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ANDREW**

THE RED TRUE  
STORY BOOK

Andrew Lang

**The Red True Story Book**

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# The Red True Story Book

## INTRODUCTION

*The Red True Story Book* needs no long Introduction. The Editor, in presenting *The Blue True Story Book*, apologised for offering tales so much less thrilling and romantic than the legends of the Fairies, but he added that even real facts were, sometimes, curious and interesting. Next year he promises something quite as true as History, and quite as entertaining as Fairies!

For this book, Mr. Rider Haggard has kindly prepared a narrative of 'Wilson's Last Fight,' by aid of conversations with Mr. Burnham, the gallant American scout. But Mr. Haggard found, while writing his chapter, that Mr. Burnham had already told the story in an 'Interview' published by the *Westminster Gazette*. The courtesy of the proprietor of that journal, and of Mr. Burnham, has permitted Mr. Haggard to incorporate the already printed narrative with his own matter.

'The Life and Death of Joan the Maid' is by the Editor, who has used M. Quicherat's *Procès* (five volumes, published for the Historical Society of France), with M. Quicherat's other researches. He has also used M. Wallon's Biography, the works of Father Ayroles, S.J., the *Jeanne d'Arc à Domremy* of M. Siméon Luce, the works of M. Sepet, of Michelet, of Henri Martin, and, generally, all printed documents to which he has had access. Of unprinted contemporary matter perhaps none is known to exist, except the Venetian Correspondence, now being prepared for publication by Father Ayroles.

'How the Bass was held for King James' is by the Editor, mainly from Blackadder's *Life*.

'The Crowning of Ines de Castro' is by Mrs. Lang, from Schäfer. 'Orthon,' from Froissart, 'Gustavus Vasa,' 'Monsieur de Bayard's Duel' (Brantôme), are by the same lady; also 'Gaston de Foix,' from Froissart, and 'The White Man,' from Mile. Aïssé's Letters.

Mrs. McCunn has told the story of the Prince's Scottish Campaign, from the contemporary histories of the Rising of 1745, contemporary tracts, *The Lyon in Mourning*, Chambers, Scott, Maxwell of Kirkconnel, and other sources.

The short Sagas are translated from the Icelandic by the Rev. W. C. Green, translator of *Egil Skjalagrim's Saga*.

Mr. S. R. Crockett, Author of *The Raiders*, told the tales of 'The Bull of Earlstoun' and 'Grisell Baillie.'

Miss May Kendall and Mrs. Bovill are responsible for the seafarings and shipwrecks; the Australian adventures are by Mrs. Bovill.

Miss Minnie Wright compiled 'The Conquest of Peru,' from Prescott's celebrated History.

Miss Agnes Repplier, that famed essayist of America, wrote the tale of Molly Pitcher.

'The Adventures of General Marbot' are from the translation of his Autobiography by Mr. Butler.

With this information the Editor leaves the book to children, assuring them that the stories are *true*, except perhaps that queer tale of 'Orthon'; and some of the Sagas also may have been a little altered from the real facts before the Icelanders became familiar with writing.

## WILSON'S LAST FIGHT

### 'They were men whose fathers were men'

TO make it clear how Major Wilson and his companions came to die on the banks of the Shangani on December 4, 1893, it will be necessary, very briefly, to sketch the events which led to the war between the English settlers in Mashonaland in South Africa and the Matabele tribe, an offshoot of the Zulu race.

In October 1889, at the instance of Mr. Cecil Rhodes and others interested, the Chartered Company of British South Africa was incorporated, with the sanction of Her Majesty's Government.

In 1890 Mashonaland was occupied, a vast and fertile territory nominally under the rule of Lobengula, king of the Matabele, which had been ceded by him to the representatives of the Company in return for certain valuable considerations. It is, however, an easier task for savage kings to sign concessions than to ensure that such concessions will be respected by their subjects, especially when those 'Subjects' are warriors by nature, tradition, and practice, as in the present case, and organised into regiments, kept from year to year in perfect efficiency and readiness for attack. Whatever may have been Lobengula's private wishes and opinions, it soon became evident that the gathering of the white men upon their borders, and in a country which they claimed by right of conquest if they did not occupy it, was most distasteful to the more warlike sections of the Matabele.

Mashonaland takes its name from the Mashona tribes who inhabit it, a peaceful and, speaking by comparison, an industrious race, whom, ever since they first settled in the neighbourhood, it had been the custom of the subjects of Lobengula and of his predecessor, Mosilikatze, 'the lion,' to attack with every cruelty conceivable, raiding their cattle, slaughtering their men, and sweeping their maidens and young children into captivity. Terrified, half exterminated indeed, as they were by these constant and unprovoked onslaughts, the Mashonas welcomed with delight the occupation of their country by white men, and thankfully placed themselves under the protection of the Chartered Company.

The Matabele regiments, however, took a different view of the question, for now their favourite sport was gone: they could no longer practise rapine and murder, at least in this direction, whenever the spirit moved them. Presently the force of habit overcame their fear of the white men and their respect for treaties, and towards the end of 1891 the chief Lomaghondi, who lived under the protection of the Company, was killed by them. Thereon Dr. Jameson, the Administrator of Mashonaland, remonstrated with Lobengula, who expressed regret, saying that the incident had happened by mistake.

This repudiation notwithstanding, an impi, or armed body of savages, again crossed the border in 1892, and raided in the Victoria district. Encouraged by the success of these proceedings, in July 1893 Lobengula sent a picked company to harry in the neighbourhood of Victoria itself, writing to Dr. Jameson that he made no excuse for so doing, claiming as he did the right to raid when, where, and whom he chose. The 'indunas,' or captains, in command of this force were instructed not to kill white men, but to fall particularly upon those tribes who were in their employ. On July 9, 1893, and the following days came the climax, for then the impi began to slaughter every Mashona whom they could find. Many of these unfortunates were butchered in the presence of their masters, who were bidden to 'stand upon one side as the time of the white men had not yet come.'

Seeing that it was necessary to take action, Dr. Jameson summoned the head indunas of the impi, and ordered them to cross the border within an hour or to suffer the consequences of their disobedience. The majority obeyed, and those who defied him were attacked by Captain Lendy and a small force while in the act of raiding a kraal, some of them being killed and the rest driven away.

From this moment war became inevitable, for the question lay between the breaking of the power of Lobengula and the evacuation of Mashonaland. Into the details of that war it is not proposed to enter; they are outside the scope of this narrative. It is enough to say that it was one of the most brilliant and successful ever carried out by Englishmen. The odds against the little force of a thousand or twelve hundred white men who invaded Matabeleland were almost overwhelming, and when it is remembered that the Imperial troops did not succeed in their contest against Cetuywayo, the Zulu king, until nearly as many soldiers were massed in the country as there were able-bodied Zulus left to oppose them, the brilliancy of the achievement of these colonists led by a civilian, Dr. Jameson, can be estimated. The Matabele were beaten in two pitched battles: that of the Shangani on October 25, and that of the Imbembezi on November 1. They fought bravely, even with desperation, but their valour was broken by the skill and the cool courage of the white man. Those terrible engines of war, the Maxim guns and the Hotchkiss shells, contributed largely to our success on these occasions. The Matabele, brave as they were, could not face the incessant fire of the Maxims, and as to the Hotchkiss they developed a curious superstition. Seeing that men fell dead in all directions after the explosion of a shell, they came to believe that as it burst out of each missile numbers of tiny and invisible imps ran forth carrying death and destruction to the white men's foes, and thus it happened that to their minds moral terrors were added to the physical dangers of warfare. So strong was this belief among them, indeed, that whenever a shell struck they would turn and fire at it in the hope that thus they might destroy the 'live devils' who dwelt within it.

After these battles Lobengula, having first set fire to it, fled from his chief place, Buluwayo, which was occupied by the white men within a month of the commencement of the campaign.

In reply to a letter sent to him by Dr. Jameson, demanding his surrender and guaranteeing his safety, Lobengula wrote that he 'would come in.'

The promised period of two days' grace having gone by, however, and there being no sign of his appearance, a force was despatched from Buluwayo to follow and capture him. This force, which was under the leadership of Major Patrick W. Forbes, consisted of ninety men of the Salisbury Column, with Captains Heany and Spreckley and a mule Maxim gun under Lieutenant Biscoe, R.N.; sixty men of the Victoria Column commanded by Major Wilson, with a horse Maxim under Captain Lendy; sixty men of the Tuli Column, and ninety men of the Bechuanaland Border Police, commanded by Captain Raaf, C.M.G., accompanied by two horse Maxims and a mule seven-pounder, commanded by Captain Tancred.

The column, which started on or about November 14, took with it food for three days only, carried by natives, and a hundred rounds of ammunition per man. After several days' journeying northward the patrol reached the Buby River, where dissensions arose between Captain Raaf and Major Forbes, the former being of opinion, rightly enough as the issue showed, that the mission was too dangerous to be pursued by a small body of men without supplies of food, and having no reserve of ammunition and no means of carrying the wounded. The upshot was that Major Forbes decided to return, but was prevented from doing so by a letter received from Dr. Jameson, stating that he was sending forward a reinforcement of dismounted men under Captain Napier with food, ammunition, and wagons, also sixteen mounted men under Captain Borrow. The force then proceeded to a deserted Mission Station known as Shiloh. On November 25 the column, three hundred strong and carrying with it three-quarter rations for twelve days, took up the King's wagon spoor about one mile from Shiloh, and followed it through much discomfort, caused by the constant rain and the lack of roads, till, on December 5, a point was reached on the Shangani River, N.N.W. of Shiloh and distant from it about eighty miles.

On November 29, however, Major Forbes, finding that he could make small progress with the wagons, sent them away, and proceeded with the best mounted men and two Maxims only, so that the actual force which reached the Shangani on the 3rd consisted of about one hundred and sixty men and a couple of machine guns.

At this time the information in possession of the leaders of the column was to the effect that the King was just in front of them across the river, accompanied only by a few of his followers. Under these circumstances Major Forbes instructed Major Wilson and eighteen men to go forward and reconnoitre along Lobengula's spoor; the understanding seeming to have been that the party was to return by sundown, but that if it did not return it was, if necessary, to be supported by the whole column. With this patrol went Mr. Burnham, the American scout, one of the three surviving white men who were eye-witnesses of that eventful night's work, which ended so tragically at dawn.

What followed is best told as he narrated it by word of mouth to the compiler of this true story, and to a reporter of the 'Westminster Gazette,' the editor of which paper has courteously given permission for the reproduction of the interview. Indeed, it would be difficult to tell it so well in words other than Mr. Burnham's own.

'In the afternoon of December 8,' says Mr. Burnham, 'I was scouting ahead of the column with Colenbrander, when in a strip of bush we lit on two Matabele boys driving some cattle, one of whom we caught and brought in. He was a plucky boy, and when threatened he just looked us sullenly in the face. He turned out to be a sort of grandson or grand-nephew of Lobengula himself. He said the King's camp was just ahead, and the King himself near, with very few men, and these sick, and that he wanted to give himself up. He represented that the King had been back to this place that very day to get help because his wagons were stuck in a bog. The column pushed on through the strip of bush, and there, near by, was the King's camp – quite deserted. We searched the huts, and in one lay a Maholi slave-boy, fast asleep. (The Maholis are the slaves of the Matabele.) We pulled him out, and were questioning him, when the other boy, the sulky Matabele, caught his eye, and gave him a ferocious look, shouting across to him to take care what he told.

'The slave-boy agreed with the others that the King had only left this camp the day before; but as it was getting dark, Major Forbes decided to reconnoitre before going on with the column. I learnt of the decision to send forward Major Wilson and fifteen men on the best horses when I got my orders to accompany them, and, along with Bayne, to do their scouting. My horse was exhausted with the work he had done already; I told Major Forbes, and he at once gave me his. It was a young horse, rather skittish, but strong and fairly fresh by comparison.

'Ingram, my fellow-scout, remained with the column, and so got some hours' rest; thanks to which he was able not only to do his part of tracking for the twenty men afterwards sent on to us through the bush at night, but also, when he and I got through after the smash, to do the long and dangerous ride down country to Buluwayo with the despatches – a ride on which he was accompanied by Lynch.

'So we set off along the wagon track, while the main body of the column went into laager.

'Close to the river the track turned and led down stream along the west bank. Two miles down was a drift' (they call a fordable dip a drift in South Africa), 'and here the track crossed the Shangani. We splashed through, and the first thing we scouts knew on the other side was that we were riding into the middle of a lot of Matabele among some scherms, or temporary shelters. There were men, and some women and children. The men were armed. We put a bold face on it, and gave out the usual announcement that we did not want to kill anybody, but must have the King. The natives seemed surprised and undecided; presently, as Major Wilson and the rest of the patrol joined us, one of them volunteered to come along with us and guide us to the King. He was only just ahead, the man said. How many men were with him? we asked. The man put up his little finger – dividing it up, so. Five fingers mean an impi; part of the little finger, like that, should mean fifty to one hundred men. Wilson said to me, "Go on ahead, taking that man beside your saddle; cover him, fire if necessary, but don't you let him slip."

'So we started off again at a trot, for the light was failing, the man running beside my horse, and I keeping a sharp eye on him. The track led through some thick bush. We passed several scherms. Five miles from the river we came to a long narrow vlei [a vlei is a shallow valley, generally with

water in it], which lay across our path. It was now getting quite dark. Coming out of the bush on the near edge of the vlei, before going down into it, I saw fires lit, and scherms and figures showing dark against the fires right along the opposite edge of the vlei. We skirted the vlei to our left, got round the end of it, and at once rode through a lot of scherms containing hundreds of people. As we went, Captain Napier shouted the message about the King wherever there was a big group of people. We passed scherm after scherm, and still more Matabele, more fires, and on we rode. Instead of the natives having been scattering from the King, they had been gathering. But it was too late to turn. We were hard upon our prize, and it was understood among the Wilson patrol that they were going to bring the King in if man could do it. The natives were astonished: they thought the whole column was on them: men jumped up, and ran hither and thither, rifle in hand. We went on without stopping, and as we passed more and more men came running after us. Some of them were crowding on the rearmost men, so Wilson told off three fellows to "keep those niggers back." They turned, and kept the people in check. At last, nearly at the other end of the vlei, having passed five sets of scherms, we came upon what seemed to be the King's wagons, standing in a kind of enclosure, with a saddled white horse tethered by it. Just before this, in the crowd and hurry, my man slipped away, and I had to report to Wilson that I had lost him. Of course it would not have done to fire. One shot would have been the match in the powder magazine. We had ridden into the middle of the Matabele nation.

'At this enclosure we halted and sang out again, making a special appeal to the King and those about him. No answer came. All was silence. A few drops of rain fell. Then it lightened, and by the flashes we could just see men getting ready to fire on us, and Napier shouted to Wilson, "Major, they are about to attack." I at the same-time saw them closing in on us rapidly from the right. The next thing to this fifth scherm was some thick bush; the order was given to get into that, and in a moment we were out of sight there. One minute after hearing us shout, the natives with the wagons must have been unable to see a sign of us. Just then it came on to rain heavily; the sky, already cloudy, got black as ink; the night fell so dark that you could not see your hand before you.

'We could not stay the night where we were, for we were so close that they would hear our horses' bits. So it was decided to work down into the vlei, creep along close to the other edge of it to the end we first came round, farthest from the King's camp, and there spend the night. This, like all the other moves, was taken after consultation with the officers, several of whom were experienced Kaffir campaigners. It was rough going; we were unable to see our way, now splashing through the little dongas that ran down into the belly of the vlei, now working round them, through bush and soft bottoms. At the far end, in a clump of thick bush, we dismounted, and Wilson sent off Captain Napier, with a man of his called Robinson, and the Victoria scout, Bayne, to go back along the wagon-track to the column, report how things stood, and bring the column on, with the Maxims, as sharp as possible. Wilson told Captain Napier to tell Forbes if the bush bothered the Maxim carriages to abandon them and put the guns on horses, but to bring the Maxims without fail. We all understood – and we thought the message was this – that if we were caught there at dawn without the Maxims we were done for. On the other hand was the chance of capturing the King and ending the campaign at a stroke.

'The spot we had selected to stop in until the arrival of Forbes was a clump of heavy bush not far from the King's spoor – and yet so far from the Kaffir camps that they could not hear us if we kept quiet. We dismounted, and on counting it was found that three of the men were missing. They were Hofmeyer, Bradburn and Colquhoun. Somewhere in winding through the bush from the King's wagons to our present position these men were lost. Not a difficult thing, for we only spoke in whispers, and, save for the occasional click of a horse's hoof, we could pass within ten feet of each other and not be aware of it.

'Wilson came to me and said, "Burnham, can you follow back along the vlei where we've just come?" I doubted it very much as it was black and raining; I had no coat, having been sent after the patrol immediately I came in from firing the King's huts, and although it was December, or midsummer south of the line, the rain chilled my fingers. Wilson said, "Come, I must have those

men back." I told him I should need some one to lead my horse so as to feel the tracks made in the ground by our horses. He replied, "I will go with you. I want to see how you American fellows work."

'Wilson was no bad hand at tracking himself, and I was put on my mettle at once. We began, and I was flurried at first, and did not seem to get on to it somehow; but in a few minutes I picked up the spoor and hung to it.

'So we started off together, Wilson and I, in the dark. It was hard work, for one could see nothing; one had to feel for the traces with one's fingers. Creeping along, at last we stood close to the wagons, where the patrol had first retreated into the bush.

"If we only had the force here now," said Wilson, "we would soon finish."

'But there was still no sign of the three men, so there was nothing for it but to shout. Retreating into the vlei in front of the King's camp, we stood calling and cooeing for them, long and low at first, then louder. Of course there was a great stir along the lines of the native scherms, for they did not know what to make of it. We heard afterwards that the natives were greatly alarmed as the white men seemed to be everywhere at once, and the indunas went about quieting the men, and saying "Do you think the white men are on you, children? Don't you know a wolf's howl when you hear it?"

'After calling for a bit, we heard an answering call away down the vlei, and the darkness favouring us, the lost men soon came up and we arrived at the clump of bushes where the patrol was stationed. We all lay down in the mud to rest, for we were tired out. It had left off raining, but it was a miserable night, and the hungry horses had been under saddle, some of them twenty hours, and were quite done.

'So we waited for the column.

'During the night we could hear natives moving across into the bush which lay between us and the river. We heard the branches as they pushed through. After a while Wilson asked me if I could go a little way around our position and find out what the Kaffirs were doing. I always think he heard something, but he did not say so. I slipped out and on our right heard the swirl of boughs and the splash of feet. Circling round for a little time I came on more Kaffirs. I got so close to them I could touch them as they passed, but it was impossible to say how many there were, it was so dark. This I reported to Wilson. Raising his head on his hand he asked me a few questions, and made the remark that if the column failed to come up before daylight, "we are in a hard hole," and told me to go out on the King's spoor and watch for Forbes, so that by no possibility should he pass us in the darkness. It was now, I should judge, 1 a. m. on the 4th of December.

'I went, and for a long, long time I heard only the dropping of the rain from the leaves and now and then a dog barking in the scherms, but at last, just as it got grey in the east, I heard a noise, and placing my ear close to the ground, made it out to be the tramp of horses. I ran back to Wilson and said "The column is here."

