

1421. Henry V. gains several victories over the French, who refuse to acknowledge the treaty of Troyes. His son, afterward Henry VI., is born.

1422. Henry V. and Charles VI. of France die. Henry VI. is proclaimed at Paris King of England and France. The followers of the French dauphin proclaim him Charles VII., king of France. The Duke of Bedford, the English regent in France, defeats the army of the dauphin at Crevant.

1424. The Duke of Bedford gains the great victory of Verneuil over the French partisans of the dauphin and their Scotch auxiliaries.

1428. The English begin the siege of Orleans.

CHAPTER IX.

JOAN OF ARC'S VICTORY OVER THE ENGLISH AT ORLEANS, A.D. 1429.

The eyes of all Europe were turned toward this scene, where it was reasonably supposed the French were to make their last stand for maintaining the independence of their monarchy and the rights of their sovereign.—HUME.

WHEN, after their victory at Salamis, the generals of the various Greek states voted the prizes for distinguished individual merit, each assigned the first place of excellence to himself, but they all concurred in giving their second votes to Themistocles.* This was looked on as a decisive proof that Themistocles ought to be ranked first of all. If we were to endeavor, by a similar test, to ascertain which European nation had contributed the most to the progress of European civilization, we should find Italy, Germany, England, and Spain each claiming the first degree, but each also naming France as clearly next in merit. It is impossible to deny her paramount importance in history. Besides the formidable part that she has for nearly three centuries played, as the Bellona of the European commonwealth of states, her influence during all this period over the arts, the literature, the manners, and the feelings of mankind, has been such as to make the crisis of her earlier fortunes a point of world-wide interest; and it may be asserted, without exaggeration, that the future career of every nation was involved in the result of the struggle by which the unconscious heroine of France, in the beginning of the fifteenth century, rescued her country from becoming a second Ireland under the yoke of the triumphant English.

* Plutarch, *Vit. Them.*, 17.

Seldom has the extinction of a nation's independence appeared more inevitable than was the case in France when the English invaders completed their lines round Orleans, four hundred and twenty-two years ago. A series of dreadful defeats had thinned the chivalry of France, and daunted the spirits of her soldiers. A foreign king had been proclaimed in her capital; and foreign armies of the bravest veterans, and led by the ablest captains then known in the world, occupied the fairest portions of her territory. Worse to her, even, than the fierceness and the strength of her foes, were the factions, the vices and the crimes of her own children. Her native prince was a dissolute trifle, stained with assassination of the most powerful noble of the land, whose son, in revenge, had leagued himself with the enemy. Many more of her nobility, many of her prelates, her magistrates, and rulers, had sworn fealty to the English king. The condition of the peasantry amid the general prevalence of anarchy and brigandage, which were added to the customary devastations of contending armies, was wretched beyond the power of language to describe. The sense of terror and wretchedness seemed to have extended itself even to the brute creation.

"In sooth, the estate of France was then most miserable. There appeared nothing but a horrible face, confusion, poverty, desolation, solitariness, and feare. The lean and bare laborers in the country did terrifie even theeves themselves, who had nothing left them to spoile but the carcases of these poore miserable creatures, wandering up and down like ghostes drawne out of their graves. The least farmes and hamlets were fortified by these robbers, English, Bourgneons, and French, every one striving to do his worst: all men-of-war were well agreed to spoile the countryman and merchant. Even the cattell, accustomed to the lamine bell, the signe of the enemy's approach, would run home if themselves without any guide by this accustomed misery."*

In the autumn of 1428, the English, who were already masters of all France north of the Loire, prepared their forces for the conquest of the southern provinces, which yet adhered to the cause of the dauphin. The city of Orleans, on the banks of that river, was looked upon as the last stronghold of the French national party. If the English could once obtain possession of it their victorious progress through the residue of the kingdom seemed free from any serious obstacle. Accordingly the Earl of Salisbury, one of the bravest and most experienced of the English generals, who had been trained under Henry V., marched to the attack of the all-important city; and, after reducing several places of inferior consequence in the neighborhood, appeared with his army before its walls on the 12th of October, 1428.

