Joan of Arc, her Imprisonment,
Trial and Death.

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JOAN OF ARC

"The fairest things have sweetest end
Their scent survives their close
But the rose's scent is bitterness
To him that loved the rose."--Francis Thompson

Those "fairest things" are verified in the life of Joan of Arc, the Flower of Chivalry, The Lady Knight, titles befitting our Maiden Saint. A mere child in years, and though innocence bedecked her fair young brow, she was born only to blossom, ruthlessly plucked by her enemy and heartlessly cast into the raging flames. From those very ashes has wafted a perfume, sweeter than the rose itself. This sweet scented perfume of our Maiden Flower, while bitterness to her adversaries, has been Joan's rich legacy to the Catholic Church, and her followers. To-day, better than ever, do we know the truth concerning Joan and for the sake of truth, men of every land love to tell her story.

The village of Domremy in the province of Lorraine, was the birthplace of the Maid. Born on January 6, 1412 of humble parents, Joan or Jeanne, as the French call her, led the daily life of a simple, peasant girl until her seventeenth birthday. This seventeenth birthday, however, marked a notable change in the career of the Maid. For three years prior to this date, Joan had on various occasions held intimate concourse with heaven-sent messengers, namely St. Catherine and St. Margaret.
These saints had repeatedly reminded her that she was to be the savior of France, for Joan lived during a most unhappy time, a time when war and bloodshed were common occurrences. It was at that period in Europe when the political conditions were in their worst form, when the dissensions between the two mighty nations, England and France, formed an important epoch of history in the career of Joan. At first, Joan turned a deaf ear to her celestial advisors, considering herself too ignorant and too insignificant to be the happy originator and joyful heraldress of such good tidings. Her Voices, as Joan was wont to term them, became more and more incessant as time elapsed, so Joan finally decided to seek the advice of her beloved parents, not having previously confided her secret to any one. Her incredulous parents looked upon the plan as vague and visionary. Her father was even incensed and threatened to drown her should she make any attempt to obey such imaginary voices. This was only an addition to Joan's rapidly increasing number of obstacles. Joan, always obedient and docile, was now in a very serious dilemma. Whom should she obey? her parents, or her God-sent messengers, as she firmly believed them to be. After some deliberation she decided that, "to obey God rather than man," should be her motto; therefore, fearlessly, though perhaps somewhat secretly, she left her father's house and sought refuge in that of her uncle, a man, while of deep virtue, was likewise most liberal in his views and very broad-minded. At that time, this uncle lived near Vaucouleurs. To him, Joan pru-
dently but confidently related all that had occurred and with
earnest persistency begged the old man to take her to the French
Commander, Baudrericourt. Her Uncle listened attentively, yet not
without much astonishment, to her strange story. But, sincerely
believing she was directed from on high, he willingly and gladly
yielded to her serious entreaties and took her at once to the
French general. On her arrival, she found to her dismay that
Baudrericourt, the French general, was not as easily or readily
convinced as was her uncle. He laughed at Joan in derision and
bade her uncle take her home and punish her as she deserved.
Evidently Joan's very appearance was not such as would inspire con­
fidence, but our ingenious Joan was not the least perturbed. To the
general's mind it seemed a repetition of the old proverb, "Fools
rush in where angels fear to tread." Rebuffed, but not outwitted,
Joan, simply, though perhaps somewhat impatiently, abided her time.
Meanwhile, she redoubled her prayers and petitions, until at last
a circumstance happened which induced the dubious commander to
listen to the Maid with more than an ordinary amount of fear and
respect.

Lent was fast approaching and the French people wished
to prepare themselves with an abundant supply of fish for the
holy season. News soon arrived that a number of wagons containing
herring were being sent to the English, so the French decided to
capture them. They made the attempt—bloodshed followed, and the
French were sadly defeated. Now, this "Battle of the Herrings,"
as it was termed, was fought February 12, 1429, and Joan, many
miles from the scene of the bloody contest, was duly informed by
the Voices of the defeat and immediately wended her steps toward
the French Commander to make him the recipient of the doeful news.

He was greatly surprised, but was incredulous, as the
news could not have traveled so quickly, for Orleans was many
miles distant, and the road leading thereto, was beset by English
soldiers and bloodthirsty robbers. But what was his chagrin,
when he found himself outwitted by this simple peasant girl, for
not long after, messenger after messenger, came with the same tid­
ings. Convinced, in spite of himself, that there was something
uncommon in the girl, and perhaps, really fearing to oppose her
longer, he at length consented to Joan's visiting the Dauphin. At
last the patience and persistency of Joan was to be rewarded.

"No victory without labor."
Joan's Visit to the Dauphin and its Result

All difficulties having at last been overcome, Boudricourt presented the eager maid with a sword and gave into her command a small body of men-at-arms to act as a personal guard enroute to the Dauphin. The journey to Chinon took several days, and it too, was fraught with many hardships. Possible murmurings of the probably unwilling guard, conditions of the roads, weariness, and anxiety were evidently Joan's trials even at the very outset of her mission, but Joan stood her ground like a colossal wall, seemingly impressionable. However, in due time, the small party arrived at Chinon, only to find there discord among the king's advisors as to the plausibility of admitting the maid. After an elapse of a brief period, these obstacles likewise vanished. At last, Joan's first dream was realized—or was it only a dream? No, there she stood, really and truly, in the presence of the Dauphin.

