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A table of contents for *The Churchman* can be found here:

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# THE CHURCHMAN

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ful"? In Ps. cxlv. 17 the A.V. reads, "the Lord is holy in all his works;" the margin adds "merciful or bountiful:" but the Revisers have discarded all three renderings and have unfortunately substituted the word "gracious." Is not this playing fast and loose with God's Word? Why should we not give to the English readers the benefit of a consistent rendering of important words? In Deut. xxxiii. 8 we read, "let thy Thummim and thy Urim be with thy holy one." Here the Revisers have substituted "thy godly one," and have put in the margin "him whom Thou lovest;" but in Ps. cvi. 16, where the same word is used in the same connection, the Revisers have kept in the text "the saint," and in the margin "the holy one;" thus they have ingeniously succeeded in obscuring the relationship between these references to a characteristic found in two of the priestly family. In 2 Sam. vii. 15 we have the title-deed of the House of David, and the word "mercy" is retained, and so in 1 Chron. xvii. 13; but, alas! the reference to these passages is lost by the substitution of the word "kindness" in 1 Kings iii. 6 and 2 Chron. i. 8, though retained in 2 Chron. vi. 42 and throughout Ps. lxxxix. The other most noteworthy passage where the word occurs is Ps. xvi. 10, still rendered "Thine holy one." We did not expect to find an alteration, but we looked with interest to the margin, where the reader will find "godly or beloved." Why not "merciful"? Is not Christ the embodiment of the divine mercy? Are not the sure mercies of David fulfilled in Him? Let the Greek Testament scholar read St. Paul's speech at Antioch (Acts xiii.); he will find the solution there.

R. B. GIRDLESTONE.

(To be continued.)

## ART. II.—SAINTS' DAYS IN THE CHURCH'S YEAR.

### VIII. AUGUST. GOSPEL AND EPISTLE FOR ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S DAY.

#### A. THE LEARNING OF HUMILITY.

"Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant."—MATT. xx. 26, 27.

"He that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve."—LUKE xxii. 26.

IT is remarkable that on two successive Saints' Days precisely the same moral lesson, and in nearly the same words, should be set before us in the appointed Gospels.

The occasions upon which the almost identical words were spoken were not the same; but it may be confidently asserted that Jesus Christ very often repeated the same words on various occasions. Again, when He did so repeat them, they have a special claim on our reverential regard. That there was such repetition in the present instance appears evident; and certainly no lesson is more worthy of being reiterated than that which we find in these two passages.

In the former instance it was when St. James and his brother St. John had ambitiously desired to be placed on the right hand and the left hand of the Lord in His<sup>1</sup> kingdom, and when the ten were made indignant by the request, that Jesus "called them to Him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." These words must have been deeply impressed upon those who heard them, and carefully remembered by them afterwards—especially when they were actually engaged in founding the kingdom of Christ. And with none of them would the impression be more serious and abiding than with the two brothers—with John, who was the last of the twelve to leave the earth, and with James, who (after Judas Iscariot) was the first.

In the second instance it was at the most solemn of all moments, even at the Lord's Supper itself, that there again occurred a dispute for precedence; and the Lord said once more, "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve." This saying seems to have been closely connected with the washing of the disciples' feet,<sup>1</sup> when the lesson of humility was impressed upon all of them, and especially upon St. Peter, by a parable in action which could never be forgotten.

This repetition in the appointed Gospels for two successive Saints' Days can hardly be accidental; and perhaps one reason of the arrangement is this, that the grace of humility here described is, above all other graces, characteristic of the Christian saint. There might also be a consciousness, on the part of those who drew up these services, that the circumstances of the case did not admit of any special or minute allusion to these two Apostles. Of St. James, separately from his com-

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<sup>1</sup> Luke xxii. 24.

<sup>2</sup> John xiii. 1.

panionship with St. John, we know hardly anything, except that he was cut off by an early and cruel martyrdom.<sup>1</sup> And concerning St. Bartholomew we possess no exact information, unless we identify him with Nathanael, which cannot be done with perfect confidence. Hence there is good reason, in this commemoration, for simply giving reiterated attention to this grace of humility, which should be the special object of ambition to everyone who aspires to be a Christian saint.

But what is *humility*? It is essential that we apprehend the right Scriptural meaning of the term; and mistakes are often made on this point. Thus it comes to pass that men fail to achieve good progress in the acquisition of this grace, because an erroneous view of the matter has been taken at the outset.

