

de Bon Secours, and from there magnificent indeed is the panorama of the city, the fair lands of France that lie about it, and the broad, winding river; the place was pointed out where once on the waters were strewn the ashes of the Maid and where now the citizens come to strew the flowers of France. The Cathedral of Rouen is one of the finest churches in the world; its building began in 1201, and was completed in 1530. It presents many a variation in Gothic art, but it would take pages to give even a meagre description of its interesting old carvings and sculptures, its strange tombs and its lofty and glorious arches and windows. The Church of St. Maclou is another jewel of Rouen that makes you think of music frozen into form, and the Church of St. Ouen is still more lovely. Besides these we saw many beautiful and interesting places.

But chiefly our interest lay in the associations of Rouen with St. Joan, that great enigma of the Middle Ages who exercised such an extraordinary influence on the destiny of Europe. She it was who set France in her right position, made her a nation by unifying her provinces. But we have to remember also that England owes much to St. Joan, for did she not also set England in her right position? She prevented her from establishing so close a connection with the Continent as to become an European state merely; thereby she led England to her destiny—an Empire. Joan of Arc may, in a sense, be said to have opened the door for England to the "spacious times of the great Elizabeth," although England was far from recognising this.

To Rouen Joan of Arc was brought a prisoner in 1430, and two days after her arrival the Vicar-General of the Inquisition and the University of Paris demanded that she be handed over to the justice of the Church. She was taken to the castle and placed in an iron cage, but the tower that bears her name is all that remains of the lordly castle built by Philip Augustus with its towers and donjons and its massive walls that spread themselves over a large expanse of ground. As we drove on, after viewing the tower and the site of the castle, we came suddenly into the square where her martyrdom took place. Just as suddenly a nurse in the party exclaimed at the sight of the statue of the Maid rising out of a wonderful luxuriance of lilies heaped about her feet, gifts to her memory laid there by the citizens of Rouen. To the square she came on May 30th, 1431, from the castle of Philip Augustus wearing a mitre on which were written the words: "Hérétique, Relapse, Apostate, Idolatre." Seven hundred soldiers guarded the girl, and the people wept to see her sobbing in the cart. She listened to a long sermon from Nicole Midi, who then delivered her over to secular justice, and the Bishop of Beauvais pronounced the sentence of excommunication. Just a few formalities more and the flames began slowly to rise about the slender form of the Maid of France. With the word "Jesus" on her lips there passed one who stood at the portal of one of the turning points of time—the fifteenth century—she with her mission which yet we so faintly understand. In all the wonderful story of Joan of Arc the most astonishing aspect is the Maid herself with her overshadowing spirits and her certainty in her heaven-sent mission.

Just here we would make a digression to point out connections that are important though they appear mere coincidence from the everyday point of view. The guides of St. Joan were the Archangel Michael, St. Margaret and St. Catherine—that same St. Catherine to whom Queen Matilda dedicated the ancient Royal Hospital of St. Katherine's by the Tower. It was the Archangel Michael who came to St. Catherine when she confounded and converted the fifty doctors. St. Margaret lived at Antioch, and she was the saint from whom Queen Margaret of Scotland,

the first of the Royal British Nurses, received her name. This first St. Margaret was revered as a protectress of women in childbirth. It is recorded that, when she was in prison, she was tempted by an evil spirit in the form of a dragon, and we remember the legend of St. Michael and the dragon. It is told that the soul of St. Margaret took its flight in the form of a dove; there is a legend that a dove brought food to St. Catherine when in prison, while one of still later date tells that the soul of Joan of Arc ascended from the fire as a dove. Further, St. Michael was believed to have mysterious connections and powers in regard to fire, and it is said that when St. Margaret was condemned to be burnt the flames were held back from her and could not touch her. The message to St. Catherine in her prison was: "Take all things peacefully, heed not thine affliction. Thence shalt thou come at last into the Kingdom of Paradise." And St. Michael brought an almost similar message to Joan in prison. All these connections are mysterious and strange, but they have significance.

Chesterton, in describing the Maid, says "Joan chose her path and went down it like a thunderbolt." We do not always like a certain pertness which Shaw gives to her, for it had no part in this Maid, but there are fine lines in the preface to his work which give, in few words, some indications towards understanding her better—"There are forces at work which use individuals for purposes far transcending the purpose of keeping these individuals alive and prosperous and respectable and safe and happy."

Twenty-five years after the burning of the Maid that Square in France witnessed a very different scene, for in the great hall of the Palace of the Archbishop of Rouen it had been ordered that her memory be publicly reinstated both where she was burnt and in the cemetery of St. Ouen; this was done, and to witness the ceremony came her brother and her mother's representative.

Afterwards we visited other places in the town, but it seemed somehow as though they receded, in our consciousness, in a strangely silent and devotional way from the tremendous magnificence of the story of the Maid and the impressiveness of a kind of supersensible life that clings to Rouen because of what took place there. It clothes the city with a kind of "atmosphere" all its own. With a feeling of reverence we left the square, now restored to a similarity with what it was in the fifteenth century, left the lilies and the lovely sculptured form, left this place where once there stood a scaffold, this place where the people wept and the soldiers exclaimed "We have burned a Saint," this place to which there came no herald to proclaim that gratitude lived in the heart of a king. It was as though we had journeyed from London for one thing only, for one grand climax—this Square and its memories. We left it feeling that we had stood on holy ground, that it was good for us to have been here.

FRIENDS OF CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL.

We regret that from the account of our Ramble to Canterbury in the May Supplement it would appear that the "Friends of Canterbury Cathedral" are an organisation of ladies; it has many friends of the other sex, and its Council is composed almost entirely of men, with the Dean of Canterbury as Chairman. The Prince of Wales is First Friend on the Roll, the Archbishop of Canterbury President, the Lord Lieutenant of the County, Patron, the Bishop of Chichester (formerly Dean of Canterbury), Founder, and Sir Charles Peers, Seneschal. The Cathedral is fortunate indeed in its "Friends."

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