

JOAN OF ARC, THE NATIONAL HEROINE OF FRANCE

HER CONDEMNATION BY THE CHURCH IN 1431, AND HER
BEATIFICATION IN 1908

BY HENRY J. MARKLAND

FOR sixteen hundred years the patron saint of France has been St. Denis, the first Bishop of Paris. Of him it is told that he was sent from Rome in the middle of the third century to convert the Gauls to Christianity. His preaching and teaching were marvelously successful, and he made his way to Paris, which was even then a city. The Roman governor of the district caused him to be seized, tortured, and finally beheaded. His body was thrown into the river Seine, but was taken from the water by one of his converts, named Catulla, who gave it burial. In the years that followed, a chapel was built above his tomb; and in the seventh century King Dagobert erected there the Abbey of St. Denis. From that time he was the patron saint of France; and under the old kingdom, French soldiers when charging in battle did so shouting "*Montjoye St. Denis.*"

It will not, perhaps, be very long before the honors of St. Denis will be shared by another saint—a woman whose memory is linked with the war which lasted for a hundred years, and which ended in the partial triumph of the French over their traditional enemies, the English. Four hundred and eighty years ago this month—on April 29, 1429—the French garrison at Orléans, dejected and almost ready to surrender in despair, was rescued by a force which scattered the English, burst into the beleaguered town, and rent the air with shouts of victory. This force was led by a young girl of eighteen, who rode upon a snow-white horse and carried a stand-

ard embroidered with lilies, displaying the image of God seated on the clouds and holding in His hand a sphere which represented the world.

The girl was Jeanne d'Arc—or Darc, as the name should more properly be spelled—a peasant maiden, who, not long before, had tended sheep in the forests of Domrémy, in Lorraine, but who was now the defender of France and of its uncrowned king. The story of her early life is almost too well known to be told again at any length. About it there is little that invites controversy.

When she was born, the English held possession of all France north of the river Loire, as well as of Guienne, in the south. When she had reached her eleventh year, King Henry VI of England, then a mere child, was proclaimed King of France in the Abbey of St. Denis, just outside of Paris. His masterful minister, the Duke of Bedford, had formed an alliance with Duke Philip of Burgundy. It seemed as if, between these two powerful forces, the kingdom of France would be dismembered and its people crushed.

The heir to the French throne, the Dauphin Charles, was of an indolent and passive disposition. He had given up all hope of recovering the throne which had descended to him, and was spending idle days in a little provincial city, so that he was mockingly described as "the King of Bourges."

THE PEASANT MYSTIC OF DOMRÉMY

Now, there was current among the French a prophecy that great trouble



JEANNE D'ARC LISTENING TO THE HEAVENLY VOICES

From a carbon print by Braun, Clement & Co., New York, after the painting by D. N. Maillart

would fall on France through the depravity of a woman, and that the only path of hope would be opened by a virgin.

This prophecy, which was ascribed to Merlin, was especially believed in the province of Lorraine. It was heard in

childhood by Jeanne d'Arc, the little peasant girl of Domrémy, and it took a singular hold upon her imagination. Over it, in the solitude of the forest, she brooded month after month, until it gave her the guiding motive of her life.

As she approached womanhood, Jeanne became in thought a religious recluse. She performed her household duties deftly. She was kind, unselfish, and charitable, so that every one who knew her loved her; but she entered into none of the ordinary pleasures of

her companions, repelling the advances of young men, and dwelling, in her hours of solitude, upon religious themes and on the prophecy of Merlin.

She has been described as of middle height, strongly built, but of fine proportions. She was by no means beautiful, and had not even the rustic comeliness which was found in many young girls of her station. She impressed one only by the purity and innocence of her bearing, and by her wonderful, melancholy eyes, unfathomable, looking far into the future. She had a remarkable power of resisting weariness, as she afterward made plain. Her voice was sweet and low, and she had a natural dignity, so that even