Innocence and purity has its own beautiful reward and Joan, pure as a dove and meek as a lamb, was not in the least degree daunted by the splendor of the palace, nor the dignity of the king and his nobles. Though Joan had never seen the king, nor was he even now pointed out to her, yet she gracefully stepped before him, whom God himself had ordained as her lord and king. In her simple charming manner she stated her mission. She had a vague dread, that even now his majesty might refuse her request. The king, struck by the charming simplicity of the girl, was immediately convinced of the veracity of her mission and of its Divine interpretation, yet for fear of displeasing his house, tarried
some little time before giving the Maid his approbation and the necessary men and provisions.

After a delay, which seemed to the Maid, one of interminable duration, though in reality it was only six weeks, Joan appeared before the army at Blois on April 1, 1429. She proved herself an apt leader and gained the confidence of all the soldiers. Through her masterful leadership the battle of Orleans proved a gigantic French victory.

Jean, by this victory, almost 500 years ago, actually saved the French nation from the yoke of the stranger. Her victory thrust the invader practically out of the whole of France. Only a foothold in the North was left to the English. Calais alone, remained to them out of the vast conquests formerly held. But the victory of the maid, entailed consequences, which neither Jeanne nor the men of her times, who fought side by side with her, could even dimly foresee.

Now, that her one mission was over, Joan proceeded to accomplish her second, a task, as dear, if not dearer to her heart than was the first—to have the Dauphin crowned at Rheims. Triumphantly, she led him there, and amid all imaginable splendor, he was crowned king. With the triumph of the newly crowned monarch began the downfall of Joan's success.

Now that the two most cherished missions of Joan was accomplished, she was most anxious to return to her father's house, but the young king, perhaps through some sentiment of gratitude, insisted on the Maid's remaining. She acquiesced, only to be captured a short time after this at a small town known as Compiègne.
In prosperity, her friends were many, in adversity she stood alone, a blot which will ever stand against the king, his army and his countrymen. The words of Robinson should echo and re-echo in the hearts of every Frenchmen,

"Strange that I did not know her then,
That friend of mine!"

I never knew the worth of her until she died."

Her glory was but short-lived. Captured, sold to the English by the ungrateful French, and finally cast into a prison of her own country----. These were the miseries which caused the bitterest tears to flow from the eyes of Joan. This same girl, though only a child in years, had endured hunger, fatigue and suffering to a surprising degree, found the ingratitude of those whom she so tenderly and fondly loved, almost beyond human endurance; but her martyrdom was only beginning.

"God's will be done," exclaimed Joan, but she was troubled. Imprisonment was now her lot and would it be long? And what would follow--perhaps death, perhaps dishonor. She hoped and prayed that if death be her lot the imprisonment might be short. But reflections now were not to be permitted; not one glance was to be cast back; not even one forward. No, not one thought must she give either to the past or the future. The first was a page so heavenly sweet--so deadly sad--that to read one line of it would dissolve the courage of Joan and break down her energy. The last was an awful blank; something like the world after the deluge.
Imprisonment

By the law of any supposed civilized nation, Jeanne, as a prisoner of war, was entitled to an honorable treatment and to ransom. Had her captors put a price upon her, be that price what it would, the French people, out of mere gratitude should have been more than willing to pay it. But petty jealousies were rampant and these jealousies grew into hatred and hatred into revenge, hence, to deprive Joan of her rights as a combatant, was the one thought and aim of her enemies. There was only one way in which to accomplish the above and that way was: by charging the Maid with a crime against religion, thus placing her under the jurisdiction of ecclesiastical law. Pierre Cauchon (we shall learn more of him later) was the man for the work. It was through his influence that on the second day after the capture of Joan, Philip of Burgundy was asked to deliver up to him: "a certain woman named Jeanne, suspected of heresy," so that she might be duly tried before good and learned doctors of the University. But the Burgundians, at least, knew the value of their prisoner and consequently gave no reply to Cauchon's message, but held the "woman named Jeanne" in the castle of Beaulieu, until after Jeanne attempted escape when she was transferred to the fortress of Beaurevoir.

During the intervening time, Cauchon foiled in his first plans, was not idle. Determined to have her, he connived with the University of Paris and the latter issued a summons, on July 14, citing the "woman suspected of heresy." There was a peculiar provision added to this summons which stated that in case the woman was not sent to Paris, she should be handed over to the bishop of
Beauvais, in whose diocese she had been captured. A third summons in Cauchon's own name was forwarded and this time a bribe was offered. Philip had been waiting for a bid. But Cauchon's price was too low. The Duke wanted 10,000 francs, so he still held on to his captive, awaiting a more favorable opportunity of disposing of his valuable prey. It was about this time when Joan attempted to escape. She, only too naturally, feared the hatred of the English and then too, her beloved people of Campagne were in sore distress. To help them was now her most ardent desire. To aid while imprisoned was not possible, so escape was contemplated by Joan. Her Voices bade her desist from such a plan, but Joan was desperate and not heeding their council she leaped from the top of the castle of Beaurevoir to the ground. In doing so, Joan missed her footing, injured herself and was consequently recaptured and again thrown into prison. Results of this were only certain to follow. Instead of aiding Joan, it only added to her existing, countless miseries. The English now chained hand and foot, the poor peasant girl, lest she should attempt again to escape. A short time after, Philip's terms were accepted. Philip then sent the Maid to Crotoy, toward the end of December, she was removed to Rouen. Here, Joan was to suffer, in a manner more to be imagined than expressed, for the demonical actions of conscienceless men must be experienced in order to be realized.

