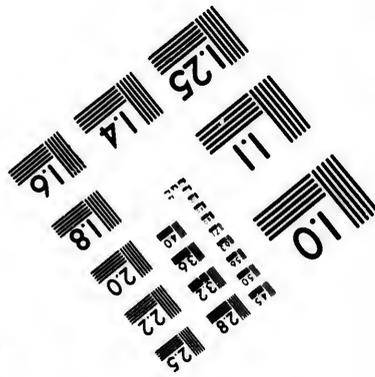
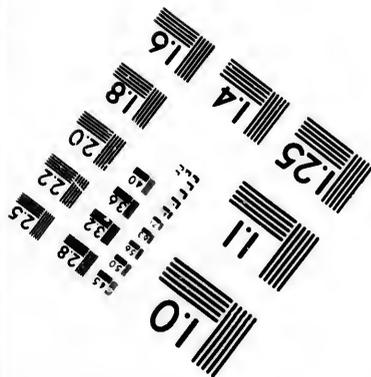
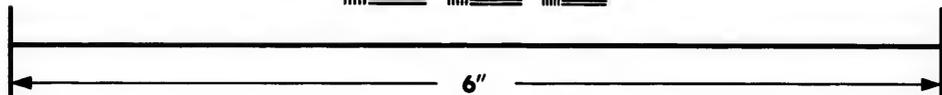
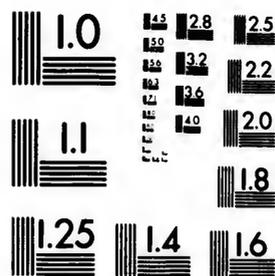


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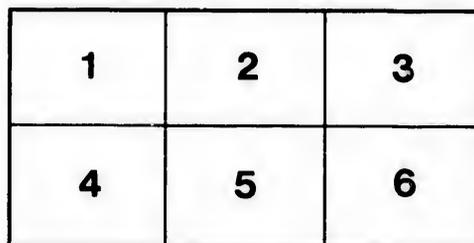
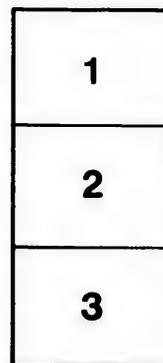
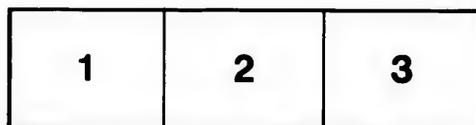
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— of ARC.

By THOMAS DE QUINCEY.

WITH EXPLANATORY NOTES.

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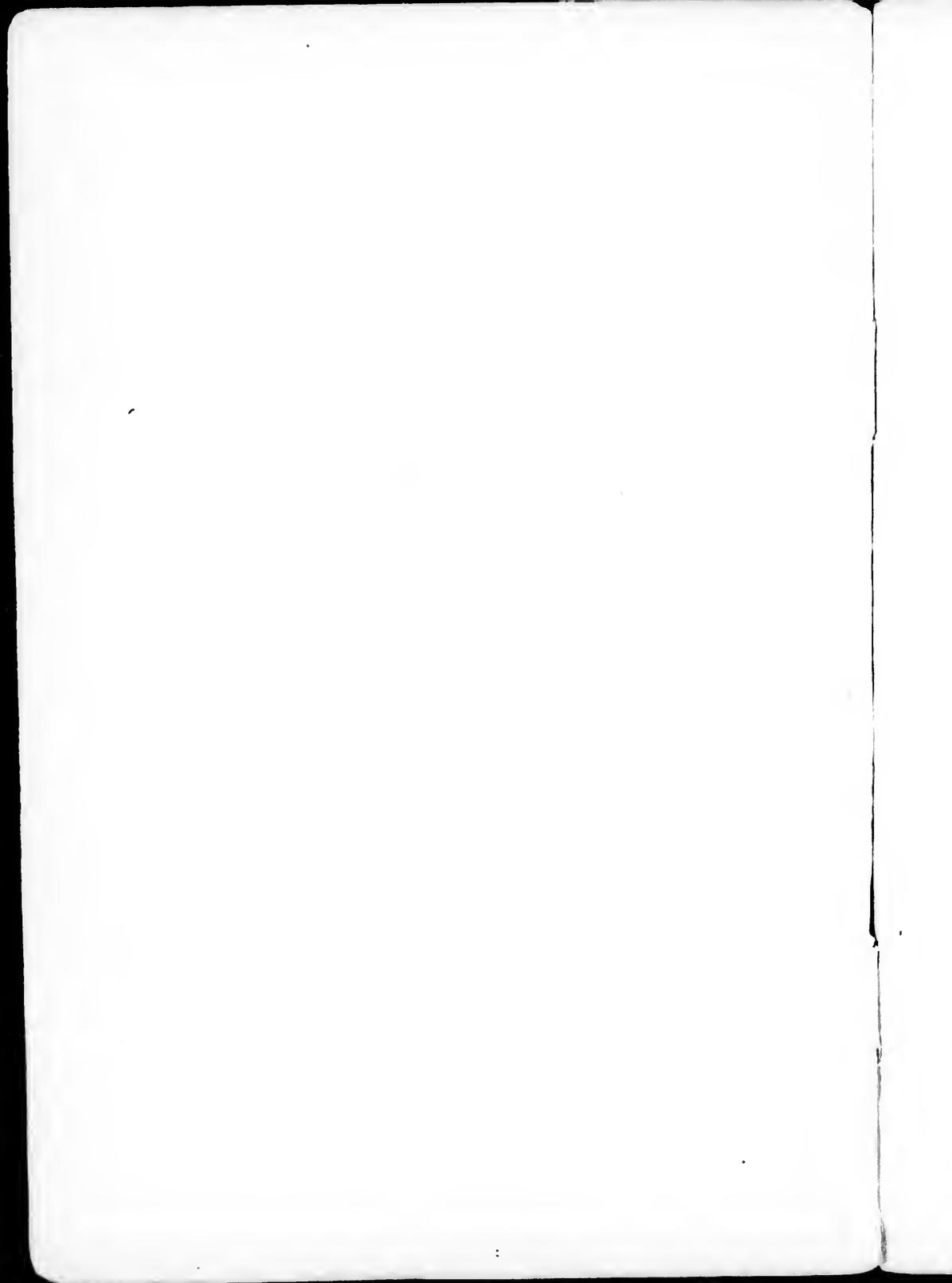


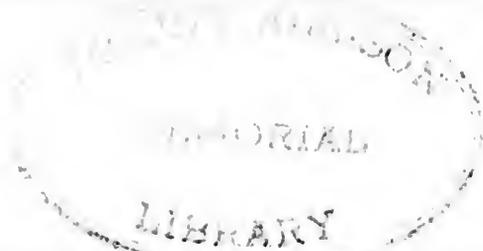
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SELECTIONS FROM DE QUINCEY.

JOAN OF ARC.

IN REFERENCE TO M. MICHELET'S HISTORY OF FRANCE.

What is to be thought of *her*? What is to be thought of the poor shepherd girl from the hills and forests of Lorraine, that—like the Hebrew shepherd boy from the hills and forests of Judea—rose suddenly out of the quiet, out of the safety, out of the religious inspiration, rooted in deep pastoral solitudes, to a station in the van of armies, and to the more perilous station at the right hand of kings? The Hebrew boy inaugurated his patriotic mission by an *act*, 'by a victorious *act*, such as no man could deny. But so did the girl of Lorraine, if we read her story as it was read by those who saw her nearest. Adverse armies bore witness to the boy as no pretender; but so they did to the gentle girl. Judged by the voice of all who saw them *from a station of good-will*, both were found true and loyal to any promises involved in their first acts. Enemies it was that made the difference between their subsequent fortunes. The boy rose to a splendor and a noonday prosperity, both personal and public, that rang through the records of his people, and became a by-word amongst his posterity for a thousand years. until the scepter was departing from Judah. The poor, forsaken girl, on the contrary, drank not herself from that cup of rest which she had secured for France. She never sang together with the songs that rose in her native Domrémy,² as echoes to the departing steps of invaders. She mingled not in festal dances at Vaucouleurs which celebrated in rapture the redemption of France. No! for her

1. See I. Samuel, xvii.

2. **Domrémy**: More generally called Domrémy-la-Pucelle, in honor of Joan of Arc. The house in which she was born is preserved as a national relic. Near it is a handsome monument, with a colossal statue of the heroine. A chapel has also been built to her memory.

