

Her Reason Destroyed By Acting Joan of Arc's Death

Fettered to the Stake With Harmless Lights Burning Around Her, Mlle. Paulette Suffers in Imagination All the Death Agonies of the Martyred Maid of Orleans and Becomes a Mindless Lunatic



Some of the Actresses at the Pageant. Mlle. Paulette Is the Second Figure at the Left.

PARIS, August 21. H. ROUEN, I fear you will one day repent my death!" "Water, water!" "Jesu!"

These were the last words of Joan of Arc, dying at the stake 500 years ago, and as they were repeated by Mademoiselle Paulette Burbail, recently, reenacting that tragedy at Versailles, the great audience, thrilled by her dramatic genius, shuddered in silence, then roared its applause.

It was the climax of a pageant commemorating the anniversary of Joan of Arc's death. Many of the events of her career had been played, and now her own tragic close in martyrdom.

Mlle. Paulette had been bound to the stake, just as the Maid of Orleans had been. She stood there while flames and smoke arose from fagots piled knee-high above her.

Everyone knew that those fagots were not burning, and that the effects came from colored lights and harmless Bengal fires. But there was such a note of real agony in the words, and there was such torment expressed in the writhings of the white-clad figure that the audience, massed hundreds deep, felt that they were really watching the death of Joan, and that by the art of Mlle. Burbail they had been carried back to the tragic scene at Rouen, half a millennium ago. Here was a great actress—they thought.

The smoke rose higher, hiding the girl. And then the lights were turned out, the harmless fires were quenched, and the acting was over.

But it seemed that Mlle. Burbail did not know this. Her body lay limp and apparently lifeless against her fetters.

Two of her fellow actors, who had played the role of executioners, touched her on the shoulder.

"All right, you did splendidly. It's all over," they said as they unbound her from the stake.

Instead of answering, she dropped down among the fagots. Seeing that something was wrong, officers of the pageant came up. Mlle. Paulette was apparently in a deep faint, and doctors were summoned.

At first it was thought that she might accidentally have been burned—although this did not seem possible. The doctors found upon the skin of her legs and her breast some peculiar marks that did look as though they might be slight burns, but promptly decided that whatever they were, they were not the touch of flames because there was not even the slightest scorching of the white robe that had covered her, or upon her underwear beneath it. Yet something clearly had happened to the girl.

She was taken to a hospital. For almost two days she faint, or coma continued. Then she regained consciousness.

But it was no longer Paulette who awakened to life. "The eyes that looked up at the doctors and nurses were vacant and staring. The sounds that came from her lips were a meaningless babble. The girl who had played the part of Joan of Arc was a mindless idiot."

She had put herself so completely in the place of the immortal heroine of France, and had so completely imagined the sufferings of the Maid that her mind—that conscious part of her which was Paulette Burbail—had died as completely as Joan of Arc had died under the flames 500 years before.

The colored lights and Bengal flames and smoke which the spectators knew to be harmless had been so real to her. The cries and agonies which she had thought so dramatically simulated had been real to Paulette. She had felt the flames, she had felt the heat, and she had cried out from her heart, as Joan had, to the Saviour.

And just as Joan of Arc had per-



Mlle. Paulette Burbail, Who Enacted the Martyrdom of

Joan of Arc at a Pageant Commemorating the 500th Anniversary of Her Martyrdom, and Whose Case Is So Interesting to Psychologists.

ished, the part of her that was Paulette had perished, too.

All that was left was a body marked by the same power of the imagination that had destroyed her conscious self. Paulette is now nothing but a mindless animal which has to be cared for like an idiot baby. And the doctors and psychiatrists hold out little hope that she will ever be anything else.

Her case is quite as extraordinary as that of Therese Neumann, the peasant girl of the little Bavarian village of Konnersreuth, upon whose body at regular intervals appear the stigmata of the pierced hands and feet, the wounded side, the bloody sweat and the tears and blood of Christ, and are most noted scientists of France are studying her with the same interest.

In a number of ways Paulette, however, is unlike Therese; but in one strong essential she is like her. Therese is a poor and uneducated peasant. Paulette, who is about twenty-three, but looks much older, comes of a good family and is unusually well educated.

Both girls, however, have the same deep, compelling strain of religious fervor.