'We all led our horses out to the King's spoor. I saw the form of a man tracking. It was Ingram. I gave him a low whistle; he came up, and behind him rode – not the column, not the Maxims, but just twenty men under Captain Borrow. It was a terrible moment – "If we were caught there at dawn" – and already it was getting lighter every minute.

'One of us asked "Where is the column?" to which the reply was, "You see all there are of us." We answered, "Then you are only so many more men to die."

'Wilson went aside with Borrow, and there was earnest talk for a few moments. Presently all the officers' horses' heads were together; and Captain Judd said in my hearing, "Well, this is the end." And Kurten said quite quietly, "We shall never get out of this."

'Then Wilson put it to the officers whether we should try and break through the impis which were now forming up between us and the river, or whether we would go for the King and sell our lives in trying to get hold of him. The final decision was for this latter.

'So we set off and walked along the vlei back to the King's wagons. It was quite light now and they saw us from the scherms all the way, but they just looked at us and we at them, and so we went along. We walked because the horses hadn't a canter in them, and there was no hurry anyway.

'At the wagons we halted and shouted out again about not wanting to kill anyone. There was a pause, and then came shouts and a volley. Afterwards it was said that somebody answered, "If you don't want to kill, we do." My horse jumped away to the right at the volley, and took me almost into the arms of some natives who came running from that side. A big induna blazed at me, missed me, and then fumbled at his belt for another cartridge. It was not a proper bandolier he had on, and I saw him trying to pluck out the cartridge instead of easing it up from below with his finger. As I got my horse steady and threw my rifle down to cover him, he suddenly let the cartridge be and lifted an assegai. Waiting to make sure of my aim, just as his arm was poised I fired and hit him in the chest; he dropped. All happened in a moment. Then we retreated. Seeing two horses down, Wilson shouted to somebody to cut off the saddle pockets which carried extra ammunition. Ingram picked up one of the dismounted men behind him, Captain Fitzgerald the other. The most ammunition anyone had, by the way, was a hundred and ten rounds. There was some very stiff fighting for a few minutes, the natives having the best of the position; indeed they might have wiped us out but for their stupid habit of firing on the run, as they charged. Wilson ordered us to retire down the vlei; some hundred yards further on we came to an ant-heap and took our second position on that, and held it for some time. Wilson jumped on the top of the ant-heap and shouted – "Every man pick his nigger." There was no random firing, I would be covering a man when he dropped to somebody's rifle, and I had to choose another.

'Now *we* had the best of the position. The Matabele came on furiously down the open. Soon we were firing at two hundred yards and less; and the turned-up shields began to lie pretty thick over the ground. It got too hot for them; they broke and took cover in the bush. We fired about twenty rounds per man at this ant-heap. Then the position was flanked by heavy reinforcements from among the timbers; several more horses were knocked out and we had to quit. We retreated in close order into the bush on the opposite side of the vlei – the other side from the scherms. We went slowly on account of the disabled men and horses.

'There was a lull, and Wilson rode up to me and asked if I thought I could rush through to the main column. A scout on a good horse might succeed, of course, where the patrol as a whole would not stand a chance. It was a forlorn hope, but I thought it was only a question of here or there, and I said I'd try, asking for a man to be sent with me. A man called Gooding said he was willing to come, and I picked Ingram also because we had been through many adventures together, and I thought we might as well see this last one through together.

'So we started, and we had not gone five hundred yards when we came upon the horn of an impi closing in from the river. We saw the leading men, and they saw us and fired. As they did so I swerved my horse sharp to the left, and shouting to the others, "Now for it!" we thrust the horses through the bush at their best pace. A bullet whizzed past my eye, and leaves, cut by the firing, pattered down on us; but as usual the natives fired too high.

'So we rode along, seeing men, and being fired at continually, but outstripping the enemy. The peculiar chant of an advancing impi, like a long, monotonous baying or growling, was loud in our ears, together with the noise they make drumming on their hide shields with the assegai – you must hear an army making those sounds to realise them. As soon as we got where the bush was thinner, we shook off the niggers who were pressing us, and, coming to a bit of hard ground, we turned on our tracks and hid in some thick bush. We did this more than once and stood quiet, listening to the noise they made beating about for us on all sides. Of course we knew that scores of them must have run gradually back upon the river to cut us off, so we doubled and waited, getting so near again to the patrol that once during the firing which we heard thickening back there, the spent bullets pattered around us. Those waiting moments were bad. We heard firing soon from the other side of the river too, and didn't know but that the column was being wiped out as well as the patrol.

'At last, after no end of doubling and hiding and riding in a triple loop, and making use of every device known to a scout for destroying a spoor – it took us about three hours and a half to cover as many miles – we reached the river, and found it a yellow flood two hundred yards broad. In the way African rivers have, the stream, four feet across last night, had risen from the rain. We did not think our horses could swim it, utterly tired as they now were; but we were just playing the game through, so we decided to try. With their heads and ours barely above the water, swimming and drifting, we got across and crawled out on the other side. Then for the first time, I remember, the idea struck me that we might come through it after all, and with that the desire of life came passionately back upon me.

We topped the bank, and there, five hundred yards in front to the left, stood several hundred Matabele! They stared at us in utter surprise, wondering, I suppose, if we were the advance guard of some entirely new reinforcement. In desperation we walked our horses quietly along in front of them, paying no attention to them. We had gone some distance like this, and nobody followed behind, till at last one man took a shot at us; and with that a lot more of them began to blaze away. Almost at the same moment Ingram caught sight of horses only four or five hundred yards distant; so the column still existed – and there it was. We took the last gallop out of our horses then, and – well, in a few minutes I was falling out of the saddle, and saying to Forbes: "It's all over; we are the last of that party!" Forbes only said, "Well, tell nobody else till we are through with our own fight," and next minute we were just firing away along with the others, helping to beat off the attack on the column.'

Here Mr. Burnham's narrative ends.

What happened to Wilson and his gallant companions, and the exact manner of their end after Burnham and his two comrades left them, is known only through the reports of natives who took part in the fight. This, however, is certain: since the immortal company of Greeks died at Thermopylæ, few, if any, such stands have been made in the face of inevitable death. They knew what the issue must be; for them there was no possibility of escape; the sun shone upon them for the last time, and for the last time the air of heaven blew upon their brows. Around them, thousand upon thousand, were massed their relentless foes, the bush echoed with war-cries, and from behind every tree and stone a ceaseless fire was poured upon their circle. But these four-and-thirty men never wavered, never showed a sign of fear. Taking shelter behind the boles of trees, or the bodies of their dead horses, they answered the fire shot for shot, coolly, with perfect aim, without haste or hurry.

The bush around told this tale of them in after days, for the bark of every tree was scored with bullets, showing that wherever an enemy had exposed his head there a ball had been sent to seek him. Also there was another testimony – that of the bones of the dead Matabele, the majority of whom had clearly fallen shot through the brain. The natives themselves state that for every white man who died upon that day, there perished at least ten of their own people, picked off, be it remembered, singly as they chanced to expose themselves. Nor did the enemy waste life needlessly, for their general ordered up the King's elephant hunters, trained shots, every one of them, to compete with the white man's fire.

For two long hours or more that fight went on. Now and again a man was killed, and now and again a man was wounded, but the wounded still continued to load the rifles that they could not fire, handing them to those of their companions who were as yet unhurt. At some period during the fray, so say the Matabele, the white men began to 'sing.' What is meant by the singing we can never know, but probably they cheered aloud after repelling a rash of the enemy. At length their fire grew faint and infrequent, till by degrees it flickered away, for men were lacking to handle the rifles. One was left, however, who stood alone and erect in the ring of the dead, no longer attempting to defend himself, either because he was weak with wounds, or because his ammunition was exhausted. There he stood silent and solitary, presenting one of the most pathetic yet splendid sights told of in the generation that he adorned. There was no more firing now, but the natives stole out of their cover and came up to the man quietly, peering at him half afraid. Then one of them lifted his assegai and drove it through his breast. Still he did not fall; so the soldier drew out the spear and, retreating a few yards,

he hurled it at him, transfixing him. Now, very slowly, making no sound, the white man sank forward upon his face, and so lay still.

There seems to be little doubt but that this man was none other than Major Allan Wilson, the commander of the patrol. Native reports of his stature and appearance suggest this, but there is a stronger piece of evidence. The Matabele told Mr. Burnham who repeated it to the present writer, that this man wore a hat of a certain shape and size, fastened up at the side in a peculiar fashion; a hat similar to that which Mr. Burnham wore himself. Now, these hats were of American make, and Major Wilson was the only man in that party who possessed one of them, for Mr. Burnham himself had looped it up for him in the American style, if indeed he had not presented it to him.

The tragedy seemed to be finished, but it was not so, for as the natives stood and stared at the fallen white men, from among the dead a man rose up, to all appearance unharmed, holding in each hand a revolver, or a 'little Maxim' as they described it. Having gained his feet he walked slowly and apparently aimlessly away towards an ant-heap that stood at some distance. At the sight the natives began to fire again, scores, and even hundreds, of shots being aimed at him, but, as it chanced, none of them struck him. Seeing that he remained untouched amidst this hail of lead, they cried out that he was 'tagati,' or magic-guarded, but the indunas ordered them to continue their fire. They did so, and a bullet passing through his hips, the Englishman fell down paralysed. Then finding that he could not turn they ran round him and stabbed him, and he died firing with either hand back over his shoulders at the slaughterers behind him.

So perished the last of the Wilson patrol. He seems to have been Alexander Hay Robertson – at least Mr. Burnham believes that it was he, and for this reason. Robertson, he says, was the only man of the party who had grey hair, and at a little distance from the other skeletons was found a skull to which grey hair still adhered.

It is the custom among savages of the Zulu and kindred races, for reasons of superstition, to rip open and mutilate the bodies of enemies killed in war, but on this occasion the Matabele general, having surveyed the dead, issued an order: 'Let them be,' he said; 'they were men who died like men, men whose fathers were men.'

No finer epitaph could be composed in memory of Wilson and his comrades. In truth the fame of this death of theirs has spread far and wide throughout the native races of Southern Africa, and Englishmen everywhere reap the benefit of its glory. They also who lie low, they reap the benefit of it, for their story is immortal, and it will be told hundreds of years hence when it matters no more to them whether they died by shot and steel on the banks of the Shangani, or elsewhere in age and sickness. At least through the fatal storm of war they have attained to peace and honour, and there within the circle of the ruins of Zimbabwe they sleep their sleep, envied of some and revered by all. Surely it is no small thing to have attained to such a death, and England may be proud of her sons who won it.

# THE LIFE AND DEATH OF JOAN THE MAID

## I THE FAIRIES' TREE

FOUR hundred and seventy years ago, the children of Domremy, a little village near the Meuse, on the borders of France and Lorraine, used to meet and dance and sing beneath a beautiful beech-tree, 'lovely as a lily.' They called it 'The Fairy Tree,' or 'The Good Ladies' Lodge,' meaning the fairies by the words 'Good Ladies.' Among these children was one named Jeanne (born 1412), the daughter of an honest farmer, Jacques d'Arc. Jeanne sang more than she danced, and though she carried garlands like the other boys and girls, and hung them on the boughs of the Fairies' Tree, she liked better to take the flowers into the parish church, and lay them on the altars of St. Margaret and St. Catherine. It was said among the villagers that Jeanne's godmother had once seen the fairies dancing; but though some of the older people believed in the Good Ladies, it does not seem that Jeanne and the other children had faith in them or thought much about them. They only went to the tree and to a neighbouring fairy well to eat cakes and laugh and play. Yet these fairies were destined to be fatal to Jeanne d'Arc, Joan the Maiden, and her innocent childish sports were to bring her to the stake and the death by fire. For she was that famed Jeanne la Pucelle, the bravest, kindest, best, and wisest of women, whose tale is the saddest, the most wonderful, and the most glorious page in the history of the world. It is a page which no good Englishman and no true Frenchman can read without sorrow and bitter shame, for the English burned Joan with the help of bad Frenchmen, and the French of her party did not pay a *sou*, or write a line, or strike a stroke to save her. But the Scottish, at least, have no share in the disgrace. The Scottish archers fought on Joan's side; the only portrait of herself that Joan ever saw belonged to a Scottish man-at-arms; their historians praised her as she deserved; and a Scottish priest from Fife stood by her to the end.<sup>1</sup>

To understand Joan's history it is necessary to say, first, how we come to know so much about one who died so many years ago, and, next, to learn how her country chanced to be so wretched before Joan came to deliver it and to give her life for France.

We know so much about her, not from poets and writers of books who lived in her day, but because she was tried by French priests (1431), and all her answers on everything that she ever did in all her life were written down in Latin. These answers fill most of a large volume. Then, twenty years later (1550-1556), when the English had been driven out of France, the French king collected learned doctors, who examined witnesses from all parts of the country, men and women who had known Joan as a child, and in the wars, and in prison, and they heard her case again, and destroyed the former unjust judgment. The answers of these witnesses fill two volumes, and thus we have all the Maid's history, written during her life, or not long after her death, and sworn to on oath. We might expect that the evidence of her friends, after they had time to understand her, and perhaps were tempted to overpraise her, would show us a picture different from that given in the trial by her mortal enemies. But though the earlier account, put forth by her foes, reads like a description by the Scribes and Pharisees of the trial of Our Lord, yet the character of Joan was so noble that the versions by her

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<sup>1</sup> This unnamed monk of Dunfermline describes Joan as 'a maid worthy to be remembered, who caused the recovery of the kingdom of France from the hands of the tyrant Henry, King of England. This maid I saw and knew, and was with her in her conquests and sieges, ever present with her in her life and at her end.' The monk proposed to write Joan's history; unhappily his manuscript ends in the middle of a sentence. The French historians, as was natural, say next to nothing of their Scottish allies. See Quicherat, *Procès*, v. 339; and *The Book of Pluscarden*, edited by Mr. Felix Skene.

friends and her enemies practically agree in her honour. Her advocates cannot make us admire her more than we must admire her in the answers which she gave to her accusers. The records of these two trials, then, with letters and poems and histories written at the time, or very little later, give us all our information about Joan of Arc.

Next, as to 'the great pitifulness that was in France' before Joan of Arc came to deliver her country, the causes of the misery are long to tell and not easy to remember. To put it shortly, in Joan's childhood France was under a mad king, Charles VI., and was torn to pieces by two factions, the party of Burgundy and the party of Armagnac. The English took advantage of these disputes, and overran the land. France was not so much one country, divided by parties, as a loose knot of states, small and great, with different interests, obeying greedy and selfish chiefs rather than the king. Joan cared only for her country, not for a part of it. She fought not for Orleans, or Anjou, or Brittany, or Lorraine, but for France. In fact, she made France a nation again. Before she appeared everywhere was murder, revenge, robbery, burning of towns, slaughter of peaceful people, wretchedness, and despair. It was to redeem France from this ruin that Joan came, just when, in 1429, the English were besieging Orleans. Had they taken the strong city of Orleans, they could have overrun all southern and central France, and would have driven the natural king of France, Charles the Dauphin, into exile. From this ruin Joan saved her country; but if you wish to know more exactly how matters stood, and who the people were with whom Joan had to do, you must read what follows. If not, you can 'skip' to Chapter III.

## II

### A PAGE OF HISTORY

AS you know, Edward III. had made an unjust claim to the French crown, and, with the Black Prince, had supported it by the victories of Crécy and Poitiers. But Edward died, and the Black Prince died, and his son, Richard II., was the friend of France, and married a French princess. Richard, too, was done to death, but Henry IV., who succeeded him, had so much work on his hands in England that he left France alone. Yet France was wretched, because when the wise Charles V. died in 1380, he left two children, Charles the Dauphin, and his brother, Louis of Orleans. They were only little boys, and the Dauphin became weak-minded; moreover, they were both in the hands of their uncles. The best of these relations, Philip, Duke of Burgundy, died in 1404. His son, John the Fearless, Duke of Burgundy, was the enemy of his own cousin, Louis of Orleans, brother of the Dauphin Charles, who was now king, under the title of Charles VI. John the Fearless had Louis of Orleans murdered, yet Paris, the capital of France, was on the side of the murderer. He was opposed by the Count of Armagnac. Now, the two parties of Armagnac and Burgundy divided France; the Armagnacs professing to be on the side of Charles the Dauphin. They robbed, burned, and murdered on all sides. Meanwhile, in England, Henry V. had succeeded to his father, and the weakness of France gave him a chance to assert his unjust claim to its throne. He defeated the French at Agincourt in 1415, he carried the Duke of Orleans a prisoner to London, he took Rouen, and overran Normandy. The French now attempted to make peace among themselves. The Duke of Burgundy had the mad Charles VI. in his power. The Dauphin was with the opposite faction of Armagnac. But, if the Dauphin and the Duke of Burgundy became friends, the Armagnacs would lose all their importance. The power would be with the Duke of Burgundy. The Armagnacs, therefore, treacherously murdered the duke, in the name of the Dauphin, at a meeting on the Bridge of Montereau (1419). The son of the duke, Philip the Good, now became Duke of Burgundy, and was determined to revenge his murdered father. He therefore made friends with Henry V. and the English. The English being now so strong in the Burgundian alliance, their terms were accepted in the Peace of Troyes (1420). The Dauphin was to be shut out from succeeding to the French crown, and was called a Pretender. Henry V. married the Dauphin's sister Catherine, and when the mad Charles VI. died, Henry and Catherine were to be King and Queen of England and France. Meantime, Henry V. was to punish the Dauphin and the Armagnacs. But Henry V. died first, and, soon after, the mad Charles died. Who, then, was to be King of France? The Armagnacs held for the Dauphin, the rightful heir. The English, of course, and the Burgundians, were for Henry VI., a baby of ten months old. He, like other princes, had uncles, one of them, the Duke of Gloucester, managed affairs in England; another, the Duke of Bedford, the Regent, was to keep down France. The English possessed Paris and the North; the Dauphin retained the Centre of France, and much of the South, holding his court at Bourges. It is needless to say that the uncles of the baby Henry VI., the Dukes of Gloucester and Bedford, were soon on bad terms, and their disputes made matters easier for the Dauphin. He lost two great battles, however, Crevant and Verneuil, where his Scottish allies were cut to pieces. The hearts of good Frenchmen were with him, but he was indolent, selfish, good-humoured, and governed by a fat, foolish favourite, La Tremouille. The Duke of Bedford now succeeded in patching up the quarrels among the English, and then it was determined (but not by Bedford's advice) to cross the Loire, to invade Southern France, to crush the Dauphin, and to conquer the whole country. But, before he could do all this, Bedford had to take the strong city of Orleans, on the Loire. And against the walls of Orleans the tide of English victory was broken, for there the flag of England went down before the peasant girl who had danced below the Fairy Tree of Domremy, before Joan the Maiden.

### III

## THE CHILDHOOD OF JOAN THE MAIDEN

THE English were besieging Orleans; Joan the Maid drove them from its walls. How did it happen that a girl of seventeen, who could neither read nor write, became the greatest general on the side of France? How did a woman defeat the hardy English soldiers who were used to chase the French before them like sheep?