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voice was then silent : no ! for her feet were dust. Pure, innocent, noble-hearted girl ! whom, from earliest youth, ever I believe in as full of truth and self-sacrifice, this was amongst the strongest pledges for *thy* truth, that never once—no, not for a moment of weakness—didst thou revel in the vision of coronets and honor from man. Coronets for thee ! Oh no ! Honors, if they come when all is over, are for those that share thy blood.³ Daughter of Domrémy, when the gratitude of thy king shall awaken, thou wilt be sleeping the sleep of the dead. Call her, King of France, but she will not hear thee ! Cite her by thy apparitors⁴ to come and receive a robe of honor, but she will be found *en contumace*.⁵ When the thunders of universal France, as even yet may happen, shall proclaim the grandeur of the poor shepherd girl, that gave up all for her country, thy ear, young shepherd girl, will have been deaf for five centuries. To suffer and to do, that was thy portion in this life ; that was thy destiny ; and not for a moment was it hidden from thyself. Life, thou saidst, is short : and the sleep which is in the grave is long ! Let me use that life, so transitory, for the glory of those heavenly dreams destined to comfort the sleep which is so long. This pure creature—pure from every suspicion of even a visionary self-interest, even as she was pure in senses more obvious—never once did this holy child, as regarded herself, relax from her belief in the darkness that was travelling to meet her. She might not prefigure the very manner of her death ; she saw not in vision, perhaps, the aerial altitude of the fiery scaffold, the spectators without end on every road pouring into Rouen as to a coronation, the surging smoke, the volleying flames, the hostile faces all around, the pitying eye that lurked but here and there, until nature and imperishable truth broke loose from artificial restraints ; —these might not be apparent through the mists of the hurrying future. But the voice that called her to death, *that* she heard forever.

3. A relative of Joan of Arc, probably her brother, was ennobled by the title of *Du Lis*.

4. **Apparitors**: The summoners, or attendants, upon the officers of ecclesiastical courts.

5. **En contumace**: A French legal term denoting the position of one who being criminally charged does not appear for trial.

Great was the throne of France even in those days, and great was he that sat upon it; but well Joanna knew that not the throne, nor he that sat upon it, was for *her*; but, on the contrary, that she was for *them*; not she by them, but they by her, should rise from the dust. Gorgeous were the lilies of France,⁶ and for centuries had the privilege to spread their beauty over land and sea, until, in another century, the wrath of God and man combined to wither them; but well Joanna knew, early at Domrémy, she had read that bitter truth, that the lilies of France would decorate no garland for *her*. Flower nor bud, bell nor blossom, would ever bloom for *her*.

But stay. What reason is there for taking up this subject of Joanna precisely in the spring of 1847? Might it not have been left till the spring of 1917; or, perhaps, left till called for? Yes, but it *is* called for; and clamorously. You are aware, reader, that amongst the many original thinkers whom modern France has produced, one of the reputed leaders is M. Michelet.⁷ All these writers are of a revolutionary cast; not in a political sense merely, but in all senses; mad, oftentimes, as March hares;⁸ crazy with the laughing gas of recovered liberty; drunk with the wine-cup of their mighty revolution; snorting, whinnying, throwing up their heels, like wild horses in the boundless pampas, and running races of defiance with snipes, or with the winds, or with their own shadows, if they can find nothing else to challenge. Some time or other I, that have leisure to read, may introduce *you*, that have not, to two or three dozen of these writers; of whom I can assure you beforehand, that they are often profound, and at intervals are even as impassioned as if they were come of our best

6. **Lilies of France**; The lily, or fleur-de-lis (flower of the lily) is said to have been the royal emblem of France from the time of Clovis. The Revolution of 1789-93 caused the royal lily to "wither," when Louis XVI. was beheaded, and the people for a time ruled the kingdom.

7. **Jules Michelet** [mceesh-lā'] (1798-1874): A French historian Professor of history in the College of France. His principal works are "History of France," "History of the French Revolution," "Women of the Revolution," and several books of a poetical and speculative character, such as "The Bird," "The Insect," "The Sea," and "Woman." His writings are especially remarkable for their brilliancy of style.

8. "As mad as a march hare" is a very old saying. In the month of March hares are unusually wild and excitable.

English blood. But now, confining our attention to M. Michelet, we in England—who know him best by his worst book,⁹ the book against priests, etc.—know him disadvantageously. That book is a rhapsody of incoherence. But his “History of France” is quite another thing. A man, in whatsoever craft he sails, cannot stretch away out of sight when he is linked to the windings of the shore by towing-ropes of history. Facts, and the consequences of facts, draw the writer back to the falconer’s lure from the giddiest heights of speculation. Here, therefore,—in his “France,”—if not always free from flightiness, if now and then off like a rocket for an airy wheel in the clouds, M. Michelet, with natural politeness, never forgets that he has left a large audience waiting for him on earth, and gazing upwards in anxiety for his return: return, therefore, he does. But history, though clear of certain temptations in one direction, has separate dangers of its own. It is impossible so to write a history of France, or of England—works becoming every hour more indispensable to the inevitably political man of this day—without perilous openings for error. If I, for instance, on the part of England, should happen to turn my labors in that channel, and (on the model of Lord Percy going to Chevy Chase)

“ A vow to God should make
My pleasure in the Michelet woods
Three summer days to take,”¹⁰

probably, from simple delirium, I might hunt M. Michelet into *delirium tremens*. Two strong angels stand by the side of history, whether French history or English, as heraldic supporters: the angel of research on the left hand, that must read millions of dusty parchments, and of pages blotted with lies; the angel of meditation on the right hand, that must cleanse these lying records with fire, even as of

9. **His worst book:** A translation of the work “Priests, Women, and Families” had been published in London the year before.

10. A parody of the opening lines of the old ballad of “Chevy Chase:”

“ The Percy out of Northumberland
And a vow to God made he,
That he would hunt in the mountains
Of Cheviot within days three.”

old the draperies of *asbestos*¹¹ were cleansed, and must quicken them into regenerated life. Willingly I acknowledge that no man will ever avoid innumerable errors of detail; with so vast a compass of ground to traverse, this is impossible; but such errors (though I have a bushel on hand, at M. Michelet's service) are not the game I chase; it is the bitter and unfair spirit in which M. Michelet writes against England. Even *that*, after all, is but my secondary object; the real one is Joanna the Pucelle d'Orleans for herself.

I am not going to write the History of *La Pucelle*:¹² to do this, or even circumstantially to report the history of her persecution and bitter death, of her struggle with false witnesses and with ensnaring judges, it would be necessary to have before us *all* the documents, and therefore the collection only now forthcoming in Paris. But *my* purpose is narrower. There have been great thinkers, disdaining the careless judgments of contemporaries, who have thrown themselves boldly on the judgment of a far posterity, that should have had time to review, to ponder, to compare. There have been great actors on the stage of tragic humanity that might, with the same depth of confidence, have appealed from the levity of compatriot friends—too heartless for the sublime interest of their story, and too impatient for the labor of sifting its perplexities—to the magnanimity and justice of enemies. To this class belongs the Maid of Arc. The ancient Romans were too faithful to the ideal of grandeur in themselves not to relent, after a generation or two, before the grandeur of Hannibal.¹³ Mithridates¹⁴—a

11. **Asbestos**; A form of hornblende consisting of fine crystalline fibers, with a silky luster, which may be woven into cloth. It is said that the ancients wrapped the bodies of their dead in asbestos cloth, to keep their ashes separate from those of the funeral pile. Charlemagne, says legend, was wont to astonish his guests by throwing his asbestos tablecloth into the fire after dinner.

12. **La Pucelle**; "The Maid," or "The Virgin;" the common French designation for Joan of Arc.

13. **Hannibal**; The famous Carthaginian general, who when nine years old was made by his father, Hamilcar, to swear eternal enmity to Rome. In 217 B. C. he led a vast army across the Alps, and for a time threatened the empire with total destruction. In 183 B. C. he took poison to escape falling into the hands of his old enemies.

14. **Mithridates**; A ferocious king of Pontus, who for many years waged war against the Romans. In the last war against Pompey, 66 B. C., his son Pharnaces having rebelled, Mithridates, after attempting ineffectually to poison himself, ordered one of his Gallic mercenaries to dispatch him with his sword.

more doubtful person—yet merely for the magic perseverance of his indomitable malice, won from the same Romans the only real honor that ever he received on earth. And we English have ever shown the same homage to stubborn enmity. To work unflinchingly for the ruin of England; to say through life, by word and by deed, *Delenda est Anglia Victrix!*¹⁵ that one purpose of malice, faithfully pursued, has quartered some people upon our national funds of homage as by a perpetual annuity. Better than an inheritance of service rendered to England herself, has sometimes proved the most insane hatred to England. Hyder Ali,¹⁶ even his son Tippoo, though so far inferior, and Napoleon, have all benefited by this disposition amongst ourselves to exaggerate the merit of diabolic enmity. Not one of these men was ever capable, in a solitary instance, of praising an enemy [what do you say to *that*, reader?], and yet in *their* behalf, we consent to forget, not their crimes only, but (which is worse) their hideous bigotry and anti-magnanimous egotism, for nationality it was not. Suffrein,¹⁷ and some half-dozen of other French nautical heroes, because rightly they did us all the mischief they could (which was really great) are names justly revered in England. On the same principle, La Pucelle d'Orleans, the victorious enemy of England, has been destined to receive her deepest commemoration from the magnanimous justice of Englishmen.