In this prison lay the innocent Maid condemned by non-innocent, pitiless and revengeful judges, to this dark and gloomy abode. Only a glimpse or just a mental picture of the prison to which Joan was sentenced is sufficient to cast a gloom over the
brightest countenance. Does not human nature itself recoil from the very thought of a dungeon which is synonymous with darkness, filth and disease? And then, in Rouen, a city of her own country, the land Joan loved so intensely, for which she fought so successfully, was found that prison. The tower of the castle of Philip Augustus held that infernal abode. Here Joan was incarcerated after her attempted escape from the tower of Beaurevoir.

Monvert, in an account of Joan, describes this prison to which the Maid was condemned in the following words: "Ainsi pouvons nous y lever la tête, il serait impossible d'y étendre les bras." "Joan," as an eye-witness said, "was placed in a dark cell and in irons."

"In irons" and surrounded by men! Can the memory of such treatment ever be effaced from the history of France or from the hearts of her people? Forgiven--yes; forgotten--never. "The Maid often complained that her daily companions used to bully and ill-treat her," says Colles, a notary employed at her trial. Haimond de Macy says: "that in the company of Jean de Luxemburg, and the Earls of Warwick and Stafford he visited her; that Jean said he would ransom her if she would swear not to take arms again." "In God's name you mock me, I know that you have neither the will nor the power," answered Joan. Jean persisted, and the Maid again replied: "I know the English will doom me to death, thinking when I am dead, to win the kingdom of France. But if they were a hundred thousand Godons more than you are, they shall not have the kingdom."

Stafford drew his dagger to dispatch her: Jean desired nothing more; but the astute Warwick stayed his hand. When an earl thus forgot himself, we may imagine the ribaldry of her daily and nightly
companions. It was in this prison that these companions consisted of "five English housepailliers of the basest degree." "People used to go to stare at her and banter her." (Lang) That Joan could have preserved her virginal purity amid such diabolical men, is one of the greatest miracles that can be recorded in the history of the saint. One less courageous, less staunch or less fervent, could never have done so. That her virtue was tested, can scarcely be questioned, for such housepailliers as were her constant companions would find nothing too low, to which they would not venture to stoop. A long and slow martyrdom! Better any day to be dispatched by the sword, than to exist through such a life. Tormented by day and insulted by night, small wonder then that Joan attempted to escape. The wonder was that Joan really found sufficient time, during some unguarded moments, to even make the attempt. True, the chains became her recompense and the reasons for the escape were given in her own words: "The people of Campiegne were in distress, and that was one of my reasons and the other reason was, that I had been sold to the English and I would rather die than be in the hands of my enemies, the English." She had good reason for her choice, but Joan fared no better in the hands of her countrymen, the French.

Without a friend, alone in the world, without even an encouraging word, Joan spent six weary months in prison. Those months were endless in the mind of Joan. Only an eternity will reveal all that the poor girl suffered. The climax seemed reached. Pangs of intense suffering rent the body and soul of Joan. The pitiless, relentless banterers by day and the tireless,
revengeful ones by night kept the Maid in a turbulent sea of sorrow. Others would have despaired. What a consolation it would have been to poor Joan had some woman of respectable reputation been with her! But that meant comfort and even the vestige of comfort was a stranger to Joan.

To torture the mind, to weary the body, and to pollute the soul were the instruments of torture used by the girl's enemies. A troubled spirit, a wornout body would make an easy bird of prey for the bloodthirsty rabble. But these rabbles evidently judged Joan by themselves, for they were yet to learn that the Maid was anything but easy game.

In prison must Joan rest in silence until we take a glance at the character and temperament of those on whose infamous judgement did the Maid yield up her life.

Even the ungrateful king never once took up the cause of Joan, though it would have been well in his power to do so.

The revision of the judgement which took place twenty-five years later at the command of Pope Calixtus III and ended in the condemnation, public censure, and posthumous vindication of the king. It was not until 1915 when Pope Benedict XV placed Joan among the recognized saints of God, then, one and only gave her real worth been proven, but prior to this, facts which now ought to make every French and Englishman blush, must be faced.

In order to fully comprehend the situation under which Joan was placed, it is necessary to know something of the chara-
The Judges

"They gnashed their teeth in raging ire,
Those dark and cruel men
They vowed a vengeance deep and dire
Against 'poor Joan' then"

Father Ryan

It is difficult to conceive that intelligent men, church dignitaries and nobles could be guilty of such heinous atrociousness, such base ingratitude, such deplorable lack of the expected, ordinary, common sense and good or at least reasonable judgement as to permit Joan, the very savior of their country to be taken prisoner without the slightest effort on the part of any individual or the country at large, of ransoming her. Such is the wisdom or folly of men! In all truth can it be said of Joan that "A prophet is never acceptable in his own country".

Even the ungrateful king never once took up the cause of Joan, though it would have been well in his power to do so.

The revision of the judgement which took place twenty-five years later at the command of Pope Calixtus III and ended in the complete vindication of the king. It was not until 1913 when Pope Benedict XV placed Joan among the recognized saints of God, then, and then only has her real worth been proven, but prior to this, facts, which now, ought to make every French and Englishman blush, must be faced.

In order to fully comprehend the situation under which Joan was placed, it is necessary to know something of the charac-
ter of the men who sat as judges during the trial of Joan. Then, and then only will it be realized that the trial given to Joan was only a farce. The very outcome of the trial had been previously planned and in no other way must it terminate. Joan must die and that death was planned by fire. If the Maid did not convict herself, others would do it for her, hence, the question has since arisen—did Joan have a just trial? Even the English have later acknowledged that the trial was not in accordance with the laws of the land as is evident from the following quotation taken from the Process De Condamnation de Jeanne D'Arc:

"Nous, Anglais n'avons pas traité, comme c'était notre droit, cette fille en ennemie, bien qu'elle nous ait infligé tant de défaites et de pertes. Nous, juges ecclésiastiques, nous avons agi suivant la doctrine immuable de l'Eglise, suivant toutes les formes du droit, après avoir épuisé le secours de toutes les lumières de la raison. Et de là découlait la nécessité de donner, une grande publicité au document qui devait à l'avance, condamner toute velléité de réhabilitation."

