtre-Dame in Paris. The expenses of the Coronation were defrayed by his great-uncle, the Cardinal. Therefore, although the Bishop of Paris considered that it should be his privilege to

conduct the solemn ceremony of consecration of the King of France in his own cathedral, the Cardinal performed it himself. Many French Princes of the Blood, including the Duc de Bourgogne and his son, were represented at this ceremony by Seigneurs wearing tabards, on which were blazoned their coats of arms ; but, with exception of Cauchon and a string of French Bishops who followed the Cardinal, no really great French personages were actually present. The presence of that English Prince, the Duke of Bedford, and many English nobles lent brilliancy, however, to the ceremony of placing the French Crown on the head of an English boy. The subsequent festivities were marked by the extreme meanness and want of courtesy of the English towards the French officials.

When the canons of Nôtre-Dame insisted that the vase containing the wine used at the consecration belonged by right to them, it was retained by the young King's officers ; and at the subsequent Royal banquet the city officials and members of the Parliament, in their crimson gowns, were allowed to fight for seats with the street-porters and charcoal-burners. While many of them were hustled, knocked down, and even robbed by the ruffianly crowd, but few of these dignitaries contrived even to obtain a seat at the feast. When, again, during the joustings in honour of the Coronation, the Heralds, according to ancient custom, cried " Largesse !" scarcely any money was thrown to the expectant multitude. The Bourgeois of Paris relates that the people who went away empty-handed were furious, exclaiming : " We should have had more at the wedding of a common jeweller."

As no prisoners were set at liberty after the Coronation of Henry VI., and no remission of taxes made, its result was merely to cause general discontent, whereas, properly and generously handled, the ceremony might easily have resulted in increased popularity for the English rule in France.

As it was determined to take the young King to be crowned also in London, the English Court on its way to the sea-coast proceeded to Rouen. Now, had Joan's voices but spoken to her truthfully at Beaurevoir, would have been the opportunity for her to see the King of England and obtain the promised liberty, if only as an act of grace after the Coronation. Although Henry VI. was lodged in the château close to the place where Joan was confined, his presence in Rouen brought, however, no improvement to her condition, and it would not appear as if the young Prince was even allowed to see the sorceress who had wrought him so much evil in his French domains.

The Duchess of Bedford, who was Anne, sister of Philippe of Burgundy, and the English ladies, whose prudish customs she emulated, were sadly scandalised with the behaviour of the poor imprisoned girl who, while chained to a log in her prison, still insisted upon wearing trousers like a man.

As Queen Yolande and her ladies in April 1429, so did now the Duchess Anne and her ladies, visit Joan to hold an investigation upon the delicate subject as to whether she were a pure maiden or no. The examining matrons, being able to say nothing else against her character, then resolved that her dress at any rate was immodest and indecent, and must be changed. Already the ladies of Ligny at Beaurevoir

had begged her to assume an attire more becoming to an honest girl, but she does not seem to have done so before her attempt to escape by throwing herself from the tower and subsequent removal, to be handed over to the Duc de Bourgogne.

The Duchess of Bedford, however determined she may have been to force Joan to dress like a woman, would not appear to have succeeded at this period, although, as we know, the young girl was compelled to accept woman's raiment later.

It was the habit of the great French and English ladies of that day to cause themselves to be dressed by a man tailor, and this was the cause of the ill-success of the Duchess.

Students of the reign of Louis XIV., le Grand Monarque, will remember a similar incident to that which occurred in the case of Joan, when Louis first caused his Spanish wife Marie Thérèse to be fitted for her corsets by a man *corsetier*. Although the modest Spanish Princess strongly objected to being compelled to disrobe and be measured by this individual, the King forced her to submit. He told her severely that it was a matter of court "privilege," which could not be interfered with, belonging to the Queen's tailor and the valets of her wardrobe to both fit her and lace her, and that, as their appointments were charges which they had bought and paid for, he refused to change the custom of France. As with many another disagreeable "custom of France" which her unfaithful husband declined to change, the unfortunate Marie Thérèse was compelled to put up for the rest of her life with that which greatly tended to shock her womanly feelings.

To Joan, in like manner, the Duchess of Bedford sent a woman's dress by the hands of a man-tailor, who was ordered to remain and robe her with it.

The modesty of the unfortunate maiden must already have been shocked daily, living as she was with three English soldiers in her room day and night, but the process of disrobing and being dressed by the Duchess of Bedford's tailor was more than she could endure. The man, in a bold and familiar manner trying to clothe her, she pushed him away from her. When he then proceeded to lay his hands upon her, Joan administered to him a box on the ear which sent him reeling against the wall.

It was only after the boy-King Henry VI. had departed from Rouen on his way to England that Cauchon commenced his first investigation; and the Cardinal of Winchester, having seen his great-nephew safely across the Channel, at once returned to Rouen to closely watch the proceedings against the poor young girl now left apparently without a friend in the world.

Winchester soon learned from his tool, Cauchon, that he could not answer for the monk who was the Vicar of the Inquisition at Rouen. This Dominican appeared recalcitrant; he did not seem at all anxious to join in the trial, making frivolous excuses about his scruples of conscience and as to whether he had vested in him sufficient powers. He even went so far as to demand that some one else should sit in his place until his powers could be ratified by the Pope.

