Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc Study Guide

Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc by Mark Twain

BOOKRAGS

Contents

Plot Summary

The Sieur Louis de Conte, a fictional character invented by Mark Twain, tells the story of Joan of Arc, Louis' childhood friend and an actual figure in history, who fights for French independence from the English in the 15th century. Louis accompanies Joan as her secretary through the battles and witnesses her trial and execution at the hands of the English.

Joan of Arc grows up in Domremy, a small village in the eastern part of France. Armagnacs, or French loyalists, populate her village in an area dominated by Burgundians, or English sympathizers. Her life proceeds normally until she hears voices from saints and angels who urge her to fight for French independence from the English.

She must first convince the governor of Vaucouleurs to provide her with an armed escort to Chinon, where Charles VII resides, the dauphine of France. The governor refuses, but Joan persists until he agrees to provide the armed escort. Only sixteen years old, Joan leaves for Chinon with veteran knights, Louis the narrator and several of her childhood friends.

The issue of Joan hearing voices garners an inquisition from the Roman Catholic Church, presided over by French clergymen. Joan answers all questions satisfactorily, and she is set free to do whatever she can for France. The inquisition also allows her to wear men's clothing, as women's attire is not appropriate for her tasks.

While at court in Chinon, Joan sees through an imposter substitution ruse and persuades the genuine Charles VII to make her the leader of the entire French army. She leads the army to a successful campaign against the English at Orleans, which is under siege, by using aggressive attack strategies rather than the passive tactics to which the French are accustomed. Afterwards known as the Maid of Orleans, Joan secures the road to Rheims, thereby enabling the coronation of Charles VII as the King of France. She then attempts to take Paris, but is pulled back due to political treachery. During her military career Joan also fights and wins the battle of Patay, a turning point in the Hundred Years' War.

While on a minor campaign to free the town of Compiegne, Joan encounters the English and her personal guard defends her, although surrounded. With all her personal guard killed or wounded, the English capture Joan. She tries to escape twice and fails each time. The English move her to Roen where she defends herself from the Catholic prosecutor, Pierre Cauchon, the Bishop of Beauvais.

Cauchon must obtain a confession from Joan because she thwarts his efforts to trick her during several trials. His purpose is to prove Joan a criminal against the Roman Catholic Church in order not to make her a French martyr. He finally resorts to wearing Joan down physically until she signs a false confession. The English then burn Joan at the stake; however, the goal of not making her a martyr fails.

Mark Twain's story about Joan of Arc is historical fiction because he fleshes out probable scenes and adds other fictional characters. This makes for an entertaining story based on historical fact, but not a biography in the strict sense of the genre.

Book 1: In Domremy, Chapter 1-2

Book 1: In Domremy, Chapter 1-2 Summary

The story narrator introduces himself as the Sieur Louis de Conte, born in 1410. He grows up in a family affiliated with the Armagnacs, French loyalists, and opposed to the Burgundians, English sympathizers. Plagues sweep the land and kill the French people. The English conquer parts of France and hold them for over seventy-five years. One night a band of mercenaries serving the Burgundian party kill Louis' family but overlook him, and survivors send the six-year-old to a priest in Domremy. There Louis learns to read and write. He plays with Joan d'Arc and comes to know the children and their parents. Everyone in Domremy sympathizes with the Armagnacs.

By the time Louis reaches fourteen years of age, three Popes vie for control of the Catholic Church. The people of Domremy accept only the Pope of Rome, and this becomes the orientation of both Louis and Joan.

Louis tells about a spring and pool that the children all played around. Fairies once protected the place and the children, but then the Church decreed the fairies to be creatures born of the Devil. The priest of Domremy warns the children to never associate with the fairies again. The fairies then secretly come back to the spring and pool. A village woman stumbles upon the fairies dancing near a tree by the spring and tells her neighbors about what she saw. Father Fronte hears of this and must perform a ceremony to banish the fairies, although he and the villagers would rather not do this. The banishment must be done because the Church requires it. Meanwhile, Joan has taken ill and cannot argue against this decision.

When Joan recovers, she confronts Father Fronte about his decision. Through building her case on solid logic, Joan convinces the priest that he did a very bad thing. The priest tries to set a logic trap for Joan, but she neatly steps out of it and destroys the counter argument. Father Fronte takes full blame for having made a grave error in judgment.

Book 1: In Domremy, Chapter 1-2 Analysis

Twain writes an historical fiction of Joan of Arc based on many years of research in both France and England. He invents the character of Louis to narrate the story, but most of the other characters come from historical records. The story takes on a fictional tone by means of the narrator, who maintains a particular viewpoint and style, and by Twain's fleshing out of details.

England dominates the France of the early 15th century. The country has not completely fallen to the English and does attempt to resist the conquering forces, but not with significant success. On top of this, French sympathizers to England, the Burgundians,

sell out their country for their own gain and help the English to eliminate the Armagnacs, or the French loyalists.

The stage is set—-the force of good (Armagnacs) versus the force of evil (Burgundians), the French army versus the English occupational and conquering army. France has lost the struggle so far and is in need of a champion to lead its army to victory, drive out the English and deliver France back to the French loyalists.

The story about the fairies may be a pure fabrication or it may be based on actual French folklore, but here it makes the point that Joan possesses a quick and sure mind. She thinks in logic that seems simple on its surface but becomes irrefutable upon examination. The priest, being a kind and gentle person to begin with, attempts to refute her argument but his logic cannot stand. Additionally, being an honest man, he simply accepts responsibility without complaint, other than feeling deep remorse. Joan's argument runs along the line that the fairies should not have been banned but pitied for their lot in life, that of being devil spawn. Children are not responsible for their parentage.

Twain brings his own level-headed reasoning to bear in this scene. While Joan is still quite young, perhaps fourteen years in this passage, she has not yet taken up the sword for France. However, she displays a sharp mind that may later attract her destiny and fate.

Dense prose reflects Twain's ornate but vivid 19th century writing style. He employs French words in places, such as maire for mayor and pere for father. The narrator uses common Twain expressions and tends toward lofty descriptions of Joan, which lends credibility to the narrative. An eighty-two year old man recalling his childhood friend who accomplishes great things in her short-lived existence would speak of her in this way. The reality is probably exaggerated but understandably so.

Book 1: In Domremy, Chapter 3-4

Book 1: In Domremy, Chapter 3-4 Summary

During a stormy and cold winter night, the children gather at Joan's house to eat and play games. A stranger comes to the door, a very poor and starving road traveler. Joan offers him her bowl of porridge and Jacques d'Arc, her father, sternly orders her to stop. The adults in the house think the man is a thief of some sort. Joan thinks differently, as does the village mayor. He gives a big speech, after which Jacques agrees Joan can give the stranger the food. The stranger thanks everyone by singing the Song of Roland from the days of Charlemagne. The stranger turns out to be a very good man.

Joan's strong character attracts multiple nicknames from the other children. The ones that stick to her include the Bashful, the Patriot, the Beautiful and the Brave.

A boy named Etienne Roze runs up from the village with a black flag while the children play near the Fairy Tree. He brings news of a treaty between France and England that gives England authority over all of France, a construction of the Duke of Burgundy and the Queen of France. In the politics of the time, a marriage between the two countries seals the treaty. Catherine of France is to marry Henry of England.

Edmond Aubrey, nicknamed "the Paladin" by the children, argues that the treaty must be illegal and that Charles VI, the King of France, will never sign it. The other children, teenagers actually, suspect this is unfounded rumor, but when they learn that the news comes from a trusted person, their spirits fall. They complain about being too young to fight the English.

The Paladin jokes about Joan becoming a captain in the French army and fighting the English. As he expands his joke into a story, a madman named Benoist comes from behind the Fairy Tree with an axe, raised to strike. All the children flee except Joan. She talks the madman down and walks him back to town and his cage. This earns her the nickname of the Brave. Afterwards the boys try to regain some of their self-respect by making up stories about what they would have done had they not run away.

Book 1: In Domremy, Chapter 3-4 Analysis

Joan has been shown to have a keen mind, and this scene reveals her generous heart and good judge of character. The adults are very suspicious of the starving stranger, but Joan sees through his mean looks and detects the man of virtue beneath. The scene is reminiscent of Charles Dickens (1786-1851), a writer with whom Twain (1835-1910) was surely familiar. A similar darkness opens into a dramatic conflict and quickly brightens, like a miniature Christmas Carol.

Twain's love of political bombast, a major source for his humorous works, generates the mayor's speech. The whole room feels inspired by the mayor's words:

"They rose—the whole house rose—and clapped, and cheered, and praised him to the skies; and one after another, still clapping and shouting, they crowded forward, some with moisture in their eyes, and wrung his hands, and said such glorious things to him that he was clear overcome with pride and happiness, and couldn't say a word, for his voice would have broken, sure," (p. 50).

The above passage may at first seem wordy and overblown to the modern reader, but the cadence of Twain clearly shows through. The voice of Louis is Twain's. The author gently pulls the reader's leg in a style of storytelling that has largely disappeared in today's literature. Twain exaggerates and even tells fibs to make the story interesting during a time when his audience prefers melodrama over realism.

Chapter 4 accomplishes two story goals. First, it announces the news of the treaty between England and France, and second, it establishes the astounding bravery of Joan. Twain uses his considerable storytelling talent to weave the two threads together into a whole cloth. The children, nearing young adulthood, understand the politics of the day and show this by arguing over whether the treaty is legal or not. Their impatience with time mounts as they near the age for military service, and then the madman appears. Their metal tested and shown to be lacking, they break and run away from the danger, thus paralleling the behavior of the actual French troops when facing the English. Joan, however, stands her ground.

When asked if she felt fear, Joan says that she did not and does not know why. Her task had been to keep Benoist from killing, an action which would have brought on his own death as punishment. This may have been the argument she used on the madman, but Louis does not know. He ran away with the rest.

Joan's bravery rests on a practical base and her natural personality augments the bravery. She does not conquer her fear. She does not know what fear means, which is a remarkable trait. Most people, as represented by the children who run away, know exactly what fear means and the difference between caution and foolishness. Joan seems not to have this survival instinct, rather a combination of coolness and reason.

Book 1: In Domremy, Chapter 5

Book 1: In Domremy, Chapter 5 Summary

A Burgundian priest comes to Domremy and announces that Charles the VI is dead and that France now belongs to the baby of Catherine and Henry. This enrages the people ever more as the priest gives the news that the English army will soon march all over France to conquer what remains of the French army. Upon hearing about the funeral of Charles VI where the French King-at-Arms broke his staff of office over the coffin and declared allegiance to England, Joan tells the priest she would like to see his head lopped off his body, but only if God wills it.