Paulette was born at Versailles. Like Angeliqne, the heroine of Zola's "Dream," she was very simple and devout, and passed long hours poring over the "Golden Legend," with its stories of angels, saints, martyrs, and saints and demons. The facts of real life lost all their significance and interest for her after an excursion into this marvelous land.

Since her first communion, one of Paulette's greatest pleasures was to act in local religious pageants, where her sunny face, sweet voice and faithful interpretations made many friends. Last Spring, in the "Quartier des Chantiers," she scored a success in the "Miracle of the Roses," which brought her to the attention of Mlle. Marguerite, directress of the Society of Saint Elisabeth.

The directress was so delighted with the girl's performance that she promised her the role of Joan of Arc in the celebration to be held on the anniversary of the warrior-maid's martyrdom.

Paulette felt deeply moved, for she worshiped Joan of Arc whom she considered as her patron saint and model. She was more familiar with the episodes in the life of the Maid of Orleans than her friends were with the career of any moving-picture star. Paulette knew by heart the story of the heroic Maid, from her childhood amid the woods and pastures of Domremy, to the final scene at the stake in the marketplace of Rouen.

The girl spent days and nights in preparation, for the event, oblivious of everything which took place about her, till a morbid mental process developed in her. The fantastic illusion that she was in fact the Divine Shepherdess, who heard the voices of St. Michael, St. Catherine and St. Margaret, that she was the incarnation of "La Pucelle," Liberator of France, the simple-minded girl came firmly to believe.

The day of the fête arrived, the gardens of the Patronage were thronged with spectators, the pageant commenced. Attention was focused on Mlle. Burbail, and more than one of the other actors remarked on the strange light that shone in her eyes, the pallor of her countenance, the passion with which she played her part. "Ecstasy and prayer had woven a halo round her brow," they said. "She will do well."

Paulette mounted the pyre with firm step and allowed herself to be bound to the stake, her face transfigured in the same rapt expression as at rehearsals. In those rehearsals however there had been no Bengal fires and now, when these were



The Martyrdom of Joan of Arc at Rouen in 1431. From the Painting by the Distinguished European Artist, J. E. Lenepeur.

touched off and began to cast a lurid glow on the scene, there was a sudden change.

She trembled and her eyes rolled in terror. The girl's features, up to that moment so serene, were now convulsed. And if it had not been for that last touch of realism, the flames and smoke she might have kept her reason, and after a good night's sleep waked up to realize that she was just a devout and somewhat hysterical little actress.

The curious physical results of religious exaltation on the body when it reaches a point like that of the unfortun-

ate Paulette, where the victim actually believes he is going through the experience he imagines, are well known. Perhaps the most famous case is that of Mlle. Neumann, already mentioned.

On Good Friday of 1927 marks appeared on her body, in the same places as the wounds of the Saviour and, in a trance, she seemed to be going through that experience, crying out in agony and speaking in a strange language. There were red and sore places on the inside and outside of her palms, and on her feet, corresponding to where the nails had been driven.

On her scalp were marks such as might have been made by the crown of thorns and even a mark on her side, corresponding to the spear-wound made by the Roman soldier.

These marks or stigmata started to fade away during the week but the next Friday they occurred all over again, and each succeeding Friday for more than a year. During the trances, the stigmata actually bled and tears of blood flowed from the girl's eyes and fell from her forehead.

such a long time they gave opportunity for physicians and other trained observers to come to Konnersreuth and study the case. Their reports were even more remarkable than those of the first untrained observers. It seems clear that in those Friday trances, which she sometimes has even now, the girl thinks she is passing through in person all the incidents from the arrest of the Saviour to His death on the cross.

Prof. Papstmann of the University of Erlangen was one of the scientists who visited Therese, and he performed an experiment on her eyes during one of her Friday trances. For the purpose of this test a 5,000 candle-power lamp was focused on her eyes. Her pupils, instead of contracting, remained dilated. This was astonishing because, as Prof. Papstmann explained, the pupils of the eyes are entirely under control of involuntary muscles and supposed to be beyond the influence of the will.

It is precisely these involuntary muscles, however, which often are affected most powerfully by emotional stimuli and vivid hallucinations, such as those of the Bavarian peasant girl or Paulette Burbail enacting the role of Joan. Psychologists experimenting with hypnotism in scientific laboratories have been able to impress on their subjects such powerful suggestions of cuts or other wounds that the blood comes to the surface and even oozes out of the skin at spots where the imaginary wounds are located.