Joanna, as we in England should call her, but, according to her own statement, Jeanne, (or, as M. Michelet asserts, Jean) d'Arc, was born at Domrémy, a village on the marches of Lorraine¹⁸ and Champagne, and dependent upon the town of Vaucouleurs. I have called her a Lorrainer, not simply because the word is prettier, but because Champagne

15. "Victorious England must be destroyed;" suggested by the famous words with which the elder Cato is said to have ended all his speeches, "Delenda est Carthago."

16. **Hyder Ali**; One of the most powerful princes of India, Sultan of the state of Mysore. The defeat and death of his son Tippoo Sahib occurred in 1799.

17. **Suffrein Saint Tropez**: A French admiral, who in 1780 captured twelve merchant-ships from the British, and in 1781 defeated the British commodore Johnstone.

18. **Marchos**; An old French word for the *border* or *frontier* of a country. See map of France in the 15th century.

too odiously reminds us English of what are for *us* imaginary wines, which, undoubtedly, *La Pucelle* tasted as rarely as we English; we English, because the champagne of London is chiefly grown in Devonshire; *La Pucelle*, because the champagne of Champagne never, by any chance, flowed into the fountain of Domrémy, from which only she drank. M. Michelet will have her to be a *Champenoise*, and for no better reason than that she "took after her father," who happened to be a *Champenois*.

These disputes, however, turn on refinements too nice. Domrémy stood upon the frontiers, and, like other frontiers, produced a *mixed* race representing the *cis* and the *trans*.¹⁹ A river (it is true) formed the boundary line at this point—the river Meuse; and *that*, in old days, might have divided the populations; but in these days it did not: there were bridges, there were ferries, and weddings crossed from the right bank to the left. Here lay two great roads, not so much for travelers that were few, as for armies that were too many by half. These two roads, one of which was the great highroad between France and Germany, *decussated* at this very point: which is a learned way of saying that they formed a St. Andrew's cross, or letter X. I hope the compositor will choose a good large X, in which case the point of intersection, the *locus* of conflux and intersection for these four diverging arms, will finish the reader's geographical education, by showing him to a hair's-breadth where it was that Domrémy stood. Those roads, so grandly situated, as great trunk arteries between two mighty realms, and haunted forever by wars, or rumors of wars decussated (for anything I know to the contrary) absolutely under Joanna's bedroom window; one rolling away to the right, past Monsieur d'Arc's old barn, and the other unaccountably preferring to sweep round that odious man's pig-sty to the left.

On whichever side of the border chance had thrown Joanna, the same love to France would have been nurtured. For it is a strange fact, noticed by M. Michelet and others, that the Dukes of Bar and Lorraine had for generations pursued the policy of eternal warfare with France on their

19. **The cis and the trans**; Lat. *on this side* and *on the other side*.

own account, yet also of eternal amity and league with France in case anybody else presumed to attack her. Let peace settle upon France, and before long you might rely upon seeing the little vixen Lorraine flying at the throat of France. Let France be assailed by a formidable enemy, and instantly you saw a duke of Lorraine insisting on having his own throat cut in support of France; which favor accordingly was cheerfully granted to him in three great successive battles—twice by the English, viz., at Crécy²⁰ and Agincourt,²¹ once by the Sultan at Nicopolis.²²

This sympathy with France during great eclipses, in those that during ordinary seasons were always teasing her with brawls and guerilla inroads, strengthened the natural piety to France of those that were confessedly the children of her own house. The outposts of France, as one may call the great frontier provinces, were of all localities the most devoted to the Fleurs de Lis. To witness, at any great crisis, the generous devotion to these lilies of the little fiery cousin that in gentler weather was forever tilting at the breast of France, could not but fan the zeal of France's legitimate daughters: whilst to occupy a post of honor on the frontiers against an old hereditary enemy of France, would naturally stimulate this zeal by a sentiment of martial pride, by a sense of danger always threatening, and of hatred always smoldering. That great four-headed road was a perpetual memento to patriotic ardor. To say, this way lies the road to Paris, and that other way to Aix-la-Chapelle, this to Prague, that to Vienna, nourished the warfare of the heart by daily ministrations of sense. The eye that watched for the gleams of lance or helmet from the hostile frontier, the ear that listened for the groaning of wheels, made the high-road itself, with its relations to centers so remote, into a manual of patriotic duty.

The situation, therefore, *locally*, of Joanna was full of

20. **Creçy** (Eng. *Cressy*): This famous battle was fought in 1346 between the English under Edward III. and the Black Prince and the French under Philip VI.; 1200 French knights and 30,000 footmen were slain. It marks the downfall of feudalism. Consult a history of England.

21. **Agincourt** [aʒ'in-kört]: This victory was won by Henry V. in 1415. The French lost 10,000 men, including many princes and nobles.

22. **Nicopolis**: The allied armies of Hungary, Poland, and France, under King Sigismund, were signally defeated at this place in 1396 by the Sultan Bajazet.

profound suggestions to a heart that listened for the stealthy steps of change and fear that too surely were in motion. But, if the place were grand, the time, the burden of the time, was far more so. The air overhead in its upper chambers was *hurling* with the obscure sound; was dark with sullen fermenting of storms that had been gathering for a hundred and thirty years. The battle of Agincourt, in Joanna's childhood, had reopened the wounds of France. Crécy and Poitiers,²³ those withering overthrows for the chivalry of France, had, before Agincourt occurred, been tranquilized by more than half a century; but this resurrection of their trumpet wails made the whole series of battles and endless skirmishes take their stations as parts in one drama. The graves that had closed sixty years ago, seemed to fly open in sympathy with a sorrow that echoed their own. The monarchy of France labored in extremity, rocked and reeled like a ship fighting with the darkness of monsoons. The madness of the poor king²⁴ (Charles VI.) falling in at such a crisis, like the case of women laboring in childbirth during the storming of a city, trebled the awfulness of the time. Even the wild story of the incident which had immediately occasioned the explosion of this madness—the case of a man unknown, gloomy, and perhaps maniacal himself, coming out of a forest at noonday, laying his hand upon the bridle of the king's horse, checking him for a moment to say, 'O king, thou art betrayed,' and then vanishing, no man knew whither, as he had appeared for no man knew what—fell in with the universal prostration of mind that laid France on her knees, as before the slow unweaving of some ancient prophetic doom. The famines, the extraordinary diseases, the insurrections of the peasantry up and down Europe—these were chords struck from the same mysterious harp; but these were transitory chords. There have been others of deeper and more

23. **Poitiers** (or *Poitiers*) [poi-tērz]: Here in 1356 Edward the Black Prince, with 8000 men, defeated a French army of about 50,000 men, and captured the king, John the Good.

24. **The poor king**: Chas. VI. reigned nominally from 1380 to 1422. He became deranged in 1392, and the rivalry of his uncles, who seized the reins of government, brought on civil war. Henry V. of England, taking advantage of the intestine troubles, invaded France, won the battle of Agincourt, and secured a treaty which stipulated that he should become king of France on the death of Charles.

ominous sound. The termination of the Crusades, the destruction of the Templars,²⁵ the Papal interdicts, the tragedies caused or suffered by the house of Anjou,²⁶ and by the emperor,²⁷—these were full of a more permanent significance. But, since then, the colossal figure of feudalism was seen standing, as it were, on tiptoe, at Crécy, for flight from earth: that was a revolution unparalleled; yet *that* was a trifle, by comparison with the more fearful revolutions that were mining below the Church. By her own internal schisms, by the abominable spectacle of a double pope²⁸—so that no man, except through political bias, could even guess which was Heaven's vicegerent, and which the creature of hell—the Church was rehearsing, as in still earlier forms she had already rehearsed, those vast rents in her foundations which no man should ever heal.

These were the loftiest peaks of the cloudland in the skies, that to the scientific gazer first caught the colors of the *new* morning in advance. But the whole vast range alike of sweeping glooms overhead, dwelt upon all meditative minds, even upon those that could not distinguish the tendencies nor decipher the forms. It was, therefore, not her own age alone, as affected by its immediate calamities, that lay with such weight upon Joanna's mind; but her own age, as one section in a vast mysterious drama, unweaving through a century back, and drawing nearer continually to some dreadful crisis. Cataracts and rapids were heard

25. The celebrated "Order of the Templars," or "Knights of the Temple," was organized at Jerusalem in 1117, for the purpose of protecting Pilgrims; so called because their lodging was in a palace near the Temple. The number was at first limited to nine; but in time the order spread throughout Europe, becoming very wealthy, corrupt and powerful. In 1312 many of its leaders were burned at the stake and the order abolished by decree of the pope.

