

The papers of England, the country of those who were instrumental in her martyrdom, treated the matter with due respect, for they still retain at least the principles of gentlemen. Scotland's leading writer and critic, Andrew Lang, a Protestant, was loud in her praises. Ireland and America showed deep interest in the blessed maid.

Joan of Arc, known as the Maid of Orleans, was born in the little village of Domremy in Brittany. Her father was a peasant farmer. She was brought up with little or no schooling, and could not read or write in after years. "I was taught," said the Maid, "by my mother all that I ought to believe, and all that a child ought to do to be good." During her childhood she manifested a deep devotion to the Mother of God and His Saints, especially St. Catharine and St. Michael. In 1425, when Joan was thirteen years of age, the call came to her from Heaven, bidding her to continue her pious practices and to prepare to go to the aid of France. Three years after this, Joan could no longer resist the voices calling her. "I must go to the King," she persisted, when they discouraged her or refused to aid her, "even if I wear my limbs to the very knees; for God wills it." After several vain attempts, she was admitted to the presence of the Dauphin, Charles VII., at Chinon. Her twofold mission from Heaven she told him was to relieve Orleans and to crown him at Rheims. The Dauphin, believing her to be sent by God, placed the Maid at the head of an army, that set forth to the relief of Orleans. Joan was clad in white armor. Her standard was a large white banner with the golden fleur-de-lis of France and the holy name of Jesus on it. She silenced all foul oaths and language among the men. Great numbers frequented the churches for prayer and the Sacraments. She was wounded in leading an assault against the English, and was carried out of the battle. But, hearing a retreat had been sounded in consequence, she, with her own hands drew forth the arrow from her neck and placed herself once more at the head of the troops. The English, seized with panic, fled and abandoned the siege. The French now, under her leadership, steadily drove the English from fortress to fortress, until finally the Dauphin was crowned at Rheims. Then followed one of the most cruel and treacherous acts which history records. At the end of a century of warfare, which left France, bleeding and exhausted, at the feet of England, appeared the peasant Maid from obscure Domremy with the declaration that Heaven had sent her to save France and crown King Charles at Rheims. This indeed was all accomplished through her agency, and surely in the annals of history no achievement is more remarkable than