The city of Orleans itself was on the north side of the Loire, but

* De Serres, quoted in the Notes to Southey's "Joan of Arc."

its suburbs extended far on the southern side, and a strong bridge connected them with the town. A fortification, which in modern military phrase would be termed a *tete-du-pont*, defended the bridge head on the southern side, and two towers, called the *Tourelles*, were built on the bridge itself, at a little distance from the *tete-du-pont*. Indeed, the solid masonry of the bridge terminated at the *Tourelles*; and the communication thence with the *tete-du-pont* and the southern shore was by means of a draw-bridge. The *Tourelles* and the *tete-du-pont* formed together a strong fortified post, capable of containing a garrison of considerable strength; and so long as this was in possession of the *Orleanais*, they could communicate freely with the southern provinces, the inhabitants of which, like the *Orleanais* themselves, supported the cause of their dauphin against the foreigners. Lord Salisbury rightly judged the capture of the *Tourelles* to be the most material step toward the reduction of the city itself. Accordingly, he directed his principal operations against this post, and after some severe repulses, he carried the *Tourelles* by storm on the 23d of October. The French, however, broke down the arches of the bridge that were nearest to the north bank, and thus rendered a direct assault from the *Tourelles* upon the city impossible. But the possession of this post enabled the English to distress the town greatly by a battery of cannon which they planted there, and which commanded some of the principal streets.

It has been observed by Hume that this is the first siege in which any important use appears to have been made of artillery. And even at Orleans both besiegers and besieged seem to have employed their cannons merely as instruments of destruction against their enemy's *men*, and not to have trusted them as engines of demolition against their enemy's walls and works. The efficacy of cannon in breaching solid masonry was taught Europe by the Turks a few years afterward, in the memorable siege of Constantinople.* In our French wars, as in the wars of the classic nations, famine was looked on as the surest weapon to compel the submission of a well-walled town; and the great object of the besiegers was to effect a complete circumvallation. The great ambit of the walls of Orleans, and the facilities which the river gave for obtaining success and supplies, rendered the capture of the town by this process a matter of great difficulty. Nevertheless, Lord Salisbury, and Lord Suffolk, who succeeded him in command of the English after his death by a cannon ball, carried on the necessary work with great skill and resolution. Six strongly-fortified posts, called *bastilles*, were formed at certain intervals round the town, and the purpose of the English engineers was to draw stronglines between them. During the winter little progress was made with the entrenchments, but

* The occasional employment of artillery against slight defenses, as at Jargeau in 1429, is no real exception.

when the spring of 1429 came, the English resumed their work with activity; the communications between the city and the country became more difficult, and the approach of want began already to be felt in Orleans.

The besieging force also fared hardly for stores and provisions, until relieved by the effects of a brilliant victory which Sir John Fastolfe, one of the best English generals, gained at Rouvrai, near Orleans, a few days after Ash Wednesday, 1429. With only sixteen hundred fighting men, Sir John completely defeated an army of French and Scots, four thousand strong, which had been collected for the purpose of aiding the *Orleanais* and harassing the besiegers. After this encounter, which seemed decisively to confirm the superiority of the English in battle over their adversaries, Fastolfe escorted large supplies of stores and food to Suffolk's camp and the spirits of the English rose to the highest pitch at the prospect of the speedy capture of the city before them, and the consequent subjection of all France beneath their arms.

The *Orleanais* now, in their distress, offered to surrender the city into the hands of the Duke of Burgundy, who, though the ally of the English, was yet one of their native princes. The Regent Bedford refused these terms, and the speedy submission of the city to the English seemed inevitable. The Dauphin Charles, who was now at Chinon with his remnant of a court despaired of continuing any longer the struggle for his crown, and was only prevented from abandoning the country by the more masculine spirits of his mistress and his queen. Yet neither they nor the boldest of Charles's captains, could have shown him where to find resources for prolonging the war; and least of all could any human skill have predicted the quarter whence rescue was to come to Orleans and to France.

In the village of Domremy, on the borders of Lorraine, there was a poor peasant of the name of Jacques d'Arc, respected in his station of life, and who had reared a family in virtuous habits and in the practice of the strictest devotion. His eldest daughter was named by her parents Jeannette, but she was called Jeanne by the French, which was Latinized into Johanna, and Anglicized into Joan.*

At the time when Joan first attracted attention, she was about eighteen years of age. She was naturally of a susceptible disposition, which diligent attention to the legends of saints and tales of fairies, aided by the dreamy loneliness of her life while tending her father's flocks,† had made peculiarly prone to enthusiastic fer-

* "Respondit quod in partibus suis vocabatur Johanneta, et postquam venit in Franciam vocata est Johanna."—*Procès de Jeanne d'Arc*, l. 1, p. 46.
† Southey, in one of the speeches which he puts in the mouth of Joan of Arc, has made her beautifully describe the effect on her mind of the scenery in which she dwelt.

"Here in solitude and peace

vor. At the same time she was eminent for piety and purity of soul, and for her compassionate gentleness to the sick and the distressed.