These objections did not suit the Cardinal at all. It was important, above all things, that the Pope's

representative should share in the proceedings, in order to justify their result in the eyes of the Catholic world. Persuasion failing, Henry Beaufort tried the effect of money. When he allotted to the needy monk the large payment of twenty golden sols monthly, his scruples of conscience vanished and Joan had another powerful enemy joined to those already against her.

When Joan, with irons on her ankles, was first brought before the Court on February 21, 1431, the assembled Commission found that they were not going to have it all their own way with her. She flatly refused to tell the truth about everything concerning her visions—rather, she said, would she lose her head. After some difficulty, however, the wily Doctors contrived to extract an oath from Joan to the effect that she would answer in matters concerning the question of faith.

The Court before which Joan had now been dragged was not one for her actual trial, but merely for her previous interrogatory. It lasted until the beginning of Holy Week in 1431, whereas her trial began after Easter, at the end of March in that year.

As Cauchon presided both over the previous Commission of Inquiry and the trial, the questions and answers given may, however, all be considered as forming part of one and the same thing, anything considered damning to Joan in the inquiry being noted to be brought up against her at the subsequent trial.

Upon her daily appearance before this Commission, the unfortunate girl was bombarded with

questions, beginning with, "How old are you, and what are your name and surname?" To this she replied that she was about nineteen, was called Jehanette in her home, but Jehanne in France. As for being called "La Pucelle (the maiden)," she was shy, and avoided a direct reply. She was now called upon by the superstitious priests to repeat the Pater Noster and Ave Maria—no doubt they hoped that, as a witch, she would prove unable to do so. Here Joan baffled her tormentors by saying that if the Bishop de Beauvais would first hear her in confession she would be delighted to repeat these prayers. But the Bishop refused to hear her confess.

On another occasion Joan had admitted that she had again heard her voices in answer to her prayers, and that they had ordered her to reply boldly, but she irritated the Court by saying that she would not tell certain things that the saints had communicated to her for the King's ear alone. Still more did she anger the Court by telling Cauchon that she had really been sent by God, and that he, who called himself her Judge, had better, therefore, be careful what he was about, or he would put himself in great danger.

When her Judges thought to trip her up by asking, "Joan, do you think that you are in a condition of grace?" her reply could not have been better chosen: "If I am not, God will be willing to place me in it; if I am, He will deign to maintain me so."

To this Cauchon could make no reply.

Anxious to make her out an enchantress, she was asked many questions with reference to her

youthful visits to the fairy-tree at Dom-Remy, and, to show her evil disposition, urged to confess if it was not true that she hated the Burgundians.

One Monday, with a voice like honey, Cauchon demanded news of her health since he had seen her last.

“As you see, as well as one can be who is loaded down with chains,” was Joan’s answer.

When it was sought to entangle this poor girl by the indelicate question as to whether Saint Michael was naked when he appeared to her, Joan baffled this hostile inquiry with the clever reply :

“Do you not then think that God has the where-withal to clothe him ?”

In their effort to convict her of consorting with evil spirits, Joan was asked a hundred questions about her saints, their arms, their legs, their bodies, whether they resembled angels, and so on. The tortured prisoner was not so simple but she could see very well that the members of the Court believed firmly enough in the possibility of the apparition of devils, but very little in that of angels. The only satisfaction that she gave, therefore, was to affirm that, as firmly as she believed in God, so did she believe that they were angels.

They next worried her with a great many foolish inquiries concerning her sacred standard, and those made by her followers in imitation of hers. All these contained the hidden trap of the suggestion that Joan had told her followers that she had cast a charm or spell on their standards ; it was, however, a trap which she was cunning enough to be able to elude by saying :

“ I told them, ‘ Enter boldly among the English,’ and I plunged in myself.”

“ Why was your standard, then, the only one used at the consecration at Reims ? ”

“ It had been through the difficulties ; that was surely sufficient reason that it should also be present at the honour,” answered Joan.



JOAN OF ARC AT THE STAKE.

CHAPTER XXV

Joan Retracts

May 1431

WHILE attacked on every side with insidious questions, the sharp-witted Joan did not always in her replies maintain an attitude of respect for her Judges. When, for instance, they asked her if she had paid the soldier who, fighting under her, actually secured Franquet d'Arras as prisoner, she told the Court, sarcastically, that she was not the Treasurer of France to spend money. She told them, again, that the question as to whether or no she knew by revelation if she would escape, did not concern their law-suit against her.

Upon this point of her possible escape she seems, however, when pressed, to have answered differently on different occasions. Once she said, "Yes, they have told me that I shall be delivered, and that I may be gay and bold"; but another time replied that her voices bade her to accept everything willingly; not to worry about her martyrdom, as she would surely come to the Kingdom of Paradise.

"Then," inquired Cauchon, "you think that you can no longer commit mortal sin?"

"I leave that in our Lord's hands."

When the Court found it impossible to convict this chaste girl of sorcery out of her own mouth, its members, who varied in number daily, changed their tactics, and sought to entangle her from the side of her want of obedience to the Church. To believe in free inspiration, in a personal revelation, in submission to God not through the authority of the Church, was a deadly sin. She was accordingly harried on this point—if she could be proved to set herself up in opposition to the Church Militant, of the Pope, the Cardinals, and priests, she was lost.

When it was distinctly put to her, "Will you not, then, submit yourself to the Church Militant?" she said that she refused to reply otherwise than that she had been sent by the Church Victorious of On High—that of God, the Virgin Mary, and the saints; that God was supreme over Popes and prelates, and that she did not believe in any one else. By a reply like this, Joan played directly into the hands of her enemies. She was not submissive to the Church Militant, therefore distinctly a heretic.

