

**JOAN OF ARC; AN
HISTORICAL TALE,
BY A YOUNG LADY**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649618408

Joan of Arc; An Historical Tale, by a Young Lady by Anonymous

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ANONYMOUS

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BY A YOUNG LADY.

"She steered her woman's heart to fight,
Cared nought for pain or woe;
Her midnight dreams! To view the sight
Of Bedford's overthrow."

LONDON:
SHEPHERD & SUTTON, FOSTER LANE, CHEAPSIDE.

1844.

INTRODUCTION.

CRITICS, forbear your censure! Kind public, be indulgent! I seek not to introduce "JOAN OF ARC" before you as a novel. I desire not to compare my unpretending penmanship with the many ably written works of the day.

To you, my dear sisters, and my young friends, I dedicate this "little Tale." I wish I could take a peep at you whilst you turn over the leaves; and, with unpardonable effrontery, I confess I should "laugh for joy" if I could see your eyes moistened with the

“tear of sympathy,” as you follow the thread of the story. I should feel, then, that I had struck the right chord, and that you enter at once into the *moral* of my tale. Agree, then, with me, that we often peruse too rapidly the striking events recorded in history, without bringing home those events to our *hearts*, and inculcating from them useful lessons for our future and ripening years.

I fancy I see you all smile, and say, “bring the history of Joan of Arc home to ourselves!” Have patience for a few moments, and I will *explain* what I mean.

We are not called upon to fight for our country, nor is it probable that we shall suffer death at the stake for its cause; but are we not daily, hourly called upon to exert our fortitude to meet, with Christian behaviour, “the every-day trials of life.”

Let us not, then, rest contented with repeating in our school-days, as a biographical

lesson, "Joan of Arc suffered at the stake by order of the regent Bedford."

No, let us pause, whilst we realize her whole life. Think of Joan, in her childhood's hours, guarded by a mother's watchful care, and follow her afterwards alone and unprotected! Realize her girlhood's sunny days, and follow her through the vicissitudes of war, exchanging her peaceful home for the battle-field! Think of the many trials she was exposed to in Charles's gay court! Surely the undaunted Joan possessed great moral courage, and I would fain believe that this great virtue seldom exists without some religion filling the heart.

Now, I believe, you will enter with me into the moral view of my work, namely, impressing on our minds the "*sustaining* power of religion on our *lives*." And if we are *truly* followers of that Holy One who set us himself so glorious an example, we shall abide

patiently his will, under every trial, uttering these words, "Thy will, not *ours*, be done, O Lord!"

If we are indeed followers of that Holy One, we shall, like the "father of the faithful," offer at the shrine of belief, "the lust of the eye, and the pride of life."

Should reverses of fortune, the loss of friends, or the persecution of enemies assail us, let us check the repining tear, ere another fall, remembering that with each trial our heavenly Father will send a comforting balm to cheer us in our pilgrimage through the "narrow path which leads to everlasting life." Let us always have our glorious reward in view; let us bear in mind that this transient world is *not* our dwelling-place; that we are sojourning towards that bright, pure land, "where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest."

Alas! I wish I could assert that all the

characters in my little work are fictitious. I fear we shall all, my young companions, meet in the world many ungrateful Charles', many vindictive Bedford's, many, too many, smiling, promising ones like Agnes Sorel; — too many like her willing to grasp us by the hand of friendship, either because we are prosperous, or (what is worse) because we are new characters; like Agnes, these light friends will leave us in our wintry bower, to brave the storms of the rude hand of affliction. Let us then cultivate in our early days the acquaintance of those who, guided by the unerring hand of religion, (though they may reprove us at times, and that severely), will not forsake us for newer friends. Look not with the giddy admiration of youth upon bright but fading beauty as the standard of perfection. Remember that the purest pearl is oft times found in the roughest oyster. Finally, consider well Joan's fate—not as ordered by Bedford, but by

our Supreme Father above. She, certainly, was pious, but not sufficiently pure in her devotions: her earthly king was the first object of her thoughts. And how many of us make idols of the mammon of unrighteousness, and lose sight of that good and holy One who ought to fill our hearts? Must I *now* apologise for fiction? Certainly not, if it has wrought out the good work intended by the young authoress of these pages, who again repeats—Critics forbear your censure; this is not the work of a professed literary character, but the first effort of

A YOUNG LADY.

MAY 22, 1844.

