

the secular power to be burned at the stake gave a misleading appearance of impartiality to the proceedings. As a matter of fact the proof adduced at these sittings of any of the allegations of grave import contained in the "Act of Accusation", is strikingly insufficient. And notwithstanding this lack of proof, the Bishop of Beauvais who instituted the proceedings at the request of the King of England, asserted at the commencement that the maid's offences against religion and morality were even the subject of common public rumor. (Briefly these were divination and sorcery, claiming to have had revelations through Saints who spoke to her and whom she saw, consequent blasphemy, wearing a man's dress, disobedience to the Church and shedding human blood in war.)

This assertion could only be justified on the assumption that the Maid of Orleans was a notoriously bad woman, wanting in all the virtues afterwards attributed to her on oath during the process of her Rehabilitation, by a great many who were very intimate with her.

A disregard of the other side of the question is manifest throughout all the examinations of the accused preceding the sentence of her condemnation. Was it that her judges were blinded by zeal for the extermination of heresy? Unhappily for their memory there are many indications to point to the fact that this was not the cause of their seeming so persistently blind to the virtues of the Maid of Orleans. At the outset the Bishop of Beauvais found no use for the evidence of her character obtained, at his own request, at her birth place, Domremy, although it is evident that he would have gladly used it if it had in any way reflected unfavourably upon her instead of representing her as a paragon of virtue.

The inquiry as to the Maid's life at Domremy was ordered by the Bishop in January, 1431, the trial or Process ex-officio, which included six public and nine private examinations of the accused, began on the 21st of February following and ended on the 26th of March when the "Act of Accusation" multiplying each offence by its repetition, use of prolix terms like legal phraseology and otherwise, and consisting of "Seventy Articles" was drawn up. On the next day, the 27th of March the "Process in Ordinary" began with the reading of the "Seventy Articles", upon each of which the accused was examined. On the 24th of May, 1431, she was condemned to perpetual imprisonment, her so called Act of Abjuration having in the meantime saved her from excommunication and death. It may reasonably be surmised that the difficulty of obtaining proof