Joan now found three friends among her accusers: in Jean de La Fontaine, a distinguished Law Doctor of Rouen, and a couple of monks. Their sense of justice being revolted at her treatment by the Court of which they were members, these three repaired to Joan in her prison, and advised her that she had a right to appeal directly to the Pope and the Council then assembled at Bâle; and through them she accordingly drew up an appeal.

Cauchon found out from the soldiers guarding Joan just what had happened, when these three friends to Joan narrowly escaped with their lives, for

having acted in accord with the barest dictates of justice. To their honour be it related, in the legists of Rouen it was that Cauchon found his principal opponents. Another Law Doctor, named Jehan Lohier, snapped his fingers at the whole of the case, declaring that it was illegal and unjust to expose a simple girl, with no counsel to defend her, to the attacks of innumerable learned Doctors of Theology. He said, boldly, that as the honour of Charles VII. was as much at stake as that of the prisoner herself, the King should be called upon to come and give evidence; moreover, that Joan should be provided with counsel.

To escape the probable consequences of his boldness, Jehan Lohier, having thus expressed himself to the Bishop of Beauvais, left Rouen at once for Rome, where he rose high in the Papal service.

Another defender of Joan was found in the ranks of the Church. The Bishop of Avranches, being consulted, declared that, according to the Church herself, and the testimony of the saints, notably that of Saint Thomas, visions could not be rejected. There was therefore nothing impossible in the assertions of Joan, said the Bishop of Avranches. Another prelate, the Bishop of Lisieux, took another line, saying that there was no proof that Joan's visions were the work of the Devil, as she might simply be telling lies, and have had no visions at all.

From the members of the Chapter of the Cathedral of Rouen, who detested Cauchon, and had no wish to see him become their Archbishop, he likewise found opposition; but these the unjust Judge contrived to overrule by letters and opinions from the University

of Paris, and from another Bishop, who declared violently that Joan was possessed of the Devil, "as proved by her want of virtue and humanity."

That under all this browbeating, while listening daily to the disquisitions of the learned Doctors, it is not to be marvelled at if Joan herself became puzzled to know which was right, which wrong. In her confusion of mind, she occasionally expressed herself as willing to submit to the Papal authority and the Church Militant, but only as regarding the matter of faith; but, when it came to the deeds that she had actually accomplished, it was found impossible to shake her. There, she maintained, she was answerable to God alone.

Being worried as she was, the poor girl became ill, an additional cause for her worry being that her heavenly adviser, Saint Michael, came to see her no more, but was replaced by another celestial monitor, in the shape of Saint Gabriel. It was Palm Sunday when Joan fell sick, and her sufferings were increased by being confined a prisoner on this joyous occasion, when all the world was abroad.

Sick or well, a couple of days later the prisoner was hauled before a great assemblage in the hall of the Castle of Rouen, to listen to a pack of lies. She was then informed that all the assessors there present were benign and learned Doctors, men who wished her neither harm, nor corporal punishment, but only to lead her in the right path and to enlighten her. As she was not sufficiently instructed in the road of salvation, she was offered teachers by the Vicar of the Inquisition.

Joan humbly expressed her thanks for the kind

intentions of her tormentors towards her, and also her readiness to be instructed in matters of faith ; but she added that, where her deeds were concerned, she would only submit herself to the Church of Heaven, and that she would revoke nothing that she had done by the command of our Lord.

The Doctors now attacked her seriously upon the point of her sin in wearing man's clothing. To the request to give her reasons for wearing this, Joan replied evasively. If the Doctors insisted in pretending not to understand them, she, in her modesty, would not enlighten them. They threatened not to allow her to hear Mass or receive the Communion on Easter Day, to which threat Joan replied that, surely it would make no difference what dress she wore while receiving the Body of Christ.

When the cruel assessors still informed this religious girl that she should not hear the Mass unless she changed her clothing, the unfortunate Joan weakened on this point.

"Give me, then," she said, "a dress similar to that worn by the daughters of the bourgeois, a very long robe."

No long robe, or any other, was given to her, however, at this time.

Previous to this period of Holy Week, Joan had been allowed to see a Norman priest in her prison. This Frenchman, Loyseleur by name, was a spy of the English, to whom he communicated all that she said to him in confession, he having a notary hidden who could hear, through a hole in the wall, and write down every word the girl said.

The better to cause Joan to lose herself, this

traitorous priest instigated her to resistance, and the atrocious scoundrel was even one of the three persons who alone recommended that she should be put to the torture.

Far better than such a man of God was it to have no priest at all, but when, all through Holy Week and on Easter Day, when all the world communicated, she was deprived of the consolations of religion, the despairing girl's illness became aggravated. While directly the outcome of the argument about wearing man's clothing, another cause of this cruel deprivation was that she had said that she would submit to the Pope, the Cardinals, the Bishops, and the Archbishops, "only after our Lord being first served." Since she could not be compelled to say that she would obey the Church Militant first, last, and unconditionally, the barbarous Cauchon and a few of the assessors—only eight, as twenty-seven absented themselves—sentenced this maiden, whose holiness they so well understood, to the greatest punishment that they could devise—the deprivation of her Blessed Lord on Easter Day! What are we to think of these Judges, inhuman wretches, who by their connivance sought to leave the maiden more than ever exposed to the dangers that she ran, chained to a log of wood, and with three of the terrible soldiers of that day in her apartment?