With many persons, when they think of humility, the one idea in their minds is of abasement before God, confession of unworthiness in His sight, of deplorable sin, and of exceeding corruption in the heart. All this is most true: and it is essential that all this should be acknowledged. But all this may be acknowledged fully and honestly, where yet there may be very little humility. In respect of unworthiness and sin, we are all on the same general level before God. "There is no humility in thinking ourselves no worse than our neighbours." We may be so conscious of the fitness of this general abasement before God, that we may become blind to the pride we are indulging in regard to them. Do we not remember the servant in the parable, who, after freely confessing the enormity of his debt to his master, immediately proceeded, on account of a very small debt, to seize his fellow-servant by the throat?<sup>2</sup>

The humility, of which the New Testament speaks so much, is humility in reference to man. The degree of this humility is ascertained by the estimate we take, or are willing to take, of ourselves in comparison with others. "The essence of humility," it has been well said, "is comparison." And now, without attempting anything further in the way of definition, let us ask ourselves four very simple questions, which are useful in helping us to a clear view of the way in which humility operates, and which thus supply a test for judging of our own position in regard to this most important matter.

1. First, do we readily recognise superiority in others, wherever we find it, whether this superiority be in the form of talent, or wider influence, or more justly deserved popularity? Are we willing to take the place which properly belongs to us, even though that place is not a very high one?

<sup>1</sup> Acts xii. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xviii. 28.

Can we, without grudging, see others above us? Can we rejoice in the success of one more eminent than ourselves? Can we promote his credit and his prosperity as cheerfully as we should our own? Have we that generous charity which "envieth not, vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up?"<sup>1</sup>

2. But, secondly (and this is more difficult of attainment), can we yield precedence to others who, on a really fair estimate, are *less* worthy than we are? Can we bear it patiently if a man, who is *not* our superior, is preferred before us? Can we bear to see him praised, when we are conscious that the praise ought to be more properly *ours*? Can we do useful work, and gladly allow others to have the credit? Can we thankfully acquiesce in those Providential arrangements, under which it constantly is brought to pass that "the last" becomes "first," and the first "last?"

3. And, further still, can we bear injury without resentment? With what beauty and what gentleness St. Peter—himself naturally a hot-headed and impatient man—sums up this side of the subject, in the later part of his life! "If, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow His steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth: Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously."<sup>2</sup>

4. And then, fourthly, are we able to take any place, however low, if in that low place we can do good? Many of us would be willing to do large service to others, if only we were admired and praised for it, and if, in the doing of it, we were conspicuous. But this is not humility. Again, this may be illustrated by the highest of all examples. Christ was among His disciples as one "that served." We have only once more to recall the scene when Jesus washed His disciples' feet; and His word and His example say to us, "If I, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one another's feet."<sup>3</sup>

These are four very searching questions. By interrogating ourselves in this way we find how very little real humility we have obtained. We see how contrary this grace is to the obstinate tendency of human nature; and, this being so, we see how characteristic it is of Christianity. This is not a virtue to which any of us are predisposed. And there are two other tests of a general kind which lead to the same conclusion. Other religious systems have recommended some

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xiii. 4.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Peter ii. 23.

<sup>3</sup> John xiii. 14.

virtues, such as temperance, fortitude, patriotism ; but this is quite peculiar to the teaching of Christ. Again, in the social life of mankind, whatever form it may take, there is always some kind of aristocracy. We cannot escape from this, however earnestly we may make the attempt. The characteristic aristocracy of the kingdom of heaven is an aristocracy of humility.

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#### B. SOLOMON'S PORCH.

*"They were all with one accord in Solomon's Porch."*—ACTS v. 12.

A very large amount of the historical and religious interest of the Jewish Temple was concentrated on that part of it which was popularly called "Solomon's Porch." This designation carried the mind back at once to the very beginning from which all this architectural work was dated. The name of the founder lived on at this spot through all successive demolitions and restorations. Something, too, of the original work of Solomon was actually to be seen there: certainly the substructure, consisting of those huge blocks of stone, which are so prominently mentioned in the Books of Kings and Chronicles, and which indeed can be seen to this day.<sup>1</sup> But probably more than this. In such a case, even when a great demolition has occurred, a considerable part of the ancient masonry is left; and, in rebuilding, the old is blended with the new. An obvious parallel is supplied by our cathedrals, in which, for instance, we can commonly trace portions that date from our early Norman kings, side by side with or in combination with conspicuous portions which rose during the reigns of the Plantagenets or Tudors, or which belong to a period even very recent.<sup>2</sup>

We must, indeed, be careful not to press the parallel too closely, or to imagine that the general architectural appearance of Solomon's Temple was similar to the general architectural appearance of an English cathedral. The differences were very marked, corresponding with diversities of climate and diversities in the mode of worship. The Jewish "Temple," taking the word in its widest sense, was a series of large courts open to the sky, and surrounded by handsome colonnades. The "Temple," in its narrowest sense, containing the Holy of

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<sup>1</sup> See "The Recovery of Jerusalem."