26. The house of Anjou was an old and powerful one, numbering among its dukes and their descendants many royal personages. From this house sprang the royal house of Plantagenet in England. The early Angevins were especially famous for their monstrous deeds. After the assassination of Charles of Durazzo in Hungary, in 1385, Louis of Anjou seized the throne of Naples, but was soon expelled by Ladislaus, son of Durazzo.

27. The Emperor Sigismund, by whose treachery John Huss was burned, in 1415, and the Hussite war brought on.

28. In 1378 two popes were chosen, Urban VI. and Clement VII.; the one held court at Rome, and the other at Avignon. For 38 years there were two rival popes, hurling anathemas and foulest accusations at each other; like "two dogs snarling over a bone," said Wyclif. In 1402 there were even three recognized popes; but in 1418 a General Council deposed all three, and ended the great dispute.

roaring ahead ; and signs were seen far back, by help of old men's memories, which answered secretly to signs now coming forward on the eye, even as locks answer to keys. It was not wonderful that in such a haunted solitude, with such a haunted heart, Joanna should see angelic visions and hear angelic voices. These voices whispered to her forever the duty, self imposed, of delivering France. Five years she listened to these monitory voices with internal struggles. At length she could resist no longer. Doubt gave way ; and she left her home forever in order to present herself at the dauphin's court.

The education of this poor girl was mean, according to the present standard : was ineffably grand, according to a purer philosophic standard : and only not good for our age because for us it would be unattainable. She read nothing, for she could not read ; but she had heard others read parts of the Roman martyrology. She wept in sympathy with the sad *Misereres*²⁹ of the Romish Church ; she rose to heaven with the glad triumphant *Te Deum*³⁰ of Rome : she drew her comfort and her vital strength from the rites of the same Church. But, next after these spiritual advantages, she owed most to the advantages of her situation. The fountain of Domrémy was on the brink of a boundless forest ; and it was haunted to that degree by fairies that the parish priest (*curé*) was obliged to read mass there once a year, in order to keep them in any decent bounds. Fairies are important, even in a statistical view : certain weeds mark poverty in the soil, fairies mark its solitude. As surely as the wolf retires before cities, does the fairy sequester herself from the haunts of the licensed victualler. A village is too much for her nervous delicacy : at most, she can tolerate a distant view of a hamlet. We may judge, therefore, by the uneasiness and extra trouble which they gave to the parson, in what strength the fairies mustered at Domrémy ; and, by satisfactory consequence, how thinly sown with men and women must have been that region

29. **Miserere** : A musical composition for the 51st Psalm, which in Latin begins with the word *miserere*,—have mercy ; usually appointed in the Catholic Church for penitential acts.

30. **Te Deum** : An old Latin hymn of which the first words are *Te Deum laudamus*—We praise thee, O God ; sung in services of public thanksgiving.

even in its inhabited spots. But the forests of Domrémy—those were the glories of the land: for in them abode mysterious power and ancient secrets that towered into tragic strength. “Abbeys there were, and abbey windows,”—“like Moorish temples of the Hindoos,” that exercised even princely power both in Lorraine and in the German Diets.³¹ These had their sweet bells that pierced the forests for many a league at matins or vespers, and each its own dreamy legend. Few enough, and scattered enough, were these abbeys, so as in no degree to disturb the deep solitude of the region; yet many enough to spread a network or awning of Christian sanctity over what else might have seemed a heathen wilderness. This sort of religious talisman being secured, a man the most afraid of ghosts (like myself, suppose, or the reader) becomes armed into courage to wander for days in their sylvan recesses. The mountains of the Vosges, on the eastern frontier of France, have never attracted much notice from Europe, except in 1813-14 for a few brief months, when they fell within Napoleon’s line of defense against the Allies. But they are interesting for this, amongst other features, that they do not, like some loftier ranges, repel woods: the forests and the hills are on sociable terms. *Live and let live* is their motto. For this reason, in part, these tracts in Lorraine were a favorite hunting-ground with the Carlovingian princes. About six hundred years before Joanna’s childhood, Charlemagne was known to have hunted there. That, of itself, was a grand incident in the traditions of a forest or a chase. In these vast forests, also, were to be found (if anywere to be found) those mysterious fawns that tempted solitary hunters into visionary and perilous pursuits. Here was seen (if anywhere seen) that ancient stag who was already nine hundred years old, but possibly a hundred or two more, when met by Charlemagne; and the thing was put beyond doubt by the inscription upon his golden collar. I believe Charlemagne knighted the stag; and, if ever he is met again by a king, he ought to be made an earl—or, being

31. **German Diets:** The Imperial Parliament, or Diet, was composed of three houses, the Seven Electors, the Princes, lay and ecclesiastical, and the Free Imperial Cities. Three of the Prince Electors were the Archbishops of Treves, Mayence, and Cologne.

upon the marches of France, a marquis. Observe, I don't absolutely vouch for all these things: my own opinion varies. On a fine breezy forenoon I am audaciously skeptical; but, as twilight sets in, my credulity grows steadily, till it becomes equal to anything that could be desired. And I have heard candid sportsmen declare that, outside of these very forests, they laughed loudly at all the dim tales connected with their haunted solitudes; but, on reaching a spot notoriously eighteen miles deep within them, they agreed with Sir Roger de Coverley, that a good deal might be said on both sides.³²

Such traditions, or any others that (like the stag) connect distant generations with each other, are, for that cause, sublime; and the sense of the shadowy, connected with such appearances that reveal themselves or not according to circumstances, leaves a coloring of sanctity over ancient forests, even in those minds that utterly reject the legend as a fact.

But, apart from all distinct stories of that order, in any solitary frontier between two great empires, as here, for instance, or in the desert between Syria and the Euphrates, there is an inevitable tendency in minds of any deep sensibility, to people the solitudes with phantom images of powers that were of old so vast. Joanna, therefore, in her quiet occupation of a shepherdess, would be led continually to brood over the political condition of her country, by the traditions of the past no less than by the mementoes of the local present.

M. Michelet, indeed, says that La Pucelle was *not* a shepherdess. I beg his pardon: she *was*. What he rests upon, I guess pretty well: it is the evidence of a woman called Haumette, the most confidential friend of Joanna. Now, she is a good witness, and a good girl, and I like her; for she makes a natural and affectionate report of Joanna's ordinary life. But still, however good she may be as a witness, Joanna is better; and she, when speaking to the dauphin, calls herself in the Latin report *Bergereta*.³³ Even

32. **Sir Roger de Coverley**: Addison's charming hero, who, in Spectator paper No. 122, decides the dispute between his two friends about the fishing by telling them, "with the air of a man who would not give his judgment rashly, that much might be said on both sides."

33. **Bergereta**: Latin form of the French *bergerette*, a shepherd girl.

Haumette confesses that Joanna tended sheep in her girlhood. And I believe that if Miss Haumette were taking coffee alone with me this very evening (February 12, 1817)—in which there would be no subject for scandal or for maiden blushes, because I am an intense philosopher, and Miss H. would be hard upon four hundred and fifty years—she would admit the following comment upon her evidence to be right. A Frenchman, about forty years ago, M. Simond, in his "Travels," mentions incidentally the following hideous scene as one steadily observed and watched by himself, in chivalrous France, not very long before the French Revolution: A peasant was plowing; the team that drew his plow was a donkey and a woman. Both were regularly harnessed: both pulled alike. This is bad enough; but the Frenchman adds that, in distributing his lashes, the peasant was obviously desirous of being impartial; or, if either of the yoke fellows had a right to complain, certainly it was not the donkey. Now, in any country where such degradation of females could be tolerated by the state of manners, a woman of delicacy would shrink from acknowledging, either for herself or her friend, that she had ever been addicted to any mode of labor not strictly domestic; because, if once owning herself a prædial³¹ servant, she would be sensible that this confession extended by probability in the hearer's thoughts to the having incurred indignities of this horrible kind. Haumette clearly thinks it more dignified for Joanna to have been darning the stockings of her horny-hoofed father, Monsieur D'Arc, than keeping sheep, lest she might then be suspected of having ever done something worse. But, luckily, there was no danger of *that*: Joanna never was in service; and my opinion is that her father should have mended his own stockings, since probably he was the party to make holes in them, as many a better man than D'Arc does; meaning by *that* not myself, because, though probably a better man than D'Arc, I protest against doing anything of the kind. If I lived even with Friday³² in Juan Fernandez, either Friday must do all the darning, or else it must go undone.

31. **Prædial**: From Lat. *prædium*, a farm; hence, attached to land or farms.

32. **Friday**: Robinson Crusoe's "man" Friday.

The better men that I meant were the sailors in the British navy, every man of whom mends his own stockings. Who else is to do it? Do you suppose, reader, that the junior lords of the admiralty are under articles to darn for the navy?