The district where she dwelt had escaped comparatively free from the ravages of war, but the approach of roving bands of Burgundian or English troops frequently spread terror through Domremy. Once the village had been plundered by some of these marauders, and Joan and her family had been driven from their home, and forced to seek refuge for a time at Neufchateau. The peasantry in Domremy were principally attached to the house of Orleans and the dauphin, and all the miseries which France endured were there imputed to the Burgundian faction and their allies, the English, who were seeking to enslave unhappy France.

Thus, from infancy to girlhood, Joan had heard continually of the woes of the war, and had herself witnessed some of the wretchedness that it caused. A feeling of intense patriotism grew in her with her growth. The deliverance of France from the English was the subject of her reveries by day and her dreams by night. Blended with these aspirations were recollections of the miraculous interpositions of Heaven in favor of the oppressed, which she had learned from the legends of her church. Her faith was undoubting; her prayers were fervent. "She feared no danger, for she felt no sin," and at length she believed herself to have received the supernatural inspiration which she sought.

According to her own narrative, delivered by her to her merciless inquisitors in the time of her captivity and approaching death, she was about thirteen years old when her revelations commenced. Her own words describe them best. "At the age of thirteen, a voice from God came to her to help her in ruling herself, and that

My soul was nursed, amid the loveliest scenes
Of unpolluted nature. Sweet it was,
As the white mists of morning roll'd away,
To see the mountain's wooded heights appear
Dark in the early dawn, and mark its slope
With gorse-flowers glowing, as the rising sun
On the golden ripeness pour'd a deepening light,
Pleasant at noon beside the vocal brook
To lay me down, and watch the floating clouds,
And shape to Fancy's wild similitudes
Their ever-varying forms; and oh! how sweet,
To drive my flock at evening to the fold,
And hasten to our little hut, and hear
The voice of kindness bid me welcome home."

The only foundation for the story told by the Burgundian partisan, Monstrelet, and adopted by Hume, of Joan having been brought up as a servant, is the circumstance of her having been once, with the rest of her family, obliged to take refuge in an *auberge* in Neufchateau for fifteen days, when a party of Burgundian cavalry made an incursion into Domremy. (See the

voice came to her about the hour of noon, in summer time, while she was in her father's garden. And she had fasted the day before. And she heard the voice on her right, in the direction of the church; and when she heard the voice, she saw also a bright light." Afterward St. Michael, and St. Margaret, and St. Catharine appeared to her. They were always in a halo of glory; she could see that their heads were crowned with jewels; and she heard their voices, which were sweet and mild. She did not distinguish their arms or limbs. She heard them more frequently than she saw them; and the usual time when she heard them was when the church bells were sounding for prayer. And if she was in the woods when she heard them, she could plainly distinguish their voices drawing near to her. When she thought that she discerned the Heavenly Voices, she knelt down, and bowed herself to the ground. Their presence gladdened her even to tears; and after they departed, she wept because they had not taken her back to Paradise. They always spoke soothingly to her. They told her that France would be saved, and that she was to save it. Such were the visions and the voices that moved the spirit of the girl of thirteen; and as she grew older, they became more frequent and more clear. At last the tidings of the siege of Orleans reached Domremy. Joan heard her parents and neighbors talk of the sufferings of its population, of the ruin which its capture would bring on their lawful sovereign, and of the distress of the dauphin and his court. Joan's heart was sorely troubled at the thought of the fate of Orleans; and her Voices now ordered her to leave her home; and warned her that she was the instrument chosen by Heaven for driving away the English from that city, and for taking the dauphin to be anointed king of the Rheims. At length she informed her parents of her divine mission, and told them that she must go to the Sire de Baudricourt, who commanded at Vaucouleurs, and who was the appointed person to bring her into the presence of the king, whom she was to save. Neither the anger nor the grief of her parents, who said they would rather see her drowned than exposed to the contamination of the camp, could move her from her purpose. One of her uncles consented to take her to Vaucouleurs, where De Baudricourt at first thought her mad, and derided her, but by degrees he was led to believe, if not in her inspiration, at least in her enthusiasm, and in its possible utility to the dauphin's cause.

The inhabitants of Vaucouleurs were completely won over to her side by the piety and devoutness which she displayed, and by her firm assurance in the truth of her mission. She told them that it was God's will that she should go to the king, and that no one but her could save the kingdom of France. She said that she herself would rather remain with her poor mother, and spin; but the Lord had ordered her forth. The fame of "The Maid," as she was

termed, the renown of her holiness, and of her mission, spread far and wide. Baudricourt sent her with an escort to Chinon, where the Dauphin Charles was dallying away his time. Her Voices had bidden her assume the arms and the apparel of a knight; and the wealthiest inhabitant of Vaucouleurs had vied with each other in equipping her with war-horse, armor, and sword. On reaching Chinon, she was, after some delay, admitted into the presence of the dauphin. Charles designedly dressed himself far less richly than many of his courtiers were appareled, and mingled with them, when Joan was introduced in order to see if the Holy Maid would address her exhortations to the wrong person. But she instantly singled him out, and kneeling before him, said, "Most noble dauphin, the King of Heaven announces to you by me that you shall be anointed and crowned king in the city of Rheims, and that you shall be his viceregent in France." His features may probably have been seen by her previously in portraits, or have been described to her by others; but she herself believed that her Voices inspired her when she addressed the king;* and the report soon spread abroad that the Holy Maid had found the king by a miracle; and this, with many other similar rumors, augmented the renown and influence that she now rapidly acquired.