JEANNE D'ARC LEADING THE SOLDIERS OF FRANCE

From the statue modeled by Paul Dubois

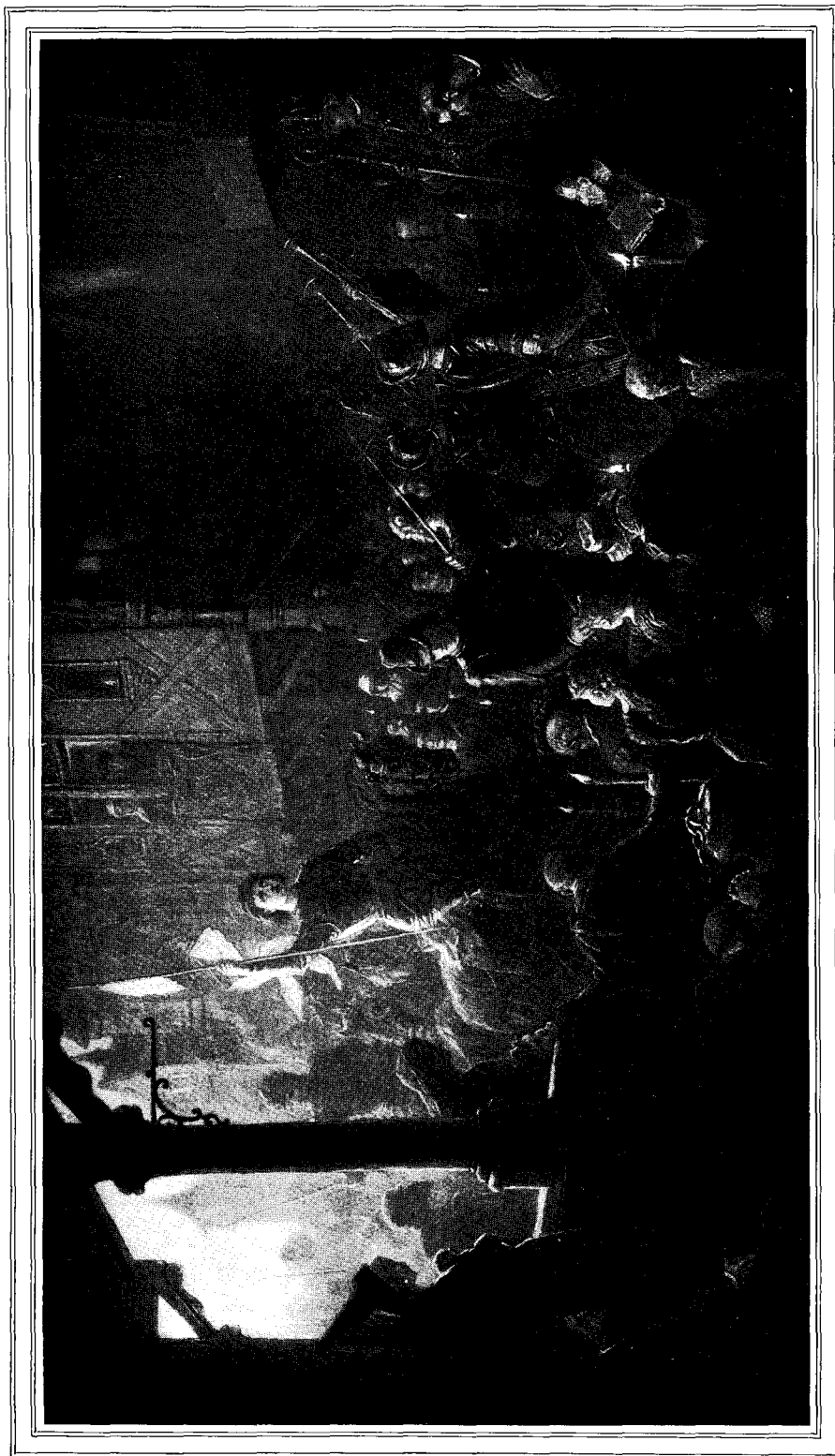
Jeanne was typically a mystic. Though her physical energy was very great, and though she had all the French vivacity, she was in mind and in temperament sensitively nervous, always high-strung and intensely active, while steeped in religious enthusiasm. Her mother had once made a pilgrimage to Rome—a remarkable thing for a northern peasant woman—and the impressions which she had received of the Eternal City she had imparted to her child.

men of rank who came into her presence were awed by it. Like many other mystics who think intensely of a single theme, her thoughts seemed to her to be transmuted into voices. When thirteen years of age, she heard, as she believed, an angel saying:

“Jeanne, fail not to seek the church.”

JEANNE AND THE HEAVENLY VOICES

Little by little, other voices came to her sensitive ear, and she identified them

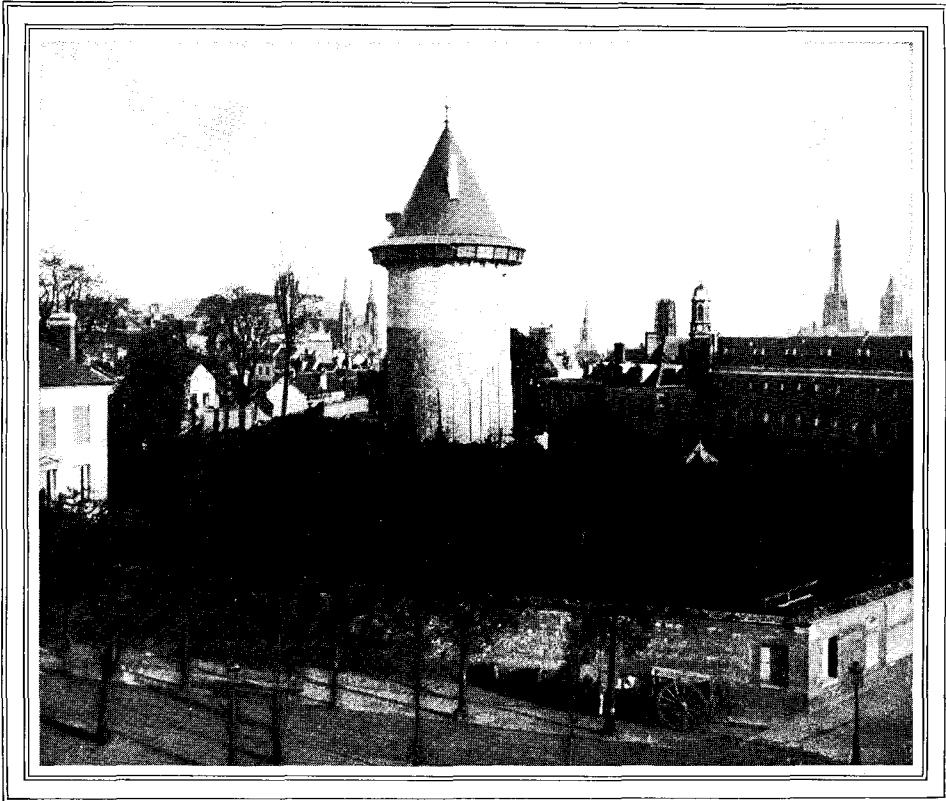


THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY OF JEANNE D'ARC INTO ORLÉANS, MAY 7, 1429
From the painting by Serres—copyright, 1894, by Manzi, Joyant & Co., Paris and New York

as the voices of St. Michael, St. Catharine, and St. Margaret. In time, St. Michael spoke to her and told her of her country's great calamities, ending with the words:

"Jeanne, you are called for marvelous

perative and stern. Jeanne could refrain no longer, but sought out the French commander at Vaucouleurs, near Domrémy. She told her story to him, and he thought at first that she had lost her reason; but there was something in



THE TOUR DE JEANNE D'ARC, IN ROUEN, PART OF THE ANCIENT CASTLE IN WHICH THE MAID OF ORLÉANS WAS IMPRISONED AND BROUGHT TO TRIAL—THE TALL IRON SPIRE OF ROUEN CATHEDRAL APPEARS IN THE DISTANCE ON THE RIGHT

things. The King of Heaven has chosen you to give back happiness to France, and to aid King Charles. Dress yourself as a man and put on armor. You shall lead in war, and all shall be done as you advise."

Throughout four years, these words and others like them were repeated. Jeanne learned that every year her country's life was ebbing. The Duke of Bedford was routing the French armies. Burgundian and English troops were marching in long columns toward the south of France. They had beset the city of Orléans, and its defenders were almost without hope.

The mystic voices now became im-

perative and intense sincerity of her bearing, and in the persuasiveness of her exquisite voice, which finally altered his opinion. The time was one when women, disguised as pages, often accompanied their lovers or their lords to war. There was something romantic in Jeanne's story which appealed to the Frenchman's quick imagination.

JEANNE'S TRIUMPH AT ORLÉANS

Things had reached a desperate pass, and Jeanne could certainly not make them worse. She was escorted to the Dauphin, into whose presence she rode in male attire. Charles, easy-going, indolent, and superstitious, put her to a

test. He disguised himself and took his place amid a great crowd of soldiers and civilians. Jeanne at once moved straight through the throng and knelt before him. It seemed a supernatural feat; and soon after, when a body of theologians had questioned her and decided that she was orthodox, she was allowed to have her way.

She declared that under the altar of St. Catharine would be found an ancient sword. The altar was removed, and the sword was discovered lying there. Then at once a suit of armor was given to the maid; the long, two-edged sword was buckled at her side; and under a lily standard of her own making, she rode out at the head of five thousand men-at-arms. Reaching Orléans, she attacked and dispersed the English, forcing them to raise the siege. From that moment she was known to history as the Maid of Orléans.

This achievement turned the tide of war. All that was chivalrous in the French flamed up, dispelling doubt, and rousing men to indomitable deeds. All that was superstitious in the English made them feel that the power of Heaven was turned against them. Jeanne d'Arc conducted the Dauphin to the ancient city of Rheims, where, like his ancestors, he was crowned, anointed, and proclaimed the lawful King of France under the title Charles VII.

JEANNE'S DOWNFALL AND CAPTURE

Jeanne now believed that her mission was accomplished. The voice which she ascribed to St. Michael had told her merely to advise the king, to lead his army, and to see him rightly crowned. This had now been done, and the girl desired to return to her little home at Domrémy, where her parents waited for her. They had been ennobled by the king, receiving a new name, Du Lys.

But Charles, quite naturally, was unwilling to let her go. She had done so much for him and for his cause; why should she not do more? Then occurred an incident which confirmed Jeanne in her belief that her task was ended. Riding through the camp one day, she passed some women of vile character, whose language accorded with their profession. The virgin soul of Jeanne was

stirred to anger, and she struck one of these women with the flat of her sword—the sword which had been found beneath the altar of St. Catharine. The blade immediately broke, and all the skill of the French armorers could not weld the pieces into one again.

Jeanne felt that Heaven had ended her career, but against her judgment she consented to lead new expeditions, in most of which she failed—most signally of all in an attempt to recapture Paris. Still, she fought in many combats, until in May she was besieged by the Burgundians in Compiègne. With reckless valor she headed a charge against the besiegers. They cut her off from her followers, and took her prisoner.

From that moment, belief in her miraculous power waned rapidly. The Duke of Burgundy, after some hesitation, surrendered her to the English, who took her to Rouen and imprisoned her in a fortress, part of which—the so-called *Tour de Jeanne d'Arc*—still exists. Her captors bade her once more dress in woman's clothing, but she steadfastly refused to do so, declaring that the "voices" had forbidden it, and saying also that she was exposed to vile assaults from her jailers.

THE TRIAL OF JEANNE D'ARC

Brought before the inquisition, she was charged with heresy and witchcraft, with cutting off her hair and with wearing a man's garb. An ecclesiastical court, over which the French Bishop of Beauvais presided, heard the charges, and also heard the girl reply to them. It was a grave gathering of church dignitaries from the University of Paris. The chief inquisitor tried hard to turn the frank and touching story of the Maid in a way to justify her condemnation.

Secure in her own innocence, she proudly faced her judges, and they could find little or nothing upon which to pronounce her guilty. It was a pitiful and yet inspiring sight, this gentle, pure-faced girl, facing undauntedly a gathering of the greatest men in France, every one of whom she knew to be her enemy. Yet she never faltered, and the trial dragged on for months. One of the judges went so far as to disguise himself and to enter her cell, pretending to be

her fellow-prisoner. While there he tried to worm out of her something which could be used to her disadvantage; but even he at last gave up this attempt in very shame. She was threatened with torture, but her great, dark eyes looked unflinchingly into the face of him who made the threat.

JEANNE IS SENTENCED TO DEATH

Nevertheless, where all were agreed to find her guilty, the result was fore-ordained. She was condemned on twelve separate charges, and sentenced to death by burning. Some of these charges related to minor matters of religion, wherein the theologians declared that Jeanne had erred. For these things she expressed her penitence, and the court commuted her sentence to a life imprisonment. Then, however, the English seemed to have taken things into their own hands. Precisely what happened in the next few days is not fully known. What we do know is full of a sinister and frightful meaning. It is recorded that she once more put on men's clothing. It is almost certain that her jailers subjected her to outrage, and to such treatment that her spirit was wholly broken.

In her wild words she expressed regret that she had been penitent, and this was made the pretext for her execution. She was no longer a heroic figure. She was something which appeals infinitely more to the hearts of all who read her story—a terrified, insulted, trembling girl. On the 30th of May, 1431, she was told that she must die, and at the announcement she burst into girlish tears. She cried out:

"I would rather be beheaded seven times than burned! I appeal to God against all these great wrongs which they do me."

Then, after the passion of sobs had died away, she grew calm, and asked that she might receive the sacrament. This was granted, yet the sacrament must be administered to her without ceremonial, without the customary candles, and without any vestments for the priest. To one so deeply religious as Jeanne, this seemed dreadful, and the cruelty of it touched some unknown heart without the prison. This churchman did all within

his power, sending the Host with a train of priests who chanted litanies and carried torches, so that at least she received the rite which nerved her for her frightful end.

THE TRAGEDY OF THE ROUEN MARKET

This girl of nineteen, dressed in white, was escorted by eight hundred English soldiers over the rough cobblestones of the ancient streets of Rouen until she reached the Old Market. There was driven a stake, about which wood was piled in an enormous mass. Facing it were two platforms for her judges. Before she was bound, a ghoulish creature preached to her, calling her a rotten branch to be cut off from the church, a heretic, a blasphemer, and an impostor. When he had finished, the bishop himself arose and covered her with abusive epithets. It is likely that she did not hear him, for she was kneeling and crying to her own St. Michael for help. At last, she was bound to the stake. At the foot of it, and a little removed from it, was nailed a parchment with the following words:

Jeanne, called the maid, liar, reviler of the people, witch, blasphemer of God, pernicious, superstitious, idolatrous, cruel, dissolute, invoker of devils, apostate, schismatic, heretic.

Before she was bound, she begged for a cross, but none was at hand. One of the English soldiers on guard, with an impulse that did him honor, seized a stick and broke it across his knee, hastily binding the two parts together. This rough emblem Jeanne carried to the pile of fagots. Soon the flames began to rise, enveloping that white figure in ruddy gleams, until there gushed forth great clouds of smoke which obscured the victim. At this moment there came from her lips a cry which pierced through the crackling fagots:

"My voices were from God. They have not deceived me!"

This was the end of what was mortal in Jeanne d'Arc.

Her death caused an extraordinary revulsion of feeling. Strange stories were told of how a white dove had fluttered forth amid the flames. Her executioner was stricken with the horrors of remorse. One of the secretaries attached to the

household of the English king went home, crying out as he went:

"We are all lost, for we have burned a saint!"

Indeed, from that day to our own the figure of this young girl stands out alike in history and in art with wonderful purity and clearness. Only a short time after her death, the Pope revoked her condemnation. In 1456, her trial was revised by royal order, and she was formally declared to have been innocent. In ratification of this finding, Pope Calixtus III pronounced her to have been "a martyr for her religion, her country, and her king."

HER RECENT BEATIFICATION

Long ago a movement was begun to canonize her and to place her name among those of the saints. In 1875, the subject was seriously taken up by the Roman Curia. A long and searching canonical investigation was carried out by order of Pope Pius IX. The ecclesiastical law of the Roman church is most minute and scrupulous, and it was not until 1894 that Leo XIII directed the three final inquiries to be made. In January, 1904, Pius X, presiding over the Congregation of Rites, approved a decree which advanced the cause; and last December, in the hall of the Con-

sistory of the Vatican, the Maid of Orléans was declared by the Pope to have received beatification "as the personification of chivalrous France." Before long, St. Peter's will witness an impressive ceremony to make this known to all the world.

Jeanne d'Arc, therefore, is now beatified, and is to be spoken of as "the blessed" (*beata, bienheureuse*). There are many now living who may be able to speak of her as "Ste. Jeanne."

It is worthy of mention that the English, who have been held mainly responsible for her death, have most admired and most strongly defended her. On the other hand, her defamation has come from French writers. To the everlasting shame of Voltaire, he burlesqued this chaste and heroic girl in his mock epic "La Pucelle." Only a short time ago, the cynical Anatole France, more seriously, penned an unfavorable criticism of her life and character.

On the other hand, English writers such as Mrs. Oliphant, Douglas Murray, and Andrew Lang, like the German poet Schiller, depict her as a virgin mystic, spurning all earthly love, and personifying whatever is fine and chivalrous and noble in the race from which she sprang and the nation for whose very life she went forth to battle.

THE FOUR SEASONS

DEEP hush; the sky a glare of red;
Dim distances of heat;
And, oh, how drags the silent tread
Of Time's relentless feet!

Bleak gusts adown a sodden sky;
The drip of freezing rain;
Gloom-saddened dreams of years gone by,
And lonely days again.

Snow-glinted nights, and whiter days
That hasten to their end;
Mute longing in a heart that prays
The solace of a friend.

Moist winds astir in azure skies;
Green hints against the gray;
And, oh, the dream of those dear eyes
That do not smile to-day!

Percy M. Cushing

STORIETTES

The Other Woman

BY GEORGE RANDOLPH CHESTER

OUTSIDE, the snow was pelting at his broad window-panes and scurrying so thickly over the lawn and among the shrubbery that he could scarcely see down the broad driveway to the avenue. Somehow the chill of it all seemed to strike in upon the reverie of Nestor Dawes, and to cool the fervid dream that he had been unconsciously indulging. Impatiently he closed the double blinds, shutting out the wintry prospect which had cast its gloom upon those bright fancies. Then he drew a huge leather chair up near the blazing gas-logs, and there, in the great, dim library, the man who had risen to his position of enormous command through the sheer doggedness of his will, deliberately summoned the mental pictures which had given him so much anxiety and doubt.

He had shut himself in for an evening with some important papers, but now they lay strewn upon his table, neglected for this other interest which had come upon his virile middle age with a force that had swept him off his feet.

The second Mrs. Dawes! He recoiled at the phrase, as if he had startled himself by speaking it aloud. Why there should be something almost unsavory in the expression, something that smote him guiltily, he could not tell, but he strove to cast from his mind that form of words. As Beatrice Lane the world knew her. For three years her beauty and grace, and that indefinable charm which makes for the successful principals in musical plays a lasting place, had been the sensation of Broadway. She was clever of speech, and witty too, as Dawes had found when he was introduced to her; and then, after that chance meeting, had begun the round of gay suppers and other more or less Bohemian affairs which had bewildered and captivated the stern man of business.

From what he had heard of the theater, he had been surprised to find that Beatrice, and many of her like, kept themselves within certain rigid bounds. There were never fewer than four in her parties. She lived with her mother. No indiscretion could be charged against her.

It was a new world to Nestor Dawes, and he brightened under it, even as he thrilled under the fascination of Beatrice Lane. The intoxication that would have fitted better with his youth came upon him now, and of nights he became a notable figure among that idle class known as "men about town," admiring their wit, their gaiety, even their very flippancy and pessimism. Had he but known it, he was a lion among them—not in the sense of fame, but in the sense of ability and strength—and they were jackals; but he never awoke to this.

As he sat in the dim library, with no light but the blue flame of the gas-logs, he went back over the enchanted days when first her beauty and vivacity had cast a thrall upon him. But no man may wholly control his fancy; and presently, by that wonderful necromancy with which the imagination thrusts back the walls of our environment, he found himself wandering into other scenes.

He seemed to be in a huge dining-hall, where great, ugly imitation-marble columns broke up the vista into a bewildering mass of flower-decked tables, and brilliantly dressed women, and polished men in creaseless black and white. He recognized the place, by its ceiling of stucco and garish fresco, by its walls of gaudy gilt. It was the dining-hall of one of the expensive hotels at which he had stopped, and across the table from him she sat—the second Mrs. Dawes.

The somberness that had of late sat upon his face deepened. He had been