The reason, meantime, for my systematic hatred of D'Arc is this: There was a story current in France before the Revolution, framed to ridicule the pauper aristocracy, who happened to have long pedigrees and short rent rolls, viz., that a head of such a house, dating from the Crusades, was overheard saying to his son, a Chevalier of St. Louis,³⁶ "*Chevalier, as-tu donné au cochon à manger?*"³⁷ Now, it is clearly made out by the surviving evidence that D'Arc would much have preferred continuing to say, "*Ma fille, as-tu donné au cochon à manger?*" to saying, "*Pucelle d'Orleans, as-tu sauré les fleurs-de-lis?*"³⁸ There is an old English copy of verses which argues thus:

" If the man that turnips cries
Cry not when his father dies—
Then 'tis plain the man had rather
Have a turnip than his father."

I cannot say that the logic in these verses was ever *entirely* to my satisfaction. I do not see my way through it as clearly as could be wished. But I see my way most clearly through D'Arc; and the result is—that he would greatly have preferred not merely a turnip to his father, but saving a pound or so of bacon to saving the Oriflamme of France.³⁸

It is probable (as M. Michelet suggests) that the title of Virgin, or *Pucelle*, had in itself, and apart from the miraculous stories about her, a secret power over the rude soldiery and partisan chiefs of that period; for, in such a person, they saw a representative manifestation of the Virgin Mary, who in a course of centuries, had grown steadily upon the popular heart.

As to Joanna's supernatural detection of the dauphin (Charles VII.) amongst three hundred lords and knights, I

36. **St. Louis:** Louis IX., the "Royal Saint" and leader of the Eighth Crusade. His religion was that of an Anchorite, his government that of exact justice. "He was," says Voltaire, "in all respects a model for men."

37. "Chevalier, have you fed the hog?" My girl, have you fed the hog? Maid of Orleans, have you saved the royal lilies?

38. **Oriflamme:** The ancient royal standard of France; a red flag, deeply split into flame-shaped streamers, and borne on a gilded lance. From Lat. *aurum*, gold, and *flamma*, a flame.

am surprised at the credulity which could ever lend itself to that theatrical juggle.³⁹ Who admires more than myself the sublime enthusiasm, the rapturous faith in herself, of this pure creature? But I am far from admiring stage artifices, which not *La Pucelle*, but the court, must have arranged; nor can I surrender myself to the conjurer's *legerdemain*, such as may be seen every day for a shilling. Southey's "Joan of Arc"⁴⁰ was published in 1796. Twenty years after, talking with Southey, I was surprised to find him still owning a secret bias in favor of Joan, founded on her detection of the dauphin. The story, for the benefit of the reader new to the case, was this: *La Pucelle* was first made known to the dauphin, and presented to his court, at Chinon, and here came her first trial. By way of testing her supernatural pretensions, she was to find out the royal personage amongst the whole ark of clean and unclean creatures. Failing in this *coup d'essai*,⁴¹ she would not simply disappoint many a beating heart in the glittering crowd that on different motives yearned for her success, but she would ruin herself—and, as the oracle within had told her, would, by ruining herself, ruin France. Our own sovereign lady Victoria rehearses annually a trial not so severe in degree, but the same in kind. She "pricks" for sheriffs.⁴² Joanna pricked for a king. But observe the difference: our own lady pricks for two men out of three; Joanna for one man out of three hundred. Happy Lady of the islands and the orient!—she *can* go astray in her choice only by one half; to the extent of one half she *must*

39. Michelet's account is as follows: "At last the King received her, and surrounded by all the splendor of his court, in the hope, apparently, of disconcerting her. It was evening; the light of fifty torches illumined the hall, and a brilliant array of nobles and above three hundred knights were assembled round the monarch. Every one was curious to see the sorceress, or, as it might be, the inspired maid. . . . She entered the splendid circle with all humility, 'like a poor little shepherdess,' distinguished at the first glance the King, who had purposely kept himself amidst the crowd of courtiers; and although at first he maintained that he was not the King, she fell down and embraced his knees. But as he had not been crowned, she only styled him dauphin: 'Gentle dauphin,' she addressed him, 'my name is Jeanne la Pucelle. The King of heaven sends you word by me that you shall be consecrated and crowned in the city of Rheims, and shall be lieutenant of the King of heaven, who is King of France.'"

40. **Robert Southey** (1774-1843): His "Joan of Arc" is a blank verse poem in ten books, readable but not poetical.

41. **Coup d'essai**; Fr., first trial.

42. "**Pricking for Sheriffs**" is the annual ceremony of appointing sheriffs for each county: so called from the fact that the names of the persons chosen are marked by the prick of a pin.

have the satisfaction of being right. And yet, even with these tight limits to the misery of a boundless discretion, permit me, liege Lady, with all loyalty, to submit—that now and then you prick with your pin the wrong man. But the poor child from Domrémy, shrinking under the gaze of a dazzling court—not *because* dazzling (for in visions she had seen those that were more so), but because some of them wore a scoffing smile on their features—how should *she* throw her line into so deep a river to angle for a king, where many a gay creature was sporting that masqueraded as kings in dress? Nay, even more than any true king would have done: for, in Southey's version of the story, the dauphin says, by way of trying the virgin's magnetic sympathy with royalty,

"On the throne,

I the while mingling with the menial throng,
Some courtier shall be seated."

This usurper is even crowned: "the jeweled crown shines on a menial's head." But, really, that is "*un peu fort*;"⁴³ and the mob of spectators might raise a scruple whether our friend the jackdaw upon the throne, and the dauphin himself, were not grazing the shins of treason. For the dauphin could not lend more than belonged to him. According to the popular notion, he had no crown for himself; consequently none to lend, on any pretense whatever, until the consecrated Maid should take him to Rheims. This was the *popular* notion in France. But, certainly, it was the dauphin's interest to support the popular notion, as he meant to use the services of Joanna. For, if he were king already, what was it that she could do for him beyond Orleans? That is to say, what more than a mere *military* service could she render him? And, above all, if he were king without a coronation, and without the oil from the sacred ampulla,⁴⁴ what advantage was yet open to him by celerity above his competitor the English boy?⁴⁵ Now was

43. **Un peu fort**: A little strong.

44. The sacred ampulla of Rheims was a glass flask filled with holy oil, according to tradition, brought from heaven by a dove at the coronation of Clovis in 496. The kings of France down to Louis XVI. were anointed with this oil. The flask was destroyed in the Revolution, a piece with a little oil being saved, which was exhausted in anointing Charles X.

45. **The English Boy**: Henry V. died in 1422, a few weeks before the death of Charles VI., for whose throne he had bargained. His son, Henry VI., who had been proclaimed king at Paris when about nine months old, was now eight years old.

to be a race for a coronation : he that should win *that* race, carried the superstition of France along with him : he that should first be drawn from the ovens of Rheims, was under that superstition baked into a king.

La Pucelle, before she could be allowed to practice as a warrior, was put through her manual and platoon exercise, as a pupil in divinity, at the bar of six eminent men in wigs. According to Southey (v. 393, Book III, in the original edition of his "Joan of Arc"), she "appalled the doctors." It's not easy to do *that* : but they had some reason to feel bothered as that surgeon would assuredly feel bothered, who, upon proceeding to dissect a subject, should find the subject retaliating as a dissector upon himself, especially if Joanna ever made the speech to them which occupies v. 351-391, B. III. It is a double impossibility : 1st, because a piracy from Tindal's "Christianity as Old as the Creation"⁴⁶—a piracy *à parte ante*,⁴⁷ and by three centuries ; 2dly, it is quite contrary to the evidence on Joanna's trial. Southey's "Joan," of A. D. 1796 (Cottle, Bristol), tells the doctors, among other secrets, that she never in her life attended—1st, Mass ; nor 2d, the Sacramental table ; nor 3d, Confession. In the mean time, all this deistical confession of Joanna's, besides being suicidal for the interest of her cause, is opposed to the depositions upon *both* trials. The very best witness called from first to last, deposes that Joanna attended these rites of her Church even too often ; was taxed with doing so ; and, by blushing, owned the charge as a fact, though certainly not as a fault. Joanna was a girl of natural piety, that saw God in forests, and hills, and fountains ; but did not the less seek him in chapels and consecrated oratories.

This pleasant girl was self-educated through her own natural meditiveness. If the reader turns to that divine passage in "Paradise Regained," which Milton has put into the mouth of our Saviour when first entering the wilderness, and musing upon the tendency of those great impulses growing within himself,—

46. **Matthew Tindal** : A deistical writer whose book here mentioned appeared in 1730.

47. **A parte ante** : In relation to a part gone before.