Life turns for the worse for the Domremy villagers. The Burgundians invade and drive the villagers out. Joan, now sixteen, takes command of the chaos and marches them in an orderly fashion toward Neufchateau, where the villagers stay until they can safely return to Domremy. They find their village in ruins and Benoist the madman killed and mutilated. Joan turns away in horror.

Jacques d'Arc says that somehow Charles VII must be found and placed on the French throne. The Paladin disparages Dunois, Bastard of Orleans, and La Hire for being bad French generals. Joan defends them. The boys talk about going to war in five or so years, but Joan thinks they will go sooner. She also, in a reflective tone as if listening to something, makes other predictions. This quiets the boys for a moment, and then they fantasize about their rewards once France is again restored to sovereignty. Joan wants no reward for herself but would like to lift the taxes from Domremy.

Book 1: In Domremy, Chapter 5 Analysis

Joan of Arc is well-known for having heard voices which guided her into military service. Twain shows this through her prophetic statements to the boys who brag about how great they will be once in the French army. Joan's piety keeps her from wishing to see the Burgundian priest's head lopped off unless God wills it so, which establishes her deep faith in the Catholic religion and sets the base from which she will lead France to victory over the English. Her voices, apparently coming from God somehow, coach her toward this eventuality, but for now they speak only of the future rather than her role in it. She still sees herself as admiring the French generals from afar, as is fitting for her place, time and sex. Joan can see the fates of her friends but not her own.

The Burgundians, with the authority of the English, perform evil acts against the Armagnacs. God must have some reason to want France free of the English, and this act gives sufficient justification in the story. A few questions beg answers. Why does God choose France and not some other suffering country? Why now and not earlier or later? Are worthy champions like Joan that rare? Are the English and Burgundians that evil?

Twain leaves these questions begging because nobody can know. However, doubts inevitably will arise about someone claiming to hear voices. Joan does not talk about her voices at this point, as she may doubt them herself. Might this be a form of madness? If not, then why would any sane person, a shy young peasant girl at that, bring attention to herself in this manner? It certainly would be asking for trouble.

Book 1: In Domremy, Chapter 6

Book 1: In Domremy, Chapter 6 Summary

Louis detects that Joan carries a deep and serious secret. He begins a conversation with her about the desperate situation France is in and how this has been going on for a very long time. Louis thinks that now the situation is hopeless. Joan asks simply why he thinks this way.

In fine detail, Louis explains his position. Joan tells him the situation is not hopeless and that she expects France to win its freedom back. Louis draws a map of France in the sand and makes his case again. Joan agrees with the facts laid out but disagrees that the situation is hopeless. She fully believes France will be free before two years. Skeptically, Louis asks who will make this happen, and Joan answers that God will.

Louis watches Joan carefully for the next few days for any signs of developing madness. She seems perfectly normal, yet he still suspects a secret somewhere. He comes upon Joan sitting beneath the shadow of a tree in a meadow and witnesses a white shadow of a robed and winged shape approach her. The woodland birds burst forth in song, and Joan kneels in prayer. The white shadow encompasses her. Shortly thereafter, she pleads to heaven but Louis cannot hear all the words. He does get enough of the meaning to understand she has been directed to lead the French army. Louis knows he has witnessed a spiritual mystery, and to ensure he is not dreaming, he cuts a mark into a tree so he can check for it later.

Book 1: In Domremy, Chapter 6 Analysis

In order for the voices to be those from God and not the delusions of madness, somebody other than Joan must witness a miracle. Twain gives this task to the most logical of characters, the one who can read and write, Louis.

The vision Louis witnesses consists of obviously images. The white color of the angel shadow has the electrical characteristic of lightning. Joan detects the approaching angel before seeing it. Something communicates with her and demands more than she believes she can do, and so she begs to be taken off the task.

Sketched as a skeptical and practical type of thinker, Louis doubts his own senses and marks the tree. He acts as the reader may be thinking, having doubt about the veracity of his senses and desiring proof. Twain can but speculate from the historical record that something like this actually happened, and he anticipates the reactions the scene might evoke. He seems to be saying, "Unbelievable? I thought so too, but keep on reading."

Book 1: In Domremy, Chapter 7-8

Book 1: In Domremy, Chapter 7-8 Summary

Joan comes to see Louis and convinces him that what he witnessed was not a dream. She calms his fear of the unknown and powers beyond his comprehension. They walk to the spring and Louis immediately starts in with questions. Joan patiently explains that the archangel Michael has been visiting her for the past three years. She had been afraid the first time, but now she does not fear the visitations, which occur frequently. Usually people cannot see the archangel, but Louis was allowed for reasons that she understands but cannot reveal at this time. Other angels and saints come to talk with her—she calls them her Voices.

The Voices indeed inform her about the future. So far nothing has been foretold but disaster, and that is exactly what happened. Yet the Voices also talk of hope for France, and during the visitation that Louis witnessed, Joan had learned that she is to be the one to rescue France. She will lead the army of God and drive out the English.

Both Louis and Joan express amazement that God would chose a child to lead an army. Yet Joan has no doubt that this is so, although at first the idea frightened her. Now she knows that a year from now, the French will strike a serious blow to the English, and from there quickly regain freedom, although just where this will happen has not yet been revealed. Louis reminds Joan of her earlier prophetic speaking, but she does not remember it, indicating that she had been in a trance.

Everybody notices a big change in Joan. She acts and talks with determination and command. She must speak with the governor of Vaucouleurs, and toward this end she orders Louis to go there and prepare to be her scribe because she will dictate a letter. He follows her orders the next afternoon.

Joan shows up to the governor's court the next day with her uncle. The governor grants an audience, and Joan asks for an armed escort so she can deliver a message to the Dauphin, Charles VII. The governor asks about Joan's intentions, and she tells him that she intends to drive the English out of France. The court laughs at this idea. The governor demands to know who gave her this idea. Joan replies that it came from the King of Heaven. The governor thinks Joan mad and sends her away, but she promises to keep coming back until she gets her way.

Joan's failure to make an immediate impression upon the governor of Vaucouleurs turns most of her village against her. The Paladin tries to corner her into marriage, but Joan refuses. She then must appear before the ecclesiastical court at Toul, where witnesses include the Paladin. Joan successfully refutes all accusations against her and returns home with the court's approval and praise. Her voices tell her not to take any action until after the siege of Orleans begins.

Book 1: In Domremy, Chapter 7-8 Analysis

The plot strides ahead without hesitation or delay, just as Joan takes the first steps to free France from the English. How can she not with such a clear mandate from God? Actually, her voices are from angels and saints, not God directly. This brings up a curious interpretation of what might be happening. Joan is a simple young country woman with absolute faith in her religion and possessing a very noble character. What if her angels and saints are indeed spiritual beings attracted to her innate strengths? This allows for a kind of spiritual world that can adapt to the forms of visions and voices the living expects. Twain gives this spiritual world the ability to remain invisible to everyone except Joan, and for once when he needs to understand more, Louis. Perhaps this power extends to form and voice as well. Joan sees the angels and saints she expects to see, and they all speak French. Might they be the spirits of old French heroes? This might explain why France receives special attention in this struggle, while other struggling countries do not. Or this may simply be God's will, which is plenty of explanation for Joan.

However this works, Joan moves ahead with fierce certainty, making her an unstoppable force heading toward very moveable objects. The governor of Vaucouleurs has no idea what walks into his court when he sees Joan and her cowed uncle. She confronts him with the courage of the true believer. She will either get her way or die trying, and Joan does not believe in the latter alternative. She will get her way no matter what obstacles are set in her path.

Twain paints her character in shades of courage, honesty, selflessness, persuasion and a knack for winning people to her side, even earning their deepest love. These qualities manifest in a young woman from Domremy who now faces the mighty task of raising an army of God to march under French banners. Such a person is indeed a rarity in this world, and the French are the lucky ones this time around. Joan pursues her mission in the context of the Catholic Church, yet another Joan-like person in another social framework might pursue a different mission just as absolutely. From another perspective, Joan's spirit might be found in many settings. She wants France to be free because France is her country by accident of birth (though not all cutures consider birthplace an accidental factor).

A brief chapter 8 mercifully skips through a boring time in which Joan must wait for her voices to direct her actions. The Paladin's attempt to ensnare her in marriage fails but reveals his scheming ways. The ecclesiastical court checks to see if Joan is sane or not, and she passes the test with honors. Mostly the time drags, and Twain is a smart enough writer to not let this bog the story down. He compresses months of boredom into two pages of text.

Book 2: In Court and Camp, Chapter 1-2

Book 2: In Court and Camp, Chapter 1-2 Summary

At last on the fifth of January, Joan decides to revisit the governor of Vaucouleurs with Louis and her uncle Lexart. She questions Lexart about two cavaliers she saw on the first occasion, the Sieur Jean de Novelonpont de Metz and the Sieur Bertrand de Poulengy, two men she wants to accompany her on her quest to save France. Joan then departs Dromremy with the knowledge that she will never see the village, her family and many of her friends again.

Laxart takes Joan to Vaucouleurs where she lodges with a wheelwright's wife. The poor townspeople come by to meet this child of God, but the well-to-do stay away and scoff. Somebody recalls an eight-hundred-year-old prophecy of Merlin's that states France is supposed to be lost by a woman and then regained by a woman. The townspeople interpret this to mean that the Queen of France sells the country out and Joan will take the country back.

People from surrounding villages come into Vaucouleurs to see Joan and be near her. Some of Joan's childhood friends set out from Domremy to Vaucouleurs and enjoy their newfound fame along the way.

Joan and her friends again try to enlist the governor's aid. Sieur Jean de Metz talks with Joan and becomes convinced that she should have her armed escort. The next day Sieur Bertrand de Poulengy pledges his service to Joan, but the governor still delays in his decision. Joan tells the governor that a major battle has been lost that day near Orleans, news that would normally take days to reach Vaucouleurs. Once the news arrives, the governor decides to support Joan with men-at-arms for her journey to the King, whom she calls the Dauphin because Charles VII has not yet been crowned.

Book 2: In Court and Camp, Chapter 1-2 Analysis

A quick opening of the second book follows the brief ending of the first book. Louis knows Joan's fate because he tells the story after the fact, but somehow Joan knows she will never see her home again, probably from her voices. She leaves the village in tears, adding a bit of melodrama.