The trial of Joan commenced on the Tuesday after Easter. Must she not, abandoned as she was, friendless and alone, without even her saints, whose visits became more rare when she most wanted them, have been seized at this time with doubt? Had not her visions deceived her, indeed, since not only was

she not, as they had promised, delivered, but was deprived now even of the consolations of that religion in which she had so firmly believed? Her brain was as clear, her mind as acute as that of any of us living in this twentieth century. Let us, then, put the matter to ourselves, and endeavour to realise just what our thoughts would be should we be placed in the same terrible situation as the young daughter of Jacques Darc and Isabelle Romée. Should anything so awful be our fate, could the doubt be kept away from the mind either that the saintly apparitions were nothing but a delusion, or that they had, if real, been but lying spirits sent to deceive and lure us to our ruin? For Joan, must not the temptation to abjure them have been great at this moment? must not she strongly have felt the inclination to follow the advice given to her by the friendly Law Doctor, Jehan Lohier, before he fled to Rome? This was no longer to continue so stiff-necked, but to say to the pitiless assessors: "It seems to me that you are in the right and I in the wrong, after all." And yet, cast out by the earthly Church and neglected by the heavenly Church, whatever her doubts may have been the young girl, even while sick, would not give way. She would not give the satisfaction to her enemies of saying: "It appears to me that you must be in the right, not I."

While in this sickly condition the good Bishop of Beauvais, who doubtless was already tired of this affair, did an act of seeming kindness to Joan in sending her a fish, a lordly carp. Joan ate the carp, which happened to be poisoned, and very nearly died! Much better had it been for her, poor girl, had she

really died ; but the Earl of Warwick, the Captain of Rouen, sent his doctors, with strict instructions to save her at all costs for the scaffold ! Although the physicians saved her life she remained excessively ill for a time, during which period, although the cruel Judges visited and worried her in her prison, they still refused her the opportunity either of confession or of receiving the Sacrament before her apparently approaching death. That is to say, that to this girl, who seemed dying, they had absolutely no mercy, and, unless she would consent to put their Church Militant of Earth above her Church Victorious of Heaven, they refused even to promise her burial in consecrated ground. When she asked to be buried in a woman's chemise they merely continued the old argument, demanding to know why, if she did not wish for it while living, she asked for a woman's chemise when dead. Joan's answer was : " It will suffice if it is quite long." They then told her that, unless she obeyed the Church, she should be buried as an infidel Saracen.

With all these delays the Cardinal of Winchester was raging. He had hoped that, long ere this, some answer would have been dragged out of Joan, one which would have dishonoured Charles VII. as the companion of a sorceress. Had this but been managed things would have become at once far more secure for Bedford in France, and the Cardinal could himself have left for Bâle, where he wished to preside at the Council which was to decide the fate of the Papacy. The Cardinal began to understand that one cause of the delay of the Judges in finishing off the trial lay in the fact of the antagonism of the Rouennais to the Bishop of Beauvais, who was already

giving himself the airs of an Archbishop of Rouen, and even allowing himself to be addressed as such.

Henry Beaufort resolved, therefore, to go over the head of Rouen altogether, and, in order to baffle the dilettante Normans, to cause their rivals the Theologians of the University of Paris to take the matter in hand. He wrote to request them to do this, but the original tribunal of Rouen still held on its way, and, in the beginning of May 1431, threatened Joan for the first time with the fire which should destroy both her body and soul. Ten days later, the better to subdue her indomitable will, the executioner, with all his horrid tools of torture, was introduced into her chamber; but still Joan, whose health had now improved, remained undaunted. Beholding her fearlessness, a priest named Châtillon, who had previously threatened her, became her partisan, defended her warmly, and was with difficulty compelled by the enraged Cauchon to hold his tongue.

At this stage arrived from Paris replies from the Faculties of Theology and of Law. The former condemned Joan as one given over to the Devil, impious to her parents, and saturated with human blood. The latter was more moderate, and, while equally condemning Joan, gave her a loophole of escape from punishment. This, said the Faculty of Law, should not be enforced if the girl were not in her proper senses, or if she ceased from her obstinacy. As the letters of the Paris University at the same time lauded to the skies the manner in which Cauchon had conducted the case, some of the Doctors now wished to burn Joan at once. The Cardinal, however, first desired a retractation from Joan, one by

which Charles VII. would be, equally with herself, tarred with the brush of heresy and schism.

A priest was sent to convince the prisoner that it was her bounden duty to comply with the dictates of that "light of science," the University of Paris, but she declared that, even if she were in the fire, she would not go back upon a word that she had uttered.

Towards the end of May a cruel attempt was made to obtain from the recalcitrant maiden by guile that which even the threatened terrors of death had proved fruitless to procure. She was made a promise that, if only she would express her submission to the Church and assumed woman's clothing, she should be delivered from the custody of the English and placed in the tender hands of the Church. The three priests who made Joan this promise were all known to her; one was her false Confessor Loyseleur, another Châtillon, who had so recently defended her, the third Pierre Morice, he who had previously so vainly endeavoured to persuade the obstinate maiden to conform to the views of the University.

Speaking kindly to her as though they would save her, as indeed possibly Châtillon hoped that he might succeed in doing, they secured from Joan some sort of a promise of retractation.