The state of public feeling in France was now favorable to an enthusiastic belief in a divine interposition in favor of the party that had hitherto been unsuccessful and oppressed. The humiliations which had befallen the French royal family and nobility were looked on as the just judgments of God upon them for their vice and impiety. The misfortunes that had come upon France as a nation were believed to have been drawn down by national sins. The English, who had been the instruments of Heaven's wrath against France, seemed now, by their pride and cruelty, to be fitting objects of it themselves. France in that age was a profoundly religious country. There was ignorance, there was superstition, there was bigotry; but there was Faith—a faith that itself worked true miracles, even while it believed in unreal ones. At this time, also one of those devotional movements began among the clergy in France, which from time to time occur in national churches, without it being possible for the historian to assign any adequate human cause for their immediate date or extension. Numberless friars and priests traversed the rural districts and towns of France, preaching to the people that they must seek from Heaven a deliverance from the pillages of the soldiery and the insolence of the foreign oppressors.† The idea of a Providence that works only by general laws was wholly alien to the feelings of the age. Every political event as well as every natural phenomenon, was believed to be the immediate result of a special man-

* "Procès de Jeanne d'Arc," vol. I., p. 56.

† See Sismondi, vol. XIII., p. 114; Michelet, vol. V., livre, 2.

date of God. This led to the belief that his holy angels and saints were constantly employed in executing his commands and mingling in the affairs of men. The Church encouraged these feelings, and at the same time sanctioned the concurrent popular belief that hosts of evil spirits were also ever actively interposing in the current of earthly events, with whom sorcerers and wizards could league themselves, and thereby obtain the exercise of supernatural power.

Thus all things favored the influence which Joan obtained both over friends and foes. The French nation as well as the English and the Burgundians, readily admitted that superhuman beings inspired her; the only question was whether these beings were good or evil angels; whether she brought with her "airs from heaven or blasts from hell." This question seemed to her countrymen to be decisively settled in her favor by the austere sanctity of her life, by the holiness of her conversation, but still more by her exemplary attention to all the services and rites of the Church. The dauphin at first feared the injury that might be done to his cause if he laid himself open to the charge of having leagued himself with a sorceress. Every imaginable test therefore, was resorted to in order to set Joan's orthodoxy and purity beyond suspicion. At last Charles and his advisers felt safe in accepting her services as those of a true and virtuous Christian daughter of the Holy Church.

It is indeed probable that Charles himself and some of his counselors may have suspected Joan of being a mere enthusiast, and it is certain that Dunois, and others of the best generals, took considerable latitude in obeying or deviating from the military orders that she gave. But over the mass of the people and the soldiery her influence was unbounded. While Charles and his doctors of theology, and court ladies, had been deliberating as to recognizing or dismissing the Maid, a considerable period had passed away, during which a small army, the last gleanings, as it seemed, of the English sword, had been assembled at Blois, under Dunois, La Hire, Xaintrailles, and other chiefs, who to their natural valor were now beginning to unite the wisdom that is taught by misfortune. It was resolved to send Joan with this force and a convoy of provisions to Orleans. The distress of that city had now become urgent. But the communication with the open country was not entirely cut off: the Orleanais had heard of the Holy Maid whom Providence had raised up for their deliverance, and their messengers earnestly implored the dauphin to send her to them without delay.

Joan appeared at the camp at Blois, clad in a new suit of brilliant white armor, mounted on a stately black war-horse, and with a lance in her right hand, which she had learned to wield with skill and grace.* Her head was unhelmeted; so that all could

* See the description of her by Gui de Laval, quoted in the note to Miche-

behold her fair and expressive features, her deep-set and earnest eyes, and her long black hair, which was parted across her forehead, and bound by a ribbon behind her back. She wore at her side a small battle-axe, and the consecrated sword marked on the blade with five crosses, which had at her bidding been taken for her from the shrine of St. Catharine at Fierbois. A page carried her banner, which she had caused to be made and embroidered as her Voices enjoined. It was white satin,* strewn with fleurs-de-lis; and on it were the words, "JHESUS MARIA," and the representation of the Saviour in his glory. Joan afterward generally bore her banner herself in battle; she said that though she loved her sword much, she loved her banner forty times as much; and she loved to carry it, because it could not kill any one.