A carnival atmosphere develops in Vaucouleurs and the surrounding countryside. The poor people immediately take to Joan as the savior of France since they have nothing to lose and everything to gain, while the more wealthy people dismiss her, a little jab at the upper classes by Twain and a social observation that the lower classes tend to grasp at any promising straw. Meanwhile, Joan convinces her two cavaliers to join her cause. The governor, however, needs more convincing.

The governor insists on a priest's exorcism ritual even though the priest has not detected any devil in Joan during her confession to him. She endures the insult, and apparently the voices give her news of the lost battle at Orleans that day. Upon verification of the news, the governor gives his support, and Joan's small force of men, including Louis with his writing ability, departs by night.

Twain keeps the plot moving logically ahead. Joan gains 15th century rock star status among the common people and uses her powers of persuasion with the cavaliers. However, authority delays and wants more proof of her powers. No better proof exists than to give current events news before the age of radio and television, back when news traveled only as fast as a man on horseback. Whether historical fact or a plot invention by, the story makes sense and explains how a simple country woman could raise an army and lead troops into battle during a time in history when simply dressing like a man was a serious taboo.

Book 2: In Court and Camp, Chapter 3-4

Book 2: In Court and Camp, Chapter 3-4 Summary

Joan's small group of soldiers numbers twenty-five, some with horse experience and others with none. Those with none complain about their developing sores and aches, and most need help from the veterans just to stay on their horses. While in enemy territory, everyone must keep quiet no matter what their sufferings. At dawn everyone congregates deep within the forest and try to sleep.

Upon awaking toward noon, Louis wonders why one of Joan's prophesies was not fulfilled. Noel and the Paladin were supposed to be with the group, but Louis has not seen them. A little later he comes upon the Paladin leaning against a tree. They walk together through camp as the Paladin limps noticeably. He claims to have joined voluntarily, but Louis knows the governor forced a number of men into the group at the last minute, and according to Joan's prophecy, the Paladin must be one of these. Soon Louis talks with Noel and realizes that the prophecy has indeed been completely fulfilled.

Joan tightens up discipline in her troops and orders horsemanship lessons taught by the veterans for all the green members. She takes none herself but watches and learns in that way.

During eight night marches of about forty miles each, the band of veterans and developing warriors lose three veterans and two novices in ambushes along the way. The novices become disheartened and one plots Joan's murder. The knights want to hang the plotter, but Joan refuses and calls him and his accomplices before her. She tells the plotter that his own death is close, and sure enough, he drowns that night while crossing a river.

The band encounters the enemy, but the officer in charge does not recognize Joan. She plays along with his lead without lying, just not telling him the whole truth, and the enemy lets her band pass. Later Joan wonders if she did wrong by not telling the whole truth, but realizes she has a greater mission to accomplish and the small lapse of honesty was necessary. Once away from the enemy and across a bridge, Joan has her troops to destroy the bridge. They make their way to the friendly town of Gien without further incident.

Book 2: In Court and Camp, Chapter 3-4 Analysis

Louis observes that the Paladin and Noel have developed a close friendship even if the Paladin always inflates himself to Noel's detriment:

"At bottom he [the Paladin] was all right and a good-hearted giant, without any harm in him, for it is no harm to bark, if one stops there and does not bite, and it is no harm to

be an ass, if one is content to bray and not kick. If this vast structure of brawn and muscle and vanity and foolishness seemed to have a libelous tongue, what of it? There was no malice behind it; and besides, the defect was not of his own creation; it was the work of Noel Rainguesson, who had nurtured it, fostered it, built it up and perfected it, for the entertainment he got out of it. . . . The result was an unqualified success," (p. 99).

Twain plays with this scene and shows the great vanity of the Paladin, who cannot admit to having been forced into service or that his horsemanship is that of a green novice. Noel freely admits to what actually happened, as he has no false ego to maintain. Meanwhile, one of Joan's lesser predictions comes true, even to the detail of being forced into service. However, Twain has not yet had all his fun with the Paladin's vanity.

Joan begins developing her leadership skills by bringing discipline to her novices and treating the small rebellion in a way that establishes her ability to foresee the future. She predicts the main plotter's death.

Twain adds a touch of swashbuckling daring to the story with the scene of them passing the enemy. Confronted with an enemy officer, Joan deftly moves the conversation from where she might be going and what she is doing at the moment, answering in truthful statements that humorously mislead, to the idea that she and her guard should destroy a bridge. Then she and her guard must go along the road with enemy troops lining each side, much to Louis' discomfort.

Book 2: In Court and Camp, Chapter 5

Book 2: In Court and Camp, Chapter 5 Summary

Joan's troops rest for a few hours at Gien and then make their way to Fierbois, a small village. There she dictates a letter to Louis and sends it out to Charles VII, who is about eighteen miles away.

Noel eggs on the Paladin, who begins taking credit for the success of the mission so far. Others tell of a different Paladin who climbs trees to avoid battle. The Paladin counters that his most heroic deeds went unseen, other than the dead enemies he left behind.

On the way to Chinon, the enemy attacks but cannot form before Joan's troops charge down and go straight through them. Everyone has become veterans along the long march. Louis believes a treacherous minister of Charles VII's, Georges de la Tremouille, arranged the attack.

Joan has few friends in the court of Charles VII. Everyone has something to lose should she contact the King, and they put obstacles in her way. Only Yolande, Queen of Sicily, is on Joan's side. The Queen detects Joan's abilities from her recent action of leading a handful of veterans and novices across nearly five hundred miles, through largely enemy territory.

Joan says she knows what troubles Charles VII, the thing which makes him lethargic and without hope. Only she, the Dauphine and God know about this, but Joan will tell Charles VII what this is and he will then be free from the evil spell.

Queen Yolande arranges for Joan's two cavaliers to visit Charles VII and implore him to meet with Joan. He sends a commission of bishops to Joan instead. They want to hear her message and relay it back. Joan tells them her message is only for Charles VII upon God's command, which cannot be bypassed. The bishops quickly leave. When others ask if Joan's actions were prudent, she responds that the bishops were sent by the enemies of Charles VII. The next day, however, the King puts up Joan and her troops in the Castle of Courdray in preparation for receiving her personally.

Book 2: In Court and Camp, Chapter 5 Analysis

Enemies surround Charles VII. Whereas others in her band question her wisdom in not allowing her message to be relayed, Joan has specific instructions from her voices to deliver the message personally. Additionally, she holds a secret cure for the King's condition of lethargy and hopelessness, possibly the message she has to deliver. Under these conditions, the use of any middle voice to deliver her message cannot work.

Joan stands strong before the bishops and angers them with her defiance. Yet she keeps a respectful regard for their important stations within the Church. The bishops

cannot command her, nor can they punish her because she never loses her patience or temper. She simply declines their offer and thereby foils the gambit. However, this is merely the opening move in the courtly game of deception.

Book 2: In Court and Camp, Chapter 6-7

Book 2: In Court and Camp, Chapter 6-7 Summary

Over the next few weeks, more priests examine Joan until finally Charles VII agrees to see her in his court. Queen Yolande sees to it that Joan dresses to make a good impression. The Count of Vendome and his entourage, two of Joan's knights and Louis accompany Joan to the court of Charles VII.

Joan's procession enters the court of Charles VII and stands before the throne. The man on the throne is an imposter, and Joan detects this right away. She looks around, and upon seeing the real Dauphin, she addresses him and tells him she is to break the siege of Orleans, crown him in Rheims and thereby deliver France from the English. Charles VII and Joan talk privately, during which he asks for a sign. Joan tells him of his secret prayer regarding his doubt, which is enough of a sign. The Dauphin escorts Joan out of court and provides his own honor guard to bring her back to Courdray Castle.

While waiting for something more to happen, the Paladin buys himself a dandy second-hand Spanish cavalier's suit. He tells tall tales that get taller and broader with each telling, but his audience in the tap room of an inn finds great entertainment from his performances. Noel and Louis watch from outside the door to the tap-room through slits.

Book 2: In Court and Camp, Chapter 6-7 Analysis

The court of Charles VII tries to trick Joan by offering an imposter, but she sees through the ruse straight away, indicating that her voices must also provide her with visions. The big doubt of the Dauphin involves his legal right to rule, and Joan assures him that he is of royal blood. Overjoyed, he gives her as much as he is able but not what she desires —-an army.

Twain sets the Paladin up in the comic role of a teller of tall tales dressed in a fancy Spanish cavalier outfit. Everyone knows his stories are based on very small shreds of truth, but they like the entertainment. The fictions become better than the dry facts, and during an age when entertainment through television was not available, the Paladin enjoys his celebrity status. He is a greater entertainer than a warrior.

Book 2: In Court and Camp, Chapter 8-9

Book 2: In Court and Camp, Chapter 8-9 Summary

After his treacherous advisers question Joan's voices, saying they might be from Satan and not God, Charles VII calls for a commission of bishops to determine the source of Joan's voices. For political reasons the bishops declare they cannot tell one way or another, and they recommend Joan be sent to Poitiers to be examined by theologians.

For days Joan puts up with the inquisition and loses her temper only once. A Dominican proposes that if God wants France free, then no men-at-arms are needed because God can do anything. Joan counters that God helps those who help themselves. A professor of theology asks for a sign, and Joan challenges him to let her go, give her an army, and she will then show him plenty of signs. The inquisition drags on for weeks longer, but no one can shake Joan's convictions. The theologians finally exonerate her.

Joan's luck turns for the better. The Church gives her the freedom to dress as a man, since she must do the work of a man by God's will, and the King confers upon her the title of General-in-Chief of the Armies of France. This puts all the other French generals under her command.

Book 2: In Court and Camp, Chapter 8-9 Analysis

Joan of Arc does not gain her status in the French military without first enduring prodding and poking from skeptical Church bishops and scholars. These last flurries of intellectual punches envelop her, but she retaliates with the same clear, simple logic that served her well before—give her soldiers and she will deliver France from the English. Only one logical move can be made in response to this, and Charles VII makes it, thereby making Joan answerable only to him and God.

This is not a rags-to-riches story but a powerless-to-powerful tale supported by historical evidence. Twain refers to some of the histories now and then to reinforce the amazing feats Joan accomplishes. This alone is enough to ensure her place in the world's memory, but she has much more to do and not much time left to spare.