A just trial presupposes just judges. Who were the judges of Joan? Were they God-fearing men? Were they even conscientious, lawabiding subjects of their king? It is our turn now to cast judgement upon the judges of Joan.

Learned ecclésiastic they were, but biased or prejudiced to such an extent, that to pass an impartial judgement, was not in their power. Pierre Cauchon, the chief presiding magistrate, but an undeniable false one, and an adversary of Joan herself was
a man of such principles as not even to have had the faculty of eliciting a memory much less a place in history were it not for the odious judgement passed upon Joan. His life portrays nothing noteworthy or praiseworthy of publicity. Why he was so prejudiced toward the Maid is a question not well understood.

It would be ludicrous to imagine that Cauchon's person or character ever fell under the shadow of the Maid. Was Cauchon bribed? If so, to what advantage? The only explanatory solution to these questions lies in the statement that jealousy was the corner stone on which Cauchon built his revenge. To have been outwitted and overcome by a poor peasant girl was beyond the field of endurance for one of Cauchon's caliber. Or, though it may seem a bold assertion, the demons of hell only could have inspired that unworthy judge to speak and act so relentlessly. He was hardened in heart and conscience. No act was too ignoble, no deed too contemptible for Cauchon to perform. An ordained bishop of the church, but one only in name,—in reality never. It seems blasphemous to think so! And was such a one capable, in the eyes of God or man, of passing judgement upon another, be that other one of the meanest of God's creatures? Again it must be repeated, Cauchon was not a just judge, but a false one, even an imposter. Joan was imprisoned at Rouen and Cauchon was bishop of Beauvais.

Even that worthy gentleman was not ignorant of his lack of and was well cognizant of the fact that this lack of jurisdiction was a serious impediment to his procedure, but in order to remedy the matter he obtained from the archepiscopal Chapter of Rouen a document conceding him the necessary jurisdiction within the territory of the archdiocese for this particu-
lar case. This permit, however, was null and void, because the Chapter was not able to act freely but was swayed by threats and promises of the English government.

The mere reminiscence of the fact that a modest, devout and innocent maid should be tried as a heretic, sorcerer and witch, awakens the pity of the reader, but when it is understood, that the trial was conducted by an incompetent judge, by one who had usurped his power, and by a court selected by this judge; that the forms of a sacred law are to be dishonored in order to compass her death; yet worse than death to rob an innocent one of that priceless gift, reputation, one's very soul becomes fired with just indignation at such an outcome.

According to Lang, Cauchon had his equal in another judge, one of the very few who voted for the torture of the Maid, Thomas de Courcelles, a man much admired during the Council of Basle, by Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini later Pope Pius II. "He was," says the Pope, "respected for his learning and amiableness of character, so modest that he was always looking at the ground, like one who would fain pass unnoticed." "He had good reasons, before he died, for trying to escape observation." (Lang) But with Quicherat it will probably be necessary to add, "cette faute de jeunesse," as he was only thirty, a most melancholy young man whose evasive and peculiar replies at the Trial of the Maid proved that his memory was defective. Granted, but why choose men, one with defective memory and the other with defective judgement. Shall the excuse, cette faute de vieux, be applied to him who selected the
judges and thus pacify the ire of the questioners?

Let it suffice to say that the above mentioned judges with others, many of them of the Burgundian party, others holding benefices in Normandy, an English possession, constituted to a great extent the court at Joan's trial. Few, and they were exceedingly few, were in sympathy with the Maid, but due to timidity or fear, were not open in their sympathetic manifestations. However, there were several who were bold in their declarations of Joan's innocence, but, as a result, found it expedient to flee for their lives. Jean de Lohier was one who had to flee from the country as he was threatened with drowning, after giving his views of the unjust procedure of the trial. Nicolas de Houpperville was imprisoned for declaring the entire procedure null and void. Sincere and open confession meant the sacrifice of life and not all were willing as was our young heroine to lose it for the sake of justice. Yet, though life had been the price, it would have availed but little. The judges wanted not justice, but the life of the girl. That must be obtained, be the means fair or foul. Hence, on pretense of fairness, a trial was announced, and a trial was held.
The Trial

At length dawned the long expected trial. Joan, amid the secret and diabolical delight of Cauchon and his co-workers, was led forth to her trial, a trial which was synonymous with certain death.

After a carefully concocted plot it had been agreed upon to accuse Joan of high treason, of being a witch and a sorceress. Even her virginity was to be called into question. In those days witchcraft and treason were considered diabolical, something related to, and befitting the infernal regions, and the guilty, or the supposedly guilty were condemned without mercy, and that condemnation was not infrequently, to the flames of fire. Wealth, rank, or gallant military exploits were insufficient to save an accused wizard.

The above accusations, if brought against Joan would only too easily arouse the populace, and under such conditions no man of that time could expect a fair trial. Guilty or not guilty, was never brought into consideration; to be accused was a sufficient reason for action.

Well-plotted and well planned, no sooner were these accusations hurled at Joan when she fell victim to the sentiments of the angry mob. Even Joan's companion-in-arms suffered no less a lot. He, like Joan, was condemned by those who had an interest in his ruin, condemned on grounds which to-day would be considered mere folly. The Maid, like Mary Stuart, was judged on the evidence of persons whose very names were unknown to her.

