

With the death of Timur in 1405 and the final and perfect subjection of the Turk to Islamism and of the Mongol to Buddhism, with which began the fall of these peoples from among the great powers of the world, this interesting study of Mr. Cahun's comes to an end.

While nearly all the sources of information of Mr. Cahun have for many years been familiar to Oriental scholars, it cannot but be admitted that his comprehensive arrangement of the materials at his command, and the general conclusions he has been able to draw from them, will be appreciated as positive and valuable contributions towards a better knowledge of the intricate problems of Asiatic history with which he deals, and as such should be welcomed by all students of history.

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*Joan of Arc.* By FRANCIS C. LOWELL. (Boston, New York, and Chicago: Houghton, Mifflin and Co. 1896. Pp. iv, 382.)

As a piece of critical biography, the *Joan of Arc* is a noble success. From the effort of the author on the one hand to be severely critical, and on the other to avoid obtruding his own theories, the book may be said to lack color somewhat. And yet it is just the presence of these elements which will give the work a charm for the scholar and make it a valuable contribution upon the subject of the mysterious maid of Domremy. Mr. Lowell has, in fact, sifted a vast mass of contemporary legends and other sources, to say nothing of modern authorities, and out of it drawn what we may regard as the real Joan of Arc, — altogether a very sweet and lovable woman, who, with all the devotion of a singularly pure and unselfish nature, gave herself to the noble work of vindicating her king, unworthy though he was, and of freeing her country from the scourge of one of the cruelest wars of all history.

By way of introduction the author presents in outline a sketch of the stirring events of early fifteenth-century French history, barely sufficient to furnish a background for his main subject. Domremy, its relation to the king of France and its position in the feudal scheme, the childhood of Joan, and the influence of her surroundings upon the development of mind and character, occupy another chapter. The subject of *the Voices* ushers the reader at once into the public career of Joan. From her first appearance at Vaucouleurs the author proceeds straight forward through the relief of Orleans, the progress to Rheims and the coronation, the betrayal and capture, the trial, judgment, and execution, to the rehabilitation.

The subject of *the Voices* Mr. Lowell does not attempt to discuss, nor does he try to solve the question of inspiration. For his own peace of mind this is perhaps wise. He simply tells the story of what Joan herself saw and heard during these years, chiefly as gathered from her own testimony at the several trials. Of her sincerity there can be no doubt. An enthusiast may profoundly believe in the cause which he has espoused as a whole, and be sincere enough, and yet find himself in special instances

consciously drifting across the line that divides truth and simulation. But in Joan there was nothing of the charlatan. Although constantly tempted by the ready credulity of her admirers, she never descended to acting a part. Whatever the present rationalistic age may think of her visions and her voices, there can be no question that to her they were grave realities. She saw and heard. Was she insane then? Mr. Lowell does not attempt to answer the question. He contents himself with stating the problem (Appendix B) and leaves the matter to be settled by the pathological specialist. As to the men of the fifteenth century, the possibility of such possession was a matter of daily belief. The supernatural was continually breaking through into the natural and mixing up in most ordinary affairs. There could be but one question,—the character of the possession. Was it of God or of the devil? And men generally ranged themselves on the one side or the other as selfish interest dictated. If there was predisposition, it was more likely to favor the devil. For whatever they might think of God, for body and soul, they feared the devil.

It is in this active belief in the supernatural, whether in the powers of good or evil, that Mr. Lowell finds the explanation of much of the remarkable success of Joan, as well as of her failure and her cruel fate. The counselors of the king, hardened men, who had little faith in goodness of any kind, probably at the first did not put much faith in Joan. But the case of Charles was desperate, and a chance was offered by the appearance of Joan which was not to be neglected (p. 68). With the men who composed the armies of Charles, however, the case was far different. Simple hearts, they believed in Joan and in her commission, as they believed in God. One old captain who served with her before Orleans, afterwards looking back across twenty-five years of almost constant service, declared that in all her deeds he believed there was more of the divine than of the human (p. 138). The effect upon the morale of the army was immediate and profound. The French had been beaten by the English so often that they had come to regard their foes as irresistible. But when Joan began to lead the troops, all was changed. "Two hundred English," wrote a chronicler of the day, "used to chase five hundred Frenchmen; but after her coming, two hundred Frenchmen used to chase four hundred Englishmen" (p. 137).

Joan herself was not a general. Of strategy she knew nothing. Her one idea of war was to seek out the enemy and fly at him furiously wherever he appeared, confident always in the justice of her cause and the support of God. It was her favorite retort to those who were inclined to cavil, or to question the wisdom of her counsels, "the men at arms will fight and God will give the victory." Such headlong impetuosity, such furious energy, would in all probability have led her army into inextricable trouble if not irretrievable ruin, had she been given the full command. But under the control of such sober-headed old veterans as La Hire and Dunois, the army was kept under control, while the soldiers suddenly developed an energy and fighting power such as Frenchmen had not known before in the entire

course of the war. The English, on the other hand, lost their fighting strength as that of the French rose and owing to the same cause,—a belief in the supernatural nature of Joan's power. But to them her furious energy, the wild and unwonted zeal of her comrades in arms, were due to the support of unhallowed influences; and this belief, as it forced itself upon their superstitious minds, filled them with a mysterious dread that paralyzed the stoutest hearts. They were not afraid of Frenchmen, much less of French women, but they were afraid of the devil; and of all things terrible, the most terrible was the devil in feminine guise.