Book 2: In Court and Camp, Chapter 10-13

Book 2: In Court and Camp, Chapter 10-13 Summary

Joan quickly dictates a letter to Louis intended for the English commander at Orleans, and in it she demands he take his forces and depart peacefully. She then begins assembling her army from veterans and volunteers. Her voices tell of an old sword to be found in Fierbois behind the altar of St. Catherine, and she sends de Metz to fetch it. The priest find it buried behind the altar, polishes it and sends it to her. Rumor has it that it once belonged to Charlemagne. Joan makes all her friends from Domremy official members of her personal staff and guard, with the Paladin her standard-bearer. Within a few days the uniforms and armor are made, and Joan with her official household and men-at-arms begins her first war march to Blois and La Hire's forces.

La Hire's army has no discipline, with drinking and whoring being the usual daily activities. Joan insists that order be returned and that all soldiers must lead pious lives. La Hire objects, but is convinced shortly by Joan's skills of persuasion. The army changes its ways in accordance with Joan's desires, and La Hire's prayer takes this form:

"'Fair Sir God, I pray you to do by La Hire as he would do by you if you were La Hire and he were God,'" (p. 158).

An army of several divisions leave Blois for Orleans with La Hire, Marshal de Boussac, Sire de Retz, Forent d'Illiers and Poton de Saintrailles commanding under Joan. However, the veteran generals have no intention of following Joan's orders unless they coincide with their own strategies. Fundamentally, Joan wants to attack the English head-on, but the generals prefer to wait for the English to become tired and leave. As a result of her general's conflicting desires, Joan's forces end up on the wrong side of the river at Orleans. She orders her army to march back to where they can cross the river and take up the battle on the correct side. She then takes her small entourage into Orleans where they stay with Jacques Boucher and his family.

Book 2: In Court and Camp, Chapter 10-13 Analysis

Once Joan secures her authority, she wastes no time in assembling her army. The condition of La Hire's troops seem hopelessly chaotic and undisciplined, much like a band of thieves and rogues, but at her presence and insistence, they quickly pull themselves together. She keeps her childhood friends close, which shows that her newly acquired power does not go to her head. She is still a young woman who needs familiar faces around her.

The generals who deceive Joan probably expect her to cave to their greater experience in the matters of war, but they fail to understand that their new leader must push for an aggressive strategy if France is to be saved. If a war goes on for nearly a century as this one has, something is wrong. Joan's voices tell her that siege warfare does not work, other than to give the advantage to the side with the better supply lines, the English. The only way to break out of a siege, other than waiting out the enemy until they give up, is to forcefully break out. France still has this ability and needs Joan's aggressive leadership to break free of the English.

Book 2: In Court and Camp, Chapter 14-17

Book 2: In Court and Camp, Chapter 14-17 Summary

While waiting for her army to attain the correct side of the river, Joan asks about a letter she dictated to Louis earlier and sent by messenger to the English. In the letter she demanded the English leave French soil or she would make them do so. The messenger has not been heard from since, so she sends another message to the English. They reject her offer and promise to capture and burn her. Joan then sends Dunois to Blois to check on her army's progress.

The Paladin continues his entertainment routines at Jacques Boucher's house and captures the attention of his daughter, Catherine. Louis becomes jealous because Catherine has caught his romantic interest. He composes a poem and has Noel recite it, but the Paladin interrupts the reading and spoils the show.

When Joan's army arrives and she goes out to meet her generals, she sees a man bound hand and foot lying on top of a cart. She asks about him and learns that he is to be hanged for desertion. The man left the army to attend his dying wife, and then returned to the army. Taking pity, Joan sets the man free. The man, who is very large, goes by the nickname Dwarf and pledges his entire allegiance to Joan. With Joan in the lead, the army marches past the siege bastilles and into town without incident, save one that impacts Louis more than anyone else. A donkey brays from inside a bastille, which startles Louis and he nearly falls out of his saddle. Sir Bertrand catches him and sets him back in place.

The issue comes up in conversation once back at the Bouchers' house. The Paladin suggests Louis showed cowardice, but Sir Bertrand thinks Louis reacted as anybody might. Catherine Boucher agrees, which puts Louis at ease. The conversation turns to ghosts and how they make people afraid, and the Paladin boasts of wanting to see a ghost. Catherine offers him an opportunity to do so—the house has a haunted room.

Book 2: In Court and Camp, Chapter 14-17 Analysis

With Joan as yet unproven in battle, the English find it easy to ignore Joan's offers of peaceful resolution. Ironically, many lives could be saved with the outcome remaining the same if the English were wise enough to accept her proposal. The English, unfortunately, have no voices to guide them and only the word of a bold country girl. Blood must be shed.

Twain allows Louis a love interest in Catherine Boucher and a source of major frustration in the Paladin, who captures Catherine's interest and keeps Louis from making any inroads to her heart. This gives a sense of humanity to Louis, a normal

teen-aged boy looking for a mate. The chapter adds comic relief as well during the buildup to the inevitable bloody battle.

Joan shows compassion for the Dwarf. He left his post and admits to desertion, but comes back to the army after his wife dies. Joan recognizes that duty to family, especially to a dying spouse, overrides everything else. Her generosity saves the Dwarf's life, keeps a formidable warrior on her side, and earns the Dwarf's absolute loyalty and devotion. Everybody wins, whereas hanging the man would have gained nothing.

Besides examining how fear works, Twain sets up a subsequent scene with the offer to see ghosts in the house. The Paladin's boastful ways have maneuvered him into a corner.

Book 2: In Court and Camp, Chapter 18-20

Book 2: In Court and Camp, Chapter 18-20 Summary

Joan somehow knows French blood is being spilt and rushes off for the battle with her staff members. The sounds of war come to them as they make their way through Orleans, along with the rest of the army and some of citizens. In the disorder Joan calls for a horse, and while mounted, someone calls out that she is the Maid of Orleans. This becomes one of the primary names by which Joan of Arc is known.

The fighting started when the city's garrison attacked the garrison of the English siege fortress called St. Loup. Joan and her army eagerly join the fight, with the Dwarf slashing through a road of defeated Englishmen in front of Joan's horse. The knights order her entourage to defend her progress, and the Paladin begins to live up to his boasts by fighting very hard. The French drive the English back into St. Loup.

Dunois, the Bastard of Orleans, rides up to Joan and urges her to return to the city. She refuses and orders the charge to be sounded. The French defeat the bastille after several tries, sack it and then destroy the offensive siege fortress.

Louis and the others sleep all the rest of the afternoon and a few hours into the night. They rise for supper, at which time Catherine Boucher brings up the matter of the haunted room. Louis, the Dwarf, the Paladin, Sir Jean de Metz and a few others follow her to a room. She explains that a windowless dungeon had been walled off at some time in the dim past, and ghostly noises come from the dungeon. No ghosts have ever been seen. Catherine leaves the group.

At midnight, groans and sobs issue from the room. Everybody startles and listens for a few moments. Sir Jean de Metz tells the Dwarf to knock down the wall and set the poor souls free. He does this, and they find an empty room with only a rusty sword and rotting fan on the floor.

Two days later, Joan attacks and takes the bastille of Augustins. She must argue against some of her generals before the battle because they want to do things the old way, but Joan wants to continue attacking until the siege is fully lifted from Orleans. La Hire agrees with this approach and chides the other generals for not realizing how good Joan is with military strategy, although only a child.

Book 2: In Court and Camp, Chapter 18-20 Analysis

Joan establishes her famous war strategy—attack and keep attacking until the battle is won. The old strategy of waiting around for something to happen or taking a little ground and then falling back has not worked for almost a hundred years. However, old habits

are hard to break. Her generals plot a course consisting of the old way, but she surprises the generals during their plotting and gets them back on track.

The veteran warriors can be excused from their backsliding ways for now. They need more victories before Joan can convince them she knows what she is doing. Her uncanny nose for treachery wins this small conspiracy, which leads to the destruction of two strategic siege bastilles.

Twain throws in a ghost story as a short mystery. A man and a woman must have been sealed up in the dungeon so long ago that their clothes and bones have turned to dust, leaving only the sword and fan. The reader can infer a romance, a terrible murder or any number of scenarios. Twain leaves the interpretation open.

Book 2: In Court and Camp, Chapter 21-24

Book 2: In Court and Camp, Chapter 21-24 Summary

Joan shares a room with Catherine, and there she dictates to Louis a letter home. Joan tells her family not to be concerned about a wound she is about to take, according to her voices. Catherine implores her not to take part in any further battles, but Joan tells Catherine that the wound is a necessary part of the whole idea of driving the English out of France. Word comes from the council of Charles VII that Joan is to do no further attacks. She rejects the idea and orders her generals to prepare for the coming day's battle.

The next bastille to be taken is Tourelles. During this assault Joan receives her injury—a crossbow bolt to her shoulder. The Dwarf fights hard to defend her, and she is taken from the battlefield safely. Her wound dressed, Joan rests and hears the bugle call for retreat. Very upset at this, she mounts her horse and orders a final attack which brings down the final strategic bastille. The siege of Orleans ends on the 8th of May. The date becomes the holiday Joan of Arc's Day in France.

The English depart the next day, and the citizens swarm out into the countryside. All the remaining bastilles are burned to the ground. Joan and her army head to Tours to meet with Charles VII. He asks what reward Joan wants for lifting the siege of Orleans, but Joan wants only to crown him at Rheims. After arguing, the King agrees to the idea. He gives Joan, her family and all her entourage nobility status.

Book 2: In Court and Camp, Chapter 21-24 Analysis

Joan continues to drive her successful military campaign against the English, despite the calls from the council of Charles VII to hold back. Her wound takes her out of the fight briefly, and soon thereafter her generals revert to the old ways of waging war. Without Joan present, the French forces become ineffective. With her presence, the forces become invincible.

This first major victory in Joan's military career establishes her credibility. She gains nobility status from the Charles VII, however more needs to be done. She must bring him to Rheims for his coronation, and to do that she needs to defeat English strongholds along the way. Joan has no doubt that she and her forces can easily defeat the English. Charles VII has faith in her, but his council continues to hold him back out of their selfish political agendas.

Book 2: In Court and Camp, Chapter 25-27

Book 2: In Court and Camp, Chapter 25-27 Summary

While waiting for Charles VII and his council to make some kind of decision, Joan watches her army slowly dwindle away. She presses Charles VII to move on to Rheims and his coronation. He balks at moving while English strongholds line the road, but Joan convinces him that her army will take the strongholds. He finally consents upon this condition.