Thus accoutered, she came to lead the troops of France, who looked with soldierly admiration on her well-proportioned and upright figure, the skill with which she managed her war-horse, and the easy grace with which she handled her weapons. Her military education had been short, but she had availed herself of it well. She had also the good sense to interfere little with the manœuvres of the troops, leaving these things to Dunois, and others whom she had the discernment to recognize as the best officers in the camp. Her tactics in action were simple enough. As she herself described it, "I used to say to them, 'Go boldly in among the English,' and then I used to go boldly in myself."† Such, as she told her inquisitors, was the only spell she used, and it was one of power. But while interfering little with the military discipline of the troops, in all matters of moral discipline she was inflexibly strict. All the abandoned followers of the camp were driven away. She compelled both generals and soldiers to attend regularly at confessional. Her chaplain and other priests marched with the army under her orders; and at every halt, an altar was set up and the sacrament administered. No oath or foul language passed without punishment or censure. Even the roughest and most hardened veterans obeyed her. They put off for a time the bestial coarseness which had grown on them during a life of bloodshed and rapine; they felt that they must go forth in a new spirit to a new career, and acknowledged the beauty of the holiness in which the heaven-sent Maid was leading them to certain victory.

Joan marched from Blois on the 25th of April with a convoy of provisions for Orleans, accompanied by Dunois, La Hire, and the other chief captains of the French, and on the evening of the 28th they approached the town. In the words of the old chronicler

let, p. 69; and see the account of the banner at Orleans, which is believed to bear an authentic portrait of the Maid, in Murray's "Hand-book to France," p. 175.
* "Procès de Jeanne d'Arc," vol. I. p. 238.

† Id. ib.

Hall.* "The Englishmen, perceiving that thei within could not long continue for faute of vitaille and powder, keppe not their watche so diligently as thei were accustomed, nor scoured now the countrey environed as thei before had ordained. Whiche negligence the citizens shut in perceiving, sent worde thereof to the French capitaines, which, with Pucelle, in the dedde tyme of the nighte, and in a greate rayne and thundere, with all their vitaille and artillery, entered into the cite."

When it was day, the Maid rode in solemn procession through the city, clad in complete armor, and mounted on a white horse. Dunois was by her side, and all the bravest knights of her army and of the garrison followed in her train. The whole population thronged around her; and men, women, and children strove to touch her garments, or her banner, or her charger. They poured forth blessings on her, whom they already considered their deliverer. In the words used by two of them afterward before the tribunal which reversed the sentence, but could not restore the life of the Virgin-martyr of France, "the people of Orleans, when they first saw her in their city, thought that it was an angel from heaven that had come down to save them." Joan spoke gently in reply to their acclamations and addresses. She told them to fear God, and trust in him for safety from the fury of their enemies. She first went to the principal church, where *Te Deum* was chanted; and then she took up her abode at the house of Jacques Bourgier, one of the principal citizens, and whose wife was a matron of good repute. She refused to attend a splendid banquet which had been provided for her, and passed nearly all her time in prayer.

When it was known by the English that the Maid was in Orleans, their minds were not less occupied about her than were the minds of those in the city; but it was in a very different spirit. The English believed in her supernatural mission as firmly as the French did, but they thought her a sorceress who had come to overthrow them by her enchantments. An old prophecy, which told that a damsel from Lorraine was to save France, had long been current, and it was known and applied to Joan by foreigners as well as by the natives. For months the English had heard of the coming Maid, and the tales of miracles which she was said to have wrought have been listened to by the rough yeomen of the English camp with anxious curiosity and secret awe. She had sent a herald to the English generals before she marched for Orleans, and he had summoned the English generals in the name of the Most High to give up to the Maid, who was sent by Heaven, the keys of the French cities which they had wrongfully taken; and he also solemnly adjured the English troops, whether archers, or men of the companies of war, or gentlemen, or others, who were before the city of Orleans, to depart thence to their homes, under peril

* Hall, i. 127.

of being visited by the judgment of God. On her arrival in Orleans, Joan sent another similar message; but the English scoffed at her from their towers, and threatened to burn her heralds. She determined, before she shed the blood of the besiegers, to repeat the warning with her own voice; and accordingly, she mounted one of the boulevards of the town, which was within hearing of the *Tourelles*, and thence she spoke to the English, and bade them depart otherwise they would meet with shame and woe. Sir William Gladsdale (whom the French call *Glacidas*) commanded the English post at the *Tourelles*, and he and another English officer replied by bidding her go home and keep her cows, and by ribald jests, that brought tears of shame and indignation into her eyes. But, though the English leaders vaunted aloud, the effect produced on their army by Joan's presence in Orleans was proved four days after her arrival, when, on the approach of re-enforcements and stores to the town, Joan and La Hire marched out to meet them, and escorted the long train of provision wagons safely into Orleans, between the bastilles of the English, who cowered behind their walls instead of charging fiercely and fearlessly, as had been their wont, on any French band that dared to show itself within reach.