Not a word was said by these three priests concerning judgment or condemnation, but when the unfortunate girl was dragged out to the Cemetery of Saint-Ouen she found herself placed upon a scaffold in the midst of a horrible group consisting of the executioner's assistants, armed with dreadful implements of torture. The executioner himself waited

with a tumbrel below. The stoutest heart, that of the boldest of the martyrs, might have quailed at such a sight—what, then, must have been the sensations of this unhappy young girl when, looking at the multitude around her, she beheld naught but glances of hatred in all directions? She was still clothed as a man, and by her side were scribes to record her avowals and a priest to preach to her with pious exhortations.

Close at hand, upon another scaffolding, stood the Cardinal-Bishop of Winchester, with the two Judges and thirty-three assessors before whom Joan had so frequently appeared during the past five months. They were now waiting to enjoy their revenge, to triumph in the downfall of the young peasant-girl who had braved them all, confuted all their learned arguments, and, above all, whose iron will they had never been able to subdue.

The preacher whose glorious privilege it was to be able to exhort the sorceress before such an immense assemblage, which included many English troops, did not lose his opportunity of making the most of this, the chance of his lifetime.

Commencing with the words: "Oh! noble House of France," the Reverend Doctor of Rouen, whose name was Guillaume Erard, turned on the tap of his eloquence and let himself go in an endless flow of verbose rhetoric. He called Joan a heretic and a schismatic without any interruption from her; but when, turning to Joan and raising a warning finger at her, he denounced her King also as a heretic and a schismatic, she fearlessly cut short his eloquence. With a courage worthy of a nobler cause, and in clear

tones, the brave girl informed the preacher that he was mistaken ; that, upon her life, she was ready to swear that no nobler man or better Christian existed than Charles VII.

The Bishop of Beauvais angrily cried out to those around her to stop her mouth, for this was not the retractation that he, the Cardinal and the rest had come there to hear. Cauchon himself now angrily demanded the prisoner to express her unqualified submission to the Church Militant.

“ I submit to the Pope,” replied Joan.

“ The Pope is too far away,” retorted tersely the Bishop of Beauvais. And then, unrolling a parchment, Cauchon commenced to read an act of condemnation to be burned ; one which even in the face of the words she had just uttered, was a lie, since in it he informed Joan that she had refused to submit herself to the Holy Father and the Council, to whom, as will be remembered, she had appealed long ago.

A curious scene now took place, both upon the elevated platform upon which Joan stood and upon that adjoining. Whether from any real feeling of compassion, experienced for the moment, or for any other and more interested reason, the two priests, Loyseleur and Erard, now begged Joan to have pity upon herself, and to save herself by signing an act of recantation of her heresy. Hearing this discussion, the Bishop interrupted his reading and waited to see the result. He felt that his personal triumph as her Judge would be complete should she be prevailed upon to retract. Upon the Bishop's platform, many of the English dignitaries present with him were impatient to see Joan burned at once ; they considered

that enough time had been wasted already. A quarrel began, and both the Cardinal's chaplain and his secretary angrily accused the Bishop of Beauvais of showing undue favour to the maiden who had shamed the English arms before Orléans and upon other bloody fields. "You are a liar!" shouted Cauchon to the secretary. "And you a traitor to the King!" retorted the other. The various dignified officials became so enraged that they nearly came to blows.

Erard meanwhile continued his exhortation, crying: "Joan, you will be burned! Abjure!" The bystanders, many of whose hearts had become softened, joined in the argument, many of them begging Joan to save herself. One official even, with tears in his eyes, vowed that, if only she would yield, she would be rescued from the English and given over to the Church.

At length overcome, and in tears, Joan resisted no longer and said, "Very well, I will sign."

"She has retracted; how shall I treat her, Monseigneur?" inquired the Bishop of the Cardinal of Winchester. "You may admit her to penitence," replied the Cardinal, whose secretary produced a document, which was already written, from his sleeve. This was a very short retractation consisting of but a few lines.

The secretary handed a pen to Joan, who, as she could not write, subscribed her signature at the foot of the paper with the mark of a cross. The commuted sentence of imprisonment for life, on bread and water, was then pronounced on Joan.

CHAPTER XXVI

Joan's Relapse and Execution

May 1431

DURING the quarrel which had taken place when the Bishop of Beauvais had interrupted his reading of the act of condemnation, the English soldiers in the crowd were in very ill-humour, throwing stones at Cauchon and those with him on the raised platform. Much more angry, however, became the English, of great and little estate, when they found that they were to be deprived of the pleasure of seeing Joan burned. As the Doctors descended among the excited crowd, swords were drawn on them, and it was a wonder that they escaped alive. The Englishmen shouted furiously, "Priests, you are not earning the King's money!" Even the Earl of Warwick, a nobleman of distinction and valour, who had made the pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and was therefore a good Christian, exclaimed: "Things go badly for the King; the girl will not be burned."

As for Joan, having been admitted to penitence, she doubtless expected long and dreary imprisonment in a dungeon, perchance in one of those darksome dungeons beneath some monastery known in those days, and, until much later, as an "in pace." But there

was this satisfaction about her sentence, that she was to be handed over to the Church—to be taken away from the custody of the English, who thirsted like tigers for her blood.

This she had been promised if she should retract, and, therefore, with an immense sense of relief, she turned to descend from the scaffold upon which she had signed her retraction.

At this moment, imagine the unfortunate girl's despair to hear the Bishop cry out to the guards around her: "Take her back to the place from whence you brought her!"

She had been deceived! She was to remain, after all, in the hands of the English soldiers. Oh, misery! was it but for this that she had signed her act of recantation? Cruel and bitter deception!

