

**THE STUDENT'S SERIES OF
ENGLISH
CLASSICS. JOAN OF ARC:
AND OTHER SELECTIONS**

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The Student's Series of English Classics. Joan of Arc: And Other Selections by Thomas De Quincey & Henry H. Belfield

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THOMAS DE QUINCEY & HENRY H. BELFIELD

**THE STUDENT'S SERIES OF
ENGLISH
CLASSICS. JOAN OF ARC:
AND OTHER SELECTIONS**

The Students' Series of English Classics.

JOAN OF ARC

AND OTHER SELECTIONS
FROM

THOMAS DE QUINCEY.

- I. JOAN OF ARC.
- II. THE ENGLISH MAIL COACH.
- III. LEVANA AND OUR LADIES OF SORROW.

WITH INTRODUCTORY AND EXPLANATORY NOTES

BY

HENRY H. BELFIELD, PH.D.

DIRECTOR OF THE CHICAGO MANUAL TRAINING SCHOOL.

—o—o—o—

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BOSTON

CHICAGO

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PREFATORY NOTE.

NOR to know De Quincey is to be ignorant of some of the most remarkable literary products of the century. His writings, contributed originally to magazines, have taken a permanent place in literature. For breadth of scope, for power and delicacy of thought, and for beauty and clearness of style, he is surpassed by none of his contemporaries, if, indeed, he is equalled by any one of them. In logic, humor, irony; in subtle power of analysis; in an apparently intuitive skill in adapting language to thought; in richness of illustration; in his unparalleled imagination, De Quincey stands in the very front rank of authors of all time. His description of a great scholar is but a partial description of himself: "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."

It is doubtless true that the highest appreciation of De Quincey is possible only to those possessing a wide knowledge of literature and of men, and an imagination of unusual brilliancy; but it is also true that his writings can furnish a keen enjoyment to many not possessed of his own great qualities. It is hoped that the selections here given will stimulate thought, and lead to a closer acquaintance with this master of English prose.

CHICAGO, July, 1892.

H. H. B.

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INTRODUCTION.

THOMAS DE QUINCEY.

THOMAS DE QUINCEY was born in Manchester, August 15, 1785, and died in Edinburgh, December 8, 1859, at the age of seventy-four. The family was Norman, having crossed the channel with the Conqueror, as the boy Thomas, at the age of fifteen, proudly told His Majesty, George III. Says De Quincey: "The family ascended to the highest rank in both kingdoms (England and Scotland), and held the highest offices open to a subject." They took a distinguished part in at least one of the Crusades, and in the Barons' Wars in the time of Henry III. They were frequently, like many other noble houses, in arms against the reigning monarch; and, in the thirteenth century, the head of the house, the Earl of Winchester, was attainted for treason. The Quinceys of Massachusetts are descended from the same stock.

The father of Thomas was a man of literary taste and ability, a successful merchant, who, dying at the age of thirty-nine, left a widow and six children. Mrs. De Quincey seems to have been a woman of unusual ability; and the ample income derived from her husband's estate (£1,600 a year) enabled her to give her children the education which her own excellent judgment prescribed for them. That De Quincey recognized (in later years, at least) the advantages of his childhood is evident from the following passage.