

# FROM SORCERESS TO SAINT

## Final Canonization of Joan of Arc Has Worked This Change in Her Official Ecclesiastical Status

AT the Vatican they are completing the canonization of Joan of Arc, the Maid of Orleans. The ceremony of beatification held there eleven years ago made her veneration permissible. The canonization will render it obligatory.

In 1909 the Devil's Advocate, having presumably done his utmost to show that the Maid was unworthy to become a saint, presented the usual formula for pursuing further investigation of the claims put forward on her behalf. It was said at the time that this investigation would be extended until May 30, 1931, just five hundred years after she gave up her life at the stake in the market place at Rouen.

The great war may have had something to do with hastening the final date. It was in that region north of Paris where Foch launched the first of his series of overwhelming offensives in July, 1918, that the Maid suffered the series of defeats which ended with her being taken prisoner at Compiègne by the Burgundians, her sale to the English for \$12,000 by John of Luxembourg, her trial and execution as a sorceress. And here, too, after the battle of the Marne, the pollu of the forlorn hope repeatedly visualized the gentle Maid as once more leading the armies of France against the invader.

Then there is to be considered the fact that there were more than 40,000 priests under the Tricolor fighting the Germans; that now republican France, from both a material and a spiritual point of view, feels the need of resuming to a certain extent those relations with the Vatican which were ruptured a little while before the Maid was beatified.

In 1841 there was a great revival throughout France in regard to the services rendered to the country by the Maid. It was then that Michlet's account of La Pucelle in his "History of France" reawakened national interest. Up to that time Shakespeare's account of her as a sorceress in "Henry VI," pretty clearly represented foreign opinion. Voltaire's "La Pucelle" still showed what she meant to the French philosophic mind. Only the German Schiller in his "Jungfrau von Orleans" had consistently represented her as a virgin mystic and a messenger from heaven.

For seventy years France was to behold this constantly augmenting revival initiated by the historian. Artists and sculptors vied with each other in representing her features and the scenes in her short life of only nineteen years; historians dug deep into the archives in search of the truth; poets and novelists idealized the realities that the scholars discovered amid dusty manuscripts.

On Sept. 13, 1851, her statue, the first of a series, the work of Princess Marie of France, was inaugurated at Orleans, the scene of the Maid's first great military achievement; there, too, on May 14, 1865, the 435th anniversary of the deliverance of the city was celebrated. The anniversary of her death was celebrated throughout Northern France on May 30, 1878. Henceforth many statues were to be unveiled, of which the following are the best known: At Beauvoir, Aug. 9, 1878; Domremy, where the Maid was born, Aug. 26, 1891; Chinon, Aug. 14, 1893; Rheims, July 15, 1896; St. Pierre-le-Moutier, Aug. 24, 1902.

But her progress toward rehabilitation among the civil and ecclesiastical authorities did not go forward with the same waves of enthusiasm which carried her

on in the popular and artistic mind. Her father, Jean Darc, who had been ennobled with the name of Du Lys by the Dauphin, whose throne the Maid had saved, repeatedly petitioned the French Court, as her mother and brothers did the Pope, for a revision of her trial, alleging that it had been illegally conducted by the Bishop of Beauvais and the Faculty of the University of Paris while under English control. The revision lasted from 1449 until 1456, when the Maid was pronounced innocent and Pope Calixtus III. caused her life and character to be solemnly vindicated at the place of her trial and execution.

Then there was a long wait until the enthusiasm aroused by Michlet and his followers had its effect on Rome. There the Curia first considered the matter in 1875, and then in 1902 it took the first step toward her beatification by pronouncing her "venerable." Her beatification was approved on Jan. 27, 1894, by Pope Leo XIII., always a good friend of France. Then her canonization was proposed in February, 1903, with the initial ceremonies on Jan. 6, 1904, and complete beatification amid gorgeous ceremonies in the Vatican on April 18, 1909.

In St. Peter's, on the high altar, in the shadow of St. Peter's chair, stood the "Gloria," a picture representing the Maid in the glory of Paradise and clothed in the full, shining panoply of her earthly achievements. The Apostolic Brief for the beatification having been read, a veil fell from the picture, electric lights blazed out all round it, and the bells began to ring joyous peals. Some 50,000 French pilgrims journeyed to Rome to witness the ceremony, but it was noteworthy that official France allowed its Anti-Clerical bias to bind it to the significance of the occasion, ignoring the national importance of the heroic figure which impersonated so signally the country's glorious past and the spirit of patriotism, not only of France but of the whole world. But both impersonation and spirit were to be properly revived five years later.

The period of beatification produced another flood of statues, pictures, bi-

ographies and novels. Anatole France gave the Maid of his genius. In England, Andrew Lang gave of his. In America, Mark Twain paused in his jests long enough to write anonymously a rare story of her life with great gentleness and beauty and with a power of visualization which was the despair of critics.

The story of Joan's brief life may now be gathered from a thousand sources; its scenes viewed from a thousand canvases, tablets, and sculptures; still a bare outline of them may not be amiss here:

Born of devout peasant parents, in the village of Domremy .....	Jan. 6, 1412
First heard the prophetic "voices" .....	1425
Declared her mission to save France .....	May 28, 1428
Entered Orleans, which was besieged by the English .....	April 29, 1429
Forced the English to raise the siege of Orleans .....	May 8, 1429
English army routed by her troops at Patay .....	June 18, 1429
Present at the Dauphin's triumphal entry into Rheims and his coronation there, as she had promised .....	July 17, 1429
Implored by the King not to forsake him, she gives no heed to her "voices," which tell her that her work is done, and reopens the campaign against the English. * * * Throws herself, with a small body of troops, into Compiègne, then besieged by Burgundian forces, and is driven back and captured .....	May 24, 1430
Sold to the English for \$12,000 by John of Luxembourg .....	Nov. 1430
Carried to Rouen, headquarters of the English, heavily fettered .....	Dec. 1430
Burned at the stake, in Rouen, after a trial of several months .....	May 30, 1431