Through the scowling glances of the angry crowd, whose vile epithets resounded in her ears, Joan was dragged away, as a lamb by the butcher to the shambles. She was broken-hearted, crushed by her shame in having given way to fear and retracted, still more crushed by the weight of woe at finding herself so bitterly deceived. The shouts of the soldiers, of the mob, she heeded not—she scarcely heard them—a voice louder than all the tumult around her was crying aloud in her own bosom, "Oh! why did I give way? And oh! what have I, poor child, done that I should be subjected to all this?"

Upon her arrival at her prison, in accordance with her own undertaking made on the scaffold, Joan was to assume female attire. No woman was there to aid her with friendly hands, but the scowling soldiers, with mocking gibes and immodest words, tore her man's

clothing from her trembling body, clothed her in female attire, changed her outward semblance from that of a man to that of a woman.

Now she was at their mercy indeed! It was during the few days that Joan remained thus that the outrage previously recorded was attempted upon the poor girl's honour, at the instigation of the miscreants who sought to give her into the power of the Devil, who could make no pact with her so long as her body remained pure.

In order to convict her of relapse, her male attire was then again offered to her, and she took it and put it on.

It has usually been represented that this was merely left by the side of her bed to tempt her, when, of her own free will, she readily assumed it. That, after the dangers to which she had been subjected, she should have done so would seem by no means unlikely, and yet, upon consideration, it seems more than probable that this story was but the invention of her enemies, anxious for an excuse to burn Joan, after all, as a relapsed heretic.

More likely to be true seems the story told by the *huissier* Mathieu, who accompanied Joan to the place where she died, and who said that he had it from her own lips.

The unhappy Joan was at nights chained in her bed, and, according to this sheriff's officer, she one morning called to the soldiers to unchain her, as she wished to rise. They tore the female raiment from her body, and left only the man's clothing which she had previously worn beside her. After staying in bed until midday rather than offend by wearing the clothes

which had been forbidden to her, she was compelled to rise, and had, perforce, to reassume her old dress as a man.

Whichever version of the occurrence may be true, being once more attired in the forbidden clothing, there was no hope for Joan.

Had anything more been required to increase the fury of her enemies against her, it had been supplied in an attempt made at this time by Xaintrailles to surprise Rouen.

By this unsuccessful attempt of her old comrade-in-arms, which had, however, nothing to do with any rescue of the poor girl from her prison, Joan's doom had been sealed. Now or never was the time to administer a lesson to Charles VII., the master alike of Xaintrailles and of the imprisoned heretic. This Pretender of a King's sorceress, by the aid of whose charms he had vanquished the English, should be destroyed root and branch, lest perchance the Devil her associate might tear her from her chains, and set her once more at liberty to wreak further mischief.

Warning was at once given to all of the Assessors who had taken part in her trial that the maiden had dressed herself as a man once more. The Doctors thronged to the castle in which she was confined, but could not gain admittance. A number of English soldiers barred the way. Fearing that the Doctors had come over more to attempt to save Joan, they called these men of the Burgundian party "Traitorous Armagnacs!" and threatened them with their swords.

The Bishop of Beauvais, after some difficulty

obtained admittance. Having convinced himself with his own eyes that Joan had discarded her girl's dress, he came out rubbing his hands and exclaiming gleefully: "She is caught!" to the Earl of Warwick.

When interrogated by some of her former Judges on the following day, Joan pleaded no compulsion, but accepted full responsibility for her deed. She told them that, so long as she remained guarded by men, the dress which she wore was that which best suited her. If removed to "a more agreeable and secure prison," she said, she would dress again as a woman. She added, moreover, that she had been deceived, since the promises made to her had not been kept.

When menaced, she did not appear alarmed, but informed the Doctors that her saints had visited her and told her that it was "great pity to have abjured to save her life."

A great meeting was held in the Archbishop's palace, to consider what should be done to the culprit. All present there agreed that by her action Joan's retraction had been annulled. Whether these priests and prelates desired to annul her mitigated sentence or no mattered, however, little, for the English were now resolved that nothing should save the relapsed heretic. Had not the Judges at once condemned Joan to the flames, their own lives would have paid the forfeit.

Hurriedly, therefore, they sentenced this most unhappy being to be given to the flames, on the morrow, at eight o'clock in the morning.

Poor, unhappy, ill-used Joan! whose heart would

not bleed for her in her distress? Early on the following morning, which was the last day of May, a Confessor, named Martin l'Advenu, came to exhort her to penitence, for that in an hour or two she was to perish in the fire.

Her courage, which for so long had sustained her, now at last gave way. Tearing her hair, Joan gave vent to piteous cries.

"Alas! can they treat me so horribly and cruelly, that my entire body, which was never corrupted, should be to-day consumed and reduced to ashes? Ha! ha! I would rather be beheaded seven times over than be thus burned. Oh! I appeal to God, the Great Judge, against the wrongs wrought upon me!" And she wept bitterly.

Now that the end had come, the Bishop of Beauvais seems to have shown a spark of humanity. He, who so brutally had refused Joan the consolations of religion during Holy Week, now listened to her prayer. Marvellous indeed is it to relate that, even while condemning Joan to the cruellest death as a relapsed heretic, he yet permitted this heretic to confess, and partake of the Body of the Lord before dying!

