


To Joan in Heaven

BY P. J. COLEMAN.

*And all the priests and friars in the realm
Shall in procession sing her endless praise.*

*No longer on St. Denis will we cry,
But Joan la Pucelle shall be France's saint.*

—SHAKESPEARE, Henry VI, Act I, Scene 6.


 HE lips that curse to-day the hero's fall
 To-morrow vote him laurels and applause ;
 Impartial Time doth justice unto all,
 No blindfold goddess she, of erring laws.
 Four hundred years of slander shrink dismayed
 Beneath the shrivelling fervor of her glance,
 And lo ! with praise of thee, O shepherd maid !
 Resound the stately sanctuaries of France.

For what is death, that men should fear to lose
 The labored drawing of a little breath ?
 Or what is life, that coward men should choose
 Its lease of pain before heroic death ?
 Thy country grovelled 'neath the tyrant's yoke,
 The Vision called, the Heavenly voices spoke,
 And faring forth without or doubt or pause
 'Twas thine to crown with victory her cause.
 Yet, oh, 'twas sweet amid the morning dews
 To range a-forest with thy lambs and ewes ;
 To watch the punctual miracle of spring
 And all the mystery of the blossoming
 Of violets, and claim sweet sisterhood
 With finch and linnet and the winged brood
 Of tuneful things in old Domremy's wood ;
 Or, when the wind, musician weird, awoke
 The pealing organs of the pine and oak,
 There awed in trance of reverence to hear
 The waft of angel pinions hovering near.
 And sweeter far were distaff to thy hand
 Than gauntlet or the grip of battle-brand,