Another accusation brought against Joan was the donning
of male attire—a fault, if considered as such, would keep the
judges of to-day more than occupied. The Maid explained that she
wore such an attire because it seemed more in keeping with modesty,
since she was surrounded by men, on the battle field as well as in
prison. Again, Joan was reprimanded for obeying and disobeying
her Voices—contradictory terms—the personification of inconsist-
ence. Joan obeyed them, when she left her parental abode to fol-
low their counsel, and she violated their commands when leaping
from the tower, hence she was guilty of death. Even the unsophis-
ticated mind of a child would recoil from such reasoning.

Yet again Joan had sinned, it was evident she was a true
daughter of Eve. Joan had heard, touched and adored her Saints—
a most atrocious crime—worthy of hell-fire. How like "fawning
publicans" her enemies were as they eagerly listened to such false
accusations, thanking God they were not like the rest of men. By
the virulent minds of Joan's poignant adversaries, the Saints
whom Jeanne loved, were ruled to be devils, hence the girl was de-
clared guilty of another crime. No other evidence was needed ac-
cording to Gauchon's idea of justice. Yet, in order to make a
bold affront and apparently vindicate himself, he hastily drew up
a list of twelve Articles on which to base the verdict. In sub-
stance they consisted of the following:

I. The Saints were said to have been adored at the
fountain.

As already stated that was considered a crime—a great
crime in the eyes of the accusers. Those pharisaical judges over-
looked the beam in their own eyes in order to pick out the mote
in their neighbor—a concocted scheme to justify the cause. Joan did state that she once had seen the celestial messengers, namely, St. Catherine and St. Margaret, but the remainder of the accusation was fashioned after the fable. "The Counsel of the Fountain" of Catherine la Rochelle.

II. "She varied in her reports of the circumstances about the giving of the sign to the king."

Joan had on various occasions, told her judges that there were some things which she would not answer or not answer truly. The judges, ignoring this statement, pressed Joan to reveal to them some facts which, apparently, the Maid did not wish to foreclose. The sign which Joan gave the king as a symbol of her heaven-sent mission was a secret and as such she wished to keep it inviolate. Possible, with no thought of falsehood, Joan considered the disclosing of the secret as something averse to loyalty and fidelity, consequently very frequently answered her judges, when the above was brought into question, in contradictory terms. Perhaps too, her various statements concerning the above mentioned sign, were merely symbolism involving the secret, or as Quicherat holds, and most inquirers agree with him, that Jeanne based her story on the questions which were put to her and developed it as the interrogators proceeded.

Joan was capable of great things and keeping a secret of such moment was not among the least. With Chesterton could Joan repeat: "The tattered outlaw of the earth,

Of ancient crooked will

Starve, scourge, deride me: I am dumb,

I keep my secret still."
III. "She would not renounce her belief that her Saints were good.

Just another example of the stability of Joan. She was not a traitor nor did ingratitude sully her character. Her Saints had not harmed her. Why should she consider them evil, who themselves, were not guilty of evil? Furthermore, has it ever been known in history that a person was condemned to the ignominious death of fire, or any other death, be it ever so shameful, for thinking or speaking well of others? Cauchon's eyes were blinded by a low spirit of revenge, otherwise even to him, such a thing would appear ridiculous.

IV. "The girl wore a male dress and, when wearing it received the sacraments."

What condemnation would Cauchon and his associates have made had they lived during the Patriarchal Age when men donned woman's attire? Or, at the present time when women imitate men even to the cutting of hair, that ornament of women, once so highly prized by the gentler sex. Further, if it had been wrong, the Archbishop of Rheims and the Tribunal of Poitiers would never have permitted it. Joan's explanation of her male attire, has already been given.

V. "She believed herself to be cognizant of contingent events in the future, as that the French would do something distinguished (pulchrior factus) in her company. She had also found the sword of Fierbois."

Joan had sufficient proof that she had been cognizant contingent events in the future. Had she not been previously
informed of the capture of Orleans, of the sword of Fierbois, of her capture, likewise of other events. Her assertions, were consequently based upon facts, and an acknowledged fact is always a criterion for just statements.

VI. "She used the motto "Jesus Maria," and claimed that the course of the war would show which party was in the right."

Would that the motto of every warrior were as elevating as was that of Joan! What ignoramus would even attempt to criticize, much less condemn, (unless it be during a religious persecution) one who had chosen such soul-inspiring words for a motto. Even the beam in the eyes of the judges did not sufficiently blind them, in order to prevent their seeing the mote in the eyes of their neighbors.

VII. "She went to Baudricourt and to Charles, proclaiming herself a divine emissary."

The contrary could scarcely have been expected since Joan, in holy simplicity was thoroughly convinced that the messengers were from God and not mere illusions. Joan was good and she thought the same of the world. God had sent his messengers to her, distinctly telling her what course to follow and Joan acted upon their counsel and the result never proved a contradiction. Even the king and Baudricourt understood and realized that Joan had been directed from on high. And it was not through sympathy that they realized this, for both were of the "doubting Thomas" type.

VIII. "She leaped from the tower of Beaurevoir, disobeying her Saints."

Joan acknowledged her guilt and confessed the same--
"Let him who is without sin be the first to cast a stone."

When an act is performed through fear the guilt is in proportion to the fear. Joan had a secret horror of falling into the hands of the English. She loathed it. She detested it. Into their hands she had unfortunately fallen and out of their hands she would fortunately fall. The escape was not accomplished, though the Maid attempted it in spite of the warning of her Voices. She did wrong and she knew it—repentance was all that was left and Joan did repent and confess as was stated above.