Even when the monk, l'Advenu, insisted that the Sacrament should be brought to poor Joan with the full ceremonial of the Church, after at first demurring, Cauchon found himself compelled to agree. Then the clergy of Rouen, probably as a mark of their disdain for the man who called himself their Archbishop, and their scorn for him as a Judge, did all in their power to lend solemnity to the ceremony. With stoles, with bells, and with candles a numerous body

of the Rouen priesthood passed slowly through the streets, bearing the sacred implements and Holy Sacrament. As they passed, they cried solemnly: "Pray for her soul!" and the people, falling on their knees, offered up their prayers for the pure girl about to die, by the sentence of the Church, as an accursed heretic. A strange anomaly indeed! and one hard to be accounted for after all that had preceded this fatal day.

Having, with many tears, received the Communion, Joan told Cauchon that he was the cause of her death, which need never have taken place had he but placed her in an ecclesiastical prison. And she further told him that she appealed from him to God. Then, at nine o'clock, they dressed her again as a woman, and she was dragged off in a tumbril to the place of execution.

That Joan had firmly believed in her ultimate rescue, either by the action of her saints, the intervention of Charles VII., or that of the people of France, there is no doubt whatever. In the Latin report of the proceedings during the primary investigation, she is recorded upon two occasions, February 27 and March 17, as having declared her conviction to this effect.

She then said: "Some trouble will occur, either in the prison or at the time of the judgment, by which I shall be delivered—delivered to the great victory!"

Now, not only had she been deserted by the wretched Prince whom she had placed upon the throne, deserted by the French people, who made not the slightest effort to rise on her behalf, but

by her saints she was likewise abandoned. Saint Michael, Saint Gabriel, Sainte Catherine, Sainte Marguerite, Saint Louis, and Saint Charlemagne, in all of whom she had put her trust, made no effort to extricate her from the terrible situation which was the direct result of their promptings. She was face to face with an awful and agonising death; she was, merely for doing that which these heavenly messengers had commanded, branded as a heretic to the Church, and as the companion of Satan; and yet they wrought no miracle on her behalf! They had deserted her completely, with the awful result that there she now was, seated in a cart with two or three priests and the bailiff's officer, Massieu, while around her gleamed upwards of a thousand spears in the hands of the English soldiers, who hated her.

But it was not even yet too late! a miracle might occur, like a flash of lightning, to whip her out of the turmoil, away over the heads of the astonished soldiery, to the Court of Charles VII.—the man whom she had sworn, upon her life, to be “the noblest Christian of all the Christians.” Alas! there was no miracle!

As she journeyed on through the streets towards the Fish-market of Rouen, poor Joan lamented sadly, exclaiming through her tears: “Oh, Rouen! Rouen! must I then die here?” No angry or bitter expression escaped, however, from the lips of the forlorn and despairing maiden as, moment by moment, she was dragged nearer to her doom. One of the two Augustine monks who had proved so friendly to Joan in the matter of appealing to the Pope was by her side; so also was Martin l'Advenu, who had heard

her last confession, while even the wretched Loyseleur, the traitorous priest who had recommended her torture, had a seat with her in the wagon. This latter is even reported as having demanded her pardon during this fatal journey, to the great anger of the English soldiers of the escort, who overheard his words while begging forgiveness.

At length the journey was over, and in the ancient Market-place Joan beheld three erections or scaffoldings. One of these was for the Royal Prince, the Cardinal-Bishop of Winchester, who was surrounded by Bishops and other dignitaries of the Church, among whom was Cauchon, her Judge. Upon the second platform Joan was compelled to mount, while surrounded with guards and the three or four who had accompanied her in the cart. The third erection, at a little distance from the other two, was an immensely high edifice of plaster, upon which were piled up heaps of fagots around a central stake.

So high was this that the executioner would only be able to set the torch to the fagots from below. Thus, although in the case of the infamous Gilles de Retz and many another noted criminal, it was possible, by strangling the victim, to save from the terrors of the flames, the executioners would be compelled actually to burn Joan alive. Of this, we are informed, the man of blood was "fort marry et avoit grant compassion"—that is to say, felt extremely sorry.

The Bourgeois de Paris, in his Journal, gives an additional and horrible reason for the height of this scaffold, which was that Joan, when even at the point of death, might first be made to suffer in her modesty,

when her light outer covering had been removed prior to the application of the torch to the fagots from below. Were it not that no demoniac cruelty seems to have been too great to have been practised, in the name of religion, by the churchmen of former days, we should have been inclined to doubt this statement of the Bourgeois.

The miserable young girl was not to be burned without being subjected to yet more indignities. Her Judge, the Bishop of Beauvais, addressed her, reminding her of all her misdeeds, and exhorting her to contrition. With her death so near, the saintly Joan did not require these hypocritical words. She had already thrown herself upon her knees, calling upon the name of God, the Virgin, and the saints. To those around her she cried: "Pray for me!" when so affected were all present that, among others, the Cardinal of Winchester, Cauchon, and the Bishop of Boulogne were moved to tears—this latter prelate sobbing aloud most bitterly.

At this moment, with all around her, even her cruel Judges, weeping for her fate, we are told that Joan made another retractation—freely confessed her error. We decline, however, to believe this statement, which is supported by the signed attestation of no witnesses. To say that she did so was but another lie of her enemies, who, not content with depriving the noble girl of her life in the most barbarous manner, sought after her death to deprive her also of her reputation.