The march to Rheims begins on the 6th of June. Dressed in her white armor (unadorned, not the color white), Joan leads her army onward toward the first stronghold, Jargeau.

Some of her generals resist the idea of a direct attack and favor a siege strategy. La Hire lectures them on the need to change their thinking to Joan's direct attack methods, and when Joan shows up to the meeting, the objectors agree to fight her way.

The next day the attack on Jargeau begins. Joan's army pushes the English back into their fort and camps for the night. She sends the English a proposal for surrender, which they decline.

At dawn of the following day, Joan positions her artillery and troops and begins the artillery barrage at eight o'clock. An hour later she leads her troops to the main assault, which succeeds in taking Jargeau.

Book 2: In Court and Camp, Chapter 25-27 Analysis

The frustrating Charles VII and his council try to keep Joan from doing her job, a condition not unknown in the modern world of corporations. If she were alive today, her argument might be, "Lead, follow or get out of the way." She must lead, the King must follow and her generals must get out of her way.

Twain includes several minor scenes that bring human elements into an otherwise dry battle description. Joan promises a duchess to protect her duke's life, and during the battle, Joan directs him to move away from a spot where a cannonball lands shortly afterward. The Dwarf saves the Paladin's life by taking him off the battlefield while the Paladin is unconscious. Louis notes a young woman looking out a window in Jargeau just before the attack begins, and during the fight, how a cannon shot hits a large Englishman square in the chest.

Joan's military reputation ratchets up a few more notches. Her officers admire how well she places the artillery to perform the best possible barrage on the English stronghold.

She uses decisive tactics that quickly defeat the enemy, and before the battle, with the support of La Hire, she convinces the French generals that her way is the right and only way to win.

Character and plot may seem clichéd for a war novel, but keep in mind that Joan lives in the 15th century and performs historically confirmed actions. The clichés have not yet been invented, and if history seems clichéd, it is because it tends to repeat. In Twain's words, history does not repeat but rhymes. The character of La Hire is the rough but righteous career warrior, his men the 15th century version of Special Forces, not so much specially trained as especially fearsome. Charles VII and his council are the incompetent politicians who keep Joan and her fighting men from doing their jobs. Louis is the war correspondent, the Dwarf the big honest, but not too intelligent, soldier, the Paladin is the dandy storyteller, and Joan is the wise leader. The grand difference in this character is her connection to God and the fact that she is a seventeen-year-old female.

Book 2: In Court and Camp, Chapter 28-33

Book 2: In Court and Camp, Chapter 28-33 Summary

While the French troops rest for a couple of days before moving onward, Catherine Boucher implores Joan to stop taking the risks of a soldier. Joan assures her that the risks are necessary and success is assured, but Joan also foresees her death within two years.

At Meung, Joan's troops secure a bridge and hold it while the English general Talbot waits for reinforcements. The Constable of France, Richemont, approaches with needed reinforcements for Joan. On the morning of June 17th, both reinforced armies meet. The English retreat to a strong position, and Joan decides to not take action until the next day. During the night, English forces retreat but are detected by Joan's spies. She decides to join her forces together for the coming battle.

The English move out on the plains of La Beauce. Joan's forces follow until they come to Patay, where the English give away their position by taking a deer that bounds into their camp. La Hire and his men first attack, followed by Joan and the rest of her army. Within three hours the French win the battle of Patay. This battle marks the beginning of French independence from the English and the turning point in the Hundred Years' War.

Joan's army returns to Orleans where much celebrating breaks out over the victory at Patay. She waits for Charles VII before moving onward to Rheims and the coronation.

Book 2: In Court and Camp, Chapter 28-33 Analysis

The Hundred Year's War (1337-1453), actually a series of events later called the Hundred Years' War, consists of many conflicts between the English and the French during a time when warfare changed its character and nationalism took shape. Rather than small forces fighting here and there for various limited kingdoms, Joan leads a huge army with fealty to a nation, France. The decisive victory over the English at Patay carries with it an historical significance not recognized until many years later. The modern map of Europe begins to take shape at Patay.

Exactly what the boarders eventually become are beyond of Joan's scope of thinking. She knows the territories she fights for had at one time been French and that Paris is supposed to be under French rule, and for her campaign that is enough. She gets the ball rolling for the elimination of English influence in her corner of the continent.

Her success at lifting the siege at Orleans augments her victory at Patay. The French forces move with her inspiration and the English shrink back, fully reversing roles within a few months. The road still has English strongholds with which Joan must deal, but the

spirit of the English has been broken. Twain gives Joan a glimpse into the future and where this will bring her—a terrible early death, but for now she has a king to crown at Rheims.

Book 2: In Court and Camp, Chapter 34-37

Book 2: In Court and Camp, Chapter 34-37 Summary

Joan and Charles VII ride with the French army to Rheims even though English fortresses line the route. The English give no resistance to their passage except for the town of Troyes. Joan calls the mayor's bluff and prepares for battle for the next morning. Directly after the French bugler sounds the assault, the town surrenders without having fired a shot. Joan discovers many of the English hold French prisoners for ransom. In the name of the Charles VII, she ransoms every prisoner and sets them free.

In a long ceremony, Charles VII becomes the official King of France. He asks Joan what she would have as a reward, and all she asks for is the elimination of tax levies on her hometown of Domremy. The King grants this, and the town stays free of taxes for over three hundred and sixty years. Joan also wants to resign from her military career.

Joan discovers that her father and Lexart, her uncle, have come to Rheims. She invites them to her quarters, where they enjoy the King's hospitality. Lexart tells a story about trying to ride a bull to a funeral and being stung by many bees after crashing into their hive. Her father wants to learn what it is like to be a soldier. Joan gives him a pike and puts him through marching drills, which he does not do well, but the experience gives him stories to tell Joan's mother. Joan receives a notice from the King that he and his generals want her to stay on and lead the French army

Book 2: In Court and Camp, Chapter 34-37 Analysis

Twain describes in detail a 15th century coronation. He uses the side stories to flesh out the scenes with likely fictions, such as Joan's father wanting to learn something about being a soldier and Lexart's bull and bee tale. Joan dresses in courtly fashion, believing that with the coronation of the King, her military career has successfully ended. However, more English-held territory must be secured before France is completely free from English rule.

The coronation of Charles VII becomes a minor climax in the story at this point. Joan of Arc is a remarkable figure in history, the subject of many biographical works, including a famous play and Hollywood movie. Had she done nothing more than bring Charles VII to his coronation in Rheims, her place in French history would likely have been an interesting footnote. She may have been given a few statues in her memory. However, her most important tasks lie ahead.

Book 2: In Court and Camp, Chapter 38-41

Book 2: In Court and Camp, Chapter 38-41 Summary

Joan argues that the next step should be the taking of Paris, and despite resistance from the Chancellor of France, the King approves. Joan and the army approach the walls of Paris but are pulled back by the King's order. Shortly thereafter he disbands the army.

On the 24th of May, Joan and six hundred cavalry attempt to free Compiegne from the Duke of Burgundy. They fight against the Burgundians at Marguy while English reinforcements approach. The enemy surrounds Joan and her small personal guard. Most of the guard falls wounded, with the Dwarf and the Paladin fighting to their deaths. The English capture Joan of Arc.

Book 2: In Court and Camp, Chapter 38-41 Analysis

Joan's capture by the English ends her military career. Her desire to take Paris thwarted, she tries to raise interest in the taking of Burgundian lands that, although French, sympathize with the English. Twain allows for those figures who survive in history to be wounded in her defense, but kills off two of the heroes he invented—the Dwarf and the Paladin.

Treachery abounds and many plot against Joan, and the King is not strong enough to fully support her aggressive attacks on the English. As Joan has foretold, treachery within France defeats her, not the English.

Joan represents the pure and innocent nationalistic patriot. She believes in France more than the French King, who would tolerate English domination in order to avoid conflict and probably to gain quick wealth. Warfare to Joan is serious business that can only be won or lost. She intends to win. Nothing threatens a scheming bureaucrat worse than a true nationalistic warrior, and nothing satisfies the corrupt French royalty than when Joan of Arc is taken out of the picture. Unfortunately for the corrupt, she is not finished with her inspired work.

Book 3: Trial and Martyrdom, Chapter 1-10

Book 3: Trial and Martyrdom, Chapter 1-10 Summary

Joan attempts to escape from the English twice from different prison towers. During the first attempt, she manages to escape her cell and lock her jailer in it. A guard catches her before she can leave the tower. For the second attempt, she tries to lower herself down the side of the tower on a rope made from bed sheets. She falls and is injured, and the guards recapture her.

By the rules of war for that time, a captured soldier can be bought back by paying a ransom. However, nobody offers to pay the hefty amount the English ask for her, not the King and not France. As a result Joan remains in prison, and the French army reverts to its old ways of passivity.

Joan's first ecclesiastical trial by the English takes place in Rouen. Louis goes there and meets up with Noel Rainguesson. Louis also finds employment as an assistant to the trial scribe, which puts him in a good place to see the whole thing. Noel attends as a spectator.

Denied certain rights, Joan must face the trial alone without counsel. The Bishop of Beauvais, Pierre Cauchon, presides over the trial with the intention of proving Joan a witch, a crime that carries a punishment of burning at the stake. Try as he and a whole platoon of accusers might, Joan does not fall for any of their traps. Cauchon calls off the first public trial and begins a second private trial.

Book 3: Trial and Martyrdom, Chapter 1-10 Analysis

Twain brings forth the idea that the French and English conspire to get rid of Joan. The French fail to pay her ransom and the English want her burned at the stake no matter what. However, the English cannot simply burn her without a semblance of a trial.

The court focuses on Joan's voices and whether they come from God or Satan. They harass her for wearing men's clothing. In effect, the first trial repeats the inquisition Joan already went through at the start of her military career, but this time by a lower court. Not only is she denied counsel, the entire affair is an illegal attempt at double jeopardy —being tried twice for the same crime—and an illegal attempt of a lower court to overturn the findings of a higher court.

By a neat use of luck and coincidence, Twain places his Louis character next to the court transcriber. This gives the reader a clear view of Joan, the court and the proceedings. From secretary to Joan of Arc during her military campaigns to an

assistant transcriber at her trials, Twain keeps the viewpoint of his narrator clear and unconfused.

Book 3: Trial and Martyrdom, Chapter 11-24

Book 3: Trial and Martyrdom, Chapter 11-24 Summary

More trials ensue amd end with twelve bogus charges against Joan, among them: she refuses to submit herself to the Church; she threatened her troops with death if they failed to obey her; she claims never to have committed a sin; she wears male clothing even after her military service; she claims her voices speak French and not English. Cauchon sends the twelve charges to the University of Paris for verification, and the University unsurprisingly affirms them all.