We must say that France could only be saved by a miracle, and by a miracle she was saved. This is a mystery; we cannot understand it. Joan the Maiden was not as other men and women are. But, as a little girl, she was a child among children, though better, kinder, stronger than the rest, and, poor herself, she was always good and helpful to those who were poorer still.

Joan's parents were not indigent; they had lands and cattle, and a little money laid by in case of need. Her father was, at one time, *doyen*, or head-man, of Domremy. Their house was hard by the church, and was in the part of the hamlet where the people were better off, and had more freedom and privileges than many of their neighbours. They were devoted to the Royal House of France, which protected them from the tyranny of lords and earls further east. As they lived in a village under the patronage of St. Remigius, they were much interested in Reims, his town, where the kings of France were crowned, and were anointed with Holy Oil, which was believed to have been brought in a sacred bottle by an angel.

In the Middle Ages, the king was not regarded as really king till this holy oil had been poured on his head. Thus we shall see, later, how anxious Joan was that Charles VII., then the Dauphin, should be crowned and anointed in Reims, though it was still in the possession of the English. It is also necessary to remember that Joan had once an elder sister named Catherine, whom she loved dearly. Catherine died, and perhaps affection for her made Joan more fond of bringing flowers to the altar of her namesake, St. Catherine, and of praying often to that saint.

Joan was brought up by her parents, as she told her judges, to be industrious, to sew and spin. She did not fear to match herself at spinning and sewing, she said, against any woman in Rouen. When very young she sometimes went to the fields to watch the cattle, like the goose-girl in the fairy tale. As she grew older, she worked in the house, she did not any longer watch sheep and cattle. But the times were dangerous, and, when there was an alarm of soldiers or robbers in the neighbourhood, she sometimes helped to drive the flock into a fortified island, or peninsula, for which her father was responsible, in the river near her home. She learned her creed, she said, from her mother. Twenty years after her death, her neighbours, who remembered her, described her as she was when a child. Jean Morin said that she was a good industrious girl, but that she would often be praying in church when her father and mother did not know it. Beatrix Estellin, an old widow of eighty, said Joan was a good girl. When Domremy was burned, Joan would go to church at Greux, 'and there was not a better girl in the two towns.' A priest, who had known her, called her 'a good, simple, well-behaved girl.' Jean Waterin, when he was a boy, had seen Joan in the fields; 'and when they were all playing together, she would go apart, and pray to God, as he thought, and he and the others used to laugh at her. She was good and simple, and often in churches and holy places. And when she heard the church bell ring, she would kneel down in the fields.' She used to bribe the sexton to ring the bells (a duty which he rather neglected) with presents of knitted wool.

All those who had seen Joan told the same tale: she was always kind, simple, industrious, pious, and yet merry and fond of playing with the others round the Fairy Tree. They say that the singing birds came to her, and nestled in her breast.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> M. Quicherat thinks that this is a mere fairy tale, but the author has sometimes seen wild birds (a lark, kingfisher, robin, and finch) come to men, who certainly had none of the charm of Joan of Arc. A thoughtful child, sitting alone, and very still, might find

Thus, as far as anyone could tell, Joan was a child like other children, but more serious and more religious. One of her friends, a girl called Mengette, whose cottage was next to that of Joan's father, said: 'Joan was so pious that we other children told her she was too good.'

In peaceful times Joan would have lived and married and died and been forgotten. But the times were evil. The two parties of Burgundy and Armagnac divided town from town and village from village. It was as in the days of the Douglas Wars in Scotland, when the very children took sides for Queen Mary and King James, and fought each other in the streets. Domremy was for the Armagnacs – that is, against the English and for the Dauphin, the son of the mad Charles VI. But at Maxey, on the Meuse, a village near Domremy, the people were all for Burgundy and the English. The boys of Domremy would go out and fight the Maxey boys with fists and sticks and stones. Joan did not remember having taken part in those battles, but she had often seen her brothers and the Domremy boys come home all bruised and bleeding.

## THE RAID OF DOMREMY

Once Joan saw more of war than these schoolboy bickers. It was in 1425, when she was a girl of thirteen. There was a kind of robber chief on the English side, a man named Henri d'Orly, from Savoy, who dwelt in the castle of Doulevant. There he and his band of armed men lived and drank and plundered far and near. One day there galloped into Domremy a squadron of spearmen, who rode through the fields driving together the cattle of the villagers, among them the cows of Joan's father. The country people could make no resistance; they were glad enough if their houses were not burned. So off rode Henri d'Orly's men, driving the cattle with their spear-points along the track to the castle of Doulevant. But cows are not fast travellers, and when the robbers had reached a little village called Dommartin le France they rested, and went to the tavern to make merry. But by this time a lady, Madame d'Ogéwillier, had sent in all haste to the Count de Vaudemont to tell him how the villagers of Domremy had been ruined. So he called his squire, Barthélemy de Clefmont, and bade him summon his spears and mount and ride. It reminds us of the old Scottish ballad, where Jamie Telfer of the Fair Dodhead has seen all his cattle driven out of his stalls by the English; and he runs to Branxholme and warns the water, and they with Harden pursue the English, defeat them, and recover Telfer's kye, with a great spoil out of England. Just so Barthélemy de Clefmont, with seven or eight lances, galloped down the path to Dommartin le France. There they found the cattle, and d'Orly's men fled like cowards. So Barthélemy with his comrades was returning very joyously, when Henri d'Orly rode up with a troop of horse and followed hard after Barthélemy. He was wounded by a lance, but he cut his way through d'Orly's men, and also brought the cattle back safely – a very gallant deed of arms. We may fancy the delight of the villagers when 'the kye cam' hame.' It may have been now that an event happened, of which Joan does not tell us herself, but which was reported by the king's seneschal, in June 1429, when Joan had just begun her wonderful career. The children of the village, says the seneschal, were running races and leaping in wild joy about the fields; possibly their gladness was caused by the unexpected rescue of their cattle. Joan ran so much more fleetly than the rest, and leaped so far, that the children believed she actually *flew*, and they told her so! Tired and breathless, 'out of herself,' says the seneschal, she paused, and in that moment she heard a Voice, but saw no man; the Voice bade her go home, because her mother had need of her. And when she came home the Voice said many things to her about the great deeds which God bade her do for France. We shall later hear Joan's own account of how her visions and Voices first came to her.<sup>3</sup>

Three years later there was an alarm, and the Domremy people fled to Neufchâteau, Joan going with her parents. Afterwards her enemies tried to prove that she had been a servant at an

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birds alight on her in a friendly way, as has happened to the author. If she fed them, so much the better.

<sup>3</sup> See M. Siméon Luce, *Jeanne d'Arc in Domremy*.

inn in Neufchâteau, had lived roughly with grooms and soldiers, and had learned to ride. But this was absolutely untrue. An ordinary child would have thought little of war and of the sorrows of her country in the flowery fields of Domremy and Vaucouleurs; but Joan always thought of the miseries of *France la belle*, fair France, and prayed for her country and her king. A great road, on the lines of an old Roman way, passed near Domremy, so Joan would hear all the miserable news from travellers. Probably she showed what was in her mind, for her father dreamed that she 'had gone off with soldiers,' and this dream struck him so much, that he told his sons that he, or they, must drown Joan if she so disgraced herself. For many girls of bad character, lazy and rude, followed the soldiers, as they always have done, and always will. Joan's father thought that his dream meant that Joan would be like these women. It would be interesting to know whether he was in the habit of dreaming true dreams. For Joan, his child, dreamed when wide awake, dreamed dreams immortal, which brought her to her glory and her doom.

## THE CALLING OF JOAN THE MAID

When Joan was between twelve and thirteen, a wonderful thing befell her. We have already heard one account of it, written when Joan was in the first flower of her triumph, by the seneschal of the King of France. A Voice spoke to her and prophesied of what she was to do. But about all these marvellous things it is more safe to attend to what Joan always said herself. She told the same story both to friends and foes; to the learned men who, by her king's desire, examined her at Poitiers, before she went to war (April 1429); and to her deadly foes at Rouen. No man can read her answers to them and doubt that she spoke what she believed. And she died for this belief. Unluckily the book that was kept of what she said at Poitiers is lost. Before her enemies at Rouen there were many things which she did not think it right to say. On one point, after for long refusing to speak, she told her foes a kind of parable, which we must not take as part of her real story.

When Joan was between twelve and thirteen (1424), so she swore, 'a *Voice came to her from God for her guidance*, but when first it came, she was in great fear. And it came, that Voice, about noonday, in the summer season, she being in her father's garden. And Joan had not fasted the day before that, but was fasting when the Voice came.<sup>4</sup> And she heard the Voice on her right side, towards the church, and rarely did she hear it but she also saw a great light.' These are her very words. They asked her if she heard these Voices there, in the hall of judgment, and she answered, 'If I were in a wood, I should well hear these Voices coming to me.' The Voices at first only told her 'to be a good girl, and go to church.' She thought it was a holy Voice, and that it came from God; and the third time she heard it she knew it was the voice of an angel. The Voice told her of 'the great pity there was in France,' and that one day she must go into France and help the country. She had visions with the Voices; visions first of St. Michael, and then of St. Catherine and St. Margaret.<sup>5</sup> She hated telling her hypocritical judges anything about these heavenly visions, but it seems that she really believed in their appearance, believed that she had embraced the knees of St. Margaret and St. Catherine, and she did reverence to them when they came to her. 'I saw them with my bodily eyes, as I see you,' she said to her judges, 'and when they departed from me I wept, and well I wished that they had taken me with them.'

What are we to think about these visions and these Voices which were with Joan to her death?

Some have thought that she was mad; others that she only told the story to win a hearing and make herself important; or, again, that a trick was played on her to win her aid. The last idea

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<sup>4</sup> Here we follow Father Ayroles's correction of Quicherat's reading of the manuscripts.

<sup>5</sup> The Voice and vision of St. Michael alarmed her at first. In 1425 the French had defeated the English by sea, under Mount St. Michael, the only fortress in Normandy which never yielded to England. Consequently St. Michael was in high esteem as the patron of France, and, of all saints, he was most likely to be in Joan's mind. (See Siméon Luce, *Jeanne d'Arc à Domremy*.) On the other hand, Father Ayroles correctly argues that Joan first heard the Voices the year before the victory near Mount St. Michael.

is impossible. The French Court did not want her. The second, as everyone will admit who reads Joan's answers, and follows her step by step from childhood to victory, to captivity, to death, is also impossible. She was as truthful as she was brave and wise. But was she partially insane? It is certain that mad people do hear voices which are not real, and believe that they come to them from without. But these mad voices say mad things. Now, Joan's Voices never said anything but what was wise beyond her own wisdom, and right and true. She governed almost all her actions by their advice. When she disobeyed 'her counsel,' as she called it, the result was evil, and once, as we shall see, was ruinous. Again, Joan was not only healthy, but wonderfully strong, ready, and nimble. In all her converse with princes and priests and warriors, she spoke and acted like one born in their own rank. In mind, as in body, she was a marvel, none such has ever been known. It is impossible, then, to say that she was mad.

In the whole history of the world, as far as we know it, there is only one example like that of Joan of Arc. Mad folk hear voices; starved nuns, living always with their thoughts bent on heaven, women of feeble body, accustomed to faints and to fits, have heard voices and seen visions. Some of them have been very good women; none have been strong, good riders, skilled in arms, able to march all day long with little food, and to draw the arrow from their own wound and mount horse and charge again, like Joan of Arc. Only one great man, strong, brave, wise, and healthy, has been attended by a Voice, which taught him what to do, or rather what *not* to do. That man was Socrates, the most hardy soldier, the most unwearied in the march, and the wisest man of Greece. Socrates was put to death for this Voice of his, on the charge of 'bringing in new gods.' Joan of Arc died for her Voices, because her enemies argued that she was no saint, but a witch! These two, the old philosopher and the untaught peasant girl of nineteen, stand alone in the endless generations of men, alone in goodness, wisdom, courage, strength, combined with a mysterious and fatal gift. More than this it is now forbidden to us to know. But, when we remember that such a being as Joan of Arc has only appeared once since time began, and *that* once just when France seemed lost beyond all hope, we need not wonder at those who say that France was saved by no common good fortune and happy chance, but by the will of Heaven.<sup>6</sup>

In one respect, Joan's conduct after these Voices and visions began, was perhaps, as regarded herself, unfortunate. She did not speak of them to her parents, nor tell about them to the priest when she confessed. Her enemies were thus able to say, later, that they could not have been holy visions or Voices, otherwise she would not have concealed them from her father, her mother, and the priest, to whom she was bound to tell everything, and from whom she should have sought advice. Thus, long afterwards, St. Theresa had visions, and, in obedience to her priest, she at first distrusted these, as perhaps a delusion of evil, or a temptation of spiritual pride. Joan, however, was afraid that her father would interfere with her mission, and prevent her from going to the king. She believed that she must not be 'disobedient to the heavenly vision.'

## HOW JOAN THE MAID WENT TO VAUCOULEURS

It was in 1424 that the Voices first came to Joan the Maid. The years went on, bringing more and more sorrow to France. In 1428 only a very few small towns in the east still held out for the Dauphin, and these were surrounded on every side by enemies. Meanwhile the Voices came more frequently, urging Joan to go into France, and help her country. She asked how she, a girl, who could not ride or use sword and lance, could be of any help? Rather would she stay at home and spin beside her dear mother. At the same time she was encouraged by one of the vague old prophecies which were

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<sup>6</sup> M. Quicherat distinguishes three strange kinds of power in Joan. These are the power of seeing at a distance, the power of learning the secret thoughts of men, and the power of foretelling future events. Of each class 'one example at least rests on evidence so solid, that it cannot be rejected without rejecting the whole basis of the history.' He merely states facts, which he makes no attempt to explain. *Aperçus Nouveaux*, p. 61.

as common in France as in Scotland. A legend ran 'that France was to be saved by a Maiden from the Oak Wood,' and there was an Oak Wood, *le bois chèneu*, near Domremy. Some such prophecy had an influence on Joan, and probably helped people to believe in her. The Voices, moreover, instantly and often commanded her to go to Vaucouleurs, a neighbouring town which was loyal, and there meet Robert de Baudricourt, who was captain of the French garrison. Now, Robert de Baudricourt was not what is called a romantic person. Though little over thirty, he had already married, one after the other, two rich widows. He was a gallant soldier, but a plain practical man, very careful of his own interest, and cunning enough to hold his own among his many enemies, English, Burgundian, and Lorrainers. It was to him that Joan must go, a country girl to a great noble, and tell him that she, and she alone, could save France! Joan knew what manner of man Robert de Baudricourt was, for her father had been obliged to visit him, and speak for the people of Domremy when they were oppressed. She could hardly hope that he would listen to her, and it was with a heavy heart that she found a good reason for leaving home to visit Vaucouleurs. Joan had a cousin, a niece of her mother's, who was married to one Durand Lassois, at Burey en Vaux, a village near Vaucouleurs. This cousin invited Joan to visit her for a week. At the end of that time she spoke to her cousin's husband. There was an old saying, as we saw, that France would be rescued by a Maid, and she, as she told Lassois, was that Maid. Lassois listened, and, whatever he may have thought of her chances, he led her to Robert de Baudricourt.

Joan came, on May 18, 1423, in her simple red dress, and walked straight up to the captain among his men. She knew him, she said, by what her Voices had told her, but she may also have heard him described by her father. She told him that the Dauphin must keep quiet, and risk no battle, for before the middle of Lent next year (1429) God would send him succour. She added that the kingdom belonged, not to the Dauphin, but to her Master, who willed that the Dauphin should be crowned, and she herself would lead him to Reims, to be anointed with the holy oil.

'And who is your Master?' said Robert.

'The King of Heaven!'

Robert, very naturally, thought that Joan was crazed, and shrugged his shoulders. He bluntly told Lassois to box her ears, and take her back to her father. So she had to go home; but here new troubles awaited her. The enemy came down on Domremy and burned it; Joan and her family fled to Neufchâteau, where they stayed for a few days. It was perhaps about this time that a young man declared that Joan had promised to marry him, and he actually brought her before a court of justice, to make her fulfil her promise.

Joan was beautiful, well-shaped, dark-haired, and charming in her manner.

We have a letter which two young knights, André and Guy de Laval, wrote to their mother in the following year. 'The Maid was armed from neck to heel,' they say, 'but unhelmeted; she carried a lance in her hand. Afterwards, when we lighted down from our horses at Selles, I went to her lodging to see her, and she called for wine for me, saying she would soon make me drink wine in Paris' (then held by the English), 'and, indeed, she seems a thing wholly divine, both to look on her and to hear her sweet voice.'

It is no wonder that the young man of Domremy wanted to marry Joan; but she had given no promise, and he lost his foolish law-suit. She and her parents soon went back to Domremy.<sup>7</sup>

## HOW JOAN THE MAID WENT AGAIN TO VAUCOULEURS

In Domremy they found that the enemy had ruined everything. Their cattle were safe, for they had been driven to Neufchâteau, but when Joan looked from her father's garden to the church, she saw nothing but a heap of smoking ruins. She had to go to say her prayers now at the church of Greux. These things only made her feel more deeply the sorrows of her country. The time was drawing near

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<sup>7</sup> The date of this affair and that of the flight to Neufchâteau are uncertain.

when she had prophesied that the Dauphin was to receive help from heaven – namely, in the Lent of 1429. On that year the season was held more than commonly sacred, for Good Friday and the Annunciation fell on the same day. So, early in January, 1429, Joan the Maid turned her back on Domremy, which she was never to see again. Her cousin Lassois came and asked leave for Joan to visit him again; she said good-bye to her father and mother, and to her friend Mengette, but to her dearest friend Hauvette she did not even say good-bye, for she could not bear it. She went to her cousin's house at Burey, and there she stayed for six weeks, hearing bad news of the siege of Orleans by the English. Meanwhile, Robert de Baudricourt, in Vaucouleurs, was not easy in his mind, for he was likely to lose the protection of René of Anjou, the Duc de Bar, who was on the point of joining the English. Thus Robert may have been more inclined to listen to Joan than when he bade her cousin box her ears and take her back to her father. A squire named Jean de Nouillompont met Joan one day.

'Well, my lass,' said he, 'is our king to be driven from France, and are we all to become English?'

'I have come here,' said Joan, 'to bid Robert de Baudricourt lead me to the king, but he will not listen to me. And yet to the king I must go, even if I walk my legs down to the knees; for none in all the world – king, nor duke, nor the King of Scotland's daughter – can save France, but myself only. *Certes*, I would rather stay and spin with my poor mother, for to fight is not my calling; but I must go and I must fight, for so my Lord will have it.'

'And who is your Lord?' said Jean de Nouillompont.

'He is God,' said the Maiden.

'Then, so help me God, I shall take you to the king,' said Jean, putting her hands in his. 'When do we start?'

'To-day is better than to-morrow,' said the Maid.