The explanation, experts believe, is that the hypnotic suggestion acts on the nerves that control the tiny capillaries and arteries in the skin. These nerves then relax the tiny blood vessels so completely that blood actually oozes through the vessels' walls and escapes to the skin's surface.

There is little doubt, the psychologists who have examined her are convinced, that the stigmata which appeared on the skin of Therese Neumann are caused in this way by a powerful influence of the girl's own mind. Some call this a state of self-hypnotism. Others refer merely to over-intense imagination. However, this may be, what happens is that the power of the

The Only Authentic Likeness of Joan of Arc Known—a Sculptured Head Now in the Musée Historique, at Orleans.

mind over the involuntary muscles in the blood vessels is made manifest. Anyone can do the same, it is probable, if he can attain a sufficient state of concentration of the mind on that single idea.

Something like this is what happened, it is likely, to Paulette Burbail while she was enacting the role of Joan of Arc burning at the stake. The long course of preparation for this event joined to the girl's extremely strong religious feeling convinced her mind for the moment that she actually was Joan of Arc and that she actually was being burnt. There is recorded in medical literature a similar instance of a boy being initiated into a college fraternity, who was told and believed that he was to be struck on the neck with a sharp sword. Actually, he was struck with a wet towel, but the shock and the expectation were so great that it died, too.

Similarly, it is probable that Paulette became convinced, at least in the more emotional, more profound, unconscious part of her mind, that she was Joan and that she was dying. Therefore she did die; that is her mind died. The body clung to live on, although it would not have been surprising had it died, too.

The emotional state of the mind was led up, step by step, to the anticipated moment of death. There then was nothing else to do but die. The mind of the girl, firmly convinced that it was the mind of Joan, simply could not recover. That would have made a lie out of the whole previous imaginings. It had to die—and it did.

Why Mme. Rigoni Fired a Shot Into the Dead Professor's Heart

PROFESSOR ARNOLD CONSORTI, president of the Technical Institute of Chieti, in the Abruzzi district of Italy, died of heart failure, just as he predicted he would. Yet the courts are faced with the unique and difficult task of convicting, or clearing, Dr. Theresa Rigoni, a charming and intelligent woman friend of the professor, of the charge of "murdering" the scientist more than a day after he was pronounced dead.

The "murder" was committed under highly dramatic circumstances. The body of the dead, laid out, but not yet placed in his coffin, rested on a bier in a bed-chamber. The house was full of mourners, including Signorina Consorti and her daughter, Romana. Four students from the Technical Institute were standing solemn watch over the body.

Madame Rigoni came into the mortuary chamber and requested the students to leave the room for a few moments. She wished to be alone with her late friend. Knowing that Madame Rigoni and her husband, Professor Consorti, had been intimate friends of Professor Consorti, the students went out.

A moment later a revolver shot rang through the tomblike stillness of the house. It brought everyone hurrying to the death chamber. There they found Madame Rigoni, standing pale and shaken beside the bier, a revolver clutched in her right hand. The coat and vest in which the corpse was dressed had been unbuttoned and on the bosom of the white shirt, just over the heart, was a small black hole and a circular smudge of burned powder. No one spoke until the woman,

finally regaining her composure, walked to a nearby table laden with flowers and placed the gun on it. Then she turned and faced those that had crowded in on the dramatic scene.

In a level, dignified voice she said: "I have just fulfilled an oath which neither Madame Consorti nor her daughter had the courage to fulfill." No one made a move to stop her as she took the arm of her husband and walked slowly out of the chamber of death and out of the house.

Some hours later Madame Consorti explained to the mourning relatives and friends of her twice dead husband that she and her daughter had, in fact, failed to keep a grim promise they had made to the professor. Madame Rigoni had carried out the promise by sending a bullet through the heart of the dead man.

It seems that Professor Consorti had, in his younger days, been an extensive traveler in India and the Orient where he became a profound student of the occult religions. He came to believe in trances and suspended animation and developed a deep fear of what he called "espirit death."