“ Oh, what a multitude of thoughts at once
 Awaken'd in me swarm, while I consider
 What from within I feel myself, and hear
 What from without comes often to my ears,
 Ill sorting with my present state compared !
 When I was yet a child, no childish play
 To me was pleasing ; all my mind was set
 Serious to learn and know, and thence to do
 What might be public good ; myself I thought
 Born to that end ”—⁴⁸

he will have some notion of the vast reveries which brooded over the heart of Joanna in early girlhood, when the wings were budding that should carry her from Orleans to Rheims ; when the golden chariot was dimly revealing itself, that should carry her from the kingdom of *France delivered*⁴⁹ to the eternal kingdom.

It is not requisite, for the honor of Joanna, nor is there, in this place, room to pursue her brief career of *action*. That, though wonderful, forms the earthly part of her story : the spiritual part is the saintly passion of her imprisonment, trial, and execution. It is unfortunate, therefore, for Southey's "Joan of Arc" (which, however, should always be regarded as a *juvenile* effort), that, precisely when her real glory begins, the poem ends. But this limitation of the interest grew, no doubt, from the constraint inseparably attached to the law of epic unity. Joanna's history bisects into two opposite hemispheres, and both could not have been presented to the eye in one poem, unless by sacrificing all unity of theme, or else by involving the earlier half, as a narrative episode, in the latter ; which, however, might have been done, for it might have been communicated to a fellow-prisoner, or a confessor, by Joanna herself. It is sufficient, as concerns *this* section of Joanna's life, to say that she fulfilled, to the height of her promises, the restoration of the prostrate throne. France had become a province of England ; and for the ruin of both, if such a yoke could be maintained. Dreadful pecuniary exhaustion caused the English energy to droop ; and that critical opening *La Pucelle* used with a corresponding felicity of audacity and suddenness (that were in them-

48. *Paradise Regained*, Book I, 196-206.

49. *France delivered*: In imitation of "Jerusalem Delivered," Tasso's great epic of the Crusades.

selves portentous) for introducing the wedge of French native resources, for rekindling the national pride, and for planting the dauphin once more upon his feet. When Joanna appeared, he had been on the point of giving up the struggle with the English, distressed as they were, and of flying to the south of France. She taught him to blush for such abject counsels. She liberated Orleans, that great city, so decisive by its fate for the issue of the war, and then beleaguered by the English with an elaborate application of engineering skill unprecedented in Europe. Entering the city after sunset, on the 29th of April, she sang mass on Sunday, May 8, for the entire disappearance of the besieging force. On the 29th of June, she fought and gained over the English the decisive battle of Patay; on the 9th of July, she took Troyes by a coup-de-main⁵⁰ from a mixed garrison of English and Burgundians; on the 15th of that month, she carried the dauphin into Rheims; on Sunday the 17th, she crowned him; and there she rested from her labor of triumph. All that was to be *done* she had now accomplished; what remained was—to *suffer*.

All this forward movement was her own: excepting one man, the whole council was against her. Her enemies were all that drew power from earth. Her supporters were her own strong enthusiasm, and the headlong contagion by which she carried this sublime frenzy into the hearts of women, of soldiers, and of all who lived by labor. Henceforward she was thwarted; and the worst error she committed was, to lend the sanction of her presence to counsels which she had ceased to approve. But she had now accomplished the capital objects which her own visions had dictated. These involved all the rest. Errors were now less important; and doubtless it had now become more difficult for herself to pronounce authentically what *were* errors. The noble girl had achieved, as by a rapture of motion, the capital end of clearing out a free space around her sovereign, giving him the power to move his arms with effect; and, secondly, the inappreciable end of winning for that sovereign what seemed to all France the heavenly ratification of his rights, by crowning him with the ancient

50. **Coup-de-main:** Fr., stroke of hand; a military term, denoting a sudden and rapid attack.

solemnities. She had made it impossible for the English now to step before her. They were caught in an irretrievable blunder, owing partly to discord amongst the uncles of Henry VI., partly to a want of funds, but partly to the very impossibility which they believed to press with tenfold force upon any French attempt to forestall theirs. They laughed at such a thought; and whilst they laughed, she *did* it. Henceforth the single redress for the English of this capital oversight, but which never *could* have redressed it effectually, was, to vitiate and taint the coronation of Charles VII., as the work of a witch. That policy, and not malice (as M. Michelet is so happy to believe), was the moving principle in the subsequent prosecution of Joanna. Unless they unhinged the force of the first coronation in the popular mind, by associating it with power given from hell, they felt that the scepter of the invader was broken.

But she, the child that, at nineteen, had wrought wonders so great for France, was she not elated? Did she not lose, as men so often *have* lost, all sobriety of mind when standing upon the pinnacle of success so giddy? Let her enemies declare. During the progress of her movement, and in the center of ferocious struggles, she had manifested the temper of her feelings, by the pity which she had everywhere expressed for the suffering enemy. She forwarded to the English leaders a touching invitation to unite with the French, as brothers, in a common crusade against infidels, thus opening the road for a soldierly retreat. She interposed to protect the captive or the wounded—she mourned over the excesses of her countrymen—she threw herself off her horse to kneel by the dying English soldier, and to comfort him with such ministrations, physical or spiritual, as his situation allowed. “*Nolebat,*” says the evidence, “*uti ense suo, aut quemquam interficere.*”⁵¹ She sheltered the English, that invoked her aid, in her own quarters. She wept as she beheld, stretched on the field of battle, so many brave enemies that had died without confession. And, as regarded herself, her elation expressed itself thus:—On the day when she had finished her work, she wept; for she knew that, when her *triumphal* task

51. “She did not wish to use her sword, or to kill any one.”

was done, her end must be approaching. Her aspirations pointed only to a place, which seemed to her more than usually full of natural piety, as one in which it would give her pleasure to die. And she uttered, between smiles and tears, as a wish that inexpressibly fascinated her heart, and yet was half-fantastic, a broken prayer, that God would return her to the solitudes from which he had drawn her, and suffer her to become a shepherdess once more. It was a natural prayer, because nature has laid a necessity upon every human heart to seek for rest, and to shrink from torment. Yet, again, it was a half-fantastic prayer, because, from childhood upwards, visions that she had no power to mistrust, and the voices which sounded in her ear forever, had long since persuaded her mind, that for *her* no such prayer could be granted. Too well she felt that her mission must be worked out to the end, and that the end was now at hand. All went wrong from this time. She herself had created the *funds* out of which the French restoration should grow; but she was not suffered to witness their development, or their prosperous application. More than one military plan was entered upon which she did not approve. But she still continued to expose her person as before. Severe wounds had not taught her caution. And at length, in a sortie from Compiègne (whether through treacherous collusion on the part of her own friends is doubtful to this day),⁵² she was made prisoner by the Burgundians, and finally surrendered to the English.

Now came her trial. This trial, moving of course under English influence, was conducted in chief by the Bishop of Beauvais. He was a Frenchman, sold to English interests, and hoping, by favor of the English leaders, to reach the highest preferment. *Bishop that art, Archbishop that shalt be, Cardinal that mayest be*,⁵³ were the words that sounded continually in his ear; and doubtless, a whisper of visions still higher, of a triple crown,⁵⁴ and feet upon the necks of

52. Michelet argues that there *was* "treacherous collusion." "The probability is that the Pucelle was bargained for and bought." Her captor sold her to the Duke of Burgundy, and the Duke sold her to the English.

53. An echo of the witches' words in *Macbeth*: "Glamis thou art, and Cawdor, and shalt be what thou art promised." Act I., 3 and 5.

54. **Triple crown**: The Pope's crown consists of a long cap, or tiara, of golden cloth, encircled by three coronets, and surmounted by a ball and cross of gold. The second coronet was added to indicate the prero-

kings, sometimes stole into his heart. M. Michelet is anxious to keep us in mind that this bishop was but an agent of the English. True. But it does not better the case for his countryman—that, being an accomplice in crime, making himself the leader in the persecution against the helpless girl, he was willing to be all this in the spirit, and with the conscious vileness of a cat's-paw. Never from the foundations of the earth was there such a trial as this, if it were laid open in all its beauty of defense, and all its hellishness of attack. Oh, child of France! shepherdess, peasant girl! trodden under foot by all around thee, how I honor thy flashing intellect, quick as God's lightning, and true as God's lightning to its mark, that ran before France and laggard Europe by many a century, confounding the malice of the ensnarer, and making dumb the oracles of falsehood! Is it not scandalous, is it not humiliating to civilization, that, even at this day, France exhibits the horrid spectacle of judges examining the prisoner against himself: seducing him, by fraud, into treacherous conclusions against his own head; using the terrors of their power for extorting confessions from the frailty of hope; nay (which is worse), using the blandishments of condescension and snaky kindness for thawing into compliances of gratitude those whom they had failed to freeze into terror? Wicked judges! Barbarian jurisprudence! that, sitting in your own conceit on the summits of social wisdom, have yet failed to learn the first principles of criminal justice; sit ye humbly and with docility at the feet of this girl from Donnémey, that tore your webs of cruelty into shreds and dust. "Would you examine me as a witness against myself?" was a question by which many times she defied their arts. Continually she showed that their interrogations were irrelevant to any business before the court, or that entered into the ridiculous charges against her. General questions were proposed to her on points of casuistical divinity; two-edged questions, which not one of themselves could have answered without, on the one side, landing himself in heresy (as then interpreted), or, on the other, in some presumptuous expression

gatives of spiritual and temporal power. The third was added (probably by Urban V., 1362) to indicate the Trinity.