Joan was now staying in Vaucouleurs with Catherine le Royer. One day, as she and Catherine were sitting at their spinning-wheels, who should come in but Robert de Baudricourt with the *curé* of the town. Robert had fancied that perhaps Joan was a witch! He told the priest to perform some rite of the Church over her, so that if she were a witch she would be obliged to run away. But when the words were spoken, Joan threw herself at the knees of the priest, saying, 'Sir, this is ill done of you, for you have heard my confession and know that I am not a witch.'

Robert was now half disposed to send her to the king and let her take her chance. But days dragged on, and when Joan was not working she would be on her knees in the crypt or underground chapel of the Chapel Royal in Vaucouleurs. Twenty-seven years later a chorister boy told how he often saw her praying there for France. Now people began to hear of Joan, and the Duke of Lorraine asked her to visit him at Nancy, where she bade him lead a better life. He is said to have given her a horse and some money. On February 12 the story goes that she went to Robert de Baudricourt.

'You delay too long,' she said. 'On this very day, at Orleans, the gentle Dauphin has lost a battle.'

This was, in fact, the Battle of Herrings, so called because the English defeated and cut off a French and Scottish force which attacked them as they were bringing herrings into camp for provisions in Lent. If this tale is true, Joan cannot have known of the battle by any common means; but though it is vouched for by the king's secretary, Joan has told us nothing about it herself.<sup>8</sup>

Now the people of Vaucouleurs bought clothes for Joan to wear on her journey to the Dauphin. They were such clothes as men wear – doublet, hose, surcoat, boots, and spurs – and Robert de Baudricourt gave Joan a sword.

In the end this man's dress, which henceforth she always wore, proved the ruin of Joan. Her enemies, the English and false French, made it one of their chief charges against her that she dressed, as they chose to say, immodestly. It is not very clear how she came to wear men's garments. Jean de Nouillompont, her first friend, asked her if she would go to the king (a ten days' journey on horseback) dressed as she was, in her red frock. She answered 'that she would gladly have a man's dress,' which

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<sup>8</sup> It occurs in the *Chronique de la Pucelle*, by Cousinot de Montreuil, at that time the king's secretary, and elsewhere.

he says that he provided. Her reason was that she would have to be living alone among men-at-arms, and she thought that it was more modest to wear armour like the rest. Also her favourite saint, St. Margaret, had done this once when in danger. St. Marina had worn a monk's clothes when obliged to live in a monastery. The same thing is told of St. Eugenia.<sup>9</sup> Besides, in all the romances of chivalry, and the favourite poems of knights and ladies, we find fair maidens fighting in arms like men, or travelling dressed as pages, and nobody ever thought the worse of them. Therefore this foolish charge of the English against Joan the Maid was a mere piece of cruel hypocrisy.

## HOW JOAN THE MAID RODE TO CHINON

On February 23, 1429, the gate of the little castle of Vaucouleurs, 'the Gate of France,' which is still standing, was thrown open. Seven travellers rode out, among them two squires, Jean de Nouillompont and Bertrand de Poulengy, with their attendants, and Joan the Maid. 'Go, and let what will come of it come!' said Robert de Baudricourt. He did not expect much to come of it. It was a long journey – they were eleven days on the road – and a dangerous. But Joan laughed at danger. 'God will clear my path to the king, for to this end I was born.' Often they rode by night, stopping at monasteries when they could. Sometimes they slept out under the sky. Though she was so young and so beautiful, with the happiness of her long desire in her eyes, and the glory of her future shining on her, these two young gentlemen never dreamed of paying their court to her and making love, as in romances they do, for they regarded her 'as if she had been an angel.' 'They were in awe of her,' they said, long afterwards, long after the angels had taken Joan to be with their company in heaven. And all the knights who had seen her said the same. Dunois and d'Aulon and the beautiful Duc d'Alençon, '*le beau Duc*' as Joan called him, they all said that she was 'a thing enskied and sainted.' So on they rode, six men and a maid, through a country full of English and Burgundian soldiery. There were four rivers to cross, Marne, Aube, Seine, and Yonne, and the rivers were 'great and mickle o' spate,' running red with the rains from bank to bank, so that they could not ford the streams, but must go by unfriendly towns, where alone there were bridges. Joan would have liked to stay and go to church in every town, but this might not be. However, she heard mass thrice at the church of her favourite saint, Catherine de Fierbois, between Loches and Chinon, in a friendly country. And a strange thing happened later in that church.

From Fierbois Joan made some clerk write to the king that she was coming to help him, and that she would know him among all his men. Probably it was here that she wrote to beg her parents' pardon, and they forgave her, she says. Meanwhile news reached the people then besieged in Orleans that a marvellous Maiden was riding to their rescue. On March 6 Joan arrived in Chinon, where for two or three days the king's advisers would not let him see her. At last they yielded, and she went straight up to him, and when he denied that he was the king, she told him that she knew well who he was.

'There is the king,' said Charles, pointing to a richly dressed noble.

'No, fair sire. You are he!'

Still, it was not easy to believe. Joan stayed at Chinon in the house of a noble lady. The young Duc d'Alençon was on her side from the first, bewitched by her noble horsemanship, which she had never learned. Great people came to see her, but, when she was alone, she wept and prayed. The king sent messengers to inquire about her at Domremy, but time was going on, and Orleans was not relieved.

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<sup>9</sup> Theod. de Leliis, *Procès*, ii. 42.

## HOW JOAN THE MAID SHOWED A SIGN TO THE KING

Joan was weary of being asked questions. One day she went to Charles and said, 'Gentle Dauphin, why do you delay to believe me? I tell you that God has taken pity on you and your people, at the prayer of St. Louis and St. Charlemagne. And I will tell you, by your leave, something which will show you that you should believe me.'

Then she told him secretly something which, as he said, none could know but God and himself. A few months later, in July, a man about the court wrote a letter, in which he declares that none knows what Joan told the king, but he was plainly as glad as if something had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit. We have three witnesses of this, one of them is the famous Dunois, to whom the king himself told what happened.

What did Joan say to the king, and what was the sign? About this her enemies later examined her ten times. She told them from the very first that she would never let them know; that, if they made her speak, what she spoke would not be the truth. At last she told them a kind of parable about an angel and a crown, which neither was nor was meant to be taken as true. It was the king's secret, and Joan kept it.

We learn the secret in this way. There was a man named Pierre Sala in the service of Louis XI. and Charles VIII. of France. In his youth, Pierre Sala used to hunt with M. de Boisy, who, in his youth, had been gentleman of the bedchamber to Charles VII., Joan's king. To de Boisy Charles VII. told the secret, and de Boisy told it to Pierre Sala. At this time of his misfortunes (1429), when his treasurer had only four crowns in his coffers, Charles went into his oratory to pray alone, and he made his prayer to God secretly, not aloud, but in his mind.

Now, what Joan told the king was the secret prayer which he had made in his own heart when alone. And, ten years later, when Joan was long dead, an impostor went about saying that *she* was the Maid, who had come to life again. She was brought to Charles, who said, 'Maiden, my Maid, you are welcome back again if you can tell me the secret that is between you and me.' But the false Maid, falling on her knees, confessed all her treason.

This is the story of the sign given to the king, which is not the least strange of the things done by Joan the Maid. But there is a thing stranger yet, though not so rare.

The king to whom Joan brought this wonderful message, the king whom she loved so loyally, and for whom she died, spoiled all her plans. He, with his political advisers, prevented her from driving the English quite out of France. These favourites, men like the fat La Tremouille, found their profit in dawdling and delaying, as politicians generally do. Thus, in our own time, they hung off and on, till our soldiers were too late to rescue Gordon from the Arabs. Thus, in Joan's time, she had literally to goad them into action, to drag them on by constant prayers and tears. They were lazy, comfortable, cowardly, disbelieving; in their hearts they hated the Maid, who put them to so much trouble. As for Charles, to whom the Maid was so loyal, had he been a man like the Black Prince, or even like Prince Charlie, Joan would have led him into Paris before summer was ended. 'I shall only last one year and little more,' she often said to the king. The Duc d'Alençon heard her,<sup>10</sup> and much of that precious year was wasted. Charles, to tell the truth, never really believed in her; he never quite trusted her; he never led a charge by her side; and, in the end, he shamefully deserted her, and left the Maid to her doom.

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<sup>10</sup> *Procès*, iii. 99.

## HOW JOAN THE MAID WAS EXAMINED AT POICTIERS

Weeks had passed, and Joan had never yet seen a blow struck in war. She used to exercise herself in horsemanship, and knightly sports of tilting, and it is wonderful that a peasant girl became, at once, one of the best riders among the chivalry of France. The young Duc d'Alençon, lately come from captivity in England, saw how gallantly she rode, and gave her a horse. He and his wife were her friends from the first, when the politicians and advisers were against her. But, indeed, whatever the Maid attempted, she did better than others, at once, without teaching or practice. It was now determined that Joan should be taken to Poitiers, and examined before all the learned men, bishops, doctors, and higher clergy who still were on the side of France. There was good reason for this delay. It was plain to all, friends and foes, that the wonderful Maid was not like other men and women, with her Voices, her visions, her prophecies, and her powers. All agreed that she had some strange help given to her; but who gave it? This aid must come, people thought then, either from heaven or hell – either from God and his saints, or from the devil and his angels. Now, if any doubt could be thrown on the source whence Joan's aid came, the English might argue (as of course they did), that she was a witch and a heretic. If she was a heretic and a witch, then her king was involved in her wickedness, and so he might be legally shut out from his kingdom. It was necessary, therefore, that Joan should be examined by learned men. They must find out whether she had always been good, and a true believer, and whether her Voices always agreed in everything with the teachings of the Church. Otherwise her angels must be devils in disguise. For these reasons Joan was carried to Poitiers. During three long weeks the learned men asked her questions, and, no doubt, they wearied her terribly. But they said it was wonderful how wisely this girl, who 'did not know A from B,' replied to their puzzling inquiries. She told the story of her visions, of the command laid upon her to rescue Orleans. Said Guillaume Aymeri, 'You ask for men-at-arms, and you say that God will have the English to leave France and go home. If that is true, no men-at-arms are needed; God's pleasure can drive the English out of the land.'

'In God's name,' said the Maid, 'the men-at-arms will fight, and God will give the victory.' Then came the learned Seguin; 'a right sour man was he,' said those who knew him.

Seguin was a Limousin, and the Limousins spoke in a queer accent at which the other French were always laughing.

'In what language do your Voices speak?' asked he.

'In a better language than *yours*,' said Joan, and the bishops smiled at the country quip.

'We may not believe in you,' said Seguin, 'unless you show us a sign.'

'I did not come to Poitiers to work miracles,' said Joan; 'take me to Orleans, and I shall show you the signs that I am sent to do.' And show them she did.

Joan never pretended to work miracles. Though, in that age, people easily believed in miracles, it is curious that none worth mentioning were invented about Joan in her own time. She knew things in some strange way sometimes, but the real miracle was her extraordinary wisdom, genius, courage, and power of enduring hardship.

At last, after examining witnesses from Domremy, and the Queen of Sicily and other great ladies to whom Joan was entrusted, the clergy found nothing in her but 'goodness, humility, frank maidenhood, piety, honesty, and simplicity.' As for her wearing a man's dress, the Archbishop of Embrun said to the king, 'It is more becoming to do these things in man's gear, since they have to be done amongst men.'

The king therefore made up his mind at last. Jean and Pierre, Joan's brothers, were to ride with her to Orleans; her old friends, her first friends, Jean de Nouillompont and Bertrand de Poulengy, had never left her. She was given a squire, Jean d'Aulon, a very good man, and a page, Louis de Coutes, and a chaplain. The king gave Joan armour and horses, and offered her a sword. But her Voices told her that, behind the altar of St. Catherine de Fierbois, where she heard mass on her way to Chinon,

there was an old sword, with five crosses on the blade, buried in the earth. That sword she was to wear. A man whom Joan did not know, and had never seen, was sent from Tours, and found the sword in the place which she described. The sword was cleaned of rust, and the king gave her two sheaths, one of velvet, one of cloth of gold, but Joan had a leather sheath made for use in war. She also commanded a banner to be made, with the Lilies of France on a white field. There was also a picture of God, holding the round world, and two angels at the sides, with the sacred words, Jhesu Maria. On another flag was the Annunciation, the Virgin holding a lily, and the angel coming to her. In battle, when she led a charge, Joan always carried her standard, that she might not be able to use her sword. She wished to kill nobody, and said 'she loved her banner forty times more than her sword.' Joan afterwards broke St. Catherine's sword, when slapping a girl (who richly deserved to be slapped) with the flat of the blade. Her enemies, at her trial, wished to prove that her flag was a kind of magical talisman, but Joan had no belief in anything of that kind. What she believed in was God, her Voices, and her just cause. When once it was settled that she was to lead an army to relieve Orleans, she showed her faith by writing a letter addressed to the King of England; Bedford, the Regent; and the English generals at Orleans. This letter was sent from Blois, late in April. It began Jhesu Maria. Joan had no ill-will against the English. She bade them leave France, 'and if you are reasonable, you yet may ride in the Maid's company, where the French will do the fairest feat of arms that ever yet was done for Christentie.' Probably she had in her mind some Crusade. But, before France and England can march together, 'do ye justice to the King of Heaven and the Blood Royal of France. Yield to the Maid the keys of all the good towns which ye have taken and assailed in France.' If they did not yield to the Maid and the king, she will come on them to their sorrow. 'Duke of Bedford, the Maid prays and entreats you not to work your own destruction!'

We may imagine how the English laughed and swore when they received this letter. They threw the heralds of the Maid into prison, and threatened to burn them as heretics. From the very first, the English promised to burn Joan as a witch and a heretic. This fate was always before her eyes. But she went where her Voices called her.

## HOW JOAN THE MAID RODE TO RELIEVE ORLEANS

At last the men-at-arms who were to accompany Joan were ready. She rode at their head, as André de Laval and Guy de Laval saw her, and described her in a letter to their mother. She was armed in white armour, but unhelmeted, a little axe in her hand, riding a great black charger, that reared at the door of her lodging and would not let her mount.

"Lead him to the Cross!" cried she, for a Cross stood on the roadside, by the church. There he stood as if he had been stone, and she mounted. Then she turned to the church, and said, in her girlish voice, "You priests and churchmen, make prayers and processions to God." Then she cried, "Forwards, Forwards!" and on she rode, a pretty page carrying her banner, and with her little axe in her hand.' And so Joan went to war.<sup>11</sup> She led, she says, ten or twelve thousand soldiers.<sup>12</sup> Among the other generals were Xaintrailles and La Hire. Joan made her soldiers confess themselves; as for La Hire, a brave rough soldier, she forbade him to swear, as he used to do, but, for his weakness, she permitted him to say, *By my bâton!* This army was to defend a great convoy of provisions, of which the people of Orleans stood in sore need. Since November they had been besieged, and now it was late April. The people in Orleans were not yet starving, but food came in slowly, and in small quantities. From the first the citizens had behaved well; a Scottish priest describes their noble conduct. They had burned all the outlying suburbs, beyond the wall, that they might not give shelter to the English. They had plenty of cannon, which carried large rough stone balls, and usually did little harm. But a

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<sup>11</sup> This description is a few weeks later than the start from Blois.

<sup>12</sup> This estimate was probably incorrect; 3,500 was more like the actual number.

gun was fired, it is said by a small boy, which killed Salisbury, the English general, as he looked out of an arrow-slit in a fort that the English had taken.

The French general-in-chief was the famous Dunois, then called the Bastard of Orleans. On the English side was the brave Talbot, who fought under arms for sixty years, and died fighting when he was over eighty. There were also Suffolk, Pole, and Glasdale, whom the French called 'Classidas.' The English had not soldiers enough to surround and take so large a town, of 30,000 people, in ordinary war. But as Dunois said, 'two hundred English could then beat a thousand French' – that is, as the French were before the coming of the Maid.

The position of Orleans was this; it may be most easily understood from the map.

Looking *down* the river Loire, Orleans lies on your right hand. It had strong walls in an irregular square; it had towers on the wall, and a bridge of many arches crossing to the left side of the river. At the further end of this bridge were a fort and rampart called Les Tourelles, and this fort had already been taken by the English, so that no French army could cross the bridge to help Orleans. Indeed, the bridge was broken. The rampart and the fort of Les Tourelles were guarded by another strong work, called Les Augustins. All round the outside of the town, on the right bank, the English had built strong redoubts, which they called *bastilles*. 'Paris' was the bastille which blocked the road from Paris, 'London' and 'Rouen' were bastilles on the western side, but on the east, above the town, and on the Orleans bank of the Loire, the English had only one bastille, St. Loup. Now, as Joan's army mustered at Blois, south of Orleans, further down the river, she might march on the *left* side of the river, cross it by boats above Orleans, and enter the town where the English were weakest and had only one fort, St. Loup. Or she might march up the *right* bank, and attack the English where they were strongest, and had many bastilles. The Voices bade the Maid act on the boldest plan, and enter Orleans where the English were strongest, on the right bank of the river. The English would not move, said the Voices. She was certain that they would not even sally out against her. But Dunois in Orleans, and the generals with the Maid, thought this plan very perilous, as, indeed, it was. They therefore deceived her, caused her to think that Orleans was on the *left* bank of the Loire, and led her thither. When she arrived, she saw that they had not played her fair, that the river lay between her and the town, and the strongest force of the enemy.

The most astonishing thing about Joan is that, though she had never yet seen a sword-stroke dealt in anger, she understood the great operations of war better than seasoned generals. It was not only that she, like old Blücher, always cried *Forwards!* Audacity, to fight on every chance, carries men far in battle. Prince Charlie, who was no great general, saw that, and while his flag went forward he never lost a fight. But Joan 'was most expert in war,' said the Duc d'Alençon, 'both with the lance and in massing an army, and arraying battle, and in the management of artillery. For all men marvelled how far-sighted and prudent she was in war, as if she had been a captain of thirty years' standing, and, above all, in the service of the artillery, for in that she was right well skilled.'<sup>13</sup>

This girl of seventeen saw that, if a large convoy of provisions was to be thrown into a besieged town, the worst way was to try to ferry the supplies across a river under the enemy's fire. But Dunois and the other generals had brought her to this pass, and the Maid was sore ill-pleased. Now we shall see what happened, as it is reported in the very words of Dunois, the French general in Orleans. Joan had been brought, as we said, to the wrong bank of the Loire; it ran between her and the town where she would be. The wind was blowing in her teeth; boats could not cross with the troops and provisions. There she sat her horse and chafed till Dunois came out and crossed the Loire to meet her. This is what he says about Joan and her conduct.

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<sup>13</sup> *Procès*, iii. 100.

## HOW JOAN THE MAID ENTERED ORLEANS

They were on the wrong side of the Loire, opposite St. Loup, where the English held a strong fort.<sup>14</sup> 'I did not think, and the other generals did not think,' says Dunois, 'that the men-at-arms with the Maid were a strong enough force to bring the provisions into the town. Above all, it was difficult to get boats and ferry over the supplies, for both wind and stream were dead against us. Then Joan spoke to me thus:

"Are you the Bastard of Orleans?"

"That am I, and glad of your coming."

"Is it you who gave counsel that I should come hither by that bank of the stream, and not go straight where Talbot and the English are?"

