

**MEMOIRS OF
CELEBRATED WOMEN, IN
TWO VOLUMES, VOL. I**

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Memoirs of Celebrated Women, in Two Volumes, Vol. I by G. P. R. James

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G. P. R. JAMES

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MEMOIRS

OF

CELEBRATED WOMEN.

EDITED BY

G. P. R. JAMES, ESQ.

AUTHOR OF "DARNLEY," "DE L'ORNE," "LIFE OF THE BLACK
PRINCE," &c.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

PHILADELPHIA:
E. L. CAREY & A. HART.

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IN editing a Work of the kind now submitted to the Public, no remarks would have been necessary in former days on the part of the Editor. His functions were understood too well, and the limits of his duties too well defined, to need any explanation. In the present times the matter is different; and it is necessary for an Editor to state what share he has really had in the work he edits, lest any false impression should be adopted by the Public.

The Work which follows was written some years ago by a Lady, a near relation of the Editor, and a person of very high talents and information. Her absence from England, and the difficulty of transmitting proofs to her for correction, have induced her to intrust the revision of the work, as it passes

through the press, to her Nephew; who, having obtained some degree of reputation in the literary world, is bound, for his own sake, to give as much attention as possible to any thing he undertakes to edit. With the language alone, then, the Editor has had to deal, and that only in a certain degree: with the statements of facts and of opinions, he has nothing to do; though he doubts not that those facts are accurate, and those opinions well formed.

G. P. R. JAMES.

Marlow,
26th April, 1837.

MEMOIRS
OF
CELEBRATED WOMEN.

1472 - 31

JOAN OF ARC.

THAT a female warrior, even inspired by enthusiastic love for her country, should perform deeds, of which the most celebrated generals of the age might have been proud, appears more like the fiction of the poet than a transaction in real life; yet such was the case with Joan of Arc. But, before we proceed to give a circumstantial detail of a life so extraordinary, we must briefly notice the period of history at which she appeared.

Joan of Arc was born in the reign of Charles the Sixth, a most unhappy period for both the monarch and the kingdom. France was at that time in deplorable circumstances, from civil wars and foreign enemies; and the whole realm appeared one vast theatre of crimes of the most atrocious nature. As each faction triumphed, the reign of anarchy began afresh; and it appeared that the French people, by giving way to the diabolical frenzy which possessed them, had changed their very nature into that of savage beasts. The detail of the enormities of that sad period is too dreadful; suffice it to say, that in Paris, at the gates of the city, and in the court-yard of the

palace, the mob, we are told on good authority, stood "up to their ankles in human blood!"

As time advanced, various changes took place amongst these inhuman factions, and also in the contentions between England and France, which had been equally disastrous. The contending monarchs, namely, Charles the Sixth and Henry the Fifth, concluded the treaty of Troyes, the most disgraceful that ever France submitted to. Henry married the Princess Catherine, daughter of Charles; the two kingdoms of France and England were united, and Henry was declared Regent of the former during the incapacity of his father-in-law.

This treaty was, of course, completely invalid, and, to the parties concerned, disgraceful—Charles, from his derangement, being reduced to a state of mental imbecility, and incapable of conveying the crown to any one, even had he possessed a right to dispose of it without the consent of his people and his son.

As soon as the Dauphin heard that his inheritance was to be unjustly wrested from him, he declared loudly and indignantly his determination to depend for the maintenance of his rights on God and his sword. He lost, indeed, at this critical moment, some friends by removal and death, which greatly weakened his party. To balance this, in some degree, the Regent of Scotland sent him seven thousand men, under the Earl of Buchan; and these troops, with some which he had received from Castile, made his army amount to twenty thousand men, the chief command of which was given to the Earl of Buchan, as constable of France.

In this time of adversity, many, believing the af-

fairs of the young prince desperate, forsook him; but, with the army he had collected, he obtained possession of La Charité, and opened the passage of the Loire. To oppose the Dauphin, Henry V. of England and the Duke of Burgundy had agreed to form a junction, and by one decisive engagement to terminate the war, with which view the English monarch left Paris, full of the hope of accomplishing this unjust design; but a malady, with which he was seized at Senlis, put an end to his life and his ambition, in the thirty-fourth year of his age.

“The paths of glory lead but to the grave!”

And Charles VI. of France only survived his son-in-law fifty-one days.

Charles the Dauphin was at the castle of Espally, near Puy en Valley, when the news of his father's death reached him. His grief, we are told, was deep and sincere, and it required all the exertions of his few faithful adherents to rouse him from his melancholy. Whatever feelings kept him in inactivity at length gave way; and, preparing to meet the many dangers by which he was encompassed, he laid aside his mourning habit, assumed that of his rank, and was hailed by his just and lawful title. At Poitiers his coronation took place, in the presence of the principal nobles of his party, and his legitimate reign began as Charles VII.

The Duke of Bedford, as Regent of the kingdom, had, in the mean time, exacted an oath of allegiance to the young King of England from the inhabitants of the metropolis, and a great part of the country submitted willingly to the English rule. Every cir-