It was this belief in the divine inspiration of the maid that thrilled the disheartened and demoralized French, and enabled the king's captains to raise the siege of Orleans and bear the king in a triumphal march to Rheims, there to receive the crown of his fathers. Other elements there were also which conspired to assist the king and unnerve his foes. As the Duke of Burgundy had seen the French driven foot by foot south of the Loire, he had lost his old zeal in the cause of the English. It was not in accordance with his interest, as he saw it, to allow the English to become too strong in France by the complete overthrow of the Dauphin. The people of the conquered regions, also, who had for years been exposed to the license of the English and Burgundian soldiery, had forgotten what they had suffered at the hands of the Armagnac party, and were ready to welcome the approach of an Armagnac army as a deliverance. Hence the real resistance which Charles met from the cities in his northward march was confined for the most part to the English garrisons, who without support, or at most with only a half-hearted support from the people, easily fell into his hands. The king, however, feeble and worthless, without a mind of his own, allowed his council deliberately to throw away the splendid advantage which the coming of the peasant girl had placed in his hands, and then the end came soon. Joan, only half supported, if not betrayed outright, was suffered to be beaten. The confidence of the soldiers was shaken and their enthusiasm dampened, and when at last she fell into the hands of the enemy, the splendid morale of the army, worth thousands of fighting men, was completely dissipated.

Yet the new spirit which had breathed upon France was not to be lost. The people had come to distinguish the cause of the king as the cause of all true Frenchmen, while the English they regarded as foreigners and their French and Burgundian allies as traitors. A true patriotism was thus born in France, which was not to be allayed until the foreigner had been driven from her shores.

But for Joan there was no escape from the hard logic of her position. She had claimed to be divinely commissioned, but her *Voices* had not protected her from defeat and capture. The faith of the simple folk was shaken, while the great, never more than lukewarm in her support, abandoned her altogether. It was without doubt congenial to the self-seeking and corrupt La Trémoille, who had seen in her success a threat to his own influence with the king, to have her thus effectively removed from his path.

Witch or angel, it was all one to him. The English and their party believed that the treacherous spirits to whom she had sold herself had betrayed her into their hands, that she might meet the punishment which the age regarded as suited to such a crime. The leaders possibly regarded her condemnation as necessary to justify their own claims in opposing the heir of Charles VI. But die she must. If the charge of witchcraft failed, it was possible to catch the ignorant peasant girl in the toils of a long prosecution and condemn her as a heretic. From the moment therefore in which she fell into the enemy's hands, a condemnation upon the heinous charge of dealing with evil spirits and a cruel death were foregone conclusions.

The book, as has been stated, is not a history, but a biography. It is perhaps to be regretted that an author who has proved himself so capable and so judicious in the handling of difficult sources has not allowed himself a wider field. Good books in English upon continental subjects are rare. The epoch of French history, in which Joan of Arc is, after all, only an episode, is worthy of such an author as Mr. Lowell. In the appendix (A), he reviews the reign of Charles VII. in discussing the character of that monarch. This, with the introductory chapter, is all that he has seen fit to attempt in presenting the larger subject. As a piece of historical biography, the *Joan of Arc* is, without extravagance, one of the best books put forth by the American press for some time.

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*Lorenzo de' Medici, and Florence in the Fifteenth Century.* By E. ARMSTRONG, M.A., Fellow of Queen's College, Oxford. (New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1896. Pp. xiv, 449.)

THE constant improvement in the character of our historical manuals is a source of satisfaction to every student, for it frequently happens nowadays that little books for the many are written by those who are well qualified to furnish big books for the few. Mr. Armstrong's work belongs to the best of its class. It is scholarly and judicious in its arrangement, and is written *con amore* by one familiar with the most approved historical methods. The best secondary sources have been used, controlled, we may infer, by a considerable knowledge of the chief primary authorities. Thus while the author modestly refuses all claim to original research, even the special student will find much to attract him in the compact logical presentation and the thoughtful observations of the writer.

Mr. Armstrong adheres closely to his subject, which is Florence under Lorenzo, not the Renaissance in Italy. We are thus spared all trite general reflections such as too often form the stock in trade of writers on this period. The treatment is philosophical in the best sense of the word. Definite comparisons with familiar modern conditions are substituted for the usual vague formulæ which assume to supply a single explanation for a whole civilization. Resemblances rather than differences are emphasized; but