"I myself, and others wiser than I, gave that advice, and we think it the better way and the surer."

"In God's name, the counsel of our God is wiser and surer than yours. You thought to deceive me, and you have deceived yourselves, for I bring you a better rescue than ever shall come to soldier or city – that is, the help of the King of Heaven.."

'Then instantly, and as it were in one moment, the wind changed that had been dead against us, and had hindered the boats from carrying the provisions into Orleans, and the sails filled.'

Dunois now wished Joan to cross by boat and enter the town, but her army could not cross, and she was loth to leave them, lest they fell into sin, for she had made them all confess at Blois. However, the army returned to Blois, to cross by the bridge there, and come upon the Orleans bank, as Joan had intended from the first. Then Joan crossed in the boat, holding in her hand the lily standard. So she and La Hire and Dunois rode into Orleans, where the people crowded round her, blessing her, and trying to kiss her hand. Night had fallen, there were torches flaring in the wind, and, as the people thronged about her, a torch set fire to the fringe of her banner. 'Then spurred she her horse, and turned him gracefully and put out the flame, as if she had long followed the wars, which the men-at-arms beheld with wonder, and the folk of Orleans.' So they led her with great joy to the Regnart Gate, and the house of Jacques Boucher, treasurer of the Duke of Orleans, and there was she gladly received, with her two brothers and her gentlemen, her old friends, Nouillompont and Poulengy.

Next day, without leave from Joan, La Hire led a sally gainst the English, fought bravely, but failed, and Joan wished once more to bid the English go in peace. The English, of course, did not obey her summons, and it is said that they answered with wicked words which made her weep. For she wept readily, and blushed when she was moved. In her anger she went to a rampart, and, crying aloud, bade the English begone; but they repeated their insults, and threatened yet again to burn her. Next day (May 1), Dunois went off to bring the troops from Blois, and Joan rode round and inspected the English position. They made no attempt to take her. A superstitious fear of her 'witchcraft' had already fallen on them; they had lost heart and soon lost all. On May 4 the army returned from Blois. Joan rode out to meet them, priests marched in procession, singing hymns, but the English never stirred. They were expecting fresh troops under Fastolf. 'If you do not let me know when Fastolf comes,' cried the Maid merrily to Dunois, 'I will have your head cut off.' But for some reason, probably because they did not wish her to run risk, they did not tell Joan when the next fight began. She had just lain down to sleep when she leaped up with a noise, wakening her squire. 'My Voices tell me,' she said, 'that I must go against the English, but whether to their forts or against Fastolf I know not.'

There was a cry in the street; Joan armed herself; her page came in.

'Wretched boy!' she said. 'French blood is flowing, and you never told me!'

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<sup>14</sup> *Procès*, iii. pp. 5, 6, 7. They were 'near Saint Loup,' he says, 'on the *right* bank of the Loire above Orleans.' But (p. 7) he says that after their conversation he and Joan crossed to the right from the left bank. At all events they were some six miles higher up the river than Orleans.

In a moment she was in the street, the page handed to her the lily flag from the upper window. Followed by her squire, d'Aulon, she galloped to the Burgundy Gate. They met wounded men. 'Never do I see French blood but my hair stands up on my head,' said Joan. She rode out of the gate to the English fort of St. Loup, which the Orleans men were attacking. Joan leaped into the fosse, under fire, holding her banner, and cheering on her men. St. Loup was taken by the French, in spite of a gallant defence, and Joan wept for the dead English, fearing that they had died unconfessed. Next day was Ascension Day. Joan, thinking 'the better the day the better the deed,' was for fighting. There was no battle, but she again summoned the English to withdraw, and again was insulted, and wept.

The French generals now conceived a plan to make a feint, or a sham attack, on the English forts where they were strongest, on the Orleans side of the river. The English on the left side would cross to help their countrymen, and then the French would take the forts beyond the bridge. Thus they would have a free path across the river, and would easily get supplies, and weary out the English. They only told Joan of the first part of their plan, but she saw that they were deceiving her. When the plan was explained she agreed to it, her one wish was to strike swiftly and strongly. However, they did not carry out the plan, they only assailed the forts on the left bank.

The French attacked the English fort of Les Augustins, beyond the river, but suddenly they fled to their bridge of boats; while the English sallied out, yelling their insults at Joan. She turned, she gathered a few men, and charged. The English ran before her like sheep; she planted her banner again in the ditch. The French hurried back to her, a great Englishman, who guarded the breach, was shot; two French knights leaped in, the others followed, and the English took refuge in the redoubt of Les Tourelles, their strong fort at the bridge-head.

The Maid returned to Orleans, and, though it was a Friday, and she always fasted on Fridays, she was so weary that she ate some supper. A bit of bread, her page reports, was all that she usually ate. Now the generals sent to Joan and said that enough had been done. They had food, and could wait for another army from the king. 'You have been with your council,' she said, 'I have been with mine. The wisdom of God is greater than yours. Rise early to-morrow, do better than your best, keep close by me; for to-morrow have I much to do, and more than ever yet I did, and to-morrow shall my blood flow from a wound above my breast.'<sup>15</sup>

Joan had always said at Chinon that she would be wounded at Orleans. From a letter by a Flemish ambassador, written three weeks before the event happened, we know that this is true.<sup>16</sup>

Next morning Joan's host had got a fine fish for breakfast. 'Keep it till evening, and I will bring you a God-damn' (an Englishman) 'to eat his share,' said the Maid, 'and I will return by the bridge;' which was broken.

The generals did not wish to attack the bridge-tower, but Joan paid them no attention. They were glad enough to follow, lest she took the fort without them.

About half-past six in the morning the fight began. The French and Scottish leaped into the fosse, they set ladders against the walls, they reached the battlements, and were struck down by English swords and axes. Cannon-balls and great stones and arrows rained on them. 'Fight on!' cried the Maid; 'the place is ours.' At one o'clock she set a ladder against the wall with her own hands, but was deeply wounded by an arrow, which pierced clean through between neck and shoulder. Joan wept, but seizing the arrow with her own hands she dragged it out. The men-at-arms wished to say magic spells over the wound to 'charm' it, but this the Maid forbade as witchcraft. 'Yet,' says Dunois, 'she did not withdraw from the battle, nor took any medicine for the wound; and the onslaught lasted from morning till eight at night, so that there was no hope of victory. Then I desired that the army should go back to the town, but the Maid came to me and bade me wait a little longer. Next she mounted her horse and rode into a vineyard, and there prayed for the space of seven minutes or eight.

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<sup>15</sup> Following Pasquerel, her priest. *Procès*, iii, 109.

<sup>16</sup> Quicherat, *Nouveaux Aperçus*, p. 76.

Then she returned, took her banner, and stood on the brink of the fosse. The English trembled when they saw her, but our men returned to the charge and met with no resistance. The English fled or were slain, and Glasdale, who had insulted the Maid, was drowned' (by the burning of the drawbridge between the redoubt and Les Tourelles. The Maid in vain besought him, with tears, to surrender and be ransomed), 'and we returned gladly into Orleans.' The people of Orleans had a great share in this victory. Seeing the English hard pressed, they laid long beams across the broken arches of the bridge, and charged by this perilous way. The triumph was even more that of the citizens than of the army. Homer tells us how Achilles, alone and unarmed, stood by the fosse and shouted, and how all the Trojans fled. But here was a greater marvel; and the sight of the wounded girl, bowed beneath the weight of her banner, frightened stouter hearts than those of the men of Troy.

Joan returned, as she had prophesied, by the bridge, but she did not make her supper off the fish: she took a little bread dipped in wine and water, her wound was dressed, and she slept. Next day the English drew up their men in line of battle. The French went out to meet them, and would have begun the attack. Joan said that God would not have them fight.

'If the English attack, we shall defeat them; we are to let them go in peace if they will.'

Mass was then said before the French army.

When the rite was done, Joan asked: 'Do they face us, or have they turned their backs?'

It was the English backs that the French saw that day: Talbot's men were in full retreat on Meun.

From that hour May 8 is kept a holiday at Orleans in honour of Joan the Maiden. Never was there such a deliverance. In a week the Maid had driven a strong army, full of courage and well led, out of forts like Les Tourelles. The Duc d'Alençon visited it, and said that with a few men-at-arms he would have felt certain of holding it for a week against any strength however great. But Joan not only gave the French her spirit: her extraordinary courage in leading a new charge after so terrible a wound, 'six inches deep,' says d'Alençon, made the English think that they were fighting a force not of this world. And that is exactly what they were doing.

## **HOW JOAN THE MAID TOOK JARGEAU FROM THE ENGLISH**

The Maid had shown her sign, as she promised; she had rescued Orleans. Her next desire was to lead Charles to Reims, through a country occupied by the English, and to have him anointed there with the holy oil. Till this was done she could only regard him as Dauphin – king, indeed, by blood, but not by consecration.

After all that Joan had accomplished, the king and his advisers might have believed in her. She went to the castle of Loches, where Charles was: he received her kindly, but still he did not seem eager to go to Reims. It was a dangerous adventure, for which he and his favourites like La Tremouille had no taste. It seems that more learned men were asked to give their opinion. Was it safe and wise to obey the Maid? On May 14, only six days after the relief of Orleans, the famous Gerson wrote down his ideas. He believed in the Maid. The king had already trusted her without fear of being laughed at; she and the generals did not rely on the saints alone, but on courage, prudence, and skill. Even if, by ill fortune, she were to fail on a later day, the fault would not be hers, but would be God's punishment of French ingratitude. 'Let us not harm, by our unbelief or injustice, the help which God has given us so wonderfully.' Unhappily the French, or at least the Court, were unbelieving, ungrateful, unjust to Joan, and so she came to die, leaving her work half done. The Archbishop of Embrun said that Joan should always be consulted in great matters, as her wisdom was of God. And as long as the French took this advice they did well; when they distrusted and neglected the Maid they failed, and were defeated and dishonoured. Councils were now held at Tours, and time was wasted as usual. As usual, Joan was impatient. With Dunois, who tells the story, she went to see Charles at the castle of Loches. Some nobles and clergy were with him; Joan entered, knelt, and embraced his knees.

'Noble Dauphin,' she said, 'do not hold so many councils, and such weary ones, but come to Reims and receive the crown.'

Harcourt asked her if her Voices, or 'counsel' (as she called it) gave this advice.

She blushed and said: 'I know what you mean, and will tell you gladly.'

The king asked her if she wished to speak before so many people.

Yes, she would speak. When they doubted her she prayed, 'and then she heard a Voice saying to her:

*"Fille Dé, va, va, va, je serai à ton aide, va!"*<sup>17</sup>

'And when she heard this Voice she was right glad, and wished that she could always be as she was then; and as she spoke,' says Dunois, 'she rejoiced strangely, lifting her eyes to heaven.' And still she repeated: 'I will last for only one year, or little more; use me while you may.'

Joan stirred the politicians at last. They would go to Reims, but could they leave behind them English garrisons in Jargeau, where Suffolk commanded, in Meun, where Talbot was, and in other strong places? Already, without Joan, the French had attacked Jargeau, after the rescue of Orleans, and had failed. Joan agreed to assail Jargeau. Her army was led by the 'fair duke,' d'Alençon. He had but lately come from prison in England, and his young wife was afraid to let him go to war. 'Madame,' said Joan, 'I will bring him back safe, and even better than he is now.' We shall see how she saved his life. It was now that Guy and André de Laval saw her, and wrote the description of her black horse and white armour. They followed with her gladly, believing that with her glory was to be won.

Let us tell what followed in the words of the Duc d'Alençon.

'We were about six hundred lances, who wished to go against the town of Jargeau, then held by the English. That night we slept in a wood, and next day came Dunois and Florence d'Illiers and some other captains. When we were all met we were about twelve hundred lances; and now arose a dispute among the captains, some thinking that we should attack the city, others not so, for they said that the English were very strong, and had many men.<sup>18</sup> Seeing this difference, Jeanne bade us have no fear of any numbers, nor doubt about attacking the English, because God was guiding us. She herself would rather be herding sheep than fighting, if she were not certain that God was with us. Thereon we rode to Jargeau, meaning to occupy the outlying houses, and there pass the night; but the English knew of our approach, and drove in our skirmishers. Seeing this, Jeanne took her banner and went to the front, bidding our men be in good heart. And they did so much that they held the suburbs of Jargeau that night... Next morning we got ready our artillery, and brought guns up against the town. After some days a council was held, and I, with others, was ill content with La Hire, who was said to have parleyed with Lord Suffolk. La Hire was sent for, and came. Then it was decided to storm the town, and the heralds cried, "To the attack!" and Jeanne said to me, "Forward, gentle duke." I thought it was too early, but she said, "Doubt not; the hour is come when God pleases. Ah, gentle duke, are you afraid? Know you not that I promised your wife to bring you back safe and sound?" as indeed she had said. As the onslaught was given, Jeanne bade me leave the place where I stood, "or yonder gun," pointing to one on the walls, "will slay you." Then I withdrew, and a little later de Lude was slain in that very place. And I feared greatly, considering the prophecy of the Maid. Then we both went together to the onslaught; and Suffolk cried for a parley, but no man marked him, and we pressed on. Jeanne was climbing a ladder, banner in hand, when her flag was struck by a stone, and she also was struck on her head, but her light helmet saved her. She leaped up again, crying, "Friends, friends, on, on! Our Lord has condemned the English. They are ours; be of good heart." In that moment Jargeau was taken, and the English fled to the bridges, we following, and more than eleven hundred of them were slain.'

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<sup>17</sup> 'Daughter of God, go on, and I will help thee.'

<sup>18</sup> Sir Walter Scott reckons that there were five men to each 'lance'; perhaps four men is more usually the right number.

One Englishman at least died well. He stood up on the battlements, and dashed down the ladders till he was shot by a famous marksman of Lorraine.

Suffolk and his brother were taken prisoners. According to one account, written at the time, Suffolk surrendered to the Maid, as 'the most valiant woman in the world.' And thus the Maid stormed Jargeau.

## **HOW THE MAID DEFEATED THE ENGLISH AT PATHAY, AND OF THE STRANGE GUIDE**

The French slew some of their prisoners at Jargeau. Once Joan saw a man-at-arms strike down a prisoner. She leaped from her horse, and laid the wounded Englishman's head on her breast, consoling him, and bade a priest come and hear his confession. Cruel and cowardly deeds are done in all wars, but when was there ever such a general as the Maid, to comfort the dying?

From Jargeau the Maid rode back to Orleans, where the people could not look on her enough, and made great festival. Many men came in to fight under her flag, among them Richemont, who had been on bad terms with Charles, the uncrowned king. Then Joan took the bridge-fort at Meun, which the English held; next she drove the English at Beaugency into the citadel, and out of the town.

As to what happened next, we have the story of Wavrin, who was fighting on the English side under Fastolf.<sup>19</sup> The garrison of the English in Beaugency, he says, did not know whether to hold out or to yield. Talbot reported all this to Bedford, at Paris, and large forces were sent to relieve Beaugency. Wavrin rode with his captain, Fastolf, to Senville, where Talbot joined them, and a council was held. Fastolf said that the English had lost heart, and that Beaugency should be left to its fate, while the rest held out in strong places and waited for reinforcements. But Talbot cried that, if he had only his own people, he would fight the French, with the help of God and St. George. Next morning Fastolf repeated what he had said, and declared that they would lose all King Henry had won, But Talbot was for fighting. So they marched to a place between Meun and Beaugency, and drew up in order of battle. The French saw them, and occupied a strong position on a little hill. The English then got ready, and invited the French to come down and fight on the plain. But Joan was not so chivalrous as James IV. at Flodden.

'Go you to bed to-night, for it is late; to-morrow, so please God and Our Lady, we will see you at close quarters.'

The English then rode to Meun, and cannonaded the bridge-fort, which was held by the French. They hoped to take the bridge, cross it, march to Beaugency, and relieve the besieged there. But that very night Beaugency surrendered to the Maid! She then bade her army march on the English, who were retreating to Paris as soon as they heard how Beaugency had yielded. But how was the Maid to find the English? 'Ride forward,' she cried, 'and you shall have a sure guide.' They had a guide, and a strange one.

The English were marching towards Paris, near Pathay, when their *éclaireurs* (who beat the country on all sides) came in with the news that the French were following. But the French knew not where the English were, because the deserted and desolate country was overgrown with wood.

Talbot decided to do what the English did at Crécy, where they won so glorious a victory. He lined the hedges in a narrow way with five hundred archers of his best, and he sent a galloper to bring thither the rest of his army. On came the French, not seeing the English in ambush. In a few minutes they would have been shot down, and choked the pass with dying men and horses. But now was the moment for the strange guide.

A stag was driven from cover by the French, and ran blindly among the ambushed English bowmen. Not knowing that the French were so near, and being archers from Robin Hood's country,

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<sup>19</sup> In *Procès*, iv. 414.

who loved a deer, they raised a shout, and probably many an arrow flew at the stag. The French *éclaireurs* heard the cry, they saw the English, and hurried back with the news.

'Forward!' cried the Maid; 'if they were hung to the clouds we have them. To-day the gentle king will gain such a victory as never yet did he win.'<sup>20</sup>

The French dashed into the pass before Talbot had secured it. Fastolf galloped up, but the English thought that he was in flight; the captain of the advanced guard turned his horse about and made off. Talbot was taken, Fastolf fled, 'making more sorrow than ever yet did man.' The French won a great victory. They needed their spurs, as the Maid had told them that they would, to follow their flying foes. The English lost some 3,000 men. In the evening Talbot, as a prisoner, was presented to the Duc d'Alençon.

'You did not expect this in the morning?' said the duke.

'Fortune of war!' said Talbot.

So ended the day of Pathay, and the adventure of the Strange Guide.

## HOW THE MAID HAD THE KING CROWNED AT REIMS

Here are the exploits which the Maid and the loyal French did in one week. She took Jargeau on June 11; on June 15 she seized the bridge of Meun; Beaugency yielded to her on June 17; on June 18 she defeated the English army at Pathay. Now sieges were long affairs in those days, as they are even to-day, when cannon are so much more powerful than they were in Joan's time. Her success seemed a miracle to the world.

This miracle, like all miracles, was wrought by faith. Joan believed in herself, in her country, and in God. It was not by visions and by knowing things strangely that she conquered, but by courage, by strength (on one occasion she never put off her armour for six days and six nights), and by inspiring the French with the sight of her valour. Without her visions, indeed, she would never have gone to war. She often said so. But, being at war, her word was 'Help yourselves, and God will help you.' Who could be lazy or a coward when a girl set such an example?

The King of France and his favourites could be indolent and cowards. Had Charles VII. been such a man as Charles Stuart was in 1745, his foot would have been in the stirrup, and his lance in rest. In three months the English would have been driven into the sea. But the king loitered about the castles of the Loire with his favourite, La Tremouille, and his adviser, the Archbishop of Reims. They wasted the one year of Joan. There were jealousies against the Constable de Richemont of Brittany who had come with all his lances to follow the lily flag. If once Charles were king indeed and the English driven out, La Tremouille would cease to be powerful. This dastard sacrificed the Maid in the end, as he was ready to sacrifice France to his own private advantage.