The tears of the Bishop of Beauvais did not last long. Having wiped his eyes, he hardened his heart and read aloud the lengthy sentence, which was

couched in the most insulting and humiliating terms. How could men, let alone churchmen, of any age have been able to insult a frail girl about to die, one in whom they saw every sign of piety, so far as to tell her that she had "returned to her sin as a dog returns to his vomit"? The horror—the cruelty of it all—makes us shudder even now! It surpasses belief that these men, in their great and powerful assembly, can have so dishonourably borne themselves towards one poor trembling woman, all alone, about to be foully murdered.

After adding the further cruel insult, "We pronounce thee to be a rotten member, and as such cut off from the Church," Cauchon ended his reading by saying that, while begging it to excuse Joan from the extreme penalty of the dismemberment of her limbs, she was handed over to the Secular Power.

The maiden made no reply to this terrible harangue. While her tears fell, she cried for a cross, and an English soldier gave her one which he made out of two pieces of wood. She placed it under her clothing in her bosom, but Massieu and Isambart sent for the parish cross of Saint-Sauveur also, and it was brought. As she worshipped before it, the friendly Frère Isambart endeavoured to comfort the maiden with hopes of salvation after her death in heaven. It was all the hope now left to her—there was to be, alas! no salvation on earth while she yet lived. Strong and young, not yet twenty years of age, she was to leave the world, to die, with not an arm, not a voice, raised to save her!

The English soldiers meanwhile were getting impatient. Fearing that they might once again be

balked of their prey, they cried out to Isambart : "How now, priest, will you compel us to dine here?" For it was now midday, and, the officers being determined to have no more trifling, several sergeants were sent up to drag Joan from the hands of the priests.

Roughly the sergeants pulled down from the platform the warrior-maid whom, all clad in shining armour and beneath the folds of her sacred banner, they had so often seen charging to death or glory. The death was now coming for her, and the glory will remain for so long as the great doings of mankind remain chronicled in written words.

She was handed over to the executioner, to whom the order was given to perform his duty ; but the two monks Isambart and l'Advenu would not desert the maid about to perish. Dragged up to the summit of the pile of fagots, all hope now abandoned, Joan was tied to the stake. But yet one more indignity remained in the power of her savage Judges to wreak upon their defenceless victim, and they would spare this saint nothing which devilish ingenuity could suggest. She was crowned with an immense paper mitre, upon which, in large letters, were inscribed the words :

"HÉRÉTIQUE, RELAPSE, APOSTATE, YDOLASTRE!"

For a minute or two Joan stood thus, looking down upon the immense and now silent crowd, when she was heard clearly to exclaim : "Ah, Rouen! Rouen! I greatly fear that thou wilt suffer for my death!"

Meanwhile, the Dominican, Martin l'Advenu, remained on the fagots beside the martyred maid. Not waiting for the priest to come down, the executioner applied his lighted torch to the bottom of the pile of inflammable material.

Joan saw the action, saw the little wreaths of smoke commencing to ascend. With a cry, she pushed the good priest away from her, and implored him to descend lest he should share her fate. The good Augustine, Isambart de la Pierre, had also a narrow escape, only descending from the scaffold a moment sooner. L'Advenu scrambled down through the rising flames, and then Cauchon thought it time to have a last word with his victim—to extract some final confession of her apostasy from the woman whose murderer he was. The Bishop of Beauvais had his final word from Joan. It was not what he had hoped for, which was some accusation against Charles VII., some declaration to the effect that the ungrateful Prince for whom she was giving her young life was equally guilty with herself.

Joan's last word to the Bishop of Beauvais, uttered reproachfully, was: "Ah! Bishop, I die through you. Had you but put me in the prisons of the Church this would not have happened!" She defended the unworthy King to the last, saying of Charles: "Whether I have done well or done ill, it was not by his counsel."

Then the poor creature felt the heat, and, as the first flames licked her form she cried out for water—for holy water! The monk whom she had pushed from the pile still stood, holding up the cross, close to that which had now become a raging, fiery furnace. Ac-

According to his testimony, her last words were: "My voices were from God, and they did not deceive me." But whether, amid the crackling and roaring of the devouring flames, he heard Joan's words aright, who can tell? More likely by far was it that the last words uttered in her agony were not a mere defence of the visions which had deceived her, but prayers to the God in whom she firmly believed, and to whom her pure soul was now to render its account. Indeed, a score of years later both of the monks declared that her last cry was that of "Jesus!" Thus died Joan of Arc, in the flower of her age and youthful beauty, and we who deplore it, must ascribe her cruel fate not more to the hatred of her enemies than to the clerical bigotry and universal superstition of the day in which she lived.

Born with a mission in which she firmly believed, her coming was not in vain. She had taken up arms on account of the pity that there was in France, and, although her victories were productive of no immediate good, she herself ever showed an example of humanity both to friend and foe, the English captives and wounded being as much the object of her care as those of her own nation.

To France the advent of Joan meant much more than was at first recognised either by her enemies, who slew her, or her friends who stood idly by and allowed her to be slain. She found the English strong, while France was torn between the rival factions. She left the English weakened by her deeds, which were well-nigh miraculous. Seeing them thus weakened, five years after the death of Joan, Philippe de Bourgogne became reconciled with

Charles VII. The two parties being thus reunited, combined against the common foe, with the result that fifteen years later, her former possessions all lost, the town of Calais was all that remained to England in the France where, before Joan, she had reigned supreme.

THE END

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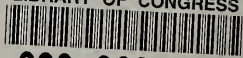
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