<sup>2</sup> Good instances are supplied in very different ways, by the Cathedrals of Gloucester, Chester, and Winchester.

Holies, entered once a year by the High Priest, was an extremely small building on the highest ground, in the midst of these courts. It is with the former that we have to do on this occasion. What was sometimes called "the Porch of the Temple" was a mere doorway or entrance to that small sacred building. What is here called "Solomon's Porch" was, strictly speaking, not a porch at all in the English sense of the word, but one of the large open colonnades that surrounded the courts.<sup>1</sup> We might compare it with one side of a cathedral cloister; but we must remember that it was far loftier, and larger in all respects, than the cloisters with which we are familiar. The Jewish historian tells us how Solomon built up the ground above the deep valley on the east side of Jerusalem, and on it erected the colonnade, which ever after recorded his name. And from the same source we obtain information concerning its dimensions and appearance, after the magnificent restoration by Herod, which was just fresh, and indeed hardly complete, in the time of Christ. The whole length of the four sides of the outer court was three-quarters of a mile. The eastern side was "Solomon's Porch." It was a vast gallery of columns in double rows. Each column, thirty-five feet high, consisted of one piece of white marble. The roof above was in panels of cedar-wood. The view through the columns, eastward and outward, ranged across the valley over the Mount of Olives. The inward view was into the court itself, which was planted with trees, and where, at festival times, there were crowds of people.

It is evident that such a place as this would be, for many reasons, a convenient and favourite place of concourse. Beyond any doubt, in the long progress of the Jewish annals, it witnessed many scenes of surpassing interest. Three such scenes are recorded for us in the New Testament itself. It cannot but be profitable to review them one by one; and this train of thought will bring us, by a most natural order, to the subject of the Festival which marks this month.

The first of these scenes is in the Gospel History. Our Lord Jesus is there the conspicuous figure. It was not very long before the close of His ministry. We read in St. John: "It was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter; and Jesus walked in Solomon's Porch."<sup>2</sup> The *time*, as well as the *place*, is worthy of attention, and also the *manner* of our Lord's appearance on the occasion.

At Jerusalem it is often very cold in winter, and often very wet. We know that even in the early spring, after that winter, when Jesus was brought before the High Priest, the weather

<sup>1</sup> See Dr. Edersheim on "The Temple," pp. 20-22.

<sup>2</sup> John x. 23.



was cold, and that Peter was glad to "warm himself by the fire."<sup>1</sup> Thus Solomon's Porch would be a place convenient for shelter, as well as easy of access and accommodation for a large number of people. There was certainly a large concourse then in Jerusalem and about the Temple Courts, for it was the Feast of the Dedication.<sup>2</sup>

At this time Jesus was "*walking*" in Solomon's Porch. There is much solemnity in contemplating Him walking here among the pillars of this famous colonnade, and it is interesting to compare this passage of the life of Jesus with a much earlier one, also recorded by the Evangelist. We read in the first chapter that Jesus was "*walking*"—in solitude—by the banks of Jordan, while John the Baptist and two of his disciples looked on.<sup>3</sup> Then, perhaps, the Lord was meditating on His great mission, on the beginning of His work, and on the calling of the first disciples which speedily followed in that place. Now, perhaps, He was meditating on the accomplishment of His work, on the destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish Temple, and on the doom of the Jewish people. The impression upon the mind is very serious when we think of Jesus, on either of these occasions, as walking in silence, whether by the banks of the famous historical river, or in this colonnade of the Temple, which, in another way, is equally famous in the sacred annals.

There is no space here for reflections upon the discourse which followed. At the close of it, as on an earlier occasion, they "took up stones to stone Him"<sup>4</sup>—some of the stones lying on the ground in connection with Herod's restoration, which in fact was hardly then fully complete.<sup>5</sup> As on that former occasion, "Jesus hid Himself and went out of the Temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by," so here we read that He retired, "escaped out of their hands and went away beyond Jordan." The next time He was in Jerusalem it was at the Great, the Last, Passover, when the cup of their guilt was full.