At last, with difficulty, Charles was brought to visit Reims, and consent to be crowned like his ancestors. Seeing that he was never likely to move, Joan left the town where he was and went off into the country. This retreat brought Charles to his senses. The towns which he passed by yielded to him; Joan went and summoned each. 'Now she was with the king in the centre, now with the rearguard, now with the van.' The town of Troyes, where there was an English garrison, did not wish to yield. There was a council in the king's army: they said they could not take the place.

'In two days it shall be yours, by force or by good will,' said the Maid.

'Six days will do,' said the chancellor, 'if you are sure you speak truth.'

Joan made ready for an attack. She was calling 'Forward!' when the town surrendered. Reims, after some doubts, yielded also, on July 16, and all the people, with shouts of '*Noel!*' welcomed the king. On July 17 the king was crowned and anointed with the Holy Oil by that very Archbishop of Reims who always opposed Joan. The Twelve Peers of France were not all present – some were on

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<sup>20</sup> D'Alençon, *Procès*, iii. 98.

the English side – but Joan stood by Charles, her banner in her hand. 'It bore the brunt, and deserved to share the renown,' she said later to her accusers.

When the ceremony was ended, and the Dauphin Charles was a crowned and anointed king, the Maid knelt weeping at his feet.

'Gentle king,' she said, 'now is accomplished the will of God, who desired that you should come to Reims to be consecrated, and to prove that you are the true king and the kingdom is yours.'

Then all the knights wept for joy.

The king bade Joan choose her reward. Already horses, rich armour, jewelled daggers, had been given to her. These, adding to the beauty and glory of her aspect, had made men follow her more gladly, and for that she valued them. She, too, made gifts to noble ladies, and gave much to the poor. She only wanted money to wage the war with, not for herself. Her family was made noble; on their shield, between two lilies, a sword upholds the crown. Her father was at Reims, and saw her in her glory. What reward, then, was Joan to choose? She chose nothing for herself, but that her native village of Domremy should be free from taxes. This news her father carried home from the splendid scene at Reims.

Would that we could leave the Maiden here, with Orleans saved, and her king crowned! Would that she, who wept when her saints left her in her visions, and who longed to follow them, could have been carried by them to their Paradise!

But Joan had another task; she was to be foiled by the cowardice of her king; she was to be captured, possibly by treachery; she was to be tried with the most cruel injustice; she was to die by fire; and was to set, through months of agony, such an example of wisdom, courage, and loyal honour as never was shown by man.

Did Joan look forward to her end, did she know that her days were numbered? On the journey to Reims she met some Domremy people at Chalons, and told them that she 'feared nothing but treachery.' Perhaps she already suspected the political enemies, the Archbishop of Reims and La Tremouille, who were to spoil her mission.

As they went from Reims after the coronation, Dunois and the archbishop were riding by her rein. The people cheered and cried *Noel*.

'They are a good people,' said Joan. 'Never saw I any more joyous at the coming of their king. Ah, would that I might be so happy when I end my days as to be buried here!'

Said the archbishop:

'Oh, Jeanne, in what place do you hope to die?'

Then she said:

'Where it pleases God; for I know not that hour, nor that place, more than ye do. But would to God, my maker, that now I might depart, and lay down my arms, and help my father and mother, and keep their sheep with my brothers and my sister, who would rejoice to see me!'<sup>21</sup>

Some writers have reported Joan's words as if she meant that she wished the king to let her go home and leave the wars. In their opinion Joan was only acting under heavenly direction till the consecration of Charles. Afterwards, like Hal of the Wynd, she was 'fighting for her own hand,' they think, and therefore she did not succeed. But from the first Joan threatened to drive the English quite out of France, and she also hoped to bring the Duc d'Orléans home from captivity in England. If her Voices had told her *not* to go on after the coronation, she would probably have said so at her trial, when she mentioned one or two acts of disobedience to her Voices. Again, had she been anxious to go home, Charles VII. and his advisers would have been only too glad to let her go. They did not wish her to lead them into dangerous places, and they hated obeying her commands.

Some French authors have, very naturally, wished to believe that the Maid could make no error, and could not fail; they therefore draw a line between what she did up to the day of Reims, and what

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<sup>21</sup> Dunois. *Procès*, iii. 14.

she did afterwards. They hold that she was divinely led till the coronation, and not later. But it is difficult to agree with them here. As we saw, Gerson told the French that by injustice and ingratitude they might hinder the success of the Maid. His advice was a prophecy.

## IV

### HOW THE MAID RODE TO PARIS

WHAT was to be done after the crowning of the king? Bedford, the regent for the child Henry VI., expected to see Joan under the walls of Paris. He was waiting for the troops which the Cardinal of Winchester had collected in England as a crusading army against the Hussite heretics, a kind of Protestants who were giving trouble. Bedford induced Winchester to bring his men to France, but they had not arrived. The Duke of Burgundy, the head of the great French party which opposed Charles, had been invited by the Maid to Reims. Again she wrote to him: 'Make a firm, good peace with the King of France,' she said; 'forgive each other with kind hearts' – for the Duke's father had been murdered by the friends of Charles. 'I pray and implore you, with joined hands, fight not against France. Great pity it would be of the great battle and bloodshed if your men come against us.'

The Duke of Burgundy, far from listening to Joan's prayer, left Paris and went to raise men for the English. Meanwhile Charles was going from town to town, and all received him gladly. But Joan soon began to see that, instead of marching west from Reims to Paris, the army was being led south-west towards the Loire. There the king would be safe among his dear castles, where he could live indoors, 'in wretched little rooms,' and take his ease. Thus Bedford was able to throw 5,000 men of Winchester's into Paris, and even dared to come out and hunt for the French king. The French should have struck at Paris at once as Joan desired. The delays were excused, because the Duke of Burgundy had promised to surrender Paris in a fortnight. But this he did merely to gain time. Joan knew this, and said there would be no peace but at the lance-point.

Here we get the best account of what happened from Perceval de Cagny, a knight in the household of the Duc d'Alençon. He wrote his book in 1436, only five years after Joan was burned, and he spoke of what he knew well, as a follower of Joan's friend, 'the fair duke.' The French and English armies kept watching each other, and there were skirmishes near Senlis. On August 15 the Maid and d'Alençon hoped for a battle. But the English had fortified their position in the night with ditches, palisades, and a 'laager' of wagons. Come out they would not, so Joan rode up to their fortification, standard in hand, struck the palisade, and challenged them to sally forth. She even offered to let them march out and draw themselves up in line of battle. La Tremouille thought this a fine opportunity of distinguishing himself. He rode into the skirmish, his horse fell with him, but, by evil luck, he was rescued. We do not hear that La Tremouille risked himself again.<sup>22</sup> The Maid stayed on the field all night, and next day made a retreat, hoping to draw the English out of their fort. But they were too wary, and went back to Paris.

More towns came in to Charles. Beauvais yielded, and the Bishop of Beauvais, Pierre Cauchon, had to fly to the English. He revenged himself by managing Joan's trial and having her burned. Compiègne, an important place north of Paris, yielded, and was handed to Guillaume de Flavy as governor. In rescuing this fatal place later, Joan was taken prisoner. Now the fortnight was over, after which the Duke of Burgundy was to surrender Paris. But he did nothing of the kind, and there were more 'long weary councils,' and a truce was arranged with Burgundy till Christmas. But the Maid was weary of words. She called the Duc d'Alençon and said: 'My fair duke, array your men, for, by my staff, I would fain see Paris more closely than I have seen it yet.'

On August 23 the Maid and d'Alençon left the king at Compiègne and rode to St. Denis, where were the tombs of the kings of France. 'And when the king heard that they were at St. Denis, he came, very sore against his will, as far as Senlis, and it seems that his advisers were contrary to the will of the Maid, of the Duc d'Alençon, and of their company.'

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<sup>22</sup> Journal du Sièg. *Procès*, iv. 195. As it stands, this authority is thirty years later than the events.

The great captains, Dunois, Xaintrailles, d'Alençon, were soldiers, and the king's advisers and favourites were clergymen, like the Archbishop of Reims, or indolent men of peace, like La Tremouille. They declared, after the Maid was captured, that she 'took too much on herself,' and they were glad of her fall. But she had shown that nobody but herself and her soldiers and captains were of any use to France.

The king was afraid to go near Paris, but Bedford was afraid to stay in the town. He went to Rouen, the strongest English hold in Normandy, leaving the Burgundian army and 2,000 English in Paris.

Every day the Maid and d'Alençon rode from St. Denis and insulted the gates of Paris, and observed the best places for an attack in force. And still Charles dallied and delayed, still the main army did not come up. Meanwhile Paris was strengthened by the English and Burgundians. The people of the city were told that Charles intended to plunder the place and utterly destroy it, 'which is difficult to believe,' says the Clerk of Parliament, who was in the city at that time.<sup>23</sup> It was 'difficult to believe,' but the Paris people believed it, and, far from rising for their king and country, they were rather in arms against the Maid. They had no wish to fall in a general massacre, as the English and Burgundians falsely told them would be their fate.

Thus the delay of the king gave the English time to make Paris almost impregnable, and to frighten the people, who, had Charles marched straight from Reims, would have yielded as Reims did.

D'Alençon kept going to Senlis urging Charles to come up with the main army. He went on September 1 – the king promised to start next day. D'Alençon returned to the Maid, the king still loitered. At last d'Alençon brought him to St. Denis on September 7, and there was a skirmish that day.

## **HOW THE MAID WAS WOUNDED IN ATTACKING PARIS, AND HOW THE KING WOULD NOT LET THE ASSAULT BEGIN AGAIN**

In all descriptions of battles different accounts are given, each man telling what he himself saw, or what he remembers. As to the assault on Paris on September 8, the Maid herself said a few words at her trial. Her Voices had neither commanded her to attack nor to abstain from attacking. Her opinion was that the captains and leaders on her side only meant to skirmish in force, and to do deeds of chivalry. But her own intention was to press onwards, and, by her example, to make the army follow her. It was thus that she took Les Tourelles at Orleans. This account scarcely agrees with what we read in the book of Perceval de Cagny, who was with his lord, the Duc d'Alençon. He says that about eight on the morning of September 8, the day of Our Lady, the army set forth; some were to storm the town; another division was to remain under cover and protect the former if a sally was made by the English. The Maid, the Marshal de Rais, and De Gaucourt led the attack on the Porte St. Honoré.<sup>24</sup> Standard in hand, the Maid leaped into the fosse near the pig market. 'The assault was long and fierce, and it was marvel to hear the noise of cannons and culverins from the walls, and to see the clouds of arrows. Few of those in the fosse with the Maid were struck, though many others on horse and foot were wounded with arrows and stone cannon-balls, but by God's grace and the Maid's good fortune, there was none of them but could return to camp unhelped. The assault lasted from noon till dusk, say eight in the evening. After sunset the Maid was struck by a crossbow bolt in the thigh; and, after she was hurt, she cried but the louder that all should attack, and that the place was taken.

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<sup>23</sup> This man was Clement de Fauquemberque. When he recorded the relief of Orleans, he drew on the margin of his paper a little fancy sketch of Joan, with long hair, a woman's dress, a sword, and a banner with the monogram of Jesus. This sketch still exists. (*Procès*, iv. 451.)

<sup>24</sup> This was not far from the present Théâtre Français. The statue of the Maid, on horseback, is near the place where she was wounded.

But as night had now fallen, and she was wounded, and the men-at-arms were weary with the long attack, De Gaucourt and others came and found her, and, against her will, brought her forth from the fosse. And so ended that onslaught. But right sad she was to leave, and said, "By my bâton, the place would have been taken." They put her on horseback, and led her to her quarters, and all the rest of the king's company who that day had come from St. Denis.'

So Cagny tells the story. He was, we may believe, with d'Alençon and the party covering the attack. Jean Chartier, who was living at the time, adds that the Maid did not know that the inner moats were full of water. When she reached the water, she had faggots and other things thrown in to fill up a passage. At nightfall she would not retreat, and at last d'Alençon came and forced her to return. The Clerk of Parliament, who, of course, was within the walls, says that the attack lasted till ten or eleven o'clock at night, and that, in Paris, there was a cry that all was lost.

Joan behaved as gallantly as she did at Les Tourelles. Though wounded she was still pressing on, still encouraging her men, but she was not followed. She was not only always eager to attack, but she never lost heart, she never lost grip. An army of men as brave as Joan would have been invincible.

'Next day,' says Cagny, 'in spite of her wound, she was first in the field. She went to d'Alençon and bade him sound the trumpets for the charge. D'Alençon and the other captains were of the same mind as the Maid, and Montmorency with sixty gentlemen and many lances came in, though he had been on the English side before. So they began to march on Paris, but the king sent messengers, the Duc de Bar, and the Comte de Clermont, and compelled the Maid and the captains to return to St. Denis. Right sorry were they, yet they must obey the king. They hoped to take Paris from the other side, by a bridge which the Duc d'Alençon had made across the Seine. But the king knew the duke's and the Maid's design, and caused the bridge to be broken down, and a council was held, and the king desired to depart and go to the Loire, to the great grief of the Maid. When she saw that they would go, she dedicated her armour, and hung it up before the statue of Our Lady at St. Denis, and so right sadly went away in company with the king. And thus were broken the will of the Maid and the army of the king.'

The politicians had triumphed. They had thwarted the Maid, they had made her promise to take Paris of no avail. They had destroyed the confidence of men in the banner that had never gone back. Now they might take their ease, now they might loiter in the gardens of the Loire. The Maid had failed, by their design, and by their cowardice. The treachery that she, who feared nothing else, had long dreaded, was accomplished now. 'The will of the Maid and the army of the king were broken.'<sup>25</sup>

## **HOW THE MAID AND HER FAIR DUKE WERE SEPARATED FROM EACH OTHER**

The king now went from one pleasant tower on the Loire to another, taking the Maid with him. Meanwhile, the English took and plundered some of the cities which had yielded to Charles, and they carried off the Maid's armour from the chapel in Saint Denis, where she had dedicated it, 'because *Saint Denis!* is the cry of France.' Her Voices had bidden her stay at Saint Denis, but this she was not permitted to do, and now she must hear daily how the loyal towns that she had won were plundered by the English. The French garrisons also began to rob, as they had done before she came. There was 'great pity in France' again, and all her work seemed wasted. The Duc d'Alençon went to his own place of Beaumont, but he returned, and offered to lead an army against the English in Normandy, if the Maid might march with him. Then he would have had followers in plenty, for the people had not wholly lost faith. 'But La Tremouille, and Gaucourt, and the Archbishop of Reims, who managed

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<sup>25</sup> Paris, as the Clerk of Parliament wrote in his note-book, could only be taken by blockade. It was a far larger city than Orleans, and we see how long the English, in the height of courage and confidence, were delayed by Orleans. But the Maid did not know the word 'impossible.' Properly supported, she could probably have taken Paris by assault; at the least she would not have left it while she lived.

the king and the war, would not consent, nor suffer the Maid and the duke to be together, nor ever again might they meet.' So says Cagny, and he adds that the Maid loved the fair duke above other men, 'and did for him what she would do for no other.' She had saved his life at Jargeau, but where was the duke when Joan was a prisoner? We do not know, but we may believe that he, at least, would have helped her if he could. They were separated by the jealousy of cowards, who feared that the duke might win too much renown and become too powerful.

## **HOW MARVELLOUSLY THE MAID TOOK SAINT-PIERRE-LE-MOUSTIER**

Even the banks of Loire, where the king loved to be, were not free from the English. They held La Charité and Saint-Pierre-le-Moustier. Joan wanted to return to Paris, but the council sent her to take La Charité and Saint-Pierre-le-Moustier. This town she attacked first. Her squire, a gentleman named d'Aulon, was with her, and described what he saw. 'When they had besieged the place for some time, an assault was commanded, but, for the great strength of the forts and the numbers of the enemy, the French were forced to give way. At that hour, I who speak was wounded by an arrow in the heel, and could not stand or walk without crutches. But I saw the Maid holding her ground with a handful of men, and, fearing ill might come of it, I mounted a horse and rode to her, asking what she was doing there alone, and why she did not retreat like the others. She took the *salade* from her head, and answered that she was not alone, but had in her company fifty thousand of her people; and that go she would not till she had taken that town.

'But, whatever she said, I saw that she had with her but four men or five, as others also saw, wherefore I bade her retreat. Then she commanded me to have faggots brought, and planks to bridge fosses. And, as she spoke to me, she cried in a loud voice, "All of you, bring faggots to fill the fosse." And this was done, whereat I greatly marvelled, and instantly that town was taken by assault with no great resistance. And all that the Maid did seemed to me rather deeds divine than natural, and it was impossible that so young a maid should do such deeds without the will and guidance of Our Lord.'

This was the last great feat of arms wrought by the Maid. As at Les Tourelles she won by sheer dint of faith and courage, and so might she have done at Paris, but for the king. At this town the soldiers wished to steal the sacred things in the church, and the goods laid up there. 'But the Maid right manfully forbade and hindered them, nor ever would she permit any to plunder.' So says Reginald Thierry, who was with her at this siege. Once a Scottish man-at-arms let her know that her dinner was made of a stolen calf, and she was very angry, wishing to strike that Scot. He came from a land where 'lifting cattle' was thought rather a creditable action.

## **HOW THE MAID WAITED WEARILY AT COURT**

From her latest siege the Maid rode to attack La Charité. But, though the towns helped her as well as they might with money and food, her force was too small, and was too ill provided with everything, for the king did not send supplies. She raised the siege and departed in great displeasure. The king was not unkind, he ennobled her and her family, and permitted the dignity to descend through daughters as well as sons; no one else was ever so honoured. Her brothers called themselves Du Lys, from the lilies of their crest, but Joan kept her name and her old banner. She was trailed after the Court from place to place; for three weeks she stayed with a lady who describes her as very devout and constantly in church. People said to Joan that it was easy for her to be brave, as she knew she would not be slain, but she answered that she had no more assurance of safety than any one of them. Thinking her already a saint, people brought her things to touch.

'Touch them yourselves,' she said; 'your touch is as good as mine.'

She wore a little cheap ring, which her father and mother had given her, inscribed jhesu maria, and she believed that with this ring she had touched the body of St. Catherine. But she was humble, and thought herself no saint, though surely there never was a better. She gave great alms, saying that she was sent to help the poor and needy. Such was the Maid in peace.

## **HOW THE MAID MET AN IMPOSTOR**

There was a certain woman named Catherine de la Rochelle, who gave out that she had visions. A beautiful lady, dressed in cloth of gold, came to her by night, and told her who had hidden treasures. These she offered to discover that there might be money for the wars, which Joan needed sorely. A certain preacher, named Brother Richard, wished to make use of this pretender, but Joan said that she must first herself see the fair lady in cloth of gold. So she sat up with Catherine till midnight, and then fell asleep, when the lady appeared, so Catherine said. Joan slept next day, and watched all the following night. Of course the fair lady never came. Joan bade Catherine go back to her family; she needed money for the war, but not money got by false pretences. So she told the king that the whole story was mere folly. This woman afterwards lied against the Maid when she was a prisoner.