The whole series of trials in the kangaroo court comes away with only one thing—Joan of Arc must confess to her crimes. Cauchon brings her to the courtyard where she faces the stake upon which she must burn in the hope that she sign a confession. This fails to work the first time, but on a second attempt, Cauchon shows Joan one document and has her sign another, which is the confession he needs. She does this under great duress and does not remember the event the next day. Due to her imprisonment becoming unbearable, which Cauchon had encouraged, Joan gives up and lets the court have its way. She asks them to give her death so she can escape her tormentors.

Cauchon obliges. The next day the executioners chain Joan to the stake with the whole town in attendance. Louis and Noel hope for a miracle to save her and watch for La Hire and his men to come storming into town. Nothing of the sort happens. The executioners light the fire, and in a famously dramatic ending, Joan of Arc unjustly dies by fire, a crucifix held before her eyes and another an English soldier in attendance made for her held against her chest.

Book 3: Trial and Martyrdom, Chapter 11-24 Analysis

Few injustices match what the English, and indirectly the French, do to Joan of Arc. Cauchon must put a veil of respectability around his kangaroo court in hopes that Joan does not become a martyr. For all his maneuvering, her martyrdom is recognized and the facts of the case go into the historical record for all to examine, including Mark Twain. The English fail. Joan becomes a beloved French heroine, the French succeed in ejecting the English, and in 1909, the Roman Catholic Church makes Joan of Arc an official saint.

Twain succeeds in evoking strong emotion at the end of Joan's life:

"Then the pitchy smoke, shot through with red flashes of flame, rolled up in a thick volume and hid her face from sight; and from the heart of this darkness her voice rose strong and eloquent in prayer, and when by moments the wind shredded somewhat of the smoke aside, there were veiled glimpses of an upturned face and moving lips. At

last a mercifully swift tide of flame burst upward, and none saw that face any more nor that form, and the voice was still," (p. 434).

As for the details of the numerous trials, Twain uses the historical transcriptions, expanded with observations from Louis. Twain adds voices from the crowd that would not have been transcribed, yet they fit into the story tightly and dramatically. Some of Joan's accusers end up being on her side, and the English soldiers show her the deep respect warriors have for one another, regardless of politics or situation.

Joan's answers to the many idiotic questions carry a degree of brilliance far beyond her accusers. The young woman cannot read nor write, but she thinks more sharply and more quickly than any around her.

Assuming her voices to be true and not some vehicle she made up to encourage the French leadership to listen to her, Joan's martyrdom for France makes perfect sense. She becomes even more powerful in death than in life. The English understand this danger, yet they take the very worst path of all—public and private trials that go into the historical record, and then, to top off their foolishness, they burn her at the stake with an entire town's population as witnesses (and notably, a French town occupied by the English). With such a degree of foolishness, one may easily believe God indeed controlled Joan's fate.

An alternative interpretation starts with Joan's native intelligence. She obviously has a superior mind, one that could have invented a mythology appropriate for her time and place. Joan of Arc may have pulled a great deal of wool over many eyes and ears. Nevertheless, her life remains highly inspirational and her death horribly tragic. France endures an independent nation to this day, a fact which probably pleases Joan of Arc in Paradise.

Characters

Joan of Arc

Joan of Arc grows up in Domremy, a small French village located to the east in the duchy of Lorraine. She claims to hear voices from saints and angels that direct her to free France from English domination, and she convinces the French army to strike hard and swift in pursuit of this goal. Her remarkable rise from country shepherd to the station of General-in-Chief moves ahead despite many roadblocks. She must first gain the support of the governor of Vaucouleurs in order to cross enemy territory and gain an audience with Charles VII, the uncrowned King of France. She must endure inquisitions from the Roman Catholic Church regarding the voices she hears. Her military goals include the lifting of the siege at Orleans and the taking of many English strongholds on the way to Rheims, that Charles VII might receive his crown.

Joan wins a decisive battle in The Hundred Years' War at Patay. The significance of this victory in French history does not become clear until many years later, but the victory breaks the English desire to dominate France. After the coronation of Charles VII, Joan wants to take Paris and nearly accomplishes this, but the treachery of French politicians who favor English rule thwarts her army even as it prepares to storm the city walls. In a relatively minor campaign at Marguy near Compiegne, the English capture Joan.

Joan tries to escape twice from the English but fails both times. France could pay her ransom but does not for unknown reasons, and so she must go through the English ecclesiastical kangaroo court supervised by Pierre Cauchon, the Bishop of Beauvais. Cauchon has only one goal in mind—to convict Joan and burn her at the stake. However, he hopes to avoid making her a martyr, and so the conviction must appear genuine. Joan succeeds in vexing Cauchon at every turn, even to the point of gaining supporters within the English population.

Cauchon resorts to physically wearing Joan down by making her imprisonment intolerable. Joan asks for the death penalty to release her from her torment, but Cauchon needs her signature on a full confession. He tricks her into signing the confession, and this allows him to burn Joan at the stake for crimes against the Roman Catholic Church.

Joan of Arc is one of the great figures of history. She is granted sainthood by Church in 1909 and has works of art, theater and cinema dedicated to her. She is remembered as a woman of intractable faith with a sharp mind and wit. The English cannot disguise the great injustice of her martyrdom and eventually lose France. Even in death, Joan of Arc defeats the English and achieves her ultimate desire—a French nation free from foreign rule.

Sieur Louis de Conte

Louis is the fictional narrator of Joan's biography. He grows up with her, shares the same birthday, and acts as her secretary through her military campaigns. During her trials while an English captive, he assists in transcribing the court proceedings.

An octogenarian while writing her story, Louis recalls as much detail as he can. Twain uses him to flesh out the story the author has brought together from both English and French historical texts over a period of twelve years. The technique allows for other characters to be introduced that, although fictional, could very well have been with Joan. The rest of the characters actually exist during Joan's time and place.

Twain gives Louis a love interest in Catherine Boucher, the daughter of a man who offers lodging to Joan and her entourage. Unfortunately for Louis, the Paladin frustrates his efforts to impress Catharine with a poem Louis has composed. Catherine later marries, but Louis never does.

While serving Joan, Louis writes several letters for her that go out to English and French leaders. He closely observes Joan's character and reports his impressions, along with vivid descriptions of the other characters. The voice of Mark Twain often shows through in the writings of Louis, as can be expected. Author and character are closely linked.

At the trial Louis faithfully reproduces Joan's words and clever arguments while commenting on the proceedings. Twain uses this opportunity to mention margin notes in the actual historical transcriptions and to add details not in them. Louis thus serves as the eyes and ears of Twain's imagination.

Charles VII

Charles VII is the uncrowned King of France who gives Joan full charge of his army. Highly influenced by treacherous English sympathizers in his court, Charles VII becomes a less than effective King after Joan arranges for his coronation through military victories. He calls off her assault on Paris and neglects to ransom her while the English hold her captive.

The King wavers between two possibilities—either the English will regain its influence or the French will succeed in expelling them. His inability to keep on a single path frustrates Joan and all her generals, especially La Hire, yet Charles VII tends to defer to Joan's determination and admires her pluck. The French have also arranged a treaty with the English that involves a marriage between French and English royalty, and this brings legal considerations into the King's actions.

Pierre Cauchon, the Bishop of Beauvais

Cauchon presides over Joan's trials while she is held captive in Rouen. He is a ruthless man with no scruples, yet condemns Joan relentlessly and eventually forces her execution. Far her inferior in exercises of logic, Cauchon finds it impossible to manipulate Joan in any manner, even though he uses every trick imaginable to cow her into submission. Much to his detriment in the historical record, the court transcripts show without doubt Joan's mastery of the situation and his bumbling attempts at entrapment.

Georges la Tremoille

Tremoille is minister to Charles VII and is the most treacherous member of the court. Louis speculates he is at the bottom of most of the ambushes sent Joan's way. He likely tried the trick of changing the real dauphin for an imposter, but Joan sees through the ruse and identifies the true Charles VII. From the aborted assault on Paris to the lack of ransom for Joan's release from the English, Tremoille likely plays an important part.

Burgundians

The Burgundians favor English rule because the Duke of Burgundy has sold out to the English. They represent the traitors of France and give military support to the English against the Armagnacs, who are French loyalists. Shortly before Joan begins her military campaigns, the Burgundians chase everyone in her village out and kill much of their livestock.

Armagnacs

All of the people in Joan's hometown of Domremy are French loyalists, Armagnacs. The Burgundians control most of the surrounding land and make regular raids on the nearby villages still loyal to France. Joan's upbringing in these conditions makes her a fiercely loyal patriot, more so after the Burgundians raid her village.

La Hire

La Hire is a general in the French army. He and his men fight very aggressively even after Joan tames them some by insisting they live pious lives by attending church services every day. La Hire always supports Joan's strategies, and in the end Louis hopes La Hire will ride in and rescue Joan from her execution. This does not happen.

The Paladin (Edmund Aubrey)

The Paladin is a boastful young friend of Joan's. He tries to trick Joan into marrying him, but she argues her way out of it. At first a green young recruit, Joan makes the Paladin her standard-bearer and he learns how to fight well. The Paladin tells stories that become ever grander, his role in them continually more heroic. He dies defending Joan just before her capture.

Noel Rainguesson

Noel Rainguesson is the Paladin's best friend. Noel encourages the Paladin's storytelling, according to Louis, and is instrumental in creating the Paladin's boastful character. Noel attends Joan's trials and stays with Louis throughout the whole ordeal. Noel and Louis witness Joan's execution.

The Dwarf

The Dwarf is a very large soldier Joan saves from desertion charges, punishable by hanging. He becomes a member of Joan's personal guard and fights in all subsequent battles. Standing seven feet tall, he mows down the English with a huge battle axe and dies with the Paladin while defending Joan just before her capture.

Catherine Boucher

Catherine Boucher urges Joan to not take so many risks with her life, but Joan refuses. She explains how important her presence on the battle field is to the soldiers of France. Louis develops a love interest in Catherine, but this never develops into a romance. She ends up marrying another man, while Louis remains unmarried throughout his long life.

Objects/Places

Domremy

Joan of Arc grows up in Domremy, a small French village in the eastern part of France. This is where she first hears her voices that direct her to free France from the English.