We now turn to the next mention in the New Testament of this part of the Temple. Two of the Apostles, Peter and John, as we read in the Book of the Acts, had gone thither at the hour of prayer. There, in the name and by the power of Christ, they had healed a lame man who had been a cripple from his youth; and then it is added that, while he clung to them with gratitude and joy, "all the people ran together

<sup>1</sup> Mark xiv. 54; John xvii. 18.

<sup>2</sup> For the original meaning of the Feast of Dedication, see 1 Macc. iv. 52-59.

<sup>3</sup> John i. 36.

<sup>4</sup> John viii. 59; x. 31.

<sup>5</sup> See Mark xiii. 1.

unto them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering."<sup>1</sup> And this assemblage became the occasion of one of St. Peter's great sermons, through which some of the first disciples were gathered in to the Church of Christ.

Here, then, is another of the memorable events connected with "Solomon's Porch." In some respects it was very different from the former. The weather was greatly changed. It was warm. It was not now winter. Whitsuntide, as we in England should say, had made the year bright and warm—far warmer than it would be with us—and this great cloister-walk would be frequented then rather as a shelter from the burning sun than from the rain and the cold. But, above all, great events had happened since our Lord had instructed and rebuked the Jews in that place. There had been the denial and the forgiveness of Peter; there had been the crucifixion of Christ; His resurrection; His ascension; and now was beginning the gradual growth of that Church which He had "purchased with His own blood."<sup>2</sup> Peter and John stand now as the prominent figures where Christ had stood before. They were the preachers in His pulpit. "Solomon's Porch" must have been, as it were, consecrated to them by the recollections of their Master. As an old writer remarks, His place had been "hanselled" by His servants, and they were now gladly following Him in the work He had appointed them to do.

So we come to the third instance where Solomon's Porch is mentioned in the New Testament, in the passage which sets its mark on our services for St. Bartholomew's Day. Again we find the Apostles assembled in this place "with one accord." It is probable that they often assembled there and preached there. "A greater than Solomon"<sup>3</sup> had been in that place; and the memory of their dear Master must have been constantly present to them as they walked among the pillars or addressed the people.

It seems as if at this time a peculiar awe and reverence had fallen upon the minds of the people. "Many sights and wonders were wrought among them by the hand of the Apostles;" and while they were with one accord in Solomon's Porch, "of the rest durst no man join himself to them, but the people magnified them." They were indeed arrested by the angry Sadducees and put in prison, but they were miraculously delivered; and again they returned to their work, and "daily in the Temple"—no doubt specially in this same part of it—they "ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ."

"Teaching and preaching Jesus Christ." Looking back on this scene, we appear to see here, in Solomon's Porch, the

<sup>1</sup> Acts iii. 11.

<sup>2</sup> Acts xx. 28.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. xii. 42.

beginning of that long succession of Gospel teaching and Gospel preaching which has gone on with more or less of purity, more or less of corruption, ever since. That group of Apostles has long since been dispersed. Some were put to death—the martyrdom of St. James, at a very short interval of time, is recorded first—others travelled into distant places and there died. Among these were perhaps Bartholomew, whom we commemorate in this month. We hear a little more of St. Peter and St. John, and then they disappear; but “their sound is gone out into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world;” and each crowded church, where Christ has been faithfully set forth in His love and His power, and according to the teaching of the Apostles, has become a “Solomon’s Porch.”

J. S. HOWSON.



#### ART. III.—THE “DE IMITATIONE CHRISTI.”

THE *De Imitatione Christi*, which we have lately heard was one of the few favourite books of General Gordon, was written in the year 1441. Its author, Thomas à Kempis, was born in the year 1380 at Kempen, a small town in the duchy of Cleves and diocese of Cologne. His parents, John and Gertrude Hæmmerlein, were people of humble life, but of this Thomas was never ashamed. Rather, like Luther in after days, he rejoiced in his lowly rank. From his father, who was an honest mechanic, he learnt industry, simplicity, and perseverance; and from his mother he received a heritage of piety, which became richer and more precious as the days went on. Even in tender youth Thomas must have evinced fine talents and shown an inclination for study, or his parents would hardly have thought of making him a scholar. The cost of education and subsistence away from home was altogether beyond their means. To young persons in such circumstances at this period the institutions of “The Brethren of the Common Lot” offered a helping hand; and in this way the Hæmmerleins were enabled to educate their son. At thirteen years of age Thomas was sent to the College of Deventer, then regarded as the Athens of the Low Countries, where his elder brother, John, had been resident for some years previously, under the instruction of the great preacher and scholar, Gerhard Groot. Here he made considerable progress in secular knowledge and in the knowledge of divine things. He read eagerly under the direction of Florentius Radewins,