## **HOW THE MAID'S VOICES PROPHESED OF HER TAKING**

Winter melted into spring; the truce with Burgundy was prolonged, but the Burgundians fought under English colours. The king did nothing, but in Normandy La Hire rode in arms to the gates of Rouen. Paris became doubtfully loyal to the English. The Maid could be idle no longer. Without a word to the king she rode to Lagny, 'for there they had fought bravely against the English.' These men were Scots, under Sir Hugh Kennedy. In mid-April she was at Melun. There 'she heard her Voices almost every day, and many a time they told her that she would presently be taken prisoner.' Her year was over, and as the Voices prophesied her wound at Orleans, now they prophesied her captivity. She prayed that she might die as soon as she was taken, without the long sorrow of imprisonment. Then her Voices told her to bear graciously whatever befell her, for so it must be. But they told her not the hour of her captivity. 'If she had known the hour she would not then have gone to war. And often she prayed them to tell her of that hour, but they did not answer.'

These words are Joan's. She spoke them to her judges at Rouen.

Among all her brave deeds this was the bravest. Whatever the source of her Voices was, she believed in what they said. She rode to fight with far worse than death under shield before her eyes, knowing certainly that her English foes would take her, they who had often threatened to burn her.

## **HOW THE MAID TOOK FRANQUET D'ARRAS**

There was in these parts a robber chief on the Burgundian side named Franquet d'Arras. The Maid had been sent, as she said, to help the poor who were oppressed by these brigands. Hearing that Franquet, with three or four hundred men-at-arms, was near Lagny-sur-Marne, the Maid rode out to seek him with four hundred French and Scots. The fight is described in one way by Monstrelet, in another by Cagny and Joan herself. Monstrelet, being a Burgundian writer, says that Franquet made a gallant resistance till he was overwhelmed by numbers, as the Maid called out the garrison of Lagny. Cagny says that Franquet's force was greater than that of the Maid who took him. However this may be, Franquet was a knight, and so should have been kept prisoner till he paid his ransom. Monstrelet tells us that Joan had his head cut off. She herself told her judges that Franquet confessed to being a traitor, robber, and murderer; that the magistrates of Senlis and Lagny claimed him as a criminal; that she tried to exchange him for a prisoner of her own party, but that her man died, that Franquet

had a fair trial, and that then she allowed justice to take its course. She was asked if she paid money to the captor of Franquet.

'I am not treasurer of France, to pay such moneys,' she answered haughtily.

Probably Franquet deserved to die, but a trial by his enemies was not likely to be a fair trial.

At Lagny the Maid left a gentler memory. She was very fond of children, and had a girl's love of babies. A boy of three days old was dying or seemed dead, and the girls of Lagny carried it to the statue of Our Lady in their church, and there prayed over it. For three days, ever since its birth, the baby had lain in a trance without sign of life, so that they dared not christen it. 'It was black as my doublet,' said Joan at her trial, where she wore mourning. Joan knelt with the other girls and prayed; colour came back into the child's face, it gasped thrice, was baptised, then died, and was buried in holy ground. So Joan said at her trial. She claimed no share in this good fortune, and never pretended that she worked miracles.

## HOW THE MAID FOUGHT HER LAST FIGHT

The name of Joan was now such a terror to the English that men deserted rather than face her in arms. At this time the truce with Burgundy ended, and the duke openly set out to besiege the strong town of Compiègne, held by de Flavy for France. Joan hurried to Compiègne, whence she made two expeditions which were defeated by treachery. Perhaps she thought of this, perhaps of the future, when in the church of Compiègne she declared one day to a crowd of children whom she loved that she knew she was sold and betrayed. Old men who had heard her told this tale long afterwards.

Burgundy had invested Compiègne, when Joan, with four hundred men, rode into the town secretly at dawn. That day Joan led a sally against the Burgundians. Her Voices told her nothing, good or bad, she says. The Burgundians were encamped at Margny and at Clairoix, the English at Venette, villages on a plain near the walls. Joan crossed the bridge on a grey charger, in a surcoat of crimson silk, rode through the redoubt beyond the bridge, and attacked the Burgundians. Flavy in the town was to prevent the English from attacking her in the rear. He had boats on the river to secure Joan's retreat if necessary.

Joan swept through Margny, driving the Burgundians before her; the garrison of Clairoix came to their help; the battle was doubtful. Meanwhile the English came up; they could not have reached the Burgundians, to aid them, but some of the Maid's men, seeing the English standards, fled. The English followed them under the walls of Compiègne; the gate of the redoubt was closed to prevent the English from entering with the runaways. Like Hector under Troy, the Maid was shut out from the town which she came to save.

Joan was with her own foremost line when the rear fled. They told her of her danger, she heeded not. For the last time rang out in that girlish voice: '*Allez avant! Forward, they are ours!*'

Her men seized her bridle and turned her horse's head about. The English held the entrance from the causeway; Joan and a few men (her brother was one of them) were driven into a corner of the outer wall. A rush was made at Joan. 'Yield I yield! give your faith to me!' each man cried.

'I have given my faith to Another,' she said, 'and I will keep my oath.'

Her enemies confess that on this day Joan did great feats of arms, covering the rear of her force when they had to fly.

Some French historians hold that the gates were closed by treason that the Maid might be taken. We may hope that this was not so; the commander of Compiègne held his town successfully for the king, and was rescued by Joan's friend, the brave Pothon de Xaintrailles.

## HOW THE MAID LEAPED FROM THE TOWER OF BEAUREVOIR

The sad story that is still to tell shall be shortly told. There is no word nor deed of the Maid's, in captivity as in victory, that is not to her immortal honour. But the sight of the wickedness of men, their cowardice, cruelty, greed, ingratitude, is not a thing to linger over.

The Maid, as a prisoner of the Bastard of Wandomme, himself a man of Jean de Luxembourg, was led to Margny, where the Burgundian and English captains rejoiced over her. They had her at last, the girl who had driven them from fort and field. Luxembourg claimed her and carried her to Beaulieu. Not a French lance was laid in rest to rescue her; not a sou did the king send to ransom her. Where were Dunois and d'Alençon, Xaintrailles and La Hire? The bold Buccleugh, who carried Kinmont Willie out of Carlisle Castle, would not have left the Maid unrescued at Beaulieu. 'What is there that a man does *not* dare?' he said to the angry Queen Elizabeth. But Dunois, d'Alençon, Xaintrailles, La Hire, dared all things. Something which we do not know of must have held these heroes back, and, being ignorant, it does not become us to blame them.

Joan was the very spirit of chivalry, but in that age of chivalry she was shamefully deserted. As a prisoner of war she should properly have been held to ransom. But, within two days of her capture, the Vicar-General of the Inquisition in France claimed her as a heretic and a witch. The English knights let the priests and the University of Paris judge and burn the girl whom they seldom dared to face in war. The English were glad enough to use French priests and doctors who would sell themselves to the task of condemning and burning their maiden enemy. She was the enemy of the English, and they did actually believe in witchcraft. The English were hideously cruel and superstitious: we may leave the French to judge Jean de Luxembourg, who sold the girl to England; Charles, who moved not a finger to help her; Bishop Cauchon and the University of Paris, who judged her lawlessly and condemned her to the stake; and the Archbishop of Reims, who said that she had deserved her fall. There is dishonour in plenty; let these false Frenchmen of her time divide their shares among themselves.

From Beaulieu, where she lay from May to August, Luxembourg carried his precious prize to Beaurevoir, near Cambrai, further from the French armies. He need not have been alarmed, not a French sword was drawn to help the Maid. At Beaurevoir, Joan was kindly treated by the ladies of the Castle. These ladies alone upheld the honour of the great name of France. They knelt and wept before Jean de Luxembourg, imploring him not to sell Joan to Burgundy, who sold her again to England. May their names ever be honoured! One of the gentlemen of the place, on the other hand, was rude to Joan, as he confessed thirty years later.

Joan was now kept in a high tower at Beaurevoir, and was allowed to walk on the leads. She knew she was sold to England, she had heard that the people of Compiègne were to be massacred. She would rather die than fall into English hands, 'rather give her soul to God, than her body to the English.' But she hoped to escape and relieve Compiègne. She, therefore, prayed for counsel to her Saints; might she leap from the top of the tower? Would they not bear her up in their hands? St. Catherine bade her not to leap; God would help her and the people of Compiègne.

Then, for the first time as far as we know, the Maid wilfully disobeyed her Voices. She leaped from the tower. They found her, not wounded, not a limb was broken, but stunned. She knew not what had happened; they told her she had leaped down. For three days she could not eat, 'yet was she comforted by St. Catherine, who bade her confess and seek pardon of God, and told her that, without fail, they of Compiègne should be relieved before Martinmas.' This prophecy was fulfilled. Joan was more troubled about Compiègne, than about her own coming doom. She was already sold to the English, like a sheep to the slaughter; they bought their French bishop Cauchon, he summoned his shavelings, the doctors of the University and of the Inquisition.

The chivalry of England locked up the Maid in an iron cage at Rouen. The rest was easy to men of whom all, or almost all, were the slaves of superstition, fear, and greed. They were men like ourselves, and no worse, if perhaps no better, but their especial sins and temptations were those to which few of us are inclined. We, like Charles, are very capable of deserting, or at least of delaying to rescue, our bravest and best, like Gordon in Khartoum. But, as we are not afraid of witches, we do not cage and burn girls of nineteen. If we were as ignorant as our ancestors on this point, no doubt we should be as cowardly and cruel.

## V

# HOW THE MAID WAS TRIED AND CONDEMNED, AND HOW BRAVELY SHE DIED

ABOUT the trial and the death of the Maid, I have not the heart to write a long story. Some points are to be remembered. The person who conducted the trial, itself illegal, was her deadly enemy, the false Frenchman, the Bishop of Beauvais, Cauchon, whom she and her men had turned out of his bishoprick. It is most unjust and unheard of, that any one should be tried by a judge who is his private enemy. Next, Joan was kept in strong irons day and night, and she, the most modest of maidens, was always guarded by five brutal English soldiers of the lowest rank. Again, she was not allowed to receive the Holy Communion as she desired with tears. Thus weakened by long captivity and ill usage, she, an untaught girl, was questioned repeatedly for three months, by the most cunning and learned doctors in law of the Paris University. Often many spoke at once, to perplex her mind. But Joan always showed a wisdom which confounded them, and which is at least as extraordinary as her skill in war. She would never swear an oath to answer *all* their questions. About herself, and all matters bearing on her own conduct, she would answer. About the king and the secrets of the king, she would not answer. If they forced her to reply about these things, she frankly said, she would not tell them the truth. The whole object of the trial was to prove that she dealt with powers of evil, and that her king had been crowned and aided by the devil. Her examiners, therefore, attacked her day by day, in public and in her dungeon, with questions about these visions which she held sacred, and could only speak of with a blush among her friends. Had she answered (as a lawyer said at the time), '*it seemed to me I saw a saint,*' no man could have condemned her. Probably she did not know this, for she was not allowed to have an advocate of her own party, and she, a lonely girl, was opposed to the keenest and most learned lawyers of France. But she maintained that she certainly did see, hear, and touch her Saints, and that they came to her by the will of God. This was called blasphemy and witchcraft. And now came in the fatal Fairies! She was accused of dealing with devils under the Tree of Domremy.

Most was made of her refusal to wear woman's dress. For this she seems to have had two reasons; first, that to give up her old dress would have been to acknowledge that her mission was ended; next, for reasons of modesty, she being alone in prison among ruffianly men. She would wear woman's dress if they would let her take the Holy Communion, but this they refused. To these points she was constant, she would not deny her visions; she would not say one word against her king, 'the noblest Christian in the world' she called him, who had deserted her. She would not wear woman's dress in prison. We must remember that, as she was being tried by churchmen, she should have been, as she often prayed to be, in a prison of the church, attended by women. They set a spy on her, a caitiff priest named L'Oyseleur, who pretended to be her friend, and who betrayed her. The English soldiers were allowed to bully, threaten, and frighten away every one who gave her any advice. They took her to the torture-chamber, and threatened her with torture, but from this even these priests shrunk, except a few more cruel and cowardly than the rest. Finally, they put her up in public, opposite a pile of wood ready for burning, and then set a priest to preach at her. All through her trial, her Voices bade her 'answer boldly,' in three months she would give her last answer, in three months 'she would be free with great victory, and come into the Kingdom of Paradise.' In three months from the first day of her trial she went free through the gate of fire. Boldly she answered, and wisely. She would submit the truth of her visions to the Church, that is, to God, and the Pope. But she would *not* submit them to 'the Church,' if that meant the clergy round her. At last, in fear of the fire, and the stake before her, and on promise of being taken to a kindlier prison among women, and released from chains, she promised to 'abjure,' to renounce her visions, and submit to the Church, that is to Cauchon, and her other priestly enemies. Some little note on paper she now signed with a cross, and

repeated 'with a smile,' poor child, a short form of words. By some trick this signature was changed for a long document, in which she was made to confess all her visions false. It is certain that she did not understand her words in this sense.

Cauchon had triumphed. The blame of heresy and witchcraft was cast on Joan, and on her king as an accomplice. But the English were not satisfied; they made an uproar, they threatened Cauchon, for Joan's life was to be spared. She was to be in prison all her days, on bread and water, but, while she lived, they dared scarcely stir against the French. They were soon satisfied.

Joan's prison was not changed. There soon came news that she had put on man's dress again. The judges went to her. She told them (they say), that she put on this dress of her own free will. In confession, later, she told her priest that she had been refused any other dress, and had been brutally treated both by the soldiers and by an English lord. In self-defence, she dressed in the only attire within her reach. In any case, the promises made to her had been broken. The judge asked her if her Voices had been with her again?

'Yes.'

'What did they say?'

'God told me by the voices of St. Catherine and St. Margaret of the great sorrow of my treason, when I abjured to save my life; that I was damning myself for my life's sake.'

'Do you believe the Voices come from St. Margaret and St. Catherine?'

'Yes, and that they are from God.'

She added that she had never meant to deny this, had not understood that she had denied it.

All was over now; she was a 'relapsed heretic.'

The judges said that they visited Joan again on the morning of her death, and that she withdrew her belief in her Voices; or, at least, left it to the Church to decide whether they were good or bad, while she still maintained that they were *real*. She had expected release, and, for the first time, had been disappointed. At the stake she understood her Voices: they had foretold her martyrdom, 'great victory' over herself, and her entry into rest. But the document of the judges is not signed by the clerks, as all such documents must be. One of them, Manchon, who had not been present, was asked to sign it; he refused. Another, Taquel, is said to have been present, but he did not sign. The story is, therefore, worth nothing.

Enough. They burned Joan the Maid. She did not suffer long. Her eyes were fixed on a cross which a priest, Martin L'Advenu, held up before her. She maintained, he says, to her dying moment, the truth of her Voices. With a great cry of Jesus! she gave up her breath, and her pure soul was with God.

Even the English wept, even a secretary of the English king said that they had burned a Saint. One of the three great crimes of the world's history had been committed, and, of the three, this was the most cowardly and cruel. It profited the English not at all. 'Though they ceased not to be brave,' says Patrick Abercromby, a Scot,<sup>26</sup> 'yet they were almost on all occasions defeated, and within the short space of twenty-two years, lost not only all the conquests made by them in little less than a hundred, but also the inheritances which they had enjoyed for above three centuries bypast. It is not my part to follow them, as the French and my countrymen did, from town to town, and from province to province; I take much more pleasure in relating the glories than the disgraces of England.'

This disgrace the English must, and do, most sorrowfully confess, and, that it may never be forgotten while the civilised world stands, there lives, among the plays of Shakspeare, whether he wrote or did not write it, that first part of 'Henry VI.,' which may pair with the yet more abominable poem of the Frenchman, Voltaire.

Twenty years after her death, as we saw, Charles VII., in his own interest, induced the Pope and the Inquisition, to try the case of Joan over again. It was as certain that the clergy would find her

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<sup>26</sup> In 1715.

innocent, now, as that they would find her guilty before. But, happily, they collected the evidence of most of the living people who had known her. Thus we have heard from the Domremy peasants how good she was as a child, from Dunois, d'Alençon, d'Aulon, how she was beautiful, courteous, and brave, from Isambart and L'Advenu, how nobly she died, and how she never made one complaint, but forgave all her enemies freely. All these old Latin documents were collected, edited, and printed, in 1849, by Monsieur Jules Quicherat, a long and noble labour. After the publication of this book, there has been, and can be, no doubt about the perfect goodness of Joan of Arc. The English long believed silly stories against her, as a bad woman, stories which were not even mentioned by her judges. The very French, at different times, have mocked at her memory, in ignorance and disbelief. They said she was a tool of politicians, who, on the other hand, never wanted her, or that she was crazy. Men mixed up with her glorious history the adventures of the false Maid, who pretended to be Joan come again, and people doubted as to whether she really died at Rouen. In modern times, some wiseacres have called the strongest and healthiest of women 'hysterical,' which is their way of accounting for her Voices. But now, thanks mainly to Monsieur Quicherat, and other learned Frenchmen, the world, if it chooses, may know Joan as she was; the stainless Maid, the bravest, gentlest, kindest, and wisest woman who ever lived. Her country people, in her lifetime, called her 'the greatest of Saints, after the Blessed Virgin,' and, at least, she is the greatest concerning whose deeds and noble sufferings history preserves a record. And her Voices we leave to Him who alone knows all truth.

## HOW THE BASS WAS HELD FOR KING JAMES

THE Bass Rock is a steep black mass of stone, standing about two miles out to sea, off the coast of Berwickshire. The sheer cliffs, straight as a wall, are some four hundred feet in height. At the top there is a sloping grassy shelf, on which a few sheep are kept, but the chief inhabitants of the rock are innumerable hosts of sea-birds. Far up the rock, two hundred years ago, was a fortress, with twenty cannons and a small garrison. As a boat can only touch at the little island in very fine weather, the fortress was considered by the Government of Charles II. an excellent prison for Covenanters. There was a house for the governor, and a chapel where powder was kept, but where no clergyman officiated. As the covenanting prisoners were nearly all ministers, and a few of them prophets, it was thought, no doubt, that they could attend to their own devotions for themselves. They passed a good deal of their time in singing psalms. One prisoner looked into the cell of another late at night, and saw a shining white figure with him, which was taken for an angel by the spectator. Another prisoner, a celebrated preacher, named Peden, once told a merry girl that a 'sudden surprising judgment was waiting for her,' and instantly a gust of wind blew her off the rock into the sea. The Covenanters, one of whom had shot at the Archbishop of St. Andrews, and hit the Bishop of Orkney, were very harshly treated. 'They were obliged to drink the twopenny ale of the governor's brewing, scarcely worth a half-penny the pint,' an inconvenience which they probably shared with the garrison. They were sometimes actually compelled to make their own beds, a cruel hardship, when their servants had been dismissed, probably for plotting their escape. They had few pleasures except writing accounts of their sufferings, and books on religion; or studying Greek and Hebrew.

