

so may the word of supplication adapted to that day be heard as a continued and potent intercession.

**60. All the people of the earth.** Comp. ver. 43. His thoughts go beyond Israel, and his heart breathes the true prophetic desire that all nations may come to his name, and forsake their idols.

**61. Heart... perfect with the Lord.** The Hebrew word for perfect is here *shalem*, and suggests the idea of "complete peace and fellowship" with Jehovah. What higher or grander conception of the truly pious and upright man! *Walk... keep.* See above on verse 58. **As at this day.** Many hearts are full of zeal and piety on great religious occasions, but after the excitement is over they fail to walk in the statutes and commandments of God.

**62. The king, and all Israel.** The king had doubtless taken ample time to provide for a representative assembly of all Israel, and they came "from the entering in of Hamath unto the river of Egypt," ver. 65. **Offered sacrifice.** As the next verse more fully records.

**63. Peace-offerings.** The law for these is given in Lev. 7, 11-21, and provides that the flesh of such offerings for thanksgiving shall be eaten the same day that it is offered. Hence the offering of this kind of sacrifices was also the occasion of a joyful feast. **Two and twenty thousand oxen... hundred and twenty thousand sheep.** These numbers will not appear enormous when we consider that such an occasion as the dedication of the temple would probably bring several hundred thousand people to the capital, and most if not all of them probably remained during the fourteen days mentioned in verse 65.

In the study of Solomon's temple we may note:

1. The temple is a symbol of the Church of God, illustrating how and on what terms God will dwell with man and how man may dwell with God.

2. Its formal dedication formed a religious epoch in the history of the chosen nation.

3. In connection with the ceremonies Solomon appeared in the true character of theocratic king.

4. The noblest thing a king can do for his people is by example and precept to encourage them to a godly life.

5. Houses erected for the establishing and perpetuating of religious worship are a great national bond.

6. Great occasions should, when possible, be utilized for inculcating lessons of truth and righteousness.

## An English Teacher's Notes on the Lesson.

BY SARAH GERALDINA STOCK.

OUR Golden Text for to-day speaks of keeping silence. There are many kinds of silence. Let us look at four of these. There is (1) the silence of awe—as, when the storm rages, the thunder waxes loud, and the lightning flashes on all sides, the merry voices cease; the laughter is hushed for a time. Then there is (2) the silence of attention and expectation—as when a person comes in who has some news to bring for which all are eagerly looking, or some thrilling tale to narrate which all are anxious to hear. There is (3) the silence of abasement and confusion—when some fault has been committed and there is no longer any possibility of hiding it, no excuse that can be advanced, nothing to urge in extenuation. And there is (4) the silence of submission: when the opposition to the will of another is at length given up, the adverse arguments dropped, and entire surrender made. With one or more of the silences every Sunday scholar must be familiar.

But what is the occasion of the silence spoken of in the Golden Text? It is this: The Lord is in his holy

temple, and therefore the "whole earth" is called upon to "keep silence before him."

It may be asked, why? since heaven is "high above the earth," far off—remote—a place beyond our sight and beyond our ken: if indeed by "holy temple" is meant heaven. If we turn to Psa. 11, 4; Isa. 63, 15, we shall find that heaven is indeed meant. But by "heaven" the Scriptures understand no far-away region, but the place whence the Lord looks down upon this world (see Psa. 14, 2; 33, 13, 14), the place from which he orders all things on earth (comp. Psa. 93, 1, 4), a place where infinite interest is taken and concern in what happens here. Job 38, 4, 7; Luke 15, 7. So the Lord being in "his holy temple" would be, if I may use the comparison, like the king being on his throne, the ruler at the seat of government, the owner on his estate, the father in his home. And therefore the call: "Let all the earth keep silence before him."

What has this to do with the passage for to-day, describing the sequel to Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the temple at Jerusalem? It has this first: that that temple was a type and sign of heaven brought down to earth, in the person of Christ (comp. John 2, 19, 21; 3, 13), and of earth exalted to heaven in the position given to the saints of God. Eph. 2, 6; 21, 22. But upon this I have not space to enlarge.

And it has this secondly: that the silence or silences due to the presence of God, and called for in the Golden Text, are all illustrated for us, in the narrative of what followed the prayer of Solomon.

1. If we turn to 1 Chron. 7, 1, we find that Solomon's prayer was immediately followed by the descent of fire from heaven upon the burnt-offering, thus hallowing it as formerly the altar in the wilderness had been hallowed (Lev. 9, 24); and the "glory of the Lord filled the house." When the people saw this they "bowed themselves with their faces to the ground." There is a moment of silence—the silence of awe and adoration, called forth by the sight of God's glory.

2. After this comes Solomon's address to the people. And here the king fills (for the time) the office of priest, and is the type of Him who came to be a "priest upon his throne." Zech. 6, 13. The silence of attention is given by the people to the words that fall from his lips as he speaks of the faithfulness of God (ver. 56) the insufficiency of man (vers. 57, 58), the sufficiency of God (vers. 59, 60), and the responsibility and duty of man (ver. 61).

3. Then come the sacrifices, in such enormous quantity that the altar is not enough to receive them. Now what is the fundamental idea of sacrifice? The unworthiness and