IX. "She believed herself as certain of heaven as if she were there already and thinks that she cannot have committed mortal sin, for if so, the Saints would not have visited her."

Sound reasoning—the Lord would not have cherished a damned soul. To the best of her ability Joan was striving to lead a virtuous life, why should she not expect heaven as her reward?

X. "She said that the Saints did not speak English."

As if Joan could have understood them if they had! It would seem that a mere child could have reasoned, written, and promulgated accusations of deeper density than were those Articles of Joan's condemnation, compiled by men supposed to be educated.

XI. "She had adored her Saints without taking clerical advice."

Should Cauchon have been consulted? If consulted, would it have been wise or even safe to follow his council? Joan with her meagre knowledge of the world and sin would never have suspected that evil-minded men could interpret childlike, simple devotions, into vice. Joan had never heard, nor had any one else, that clerical advice would have to be had in order to intercede
with the Saints of Heaven. Joan never adored the Saints. She listened to them and devoutly prayed to them.

XII. "She refuses to submit her conduct and revelations to the church."

But Joan was not permitted to appeal to the church assembled at Basle. Then too, an audience with the pope was denied her and certainly under the reigning conditions Joan could never have expected justice from the ecclesiastics of her domain. Her refusal to submit, was a forced one, and her judges knew it. Revenge revenge, was the undeniable aim of her untiring enemy. Joan was illiterate, she was totally ignorant of the arts, reading and writing, but her mind was alert and penetrating when she came face to face with those logical pitfalls, formed and planned by Cauchon and his tools, but to the written documents, because of her illiteracy, fell a miserable victim.

In the above articles many of the original charges were omitted, but as they then stood they were submitted to the learned doctors of the University of Paris. Some of the aforesaid learned doctors held their own version of the Articles but some, and they were not among the few, maintained that the Voices were either human inventions or works of the devil.

So Joan's greatest joy, her intercourse with the Saints, was converted into her greatest cross. And in carrying our cross, the true cross, that one which weighs most heavily upon us, we are nearly always alone. Our own friends, even the most loyal as Pere Louis Perroy tells us, marvel at our want of courage and fortitude and even seem annoyed at our own weakness and apparent need
of aid. Our lassitude is cowardice, our sufferings are misplaced sensitiveness. "The world demands serenity in those it leads to death."

It was at this period, that Joan's strength became exhausted. The human body can bear much, particularly when dominated by a strong will as was Joan's, but even then it knows exhaustion and Joan became a victim of disease—sick unto death. To the bed Joan seemed to have grown; on it she lay as motionless as a stone. She took no note of the lapse of time—of the change from morning to noon, from noon to evening. The Trial had been too much—it had proven beyond human endurance—"The spirit was willing but the flesh was weak," and Joan lay at the portals of death. Weeks passed. She was but a shadow, a poor frail looking creature with the saddest of countenance. Such a picture, indicative of so much suffering should have been sufficient to melt the hardest of hearts, but Cauchon was not touched. He had expected this, he had hoped for this. In health Joan was too strong a character to be handled by Cauchon. Sickness might mean success so he visited her bed of pain in her not less painful prison. He made one of those conscienceless speeches of his, every word dripping with hypocrisy and guile. Cauchon seemed to glory over the advantage he now felt was his, but he forgot that though the body was weak and the spirit almost crushed to pulp it was still Joan to whom he spoke and every word he uttered seemed only to enkindle anew the spirit that was just slumbering and out of that soul came the answer, so familiar to all, yet so utterly detested by all concerned. "Let come what may," she cried, "I will neither do nor say otherwise than I have said already in your tribunals." Another deathblow to Cauchon's
dreams. Joan understands his wiles and tears away the mask of his maneuvers in a few simple words, and these words put him to shame, if shame he could feel. Her language, the language of an unlettered girl, is stamped with that simplicity, clearness and directness which characterizes the innocent. That language is the golden coin of truth, minted pure and unalloyed from the treasury of her virgin heart. Joan, physically weak but spiritually strong, was not so easily seduced, her strength was the strength of ten because her heart was pure. She would not and could not respect a man of Cauchon’s caliber.

Time went on and Joan slowly recovered. She regained her strength as it were only to be capable of enduring more. The rack was now threatened, but even that heart-rending torture did not alter the steadfastness of the now placid Joan. However, this steadfastness was not enduring. The very demons of hell seemed dismissed from their infernal abode to take possession of the judges and thus at length tempt Joan beyond the limits of human calculation. The cup was full and it overflowed. Joan abjured.
Her Abjuration

Joan had been adjudged of heresy, sorcery and all the other crimes set forth by the twelve Articles. Not only adjudged, but found guilty. It was her life that was desired by her enemy and it now lay in the hands of Cauchon. But he was not satisfied with the results of the trial. He was a clear thinker and perhaps a logical one. He foresaw that the evidences on which the condemnation would now be based would in all probability be unsatisfactory to the people. Joan must condemn herself and this in public, then with Pilgrim Cauchon could wash his hands and say: "I am innocent of the blood of this girl, look ye to it." How was this to be accomplished?

Ideas, novel as they may appear, are never wanting when evil is in question, so a happy thought entered the degenerate minds of her confirmed enemies and tormentors. They would show her fire. After all, she was only a young girl with every trace of delicacy, dominant in the gentler sex. The sight of her doom would frighten her and in that way compel her to abjure. Well did those incarnate demons know, that if Joan would, through fear of fire, abjure and claim what she had hitherto spoken was false, would be equally anxious to retract every word when fear no longer had possession of her, then, and then only would they condemn her to death. When that had been accomplished, it would at least appear in the eyes of the multitude that Joan had relapsed. The scheme was cleverly planned and assiduously carried out.