When King James II. was driven from his throne, in 1688, by the Prince of Orange, these sufferers found release, they being on the Orange side. But the castle of the Bass did not yield to William till 1690; it was held for King James by Charles Maitland till his ammunition and stores were exhausted. The Whigs, who were now in power, used the Bass for a prison, as their enemies had done, and four Cavalier prisoners were shut up in the cold, smoky, unwholesome jail, just as the Covenanters had been before. These men, Middleton, Halyburton, Roy, and Dunbar, all of them young, had been in arms for King James, and were taken when his Majesty's forces were surprised and defeated by Livingstone at Cromdale Haugh. Middleton was a lieutenant; his friends were junior in rank, and were only ensigns.

These four lads did not devote their leisure to the composition of religious treatises, nor to the learning of Latin and Greek. On the other hand they reckoned it more worthy of their profession to turn the Whig garrison out of the Bass, and to hold it for King James. For three years they held it against all comers, and the Royal flag, driven out of England and Scotland, still floated over this little rock in the North Sea.

This is how the Four took the Bass. They observed that when coals were landed all the garrison except three or four soldiers went down to the rocky platform where there was a crane for raising goods. When they went, they locked three of the four gates on the narrow rocky staircase behind them.

On June 15, 1691, the soldiers went on this duty, leaving, to guard the Cavaliers, La Fosse, the sergeant, Swan, the gunner, and one soldier. These men were overpowered, or won over, by Middleton, Roy, Dunbar, and Halyburton, who then trained a gun on the garrison below, and asked them whether they would retire peacefully, or fight? They preferred to sail away in the coal vessel, and very foolish they must have felt, when they carried to the Whigs in Edinburgh the news that four men had turned them out of an impregnable castle, and held it for King James.

Next night young Crawford of Ardmillan, with his servant and two Irish sailors, seized a long-boat on the beach, sailed over, and joined the brave little garrison of the Bass. Crawford had been lurking in disguise for some time, and the two Irishmen had escaped from prison in Edinburgh, and were not particularly well disposed to the government of William.

When the news reached King James, in France, he sent a ship, laden with provisions and stores of all kinds, and two boats, one of them carrying two light guns. The Whigs established a force on the shore opposite, and their boats cruised about to intercept supplies, but in this they failed, the Cavaliers being too quick and artful to be caught easily.

On August 15, however, the enemy seized the large boat at night. Now Ardmillan and Middleton were absent in search of supplies, and, being without their leader, Roy and Dunbar thought of surrendering. But just as they were about signing articles of surrender, Middleton returned with a large boat and plenty of provisions, and he ran his boat under the guns of his fort, whence he laughed at the enemies of his king. Dunbar, however, who was on shore engaged in the business of the surrender, was held as a prisoner. The Whigs were not much nearer taking the Bass. On September 3 they sent a sergeant and a drummer to offer a free pardon to the Cavaliers. They were allowed to land on the rock, but Middleton merely laughed at the promise of a free pardon, and he kept the sergeant and drummer, whom he afterwards released. A Danish ship, sailing between the Bass and shore, had a gun fired across her bows, and was made prize of; they took out everything that they needed, and then let her go.

The Cavaliers lived a gay life: they had sheep on the Bass, plenty of water, meat, biscuits, beer and wine. Cruising in their boats they captured several ships, supplied themselves with what they wanted, and held the ships themselves to ransom. When food ran short they made raids on the shore, lifted cattle, and, generally, made war support war.

The government of the Prince of Orange was driven beyond its patience, and vowed that the Bass should be taken, if it cost all the revenue of the country. But Middleton had plenty of powder, he had carefully collected more than five hundred balls fired at his fort by the English, and he calmly awaited the arrival of hostile men-of-war. The 'Sheerness' (Captain Roope) and the 'London Merchant' (Captain Orton) were sent with orders to bombard the Bass and destroy the fort. After two days of heavy firing, these vessels had lost a number of men, their rigging was cut to pieces, and the ships were so damaged that they were glad to slink off to harbour.

A close watch was now set, the 'Lion' (Captain Burd), a dogger of six guns, and a long-boat cruised constantly in the neighbourhood. Captain Burd is described as 'a facetious and intelligent man,' and a brave officer, but his intelligence and courage were no match for Middleton. In August 1693 a French frigate of twelve guns sailed under the Bass and landed supplies. But the Cavaliers were so few that they had to borrow ten French sailors to help in the landing of the provisions. At this moment the 'Lion' bore down on the French vessel, which was obliged to cut her cables to avoid being run down. The garrison of the Bass was thus left with ten more mouths to feed, and with only the small supplies that had been landed. They were soon reduced to two ounces of raw rusk dough for each man, every day. Halyburton was caught and condemned to be hanged, and a Mr. Trotter, who had helped the Cavaliers, was actually hanged on shore, within sight of the Bass. Middleton fired a shot and scattered the crowd, but that did not save poor Trotter.

Middleton had now only a few pounds of meal left. He therefore sent in a flag of truce, and announced that he would surrender, but upon his own terms. Very good terms they were. Envoys were dispatched by the Whigs: Middleton gave them an excellent luncheon out of provisions kept for the purpose, and choice French wines. He had also set coats and caps on the muzzles of guns, above, on the rocks, so that the Whig envoys believed he had plenty of men, and no scarcity of provisions. Their lordships returned, and told the Privy Council that the Bass was in every respect well provisioned and well manned. Middleton's terms were, therefore, gladly accepted.

He got a full pardon for every one then in the garrison, and for every one who had ever been in it (including Halyburton, now under sentence, of death), 'and none hereafter shall call them to account.' They were to depart with all the honours of war, with swords and baggage, in their own boat. They were to be at liberty to come or go, whenever they pleased, till May 15, 1694; and a ship, properly supplied, was to be ready to carry them to France, if they preferred to join Dundee's gallant officers in

the French service. Finally, *all their expenses were to be paid!* The 'aliment' formerly granted to them, and unpaid when they seized the Bass, was to be handed over to them. On these terms Middleton took leave of the fortress which he could not have held for a week longer. There have been greater deeds of arms, but there never was one so boyish, so gallant, and so gay.

## THE CROWNING OF INES DE CASTRO

ABOUT the year 1340, when Edward III. was King of England, a young Spanish lady set out from Castile on the long journey to the Court of Portugal. She was the only daughter of John Manuel, Duke of Villena, a very rich and powerful noble, much dreaded by the King of Castile for his boldness and restlessness. Not many years before he had suddenly left his post as Warden of the French Marches, to fight against the Moors in the province of Murcia, and though the King was very angry at his conduct, he did not dare to punish him, for fear that in some way he himself would suffer. Villena's daughter Constance had passed much of her time at the Castilian Court, where she lived in the state that was expected of a great lady of those days, but when the treaty was made which decided that she was to marry Dom Pedro, Crown Prince of Portugal, her household was increased, and special attendants appointed to do honour to her rank.

Now among the ladies chosen to form part of Constance's court, was a distant cousin of her own, the beautiful and charming Ines de Castro. Like Henry II. at the sight of Fair Rosamond, the young Dom Pedro, who was not more than twenty years of age, fell passionately in love with her. He did all in his power to hide his feelings from his bride, the Infanta Constance, but did not succeed, and in a few years she died, it was said of grief at her husband's coldness, after giving birth to the Infant, Dom Fernando (1345). After her death, Dom Pedro's father King Alfonso was anxious that he should marry again, but he refused all the brides proposed for him, and people whispered among themselves that he was already secretly wedded to Ines de Castro. Time went on, and they had four children, but Ines preferred to live quietly in a convent in the country, and never took her place as Dom Pedro's wife. Still, however secluded she might be, large numbers of her fellow Castilians, weary of the yoke of their own King, Pedro the Cruel, flocked into Portugal, and looked to her for protection, which Dom Pedro for her sake always gave them, and chief among these foreign favourites were Ines' two brothers, Fernando and Alvaro Perez de Castro. This state of things was very bitter to the old Portuguese courtiers, who complained to the King that in future the country would only be governed by Spaniards. These rumours grew so loud that in time they even reached the ears of the Queen, and she, with the Archbishop of Braga, gave Dom Pedro solemn warning that some plot was assuredly forming which would end in his ruin. But Dom Pedro, naturally fearless, had faith in his father's goodwill towards him, and looked on these kindly warnings as mere empty threats, so proceeded gaily on his path. Thus in silence was prepared the bloody deed.

When the courtiers thought all was ready they went in a deputation to Alfonso IV., and pointed out what might be expected in the future if Ines de Castro was allowed to remain the fountainhead for honours and employments to all her countrymen who were attracted to Portugal by the hopes of better pay. They enlarged on the fact that the national laws and customs would be changed, and Portugal become a mere province of Spain; worse than all, that the life of the Infant Dom Fernando was endangered, as upon the death of the King, the Castros would naturally desire to secure the succession to the children of Ines. If Ines were only out of the way, Dom Pedro would forget her, and consent to make a suitable marriage. So things went on, working together for the end of Ines.

At last the King set forth, surrounded by many of his great nobles and high officials, for Coimbra, a small town in which was situated the Convent of Santa Clara, where Ines de Castro quietly dwelt, with her three surviving children. On seeing the sudden arrival of Alfonso with this great company of armed knights, the soul of Ines shrank with a horrible fear. She could not fly, as every avenue was closed, and Dom Pedro was away on the chase, as the nobles very well knew. Pale as an image of death, Ines clasped her children in her arms, and flung herself at the feet of the King. 'My lord,' she cried, 'have I given you cause to wish my death? Your son is the Prince; I can refuse him nothing. Have pity on me, wife as I am. Kill me not without reason. And if you have no compassion left for me, find a place in your heart for your grandchildren, who are of your own blood.'

The innocence and beauty of the unfortunate woman, who indeed had harmed no one, moved the King, and he withdrew to think better what should be done. But the envy and hatred of the courtiers would not suffer Ines to triumph, and again they brought forward their evil counsels.

'Do what you will,' at length said the King. And they did it.

A nameless pain filled the soul of Dom Pedro when on his return he stood before the bloody corpse of Ines, whom he had loved so well. But soon another feeling took possession of him, which shut out everything else – the desire to revenge himself on her murderers. Hastily calling together the brothers of Ines and some followers who were attached to his person, he took counsel with them, and then collecting all the men-at-arms within his reach, he fell upon the neighbouring provinces and executed a fearful vengeance, both with fire and sword, upon the innocent inhabitants. How long this rage for devastation might have lasted cannot be told, but Dom Pedro was at length brought to a better mind by Gonçalo Pereira, Archbishop of Braga, who, by the help of the Queen, succeeded in establishing peace between father and son.

So a parchment deed was drawn up between the King and the Infant, in which Dom Pedro undertook to pardon all who had been engaged in the murder of Ines, and Alfonso promised to forgive those who had taken his son's side, and borne arms against himself. And for his part Dom Pedro vowed to perform the duties of a faithful vassal, and to banish from his presence all turbulent and restless spirits. So peace was made.

Two years had hardly passed after this event before King Alfonso lay on his death-bed in Lisbon, and then, thinking over what would happen when he was dead, the feeling gradually came over him that in spite of Dom Pedro's solemn oath the murderers of Ines would not be safe from his revenge. Therefore he sent for the three knights, Diogo Lopez Pacheco, Alvaro Gonçalves, and Pedro Coelho, who had counselled him to do the dreadful deed and had themselves struck the blow, and bade them leave their property and all they had, and fly while there was yet time to foreign lands for refuge. The knights saw the wisdom of the advice, and sought shelter in Castile. Then Alfonso prepared himself to die, the murder of Ines lying heavy on his soul in his last days (1357).

King Pedro was thirty-seven years old when he ascended the throne, and his first care was to secure peace to his kingdom. To this end he sent several embassies to the King of Castile, who made a compact with Alfonso 'to be the friend of his friends, and the enemy of his enemies.' The results of this treaty may be easily guessed at. The King of Portugal engaged to send back to Castile all who had fled to his dominions from the tyranny of Pedro the Cruel, the ally of the Black Prince, and was to receive in return the murderers of Ines, two of whom he put to a horrible death. The third, Pacheco, was more fortunate. A beggar to whom he had been accustomed to give alms discovered his danger, and hastened to warn the knight, who was away from the city on a hunting expedition. By his advice Pacheco changed clothes with the beggar, and made his way through Aragon to the borders of France, where he took refuge with Henry of Trastamara, half-brother of the King of Castile. Here he remained, a poor knight without friends or property, till the year 1367, when on his death-bed the King of Portugal suddenly remembered that when dying the other two knights had sworn that Pacheco was guiltless of the murder of Ines, and ordered his son to recall him from exile and to restore all his possessions. Which Dom Fernando joyfully did.

That, however, happened several years after the time we are speaking of, when Dom Pedro had only just ascended the throne. Having satisfied his feelings of revenge against the murderers of Ines, a nobler desire filled his heart. He resolved that she who had been so ill-spoken of during her life, and had died such a shameful death, should be acknowledged openly as his wife and queen before his Court and his people. So he assembled all the great nobles and officers, and, laying his hand on the sacred books, swore solemnly that seven years before he had taken Ines de Castro to wife, and had lived with her in happiness till her death, but that through dread of his father the marriage had been kept secret; and he commanded the Lord High Chamberlain to prepare a deed recording his oath. And in case there should still be some who did not believe, three days later the Bishop of Guarda and

the Keeper of the King's Wardrobe bore witness before the great lords gathered together in Coimbra that they themselves had been present at the secret marriage, which had taken place at Braganza, in the royal apartments, according to the rites of the Church.

This solemn function being over, the last act in the history of Ines was begun. By command of the King her body was taken from the convent of Santa Clara, where it had lain in peace for many years, and was clad in royal garments: a crown was placed on her head and a sceptre in her hand, and she was seated on a throne for the subjects, who during her life had despised her, to kneel and kiss the hem of her robe. One by one the knights and the nobles and the great officers of the Crown did homage to the dead woman, and when all had bowed before what was left of the beautiful Ines they placed her in a splendid coffin, which was borne by knights over the seven leagues that lay between Coimbra and Alcobaça, the royal burying-place of the Portuguese. In this magnificent cloister a tomb had been prepared carved in white marble, and at the head stood a statue of Ines in the pride of her beauty, crowned a queen. Bishops and soldiers, nobles and peasants, lined the road to watch the coffin pass, and thousands with lighted torches followed the dead woman to her resting place, till the whole long road from Coimbra to Alcobaça was lit up with brightness. So, solemnly, Ines de Castro was laid in her grave, and the honours which had been denied her in life were heaped around her tomb.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Schäfer's *Geschichte von Portugal*.

## THE STORY OF ORTHON

[There may be some who doubt whether the following story is in all respects perfectly true. It is taken, however, from a history book, the 'Chronicle of Jean Froissart,' who wrote about the wars of the Black Prince.]

GREAT marvel it is to think and consider of a thing that I will tell you, and that was told to me in the house of the Comte de Foix at Orthez, by him who gave me to know concerning the battle of Juberot. And I will tell you of this matter, what it was, for since the Squire told me this tale, whereof you shall presently have knowledge, certes I have thought over it a hundred times, and shall think as long as I live.

'Certain it is,' quoth the Squire, 'that the day after the fight at Juberot the Comte de Foix knew of it, whereat men marvelled much how this might be. And all day, on the Sunday and the Monday and the Tuesday following, he made in his castle of Orthez such dull and simple cheer that none could drag a word out of him. All these three days he would not leave his chamber, nor speak to knight or squire, howsoever near him they might be. And when it came to Tuesday at evening, he called his brother, Sir Ernault Guillaume, and said to him in a low voice:

"Our men have fought, whereat I am grieved; for that has befallen them of their journey which I told them before they set out."

'Sir Ernault, who is a right wise knight and of good counsel, knowing well the manner and ways of his brother the Count, held his peace for a little while. Then the Count, willing to show his heart, and weary of his long sadness, spoke again, and louder than before, saying:

"By God, Sir Ernault, it is as I tell you, and shortly we shall have news; for never did the land of Béarn lose so much in one day – no, not these hundred years – as it has lost this time in Portugal."

'Many knights and squires standing round who heard the Count noted these words, and in ten days learned the truth from them who had been in the fight, and who brought tidings, first to the Court, and afterwards to all who would hear them, of what befell at Juberot. Thereby was the Count's grief renewed, and that of all in the country who had lost brothers and fathers, sons and friends, in the fray.'

'Marry!' said I to the Squire, who was telling me his tale, 'and how could the Count know or guess what befell? Gladly would I learn this.'

'By my faith,' said the Squire, 'he knew it well, as appeared.'

'Is he a prophet, or has he messengers who ride at night with the wind? Some art he must have.'

Then the Squire began to laugh.

'Truly he must learn by some way of necromancy; we know not here truly how he does it, save by phantasies.'

'Ah, good sir, of these fancies pritheee tell me, and I will be grateful. If it is a matter to keep silent, silent will I keep it, and never, while I am in this country, will I open my mouth thereon.'

'I pray you do not, for I would not that any should know I had spoken. Yet others talk of it quietly when they are among their friends.'

Thereon he drew me apart into a corner of the castle chapel, and then began his tale, and spoke thus:

'It may be twenty years since there reigned here a baron named Raymond, lord of Corasse, a town and castle seven leagues from Orthez. Now, the lord of Corasse, at the time of which I speak, held a plea at Avignon before the Pope against a clerk of Catalonia who laid claim to the tithes of his town, the said clerk belonging to a powerful order, and claiming the right of the tithes of Corasse, which, indeed, amounted to a yearly sum of one hundred florins. This right he set forth and proved before all men, for in his judgment, given in the Consistory General, Pope Urban V. declared that

the clerk had won his case, and that the Chevalier had no ground for his claim. The sentence once delivered, letters were given to the clerk enabling him to take possession, and he rode so hard that in a very short time he reached Béarn, and by virtue of the papal bull appropriated the tithes. The Sieur de Corasse was right wroth with the clerk and his doings, and came to him and said:

"Master Martin, or Master Pierre, or whatever your name may be, do you think that I am going to give up my rights just because of those letters of yours? I scarce fancy you are bold enough to lay hands on property of mine, for you will risk your life in the doing. Go elsewhere to seek a benefice, for of my rights you shall have none, and this I tell you, once and for all."

The mind of the clerk misgave him, for he knew that the Chevalier cared not for men's lives, and he dared not persevere. So he dropped his claims, and betook himself to his own country or to Avignon. And when the moment had come that he was to depart, he entered into the presence of the Sieur de Corasse, and said:

"Sir, it is by force and not by right that you lay hands on the property of the Church, of which you make such ill-use. In this land you are stronger than I, but know that as soon as I may I will send you a champion whom you will fear more than you fear me."

The Sieur de Corasse, who did not heed his words, replied:

"Go, do as you will; I fear you as little alive as dead. For all your talk, I will never give up my rights."

Thus parted the clerk and the Sieur de Corasse, and the clerk returned to his own country, but whether that was Avignon or Catalonia I know not. But he did not forget what he had told the Sieur de Corasse when he bade him farewell; for three months after, when he expected it least, there came to the castle of Corasse, while the Chevalier was quietly sleeping, certain invisible messengers, who began to throw about all that was in the castle, till it seemed as if, truly, nothing would be left standing. The Chevalier heard it all, but he said nought, for he would not be thought a coward, and indeed he had courage enough for any adventure that might befall.

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