of self-esteem. Next came a wretched Dominican, that pressed her with an objection, which, if applied to the Bible would tax every one of its miracles with unsoundness. The monk had the excuse of never having read the Bible. M. Michelet has no such excuse; and it makes one blush for him, as a philosopher, to find him describing such an argument as "weighty," whereas it is but a varied expression of rude Mahometan metaphysics. Her answer to this, if there were room to place the whole in a clear light, was as shattering as it was rapid. Another thought to entrap her by asking what language the angelic visitors of her solitude had talked; as though heavenly counsels could want polygot interpreters for every word, or that God needed language at all in whispering thoughts to a human heart. Then came a worse devil, who asked her whether the archangel Michael had appeared naked. Not comprehending the vile insinuation, Joanna, whose poverty suggested to her simplicity that it might be the *costliness* of suitable robes which caused the demur, asked them if they fancied God, who clothed the flowers of the valleys, unable to find raiment for his servants. The answer of Joanna moves a smile of tenderness, but the disappointment of her judges makes one laugh exultingly. Others succeeded by troops, who upbraided her with leaving her father; as if that greater Father, whom she believed herself to have been serving, did not retain the power of dispensing with his own rules, or had not said, that, for a less cause than martyrdom, man and women should leave both father and mother.

On Easter Sunday, when the trial had been long proceeding, the poor girl fell so ill as to cause a belief that she had been poisoned. It was not poison. Nobody had any interest in hastening a death so certain. M. Michelet, whose sympathies with all feelings are so quick that one would gladly see them always as justly directed, reads the case most truly. Joanna had a twofold malady. She was visited by a paroxysm of the complaint called *homesickness*; the cruel nature of her imprisonment, and its length, could not but point her solitary thoughts, in darkness and in chains (for chained she was), to Domrémy. And the season, which was the most heavenly period of the spring, added stings to this yearning.

That was one of her maladies—*nostalgia*, as medicine calls it; the other was weariness and exhaustion from daily combats with malice. She saw that everybody hated her, and thirsted for her blood; nay, many kind-hearted creatures that would have pitied her profoundly, as regarded all political charges, had their natural feelings warped by the belief that she had dealings with fiendish powers. She knew she was to die; that was *not* the misery: the misery was that this consummation could not be reached without so much intermediate strife, as if she were contending for some chance (where chance was none) of happiness, or were dreaming for a moment of escaping the inevitable. Why, then, *did* she contend? Knowing that she would reap nothing from answering her persecutors, why did she not retire by silence from the superfluous contest? It was because her quick and eager loyalty to truth would not suffer her to see it darkened by frauds, which *she* could expose, but others, even of candid listeners, perhaps could not; it was through that imperishable grandeur of soul, which taught her to submit meekly and without a struggle to her punishment, but taught her *not* to submit—no, not for a moment—to calumny as to facts, or to misconstruction as to motives. Besides, there were secretaries all around the court taking down her words. That was meant for no good to *her*. But the end does not always correspond to the meaning. And Joanna might say to herself: These words that will be used against me to-morrow and the next day, perhaps in some nobler generation may rise again for my justification. Yes, Joanna, they *are* rising even now in Paris, and for more than justification.

Woman, sister—there are some things which you do not execute as well as your brother, man; no, nor ever will. Pardon me, if I doubt whether you will ever produce a great poet from your choirs, or a Mozart, or a Phidias, or a Michael Angelo, or a great philosopher, or a great scholar. By which last is meant—not one who depends simply on an infinite memory, but also on an infinite and electrical power of combination; bringing together from the four winds, like the angel of the resurrection, what else were dust from dead men's bones, into the unity of breathing life. If you *can*

create yourselves into any of these great creators, why have you not?

Yet, sister, woman, though I cannot consent to find a Mozart or a Michael Angelo in your sex, cheerfully, and with the love that burns in depths of admiration, I acknowledge that you can do one thing as well as the best of us men—a greater thing than even Milton is known to have done, or Michael Angelo—you can die grandly, and as goddesses would die, were goddesses mortal. If any distant worlds (which *may* be the case) are so far ahead of us Tellurians⁵⁵ in optical resources, as to see distinctly through their telescopes all that we do on earth, what is the grandest sight to which we ever treat them? St Peter's at Rome, do you fancy, on Easter Sunday, or Luxor,⁵⁶ or perhaps the Himalayas? Oh no! my friend: suggest something better; these are baubles to *them*; they see in other worlds, in their own, far better toys of the same kind. These, take my word for it, are nothing. Do you give it up? The finest thing, then we have to show them, is a scaffold on the morning of execution. I assure you there is a strong muster in those far telescopic worlds, on any such morning, of those who happen to find themselves occupying the right hemisphere for a peep at *us*. How, then, if it be announced in some such telescopic world by those who make a livelihood of catching glimpses at our newspapers, whose language they have long since deciphered, that the poor victim in the morning's sacrifice is a woman? How, if it be published in that distant world, that the sufferer wears upon her head, in the eyes of many, the garlands of martyrdom? How, if it should be some Marie Antoinette,⁵⁷ the widowed queen coming forward on the scaffold, and presenting to the morning air her head turned gray by sorrow, daughter of Cæsar kneeling down humbly to kiss the guillotine, as one that worships death? How, if it were the noble Charlotte

55. **Tellurians**: Dwellers upon earth; L. *tellus*, the earth.

56. **Luxor**: A palace temple forming part of the ruins of Thebes in Egypt. Of the temple of Karnak, another part of these ruins, Fergusson says, "It is perhaps the noblest effort of architectural magnificence ever produced by the hand of man."

57. **Marie Antoinette**: The queen of Louis XVI., daughter of the imperial house of Austria. For an account of the career of this brilliant and ill-starred queen, consult histories of the French Revolution.

Corday,⁵⁸ that in the bloom of youth, that with the loveliest of persons, that with homage waiting upon her smiles wherever she turned her face to scatter them—homage that followed those smiles as surely as the carols of birds, after showers in spring, follow the reappearing sun and the racing of sunbeams over the hills—yet thought all these things cheaper than the dust upon her sandals, in comparison of deliverance from hell for her dear suffering France! Ah! these were spectacles indeed for those sympathizing people in distant worlds; and some perhaps would suffer a sort of martyrdom themselves, because they could not testify their wrath, could not bear witness to the strength of love and to the fury of hatred that burned within them at such scenes; could not gather into golden urns some of that glorious dust which rested in the catacombs of earth.

On the Wednesday after Trinity Sunday in 1431, being then about nineteen years of age, the Maid of Arc underwent her martyrdom. She was conducted before midday, guarded by eight hundred spearmen, to a platform of prodigious height, constructed of wooden billets supported by occasional walls of lath and plaster, and traversed by hollow spaces in every direction for the creation of air currents. The pile "struck terror," says M. Michelet, "by its height;" and, as usual the English purpose in this is viewed as one of pure malignity. But there are two ways of explaining all that. It is probable that the purpose was merciful. On the circumstances of the execution I shall not linger. Yet, to mark the almost fatal felicity of M. Michelet in finding out whatever may injure the English name, at a moment when every reader will be interested in Joanna's personal appearance, it is really edifying to notice the ingenuity by which he draws into light from a dark corner a very unjust account of it, and neglects, though lying upon the high-road, a very pleasing one. Both are from English pens. Grafton,⁵⁹ a chronicler but little read, being a stiff-necked John Bull, thought fit to say that no wonder Joanna should

58. **Charlotte Corday**; Daughter of a Norman nobleman; deeply impressed by the atrocities of the Reign of Terror, she made her way to Paris, assassinated Marat, and was immediately after guillotined, July 17, 1793.

59. Grafton's "Chronicle at large and meere History of the Affayres of Englande and Kingdomes of the same," from the creation to the date of publication, appeared in 1569.

be a virgin, since her "foule face" was a satisfactory solution of that particular merit. Holinshead,⁶⁰ on the other hand, a chronicler somewhat later, every way more important, and at one time universally read, has given a very pleasing testimony to the interesting character of Joanna's person and engaging manners. Neither of these men lived till the following century, so that personally this evidence is none at all. Grafton sullenly and carelessly believed as he wished to believe; Holinshead took pains to inquire, and reports undoubtedly the general impression of France. But I cite the case as illustrating M. Michelet's candor.