Wearied from continual questioning and weakened by her prolonged illness, Joan at length signed the fatal paper. Signed
what? Illiterate as she was, she knew not. They knew and that was sufficient. Poor Joan! She who had withstood so many taunts, so many sufferings, both physically and mentally, now through fear of fire, abjures. "The vase was human but the flower divine."

—(Father Ryan). Her thoughts at this time were evidently of a strained nature. Consequently, no compact, be it ever so sacred, is valid in the eyes of God or man, when contracted through fear, and the fear that was in Joan's heart can better be imagined than stated. Abjure and be free, rang through that deathlike stillness of the court, or remain obstinate in your opinion, and fire will be your ready recompense, echoed back with tremendous applause.

Joan was desperate. How this poor child yearned for that freedom, yet, even the hope of it was so shortlived, and so transient; scarcely a moment after her abjuration, without even a tremor of pity, Cauchon added these crushing words: "--and that she may repent of her crimes and repeat them no more, she is sentenced to perpetual imprisonment, with the bread of affliction and the water of anguish." Perpetual imprisonment--she had never dreamt of that--shut off from freedom and friendly intercourse with man by that frowning stretch of mighty walls in that commanding, awe-inspiring tower, was so frightening, that the mere thought of it, weighed upon her like a wolf upon its prey. Joan so near to the ever flooding downpour of golden sunshine, yet so impossibly far from it, yearned most intensely for just one glimpse of those radiant beams of nature's heat which were so implacably denied her by those veritable wolves who were plotting her death and blacken-
ing her good name. Forever! Did ever a definition of a word seem more terrible, more heart-rending than did this word "forever"?

Would not death, death the most cruel, death the most heartless be a heaven-sent respite in comparison to a life-long imprisonment? A crushing, lingering martyrdom! Was this to be the promised freedom? This the reward for her abjuration! Was God punishing so soon, her one sin, committed only through fear? Why did she abjure?—but this other alternative, death by fire, was crushing.

Slowly, falteringly and sadly did Joan wend her steps to her doom, the dark barren prison. There she was confronted by beastly looking men, her companions or rather her tormentors, a more appropriate appellation. What a consolation it would have been for this sad and lonely Maid to have had some one of her sex, some one who could be a mother and sister to her during this cruciable period. Just one of the gentler sex who could have aided her by word and example, also perform for her such little offices as only the delicate touch of a woman's hand is capable of doing. She could not rest by day, nor could she close her weary lids by night. Perhaps it was then, when the deep silence of the night covered the city that Joan realized what her abjuration had meant.

Thrice Peter denied his Master and thirty times thrice would the Master forgive, if pardon were sought, and would He not forgive Joan? It too, was fear that prompted Peter to sin but that fear was not the awful one of a raging fire, but only the fear
of a poor ignorant woman's tongue. A sharp tool, to be sure, but not a lacerating one.

Perhaps Joan thought of Peter that dreary night and perhaps through the pity of that now great Saint, she realized the enormity of her sin and through his intercession begged for grace to repent, for on the next day, openly and fearlessly Joan retracted her words, and then for a short space stood nobly, almost proudly awaiting her doom. That doom was fire, as Joan knew, for the stake had been threatened her on various occasions, but she had hoped against hope that it might be changed. Therefore, when the awful words were pronounced, a fearful realization dawned upon Joan in that never-to-be-forgotten moment. In just an instance, the dignified posture of Joan was changed to one of an agonizing attitude. Joan did not pretend to affect the stoicism which she did not feel. It was a period briefer than a thought, mightier than a flash of lightning across a dull gray sky, yet to the heart of Joan the time appeared interminable. Why not death by the sword? A thousand times over would she welcome it rather than be burnt alive. A crushing thought, but can any one, possessed of the use of his God-given senses, imagine the demoniacal delight of the almost howling, gesticulating hostile court that presses upon Joan? But depressed in spirit, accused of many crimes she simply yet firmly declared her innocence, yea, many times with the answers that awed her stern, conspiring judges. Crafty judges, who never had the slightest intention of allowing the Maid any other punishment, but that of death and that death by fire. Without a thought of pity, Joan so replete with pity for others, so tender, so self-
sacrificing, she, who had dared to defend her country so successfully from the proud and haughty English was now condemned to death, and for what reason? Guiltless, she was handed over to the guilty to be burned at the stake for her supposed crimes. After the first natural outburst of grief was over, Joan calmly, prayerfully and resignedly awaited the appointed hour. She had not long to wait, for the thirst of her enemy was unquenchable, until quenched by the blood of the martyr.
Her Death

In virtue of that mysterious law of suffering, under whose yoke the noblest must pass, the Maid of Domremy, the Conqueror of Orleans had her passion to undergo.

With Father John Reville, S.J. we shall say "that it may be doubted whether even the annals of the early martyrs can show such hypocrisy, heartlessness, low cunning and cruelty as we find in the judges before whom she was arraigned. Before that court whose presiding officer was a bishop unworthy of his secret calling, Joan was like a "dove trapped by unclean birds of prey."

