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JEANNE D'ARC

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Pitt Press Series. Jeanne D'Arc by A. de Lamartine & A. C. Clapin

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A. DE LAMARTINE & A. C. CLAPIN

**PITT PRESS SERIES.
JEANNE D'ARC**

Mitt Press Series.

JEANNE D'ARC

BY

A. DE LAMARTINE,

EDITED

WITH A MAP AND NOTES HISTORICAL AND
PHILOLOGICAL

AND A VOCABULARY

BY

REV. A. C. CLAPIN, M.A.

ST JOHN'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE, AND BACHELIER-ÈS-LETTRES OF THE
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PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

THE first six chapters of Lamartine's "Jeanne d'Arc" were omitted from the first edition in the Pitt Press Series on account of the difficulties, philosophical and historical, which it was feared they would present to young pupils. As they form, however, a suitable introduction to the Life of Joan of Arc, shewing the state of society and the position of political parties at the time when she appeared on the scene, it has been deemed expedient to add them to the present edition, with explanatory notes.

INTRODUCTION.

AT the beginning of the historical period (1428—1431) described in these pages the state of France was truly fearful. From king to peasant all were alike miserable. "The open land from the Loire to the Somme was a desert overgrown with wood and thickets; towns were distracted by parties, villages destroyed; the highways erased; churches were polluted and sacked; castles burnt; commerce at a stand". France, after nearly a century of struggles against England, had been so completely torn and exhausted, during the long insanity of Charles VI, by the quarrels of the Armagnacs and Burgundians, that she succumbed under the foreign invasion which civil war had called forth. The Duke of Burgundy, punishing one crime by another crime to avenge his own father assassinated with the connivance of the Dauphin, had recognised the rights of the king of England to the crown of France, and, in concert with Queen Isabel, the vile mother of the Dauphin, had imposed on the States-General the ratification of a treaty which gave up France to the foreigner. Charles VII was in possession of a fragment only of his father's dominions. The whole of the North of the kingdom was in the

hands of the conqueror. Orléans, the last bulwark of the centre and of the South, had been besieged for several months by the English forces. An army of relief had been defeated at the unfortunate battle of Rouvrai (the Day of the Herrings), and the heroic resistance of Orléans seemed to be drawing to its end. But suddenly there appeared upon the scene a deliverer, Joan of Arc, a simple peasant girl, but one of the noblest figures in history. "The enthusiastic maiden had no private ambitions or aims, she knew nothing of courts, she desired only to save her country. Her fearless spirit calculated no chances, felt no doubts, knew what it desired, and, firmly believing in a divine mission, moved on serenely towards its aim". (*Kitchin.*)

The details of her heroic life, as given in this biography, show her to have been lifted far above her countrymen and her age; in all she is perfect, in her simplicity, piety, self-devotion; she made her martyr-end piously, simply and right bravely to the very last. Her persecutors also were brutal to the end. Her ashes were scattered in the Seine, lest her body should work miracles in behalf of France and rouse the dejected energies of the people. Nothing is so striking as the utter silence with which all men looked on at the long dreary trial, at the cruel examinations, the shameful imprisonment, the bitter death. From all this darkness the noble figure of the heroine of France stands out in amazing beauty against the background of treachery, meanness, cruelty, and smoke of devouring fire.

In these pages we can trace the true character of Joan: "a thorough and earnest persuasion that hers was the rightful cause—that in all she had said she spoke the truth—that in all she did she was doing her duty—a courage that did not shrink before embattled armies or beleaguered walls, or judges thirsting for her blood—a most resolute will on all points that were

connected with her mission—perfect meekness and humility on all that were not—a clear, plain sense, that could confound the casuistry of sophists—an ardent loyalty to her king—a dutiful devotion, on all points, to her country and to God. Nowhere do modern annals display a character more pure—more humble amidst fancied visions and undoubted victories—more free from all taint of selfishness—more akin to the champions and martyrs of old times". (*Lord Mahon.*)

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE.

1422. Henry V of England and Charles VI of France both die. [Henry VI of England, 1422—1461; Charles VII of France, 1422—1453.]
The Duke of Bedford, brother of Henry V, regent in France for his young nephew Henry VI.
1424. The English beat the French at Verneuil.
1428. Siege of Orleans by Bedford and Burgundy.
1429. "Day of the Herrings".
Orleans is besieged by the Earl of Salisbury.
Jeanne d'Arc drives the English from before Orleans; takes Jargeau; beats the English at Patay, and conducts Charles VII to Rheims to be crowned.
1430. Jeanne falls into the hands of the Burgundians.
1431. Jeanne is burnt at Rouen.
Henry VI is crowned at Paris.