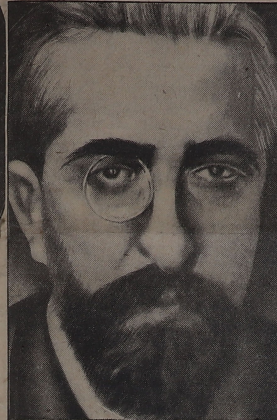
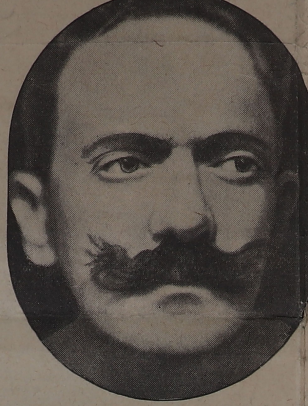
A few years ago the Italian Government appointed him director of the Italian School in Cairo, Egypt, where

he plunged even more deeply into mysticism. His health failed and it was brought back to Italy, suffering from heart disease. He was put in charge of the Technical Institute at Chieti and warned not to over-exert himself.

His health continued to decline. One day when his intimate friends the Rigonis were staying at the Consorti home, he called his wife and daughter and the Rigonis into his study and showed them a long, gold pin with a coiled serpent for a head. "I haven't much longer to live," he said. "I am not afraid to die, but I have a great fear of being buried alive.

—To the Left—
Professor Rigoni, Friend of the Dead Man and Husband of the Woman Who Fired a Bullet Into the Traveler's Heart.

—Below—
Professor Arnaldo Consorti, Traveler, Mystic and Student, Who Feared Burial Alive and Made His Wife and Friends Promise to Pierce His Heart After Death.



Because the Widow Lacked the Courage to Make Sure That Professor Consorti Was Dead, Mme. Rigoni, Her Friend, Who Is a Physician, Fired the Shot—and Was Then Brought Into the Courts.

You must swear to me that, when I die, one of you will thrust this pin through my heart." He seemed so earnest that all four of his hearers agreed to carry out his request.

When he died, six months later, his wife and daughter found them-

selves unable to fulfill their oath. And because the regards vows was sacred, performed the extraordinary "murder." She could not find the pin, so she used her husband's revolver.

The New "Straw Hat" Automobile

FOR many years residents of the Madeira Islands and tourists visiting that beauty spot of the northwestern coast of Africa, have complained of the discomforts of motoring over the island's picturesque highways during the hot summer months. The steel bodies and leather seats of the automobiles absorb the heat of the sun and make riding in them anything but enjoyable.

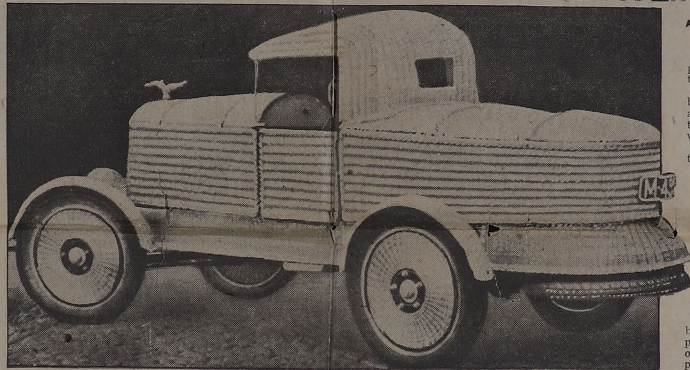
One enterprising automobile manufacturer, while on a visit to the islands, conceived the idea of making what he calls a "straw hat" automobile, a motor car with a heat-resisting body of wicker, through which the breezes can blow as the car rolls over the road. The tangible result of his sensible inspiration can be seen in the photograph at the right.

Even the mudguards and wheels of the car are fashioned of wicker, and the seat is covered with a porous material made of a tough grass. Even on the hottest days the machine is pleasantly cool to ride in.

Madaira is not, geographically, a tropical island. It is in the North Atlantic, and would not, under normal climatic conditions be uncomfortably hot. But at certain times of the year, and particularly in the Summer, it is swept by hot, dry winds that originate in the torrid wastes of the Sahara Desert, and travel across hundreds of miles of ocean to pester the inhabitants of the Madeiras.

The natives call this wind the "leste," and they dread its too frequent visitations. Strangely enough, its effect is worse in the islands' higher altitudes, where the temperature rises to a point well above 100 degrees Fahrenheit. Even on the seacoast, where the weather is usually tolerably cool, the mercury climbs to 95 degrees, and makes life distinctly unpleasant until the blow of arid heat is over.