The circumstantial incidents of the execution, unless with more space than I can now command, I should be unwilling to relate. I should fear to injure, by imperfect report, a martyrdom which to myself appears so unspeakably grand. Yet for a purpose, pointing not at Joanna, but M. Michelet,—viz., to convince him that an Englishman is capable of thinking more highly of *La Pucelle* than even her admiring countryman,—I shall, in parting, allude to one or two traits in Joanna's demeanor on the scaffold, and to one or two in that of the bystanders, which authorize me in questioning an opinion of his upon this martyr's firmness. The reader ought to be reminded that Joanna d'Arc was subjected to an unusually unfair trial of opinion. Any of the elder Christian martyrs had not much to fear of *personal* rancor. The martyr was chiefly regarded as the enemy of Cæsar; at times, also, where any knowledge of the Christian faith and morals existed, with the enmity that arises spontaneously in the worldly against the spiritual. But the martyr, though disloyal, was not supposed to be, therefore, anti-national: and still less was *individually* hateful. What was hated (if anything) belonged to his class, not to himself separately. Now, Joanna, if hated at all, was hated personally, and in Rouen on national grounds. Hence there would be a certainty of calumny arising against *her*, such as would not affect martyrs in general. That being the case, it would follow of necessity that some people would impute to her a willingness to recant. No innocence

60. Holinshead's Chronicle (1587) has the particular fame of having furnished Shakespeare with the facts for his English historical plays.

could escape *that*. Now, had she really testified this willingness on the scaffold, it would have argued nothing at all but the weakness of a genial nature shrinking from the instant approach of torment. And those will often pity that weakness most, who, in their own persons, would yield to it least. Meantime, there never was a calumny uttered that drew less support from the recorded circumstances. It rests upon no *positive* testimony, and it has a weight of contradicting testimony to stem. And yet, strange to say, M. Michelet, who at times seems to admire the Maid of Arc as much as I do, is the one sole writer amongst her *friends* who lends some countenance to this odious slander. His words are that, if she did not utter this word *recant* with her lips, she uttered it in her heart. "Whether she *said* the word is uncertain; but I affirm that she *thought* it."

Now, I affirm that she did not; not in any sense of the word "*thought*" applicable to the case. Here is France calumniating *La Pucelle*: here is England defending her, M. Michelet can only mean that, on *à priori* principles,⁶¹ every woman must be liable to such a weakness: that Joanna was a woman; *ergo*, that she was liable to such a weakness. That is, he only supposes her to have uttered the word by an argument which presumes it impossible for anybody to have done otherwise. I, on the contrary, throw the *onus*⁶² of the argument not on presumable tendencies of nature, but on the known facts of that morning's execution, as recorded by multitudes. What else, I demand, than mere weight of metal, absolute nobility of deportment, broke the vast line of battle then arrayed against her? What else but her meek, saintly demeanor won from the enemies, that cill now had believed her a witch, tears of rapturous admiration?" "Ten thousand men," says M. Michelet himself, "ten thousand men wept;" and of these ten thousand the majority were political enemies knitted together by cords of superstition. What else was it but her constancy, united with her angelic gentleness, that

61. **A priori principles:** General or necessary principles. *Ergo*: therefore.

62. **Onus:** The burden. More often, *onus probandi*, the burden of proving.

drove the fanatic English soldier—who had sworn to throw a faggot on her scaffold, as *his* tribute of abhorrence, that *did* so, that fulfilled his vow—suddenly to turn away a penitent for life, saying everywhere that he had seen a dove rising upon wings to heaven from the ashes where she had stood? What else drove the executioner to kneel at every shrine for pardon to *his* share in the tragedy? And if all this were insufficient, then I cite the closing act of her life, as valid on her behalf, were all other testimonies against her. The executioner had been directed to apply his torch from below. He did so. The fiery smoke rose upwards in billowing volumes. A Dominican monk was then standing almost at her side. Wrapped up in his sublime office, he saw not the danger, but still persisted in his prayers. Even then, when the last enemy was racing up the fiery stairs to seize her, even at that moment did this noblest of girls think only for *him*, the one friend that would not forsake her, and not for herself; bidding him with her last breath to care for his own preservation, but to leave *her* to God. That girl, whose latest breath ascended in this sublime expression of self-oblivion, did not utter the word *recant* either with her lips or in her heart. No; she did not, though one should rise from the dead to swear it.

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Bishop of Beauvais! thy victim died in fire upon a scaffold,—thou upon a down bed. But for the departing minutes of life, both are oftentimes alike. At the farewell crisis, when the gates of death are opening, and flesh is resting from its struggles, oftentimes the tortured and torturer have the same truce from carnal torment; both sink together into sleep; together both, sometimes, kindle into dreams. When the mortal mists were gathering fast upon you two, bishop and shepherd girl—when the pavilions of life were closing up their shadowy curtains about you—let us try, through the gigantic glooms, to decipher the flying features of your separate visions.

The shepherd girl that had delivered France—she, from her dungeon, she, from her baiting at the stake, she, from her duel with fire, as she entered her last dream—saw Domrémy, saw the fountain of Domrémy, saw the pomp of

forests in which her childhood had wandered. The Easter festival, which man had denied to her languishing heart—that resurrection of spring-time, which the darkness of dungeons had intercepted from *her*, hungering after the glorious liberty of forests—were by God given back into her hands, as jewels that had been stolen from her by robbers. With those, perhaps (for the minutes of dreams can stretch into ages), was given back to her by God the bliss of childhood. By special privilege, for *her* might be created, in this farewell dream, a second childhood, innocent as the first; but not, like *that*, sad with the gloom of a fearful mission in the rear. The mission had now been fulfilled. The storm was weathered, the skirts even of that mighty storm were drawing off. The blood that she was to reckon for had been exacted; the tears that she was to shed in secret had been paid to the last. The hatred to herself in all eyes had been faced steadily, had been suffered, had been survived. And in her last fight upon the scaffold she had triumphed gloriously; victoriously she had tasted the stings of death. For all, except this comfort from her farewell dream, she had died—died, amidst the tears of ten thousand enemies—died, amidst the drums and trumpets of armies—died, amidst peals redoubling upon peals, volleys upon volleys, from the saluting clarions of martyrs.

Bishop of Beauvais! because the guilt-burdened man is in dreams haunted and waylaid by the most frightful of his crimes, and because upon that fluctuating mirror—rising (like the mocking mirrors of *mirage* in Arabian deserts) from the fens of death—most of all are reflected the sweet countenances which the man has laid in ruins; therefore I know; bishop, that you also, entering your final dream, saw Domrémy. That fountain, of which the witnesses spoke so much, showed itself to your eyes in pure morning dews: but neither dews nor the holy dawn, could cleanse away the bright spots of innocent blood upon its surface. By the fountain, bishop, you saw a woman seated, that hid her face, but as *you* draw near, the woman raises her wasted features. Would Domrémy know them again for the features of her child? Ah, but *you* know them, bishop, well! Oh, mercy! what a groan was *that* which the servants, waiting outside

the bishop's dream at his bedside, heard from his laboring heart, as at this moment he turned away from the fountain and the woman, seeking rest in the forests afar off. Yet not so to escape the woman, whom once again he must behold before he dies. In the forests to which he prays for pity, will he find a respite? What a tumult, what a gathering of feet is there! In glades, where only wild deer should run, armies and nations are assembling; towering in the fluctuating crowd are phantoms that belong to departed hours. There is the great English Prince, Regent of France. There is my Lord of Winchester, the princely cardinal, that died and made no sign. There is the Bishop of Beauvais, clinging to the shelter of thickets. What building is that which hands so rapid are raising? Is it a martyr's scaffold? Will they burn the child of Domrémy a second time? No: it is a tribunal that rises to the clouds; and two nations stand around it waiting for a trial. Shall my Lord of Beauvais sit again upon the judgment-seat, and again number the hours for the innocent? Ah! no: he is the prisoner at the bar. Already all is waiting: the mighty audience is gathered, the Court is hurrying to their seats, the witnesses are arrayed, the trumpets are sounding, the judge is taking his place. Oh! but this is sudden. My lord, have you no counsel? "Counsel I have none: in heaven above, or on earth beneath, counselor there is none now that would take a brief from *me*: all are silent," Is it, indeed, come to this? Alas the time is short, the tumult is wondrous, the crowd stretches away into infinity, but yet I will search in it for somebody to take your brief: I know of somebody that will be your counsel. Who is this that cometh from Domrémy? Who is she in bloody coronation robes from Rheims? Who is she that cometh with blackened flesh from walking the furnaces of Rouen? This is she, the shepherd girl, counselor that had none for herself, whom I choose, bishop, for yours. She it is, I engage, that shall take my lord's brief. She it is, bishop, that would plead for you: yes, bishop, SHE—when heaven and earth are silent.

