

A VISION SPLendid.

"Marchons vaillamment sous la Bannière de Jeanne d'Arc."

It was midnight on Christmas Eve. The lamps glowed brightly before the altar, the tall candles gleamed as points of light, flowers and incense beautiful and fragrant told of homage to the King of Kings. In the side aisle the Crib, a centre of sweetness and light, unmistakably indicated the season, and, as the flute-like voices of the choir chanted the refrain, "Oh, come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord," it seemed that the angels of God ascended and descended upon the ladder set up from earth to Heaven. To the kneeling worshippers it was vouchsafed for a brief space to stand on the Mount of Transfiguration — to see the vision splendid.

Amongst the Heavenly visitants, each with attendant train, one most radiant compelled my attention — St. Jeanne D'Arc—

as in humble adoration she took up the refrain, "Oh, come let us adore Him," and her bright gaze turned to the Crib, where shepherds knelt before the Manger Throne at Bethlehem. Was she thinking of the fields at Domremy, where she too tended sheep, and in solitude absorbed the lessons taught by heavenly voices?

But why, I pondered, had St. Jeanne, the most beautiful of all these celestial visitants,

so few followers? And it seemed she heard the unspoken thought, for I too heard a voice — her voice.

"It was required of me, and those with me, to tread the difficult way, to be faithful unto death, though fidelity led along the path of great tribulation; but the disciple is not above

his Master. Him they crucified, and by fire and sword our souls found freedom. Some there be whose lives are quiet and uneventful, and in the path of duties faithfully fulfilled to the end find Him Whom their soul loveth; some there be who, devout in practice, yet "shrink when hard service must be done," and some, like Mr. Worldly Wiseman, try to make the best of both worlds—an impossible task, for if, by the mercy of God, they attain the Heavenly Vision, they are

'Consumed, yet quickened, by the glance of God.'

And in that illuminating moment they see relative values in their true proportion, and 'begin with

shame to take the lowest place.'

"There be some, also, whose path leads sometimes to the heights, sometimes to the depths, and who require grace and high courage—moral courage—to walk that lonely path aright, but it leads to the presence of the King."

Answering again my unspoken thought St. Jeanne said: "Yes, my path led that way. I



JEANNE D'ARC AU SACRÉ DE CHARLES VII.

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