Thus far she had prevailed without striking a blow; but the time was now come to test her courage amid the horrors of actual slaughter. On the afternoon of the day on which she had escorted the re-enforcements into the city, while she was resting fatigued at home, Dunois had seized an advantageous opportunity of attacking the English bastille of St. Loup, and a fierce assault of the Orleanais had been made on it, which the English garrison of the fort stubbornly resisted. Joan was roused by a sound which she believed to be that of her Heavenly Voices; she called for her arms and horse, and, quickly equipping herself, she mounted to ride off to where the fight was raging. In her haste she had forgotten her banner; she rode back, and, without dismounting, had it given to her from the window, and then she galloped to the gate whence the sally had been made. On her way she met some of the wounded French who had been carried back from the fight. Ah! she exclaimed, "I never can see French blood flow without my hair standing on end." She rode out of the gate, and met the tide of her countrymen, who had been repulsed from the English fort, and were flying back to Orleans in confusion. At the sight of the Holy Maid and her banner they rallied, and renewed the assault. Joan rode forward at their head, waving her banner and cheering them on. The English quailed at what they believed to be the charge of hell; Saint Loup was stormed, and its defenders put to the sword, except some few, whom Joan succeeded in saving. All her woman's gentleness returned when the combat was over. It was the first time that she had ever seen a battle-field. She wept at the sight of so many bleeding corpses; and her tears

flowed doubly when she reflected that they were the bodies of Christian men who had died without confession.

The next day was Ascension day, and it was passed by Joan in prayer. But on the following morrow it was resolved by the chiefs of the garrison to attack the English forts on the south of the river. For this purpose they crossed the river in boats, and after some severe fighting, in which the Maid was wounded in the heel, both the English bastilles of the Augustins and St. Jean de Blanc were captured. The *Tourelles* were now the only post which the besiegers held on the south of the river. But that post was formidably strong, and by its command of the bridge, it was the key to the deliverance of Orleans. It was known that a fresh English army was approaching under Fastolfe to re-enforce the besiegers, and should that army arrive while the *Tourelles* were yet in the possession of their comrades, there was great peril of all the advantages which the French had gained being nullified, and of the siege being again actively carried on.

It was resolved, therefore, by the French to assail the *Tourelles* at once, while the enthusiasm which the presence and the heroic valor of the Maid had created was at its height. But the enterprise was difficult. The rampart of the *tete-du-pont*, or landward bulwark, of the *Tourelles* was steep and high, and Sir John Gladsdale occupied this all-important fort with five hundred archers and men-at-arms, who were the very flower of the English army.

Early in the morning of the seventh of May, some thousands of the best French troops in Orleans heard mass and attended the confessional by Joan's orders, and then crossing the river in boats, as on the preceding day, they assailed the bulwark of the *Tourelles* "with light hearts and heavy hands." But Gladsdale's men, encouraged by their bold and skilful leader, made a resolute and able defense. The Maid planted her banner on the edge of the fosse, and then springing down into the ditch, she placed the first ladder against the wall and began to mount. An English archer sent an arrow at her, which pierced her corslet, and wounded her severely between the neck and shoulder. She fell bleeding from the ladder; and the English were leaping down from the wall to capture her, but her followers bore her off. She was carried to the rear, and laid upon the grass; her armor was taken off, and the anguish of her wound and the sight of her blood made her at first tremble and weep. But her confidence in her celestial mission soon returned: her patron saints seemed to stand before her, and reassure her. She sat up and drew the arrow out with her own hands. Some of the soldiers who stood by wished to staunch the blood by saying a charm over the wound; but she forbade them, saying that she did not wish to be cured by unhallowed means. She had the wound dressed with a little oil, and then bidding her confessor come to her, she betook herself to prayer.