Sometimes the "leste" is accompanied by great clouds of fine sand, the result of violent sandstorms in the desert, that stretches across thousands of miles of Northern Africa.



Automobiles in Use on the Madeira Islands, Where the Weather Is Very Hot, Are Being Made With Bodies of Wicker and Straw, Even to the Mudguards and Wheels.

Rio Grande To New York City In a Wheelbarrow At 10 Miles a Day



Ralph Hooper, Texas Farm Boy, and His Bull, "Jerry," on Which He Rode 2,700 Miles From Brownsville, Texas, to New York.

SOMEWHERE along the route from Brownsville, Tex., to New York City, a 21-year-old farmer named Walter Hooper, is pushing a wheelbarrow burdened with the weight of his pretty 19-year-old sister, Margaret. He hopes to complete the long trek by Christmas, and he welcomed to the metropolis by Mayor "Jimmie" Walker himself.

Farmer Hooper, whose acres skirt the famous Rio Grande, dividing line between the Lone Star State and Mexico, has another reason for his unusual manner of traveling to Manhattan—he wants to beat the time of Ralph Sanders, a fellow townsman of his, who recently rode from Brownsville to New York

on the back of a pet bull. Sanders completed the trip in 254 days, and was rewarded with a smile and a handshake from Mayor Walker.

Hooper believes that his manner of making the long journey is much more of a test of strength and stamina than riding on a bull, and he hopes for an even more enthusiastic reception than that accorded Sanders, who

averaged about 10½ miles a day during his eight and a half months' trip from the Rio Grande to the Hudson.

"It is my intention," said the barrow-

From Coal Pit to Paris Salon

ONE of the prettiest and most popular manikins in the fashion salons of Paris is Mlle. Gwen Evans, a dark-eyed brunette frequently taken for an unusually beautiful Spanish senorita.

Gwen never has been in Spain in her life, however, and it was only a few months ago that she came from her home in Cardiff, Wales, to work in the French capital. Less than a week after she disembarked from a Channel steamer she was wearing expensive gown in a salon on the world-famous Rue de la Paix and drawing a salary that seemed to her fantastic.

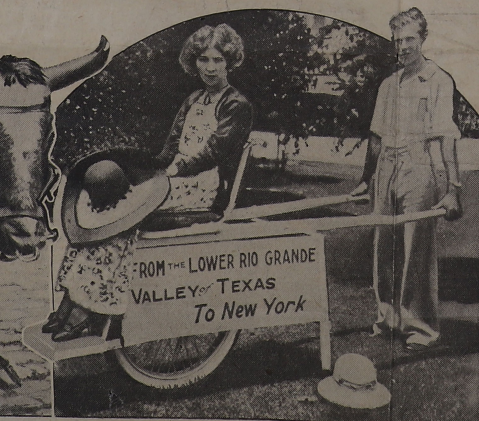
The Welsh girl was "discovered" by a French mining engineer, who saw her laboring in the coal pits of Cardiff. Even through the grime that covered her face and the rough clothes that she wore, the Frenchman could see that she was an extraordinarily pretty and graceful girl. He was, like all true sons of France, pained to see so much pulchritude being wasted, so he wrote to a friend of his, a prominent designer of fashions, and asked him if he could use a manikin more delightful to look at than any of the models then employed in his exclusive salon.

Several weeks later, the Welsh girl took off her soiled working clothes, put on her best dress and boarded a train for London. There she took a boat train for Dover, and, a few hours before she had time to adjust herself to the gay capital, she was one of the city's most popular manikins and had a "following" both of salon patrons and of discerning boulevardiers with an eye for beauty.

"I feel like Cinderella," said Mlle. Evans, "for it never occurred to me to leave Cardiff or the coal mines. All my family are miners and I expected to work in the pits until I became the wife of a miner. Perhaps I shall go back there, to live some day, but right now I never want to leave this wonderful city of Paris. It still seems wrong to take money for wearing pretty clothes."



Miss Gwen Evans, a Welsh Girl, Who Started Life in a Coal Village, Worked in the Pits, and Then, Because of Her Beauty, Became One of the Most Famous Manikins in Paris.



Walter Hooper, Texas Farm Boy, and His Sister, Margaret, Whom He Is Wheeling From Texas to Manhattan. They Are Now Somewhere on the Road, Following the Route Taken by Sanders, and Expect to Reach Times Square by Christmas.