Vaucouleurs

The site of Joan's first military command is Vaucouleurs. Through persistence and persuasion, the governor of Vaucouleurs grants her wish, and Joan's first popular title becomes the Maid of Vaucouleurs.

Chinon

Charles VII grants Joan an audience in Chinon. She sees through an imposter sitting on the throne and identifies the true dauphin. Charles VII gives Joan full control of the French army, and she sets out to Orleans.

Orleans

Joan lifts an English siege at the city of Orleans. Her strategy of always attacking and moving forward frees the city in a short time, and she earns the popular title, the Maid of Orleans. She then sets out to clear the road to Rheims.

Patay

The battle of Patay breaks the English will to dominate France and marks the turning point in the Hundred Year's War. Joan leads her troops to victory.

Rheims

The coronation of Charles VII occurs in Rheims after Joan and the French army neutralize English strongholds along the route.

Paris

Joan brings the French army to the walls of Paris with the intention of taking the city. The King of France pulls her back for political reasons.

Marguy

At Marguy the English surround Joan and her personal guard. She is taken captive, and the Dwarf and the Paladin die defending her.

Rouen

The English kangaroo court finds Joan guilty of crimes against the Roman Catholic Church in Rouen, where she is burned at the stake.

The Fairy Tree

Joan and her friends like to play by the Fairy Tree during their childhood. The Tree has symbolic importance—seeing The Tree means understanding the truth about oneself.

Joan's Standard

Joan designs her standard to combine French and Christian symbolism. She appoints the Paladin to carry the standard into battle.

Joan's White Armor

Joan wears unadorned armor, known as white armor. This expresses her modesty and helps identify her on the battle field.

Crossbow Bolts

The bolts from crossbows injure Joan twice, neither wound being serious enough to keep her from the fight very long.

French Artillery

Joan quickly develops a mastery of placing French artillery for maximum effectiveness. The cannons fire mostly rocks.

English Fortresses

The English fortresses, also called bastilles, must be taken to lift the siege around Orleans and along the road to Rheims.

Themes

Politicians versus Warriors

The politics of France toward the end of the Hundred Years' War become very complex. France has two major factions, the Burgundians who are English sympathizers and the Armagnacs, French loyalists. Although not an outright civil war, the Burgundians negotiate with the English while the Armagnacs resist and harbor Charles VII, rightful dauphin of France. Meanwhile the French army hardly fights at all. The generals like to wait out the English until they become tired and leave. However, the English become more aggressive after a treaty supposedly gives France over to England.

When Joan of Arc takes over the French army, she answers English aggression with stronger French aggression. Rather than conducting war as a long series of sieges, she attacks. Surprisingly effective, she wins battle after battle until the coronation of Charles VII. Despite efforts to stop her, Joan shows the French generals how to wage war correctly. Politicians sympathetic with England double their efforts to curtail her aggressiveness and succeed in gaining the King's ear. This frustrates both Joan and the French generals. Only political treachery conquers Joan of Arc, and then only through her loyalty to the King of France.

Joan's execution is also politically motivated. The English court cannot prove any of their allegations, but the politicians insist on her death. Cauchon breaks several civil and Church laws while railroading Joan, and he obtains her confession only through brutality and trickery.

Divine Inspiration

From the viewpoint of 15th century Roman Catholic theology, Joan receives divine inspiration to lead the French army to victory. Certain questions come up in her first inquisition that she answers to the Church's satisfaction. The Church concludes the voices do indeed come from God and not Satan, no devils have possessed Joan, and she must wear men's clothing in order to carry out the instructions from her voices.

Joan's cleverness while fighting the English, both on the battlefield and in Cauchon's kangaroo court, may come from her voices. She admits to hearing from them regularly and gives some of the details, but she also withholds information her voices have told her not to reveal. An unlearned young woman, she grasps the essence of war and law at an uncanny level and without counsel, possibly indicating divine inspiration.

Accepting divine inspiration is the simplest explanation for Joan of Arc. For some reason God wants France and England to stop their long war and to become nation-states in a world emerging from the medieval age. The events that follow the Hundred Years' War are now part of history and can be easily laid out in a logical progression to the realities

of the present time. The only question that goes begging is why, during Joan's lifetime, does France receive special divine attention. This question may beg forever.

Secular Inspiration

A secular explanation of Joan of Arc takes quite a bit of guesswork, as the sciences of the period do not include psychology. Joan's IQ is never tested and her inability to read never questioned. Yet she displays evidence of an extremely high intelligence, one that may have learned to read on its own or that rapidly picks up new knowledge and applies it without hesitation.

Twain reports just what the historical documents say about Joan's inspiration, yet a thread of doubt dangles from the whole story. Joan might be inventing her divine voices, a common trope of the age, in order to garner the attention of male generals and politicians. If she approaches without the guise of divine inspiration, the male leadership can easily dismiss her. However, with God in her corner, Joan not only gains a leadership role, she can powerfully inspire the French troops.

Pulling off this act convincingly and consistently may be beyond the typical shepherd girl's ability, but Joan may be a singularly exceptional child, a savant of great magnitude and a genius actor. She leads her army without concern for her own safety and receives battle wounds, which may bring into question her divine connection but does not lessen her courage. Even as a regular human being without divine aid, Joan of Arc is an extraordinary young woman.

Human Injustice

Joan suffers many injustices toward the end of her short life, and this after meting out justice her entire life Twain even has her defending devil spawn early on in the story, and by this he seems to be condemning the entire human race as being grossly unjust, not an uncommon Twain theme. However, the author also gives reasons why humans are so unjust to one another.

At the base level of humanity, Joan's guards treat her cruelly and help break her down. At a higher level, her family and friends love her deeply, and some of the English soldiers respect her. However, some people live their lives in ways that demand injustice be meted out to others. The King lives with political intrigues constantly and ends up treating Joan in an unjust way by ignoring her plight. His court has its loyalties split between France and England, and Joan suffers from the resulting treachery. Cauchon outstrips everybody. He discards all human decency, along with any connection to spirituality, while wearing the garb of a Bishop and extracting Joan's false confession. The guards may be forgiven, as they only follow orders. The executioners may be forgiven, as they simply do their jobs. For Cauchon there can be no forgiveness. He takes too much delight in his work, and if his Church's belief in Hell proves true, the man faces eternal damnation for the injustices he piles upon Joan.

Martyrdom

The trouble with a worthy adversary like Joan of Arc is that letting her live brings defeat, while killing her also brings defeat. This is the nature of martyrdom, and the English fully realize the dilemma. However, they do not realize that unjustly assassinating the worthy opponent immediately creates a martyr, no matter how carefully maneuvered.

Not only do the English flub and create a martyr, they create one of the most effective martyrs in history—a beautiful, intelligent young woman wrongly condemned to a horrible death by fire. From the English standpoint, death in battle would have been a better fate for Joan, and death by old age the best outcome. Actually, much trouble could have been saved had the English simply given up on France, as Joan suggests in her first letter to them, but this requires a greater capacity for wisdom than these humans possess.

As it stands, Joan's martyrdom spreads across the land, and her legend grows as the Maid of Orleans to whom God spoke. The English cannot overcome this motivator and eventually lose France despite their best efforts. This fact in no way disparages the English—no matter what the nation, the outcome would be the same. We understand the power of martyrdom but tend to acknowledge it only in retrospect.

Style

Point of View

Twain uses a fictional character, the Sieur Louis de Conte, as a limited narrator from whose point of view the historical fiction is presented. The author provides two hints that he is the narrator—the initials SLC are his (Samuel L. Clemens) and the French word "conte" means story. Twain does this to disguise his authorship during the initial serialized publishing run and thereby gain more credibility for the story as a biography. However, his fairly liberal use of fictional scenes and characters brings the book to the level of historical fiction.

Louis grows up with Joan, serves as her secretary during her military campaigns and works as an assistant to the court transcriber during her final trials. He also witnesses Joan's execution. This narrows the reader's view to a single interpretation of her life and character, a situation most biographies avoid. For historical fiction, the technique works but does tend to idealize an historical figure, which is easy to do with the likes of Joan of Arc. If she seems saintly, it is surely because she is in truth a saint in the Roman Catholic Church.

Twain unabashedly worships Joan of Arc as the perfect woman, one who never seems to have a bad day. Even on the stake, she behaves perfectly. The author does grant Louis many years in this world before writing the biography, and so the lofty passages can be accepted as memories filtered through the high esteem in which Louis (as a front for Twain) holds Joan.

Setting

The story opens in the setting of Domremy, Joan's birthplace and childhood home. She and the other children play in an idyllic place where fairies live near a spring-fed pool and the Fairy Tree. Once Joan starts her quest to free France from the English, the setting moves to Vaucouleurs and the court of the governor, then to Chinon and the court of Charles VII. Twain does not skimp on vivid descriptions of the settings, as per his usual style, nor on his distinctive observations of human nature and behavior.

The battle scenes at Orleans contain action but not much gore, and the story-telling scenes inside a tap room lend some comic relief to the medieval warfare. Twain handles the gruesomeness of men hacking each other to pieces by letting the reader fill in the gaps with as much blood as necessary or tolerated.

Brilliant colors, supreme pomp and magnificent revelry distinguish the coronation setting in Rheims. The courtroom setting for Joan's final trials contrasts with grimness, austerity and gloom. The only glimmers of light come from Joan's overall poise, her unshakable endurance and brilliant wit. While setting often overwhelms character in the battle and royal court scenes, character overcomes setting in the courtroom.

Horror intermingles with humanity in Joan's execution scene. An English soldier makes an impromptu cross for her. A priest holds a cross for her to gaze upon as the flames grow stronger and higher. Twain allows her voice to pray to the bitter end—setting and character play equally powerful roles.

Language and Meaning

Twain lends his distinctive narrative voice to Louis, and any reader familiar with the author's other works would likely not be fooled by the initial penname. Similarly, the distinctive qualities of the other characters' voices indicate a seasoned storyteller.

The style of the 19th century permeates the book. Descriptions tend to string together words of subtle differences in order to refine the images, a technique largely abandoned in favor of journalistic brevity. However, the richness of Twain's prose rewards the patient reader with sharper detail and more memorable scenes than available in much of modern literature.

Twain often lampoons his own style through word choices that exaggerate the simple or anthropomorphize the inanimate, a strategy meant to charm his audience. He also adds the character of the Paladin as an extreme liar, but an entertaining one, with the observation that people enjoy these kinds of storytellers who make them laugh. When the Paladin destroys Noel's recitation of Louis' sad poem, Twain's intention may be to kill the thing off before it does any harm.