In the mean while, the English in the bulwark of the *Tourelles*

had repulsed the oft-renewed efforts of the French to scale the wall. Dunois, who commanded the assailants, was at last discouraged, and gave orders for a retreat to be sounded. Joan sent for him and the other generals, and implored them not to despair. "By my God," she said to them, "you shall soon enter in there. Do not doubt it. When you see my banner wave again up to the wall, to your arms again! for the fort is yours. For the present, rest a little, and take some food and drink." "They did so," says the old chronicler of the siege, "for they obeyed her marvelously." The faintness caused by her wound had now passed off, and she headed the French in another rush against the bulwark. The English, who had thought her slain, were alarmed at her reappearance, while the French pressed furiously and fanatically forward. A Biscayan soldier was carrying Joan's banner. She had told the troops that directly the banner touched the wall, they should enter. The Biscayan waved the banner forward from the edge of the fosse, and touched the wall with it; and then all the French host swarmed madly up the ladders that now were raised in all directions against the English fort. At this crisis, the efforts of the English garrison were distracted by an attack from another quarter. The French troops who had been left in Orleans had placed some planks over the broken arch of the bridge, and advanced across them to the assault of the Tourelles on the northern side. Gladsdale resolved to withdraw his men from the landward bulwark, and concentrate his whole force in the Tourelles themselves. He was passing for this purpose across the draw-bridge that connected the Tourelles and the *tete-du-pont*, when Joan, who by this time had scaled the wall of the bulwark, called out to him, "Surrender! surrender to the King of Heaven! Ah, Gladsdale, you have foully wronged me with your words, but I have great pity on your soul, and the souls of your men." The Englishman, disdainful of her summons, was striding on across the draw-bridge, when a cannon shot from the town carried it away, and Gladsdale perished in the water that ran beneath. After his fall, the remnant of the English abandoned all farther resistance. Three hundred of them had been killed in the battle, and two hundred were made prisoners.

The broken arch was speedily repaired by the exulting Orleanais, and Joan made her triumphal re-entry into the city by the bridge that had so long been closed. Every church in Orleans rang out its gratulating peal; and throughout the night the sounds of rejoicing echoed, and bonfires blazed up from the city. But in the lines and forts which the besiegers yet retained on the northern shore, there was anxious watching of the generals, and there was desponding gloom among the soldiery. Even Talbot now counseled retreat. On the following morning the Orleanais,

* "Journal du Siege d'Orleans," p. 87.

from their walls, saw the great forts called "London" and "St. Lawrence" in flames, and witnessed their invaders busy in destroying the stores and munitions which had been relied on for the destruction of Orleans. Slowly and sullenly the English army retired; and not before it had drawn up in battle array opposite to the city, as if to challenge the garrison to an encounter. The French troops were eager to go out and attack, but Joan forbade it. The day was Sunday. "In the name of God," she said, "let them depart, and let us return thanks to God." She led the soldiers and citizens forth from Orleans, but not for the shedding of blood. They passed in solemn procession round the city walls, and then, while their retiring enemies were yet in sight, they knelt in thanksgiving to God for the deliverance which he had vouchsafed them.

Within three months from the time of her first interview with the dauphin, Joan had fulfilled the first part of her promise, the raising of the siege of Orleans. Within three months more she had fulfilled the second part also, and had stood with her banner in her hand by the high altar at Rheims, while he was anointed and crowned as King Charles VII. of France. In the interval she had taken Jargeau, Troyes, and other strong places, and she had defeated an English army in a fair field at Patay. The enthusiasm of her countrymen knew no bounds; but the importance of her services, and especially of her primary achievement at Orleans, may perhaps be best proved by the testimony of her enemies. There is extant a fragment of a letter from the Regent Bedford to his royal nephew, Henry VI., in which he bewails the turn that the war has taken, and especially attributes it to the raising of the siege of Orleans by Joan. Bedford's own words, which are preserved in Rymer,* are as follows:

"And alle thing there prospered for you til the tyme of the Siege of Orleans taken in hand God knoweth by what advis.

"At the whiche tyme, after the adventure fallen to the persone of my cousin of Salisbury, whom God assoille, there felle by the hand of God as it seemeth, a great strook upon your people that was assembled there in grete nombre, caused in grete partie, as y trowe, of lakke of sadde beleve, and of unlevefulle doubte, that thei hadde of a disciple and lyme of the Feende, called the Pucelle, that used fals enchantments and sorcerie.

"The whiche strooke and discomfiture nott oonly lessed in grete partie the nombre of your people there, but as well withdrew the courage of the remenant in merveillous wyse, and courageid your adverse partie and ennemys to assemble them forthwith in grete nombre."