"Away with her the rabble cried
With swelling rage and hate,
But"Joan" still gazed up on the sky
Her heart was with her Lord on high
She heeded not her fate."— Father Ryan

Her fate was sealed. Die she must. There was no other alternative. Her death was desired, her death was planned; the trap was set and all too easily did Joan become its victim. With abated breath her executioners awaited the day of her doom. Waited impatiently, lest perchance the "sorcerer" would by some magic spell escape and thus deprive them of their long expected reward. They knew not Joan. She had been weak, but fortified by prayer, she was so no longer. Calmly and peacefully she awaited the fatal hour. Courageous to the last, without aid from any friend not even from the weak-hearted Charles VII, or his fickle countrymen. How well could they have helped her! But not even a look of
Sympathy was given. Just one word of comfort, of gratitude or of appreciation from the king whom she had so loyally defended and so reverently loved, would have been sufficient to assuage the wound so deeply cut. While of him, her king, she spoke like a queen. Not one disparaging word against her sovereign would she speak or permit to be spoken. She was French in her speech, in her enthusiasm and in her unshaken belief in the destinies of her country and her king. And her feeble cries on the funeral pyre, as she proclaimed her innocence and her belief in God, proved above all things she was French in her faith. God unlike man, did not desert His cherished servant. In those last moments He strengthened her through the "Voices" and thus without human aid she rested wholly upon the Divine. So she perished, sacrificing her very life for her country and her king.

Her unquestionable innocence, her angelic purity, her constance and heroic courage, though they could not save her life, have won for her a place in every generous heart, a shrine and an altar in the Catholic Church of which she was ever a faithful and dutiful child. A Catholic bishop, Catholic ecclesiastics betrayed her, and too, it is the Catholic Church who now has given her the highest honors, and places upon her brow the tripple crown of virginity, patriotism and martyrdom.

"Dread death! I am the victor.

Strong death! Where is the sting?"--Father Ryan
Conclusion

It has only been in recent years that correct judgement has been formed, and retribution made, in behalf of Joan.

The accusations brought against this Maid during her trial and viewed now, by the light of the present day, are positively groundless, even ludicrous. No person, with sane reasoning could condemn one on such evidences as were brought against Joan. The world to-day would with one voice, rise up and declare her innocent.

But considering the circumstances at that time, the internal strifes, the prejudices, the unlimited belief in witchcraft, sorcery etc., it is not surprising that innocent victims fell before the angry mob. But it is surprising, overwhelmingly so, that mere gratitude of the king (an instinct found even in animals) would not have displayed itself in some remarkable manner and by that means conquer and overrule the prejudices of the masses. But he was silent— the personification of the basest ingratitude— a blot that will ever tarnish his name.

Then too, there were Cauchon and his associates, supposedly learned men, well versed in moral philosophy, the principles of Faith, the Tract of Justice, the appointed Shepherds of their respective flocks— that such men could be biased to such an extent as to deprive a pure, young girl, not only of her life, but of that which is by far more precious, the well merited title of Virgin, this, I say, is beyond human comprehension.

However, we do learn from "The Saints" by L. Petit that the judges who passed such an iniquitous sentence upon Joan were in league with the schismatical Council of Basle. In the text the words are: "Qui schismatico Basileae concilio studebant, p.189 n.1." But humanly
speaking what could be the motive of those men? Was it revenge, passion, gain or reward? Had they suffered loss and would the death of Joan be a compensation for that loss? Here stands the mystery which will take an eternity to reveal, but no author of to-day finds subject matter fit for condemnation.

Her humble birth, pure life and heroic deeds have formed the theme of more than one writer. Probably the most noble monument to her fame is the drama of Schiller, entitled "Die Jungfrau von Orleans." Quicherat is perhaps our best authority on Joan and among our non-Catholic writers, Lang stands prominent. His work shows the most devoted sympathy toward the Maid. Lowell's "Joan of Arc" may also be mentioned as an excellent biography, and Mark Twain's "Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc" an imaginary memoir, is replete with love and respect for the young heroine. From the Standard Reference which likewise shows a sympathetic trend, we quote the following: Referring to Joan—"The place of execution is now marked by an inadequate monument consisting of a paltry figure surmounting a fountain. Without a doubt the school children of France whose heroine she is, will one day erect a fitting memorial."

Yet another beautiful tribute is made by Creasy in these words: "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
Voices by which Socrates believed himself to be constantly attended; which cautioned him on his way from the field of battle of 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 imposter, let him dare to deride or villify Joan of Arc."

The above are only a few of the many tokens of esteem, reverence and love which the late populace has given Joan, which proves that in no history can there be found a broader scope or more tragic death than that found in the life of our "Lady Knight."
Epilogue

Joan, The Lady Knight

Upon whom could the title of Knighthood more befittingly befall than upon our sainted Joan. The title becomes her well. As a Virgin she lived, as a Knight she loved, as a Soldier she fought, but as a Saint she died.

What higher ambition, what nobler sentiment, what loftier ideal could our maidens of to-day have, than to strive to imitate Joan in thought, word and deed? As the Knight of old fought so valiently for his Lady Love, so might the girl of to-day, fight for her Love, Joan, the Lady Knight.

Very few, if any of us, will ever have the opportunity to reach the zenith of Joan's valor. A martyr's crown may never await us, but to stand up manfully under every trying circumstance, for that blessed Faith of which Joan was so proud, is a Knightly act, a heroic one, one upon which our sainted Joan, herself, would benignly smile.

The Maid was ever loyal to her king and to her God. Joan a General, a Knight and a Martyr, found this loyalty to her God and her king, her one solace.

To be loyal to one's country is fascinating, to be loyal to one's king is not difficult, but to be loyal to one's God is fast becoming a lost art. May Joan, the Lady Knight, who
deserves to be regarded as the incarnation of all that is purest and most blameless in patriotism and of all that is most submissive to God, be the protectress of our youth.

O Joan we love you
To you do we pray
In all our endeavors
Be with us each day.
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