Structure

The story moves through chronological time on a primary plot with a few subplots. Joan grows up, receives her inspiration, fights the necessary battles, crown Charles VII, is captured by the English, and is tried and burned at the stake. The fairies are banned, the Paladin becomes a man and Louis falls in love with Catherine Boucher.

Most chapters are short and involve a single scene, which reflects the serialized initial publication. In all, 73 chapters make up the book and represent the same number of newspaper or magazine editions.

Twain interleaves humorous subplot stories between the serious activities of war and political intrigue. This serves to keep the story entertaining, a technique that can hardly ever be used in serious biography. If the author intends the book to be serious biography, his storytelling instincts draw him, thankfully so, away from any potential dryness. Twain's structure lends itself to enjoyable reading, a sure way to increase readership.

Quotes

"Then she finished with a blast at the idea that fairy kinsmen of the Fiend ought to be shunned and denied human sympathy and friendship because salvation was barred against them. She said that for that very reason people ought to pity them, and do every humane and loving thing they could to make them forget the hard fate that had been put upon them by accident of birth and no fault of their own. 'Poor little creatures!' she said. 'What can a person's heart be made of that can pity a Christian's child and yet can't pity a devil's child, that a thousand times more needs it!'" (p. 45).

"The day was overcast, and all that grassy space wherein the Tree stood lay in a soft rich shadow. Joan sat on a natural seat formed by gnarled great roots of the Tree. Her hands lay loosely, one reposing in the other, in her lap. Her head was bent a little toward the ground, and her air was that of one who is lost in thought, steeped in dreams, and not conscious of herself or the world. And now I saw a most strange thing, for I saw a white shadow come slowly gliding along the grass toward the Tree. It was of grand proportions—a robed form, with wings—and the whiteness of this shadow was not like any other whiteness except it be the whiteness of lightnings, but even the lightnings are not so intense as it was, for one can look at them without hurt, whereas this brilliancy was so blinding that it pained my eyes and brought the water to them. I uncovered my head, perceiving that I was in the presence of something not of this world. My breath grew faint and difficult, because of the terror and the awe that possessed me," (p. 73).

"When we were half-way to Chinon we happened upon yet one more squad of enemies. They burst suddenly out of the woods, and in considerable force, too; but we were not the apprentices we were ten or twelve days before; no, we were seasoned to this kind of adventure now; our hearts did not jump into our throats and our weapons tremble in our hands. We had learned to be always in battle array, always alert, and no more dismayed by the sight of those people than our commander was. Before they could form, Joan had delivered the order, 'Forward!' and we were down upon them with a rush. They stood no chance; they turned tail and scattered, we ploughing through them as if they had been men of straw. That was our last ambuscade, and it was probably laid for us by that treacherous rascal the King's own minister and favorite, De la Tremouille," (p. 112).

"Most people who have the narrative gift—that great and rare endowment—have with it the defect of telling their choice things over the same way every time, and this injures them and causes them to sound stale and wearisome after several repetitions; but it was not so with the Paladin, whose art was of a finer sort; it was more stirring and interesting to hear him tell about a battle the tenth time that it was the first time, because he did not tell it twice the same way, but always made a new battle of it and a better one, with more casualties on the enemy's side each time, and more general wreck and disaster all around, and more widows and orphans and suffering in the neighborhood where it happened," (p. 128).

"It was in the midst of this wild mob that Noel and I had our first glimpse of La Hire. He answered our dearest dreams. He was of great size and of martial bearing, he was cased in mail from head to heel, with a bushel of swishing plumes on his helmet, and at his side the vast sword of the time," (p. 153).

"By this time the Paladin, who had gone away for a moment with the opening of the poem, was back again, and had stepped within the door. He stood there, now, resting his great frame against the wall and gazing toward the reciter like one entranced. When Noel got to the second part [of the poem Louis had written to impress Catherine Boucher], and that heartbreaking refrain began to melt and move all listeners, the Paladin began to wipe away tears with the back of first one hand and then the other. The next time the refrain was repeated he got to snuffling, and sort of half sobbing, and went to wiping his eyes with the sleeves of his doublet. He was so conspicuous that he embarrassed Noel a little, and also had an ill effect upon the audience. With the next repetition he broke quite down and began to cry like a calf, which ruined all the effect and started many in the audience to laughing. Then he went on from bad to worse, until I never saw such a spectacle; for he fetched out a towel from under his doublet and began to swab his eyes with it and let go the most infernal bellowings mixed up with sobbing and groanings and retchings and barkings and coughings and snortings and screamings and howlings—and he twisted himself about on his heels and squirmed this way and that, still pouring out that brutal clamor and flourishing his towel in the air and swabbing again and wringing it out. Hear? You couldn't hear yourself think. Noel was wholly drowned out and silenced, and those people were laughing the very lungs out of themselves. It was the most degrading sight that ever was. Now I heard the clankety-clank that plate-armor makes when the man that is in it is running, and then alongside my head there burst out the most inhuman explosion of laughter that ever rent the drum of a person's ear, and I looked, and it was La Hire; and he stood there with his gauntlets on his hips and his head tilted back and his jaws spread to the degree to let out his hurricanes and his thunders and it amounted to indecent exposure, for you could see everything that was in him. Only one thing more and worse could happen, and it happened: at the door I saw the flurry and bustle and bowings and scrapings of officials and flunkeys which mean that some great personage is coming—then Joan of Arc stepped in, and the house rose! Yes, and tried to shut its indecorous mouth and make itself grave an proper; but when it saw the Maid herself go to laughing, it thanked God for this mercy and the earthquake followed.
"Such things make life a bitterness, and I do not wish to dwell upon them. The effect of the poem was spoiled," (pp. 174-175).

"We marched back to the city with our crop of cannon and prisoners on view and our banners displayed. Here was the first substantial bit of war-work the imprisoned people had seen in the seven months that the siege had endured, the first chance they had had to rejoice over a French exploit. You may guess that they made good use of it. They and the bells went mad. Joan was their darling now, and the press of people struggling and shouldering each other to get a glimpse of her was so great that we could hardly push our way through the streets at all. Her new name had gone all about, and was on everybody's lips. The Holy Maid of Vaucouleurs was a forgotten title; the city had

claimed her for its own, and she was the MAID OF ORLEANS now. It is a happiness to me to remember that I heard that name the first time it was ever uttered. Between that first utterance and the last time it will be uttered on this earth—ah, think how many mouldering ages will lie in that gap! (p. 191).

"The English sent up a glad shout and came surging down in strong force to take her, and then for a few minutes the might of both adversaries was concentrated upon that spot. Over her and about her, English and French fought with desperation—for she stood for France, indeed she was France for both sides—whichever won her won France, and could keep it forever. Right there in that small spot, and in ten minutes by the clock, the fate of France, for all time, was to be decided, and was decided," (p. 207).

"Yes, Joan was in great spirits. She was here and there and everywhere, all over the camp, by day and by night, pushing things. And wherever she came charging down the lines, reviewing the troops, it was good to hear them break out and cheer. And nobody could help cheering, she was such a vision of young bloom and beauty and grace, and such an incarnation of pluck and life and go! She was growing more and more ideally beautiful every day, as was plain to be seen—and these were days of development; for she was well past seventeen now—in fact she was getting close upon seventeen and a half—indeed, just a little woman, as you may say," (p. 224).

"It was an ogre, that war; an ogre that went about for near a hundred years, crunching men and dripping blood from his jaws. And with her little hand that child of seventeen struck him down; and younder he lies stretched on the field of Patay, and will not get up any more while this old world lasts," (p. 253).

"Then the King disbanded that noble army of heroes; it furled its flags, it stored its arms: the disgrace of France was complete. La Tremouille wore the victor's crown; Joan of Arc, the unconquerable, was conquered," (p. 300).

"But here and there I glimpsed compassion and distress in a face, and it was not always a French one. English soldiers feared Joan, but they admired her for her great deeds and her unconquered spirit," (p. 322).

"There was no answer. It was a subject that had to be got around and put aside. That book had wisely been gotten out of the way, for it contained things which would be very awkward here. Among them was a decision that Joan's mission was from God, whereas it was the intention of this inferior court to show that it was from the devil; also a decision permitting Joan to wear male attire, whereas it was the purpose of this court to make the male attire do hurtful work against her," (p. 344).

"How simple it is, and how beautiful. And how it beggars the studied eloquence of the masters of oratory. Eloquence was a native gift of Joan of Arc; it came from her lips without effort and without preparation. Her words were as sublime as her deeds, as sublime as her character; they had their source in a great heart and were coined in a great brain," (p. 368).

"Joan had been adjudged guilty of heresy, sorcery, and all the other terrible crimes set forth in the Twelve Articles, and her life was in Cauchon's hands at last. He could send her to the stake at once. His work was finished now, you think? He was satisfied? Not at all. What would his Archbishopric be worth if the people should get the idea into their heads that this faction of interested priests, slaving under the English lash, had wrongly condemned and burned Joan of Arc, Deliverer of France? That would be to make her a holy martyr. Then her spirit would rise from her body's ashes, a thousand-fold reinforced, and sweep the English domination into the sea, and Cauchon along with it. No, the victory was not complete yet. Joan's guilt must be established by evidence which would satisfy the people. Where was the evidence to be found? There was only one person in the world who could furnish it—Joan of Arc herself. She must condemn herself, and in public—at least she must seem to do it," (p. 403).

"Did Cauchon hint to the English guards that thenceforth if they chose to make their prisoner's captivity crueler and bitterer than ever, no official notice would be taken of it? Perhaps so; since the guards did begin that policy at once, and no official notice was taken of it. Yes, from that moment Joan's life in that dungeon was made almost unendurable. Do not ask me to enlarge upon it. I will not do it," (p. 417).

Topics for Discussion

Describe Joan of Arc's Roman Catholic faith as she understands it and Twain presents it.

Construct a timeline of Joan's military campaigns.

How does Pierre Cauchon, the Bishop of Beauvais, finally justify Joan's execution?

Defend or refute Joan's claim that she hears voices from saints and angels.

Why does Twain include the fictional character of the Paladin?

Profile the character of King Charles VII of France.

Why is the Hundred Years' War important?

Why do some of the English soldiers respect Joan of Arc?

Compare and contrast La Hire with the rest of the French generals.

Compare and contrast 15th century warfare with modern warfare.