When Charles had been anointed King of France, Joan believed that her mission was accomplished. And, in truth, the deliverance

* Vol. I., p. 408.

of France from the English, though not completed for many years afterward, was then insured. The ceremony of a royal coronation and anointment was not in those days regarded as a mere costly formality. It was believed to confer the sanction and the grace of Heaven upon the prince, who had previously ruled with mere human authority. Thenceforth he was the Lord's Anointed. Moreover, one of the difficulties that had previously lain in the way of many Frenchmen when called on to support Charles VII. was now removed. He had been publicly stigmatized, even by his own parents, as no true son of the royal race of France. The queen-mother, the English, and the partisans of Burgundy called him the "Pretender to the title of Dauphin;" but those who had been led to doubt his legitimacy were cured of their skepticism by the victories of the Holy Maid and by the fulfillment of her pledges. They thought that Heaven had now declared itself in favor of Charles as the true heir of the crown of St. Louis, and the tales about his being spurious were thenceforth regarded as mere English calumnies. With this strong tide of national feeling in his favor, with victorious generals and soldiers round him, and a dispirited and divided enemy before him, he could not fail to conquer, though his own imprudence and misconduct, and the stubborn valor which the English still from time to time displayed, prolonged the war in France until the civil war of the Roses broke out in England, and left France to peace and repose.

Joan knelt before the French king in the cathedral of Rheims, and shed tears of joy. She said that she had then fulfilled the work which the Lord had commanded her. The young girl now asked for her dismissal. She wished to return to her peasant home, to tend her parents' flocks again, and live at her own will in her native village.* She had always believed that her career would be a short one. But Charles and his captains were loth to loose the presence of one who had such influence upon the soldiery and the people. They persuaded her to stay with the army. She still showed the same bravery and zeal for the cause of France. She still was as fervent as before in her prayers, and as exemplary in all religious duties. She still heard her Heavenly Voices,† but she now no longer thought herself the appointed minister of Heaven to lead her countrymen to certain victory. Our admiration for her courage and patriotism ought to be increased a hundred fold by her conduct throughout the latter part of her career, amid dangers, against which she no longer believed herself to be divinely secured. Indeed, she believed herself doomed to perish in a little more than a year;‡ but she still fought on as resolutely, if not as exultingly as ever.

* "Je voudrais bien qu'il voutint me faire ramener auprès mes pere et mere, a garder leurs brebis et betail, et faire ce que je voudrais faire."

† "Des le commencement elle avoit dit, 'il me faut employer: je ne guerai qu'un an, ou guere plus.'"—MICHELET, *v.*, p. 101.

As in the case of Arminius, the interest attached to individual heroism and virtue makes us trace the fate of Joan of Arc after she had saved her country. She served well with Charles's army in the capture of Laon, Soissons, Compiègne, Beauvais, and other strong places; but in a premature attack on Paris, in September, 1429, the French were repulsed, and Joan was severely wounded. In the winter she was again in the field with some of the French troops; and in the following spring she threw herself into the fortress of Compiègne, which she had herself won for the French king in the preceding autumn, and which was now besieged by a strong Burgundian force.

She was taken prisoner in a sally from Compiègne, on the 24th of May, and was imprisoned by the Burgundians first at Arras, and then at a place called Crotoy, on the Flemish coast, until November, when, for payment of a large sum of money, she was given up to the English, and taken to Rouen, which then was their main stronghold in France.

"Sorrow it were, and shame to tell,
The butchery that there befell."

And the revolting details of the cruelties practiced upon this young girl may be left to those whose duty, as avowed biographers, it is to describe them.* She was tried before an ecclesiastical tribunal on the charge of witchcraft, and on the 30th of May, 1431, she was burned alive in the market-place at Rouen.

I will add but one remark on the character of the truest heroine that the world has ever seen.

If any person can be found in the present age who would join in the scoffs of Voltaire against the Maid of Orleans and the Heavenly Voices by which she believed herself inspired, let him read the life of the wisest and best man that the heathen nations produced. Let him read of the Heavenly Voice by which Socrates believed himself to be constantly attended; which cautioned him on his way from the field of battle at Delium, and which from his boyhood to the time of his death, visited him with unearthly warnings.† Let the modern reader reflect upon this; and then, unless he is prepared to term Socrates either fool or impostor, let him not dare to deride or vilify Joan of Arc.

* The whole of the "Procès de Condamnation et de Réhabilitation de Jeanne d'Arc" has been published in five volumes, by the Société de l'Histoire de France. All the passages from contemporary chroniclers and poets are added; and the most ample materials are thus given for acquiring full information on a subject which is, to an Englishman, one of painful interest. There is an admirable essay on Joan of Arc in the 133th number of the "Quarterly."

† See Cicero, de Divinatione, lib. I., sec. 41; and see the words of Socrates himself, in Plato, Apol. Soc.: Ὅτι μοι θεῶν τι καὶ δαιμονίων γινέται. Εἰποὶ δὲ τοῦτ' ἔστιν ἐκ παιδὸς ἀσχετὸν, Φωνὴ τις γινουμένη, κ. τ. λ.

D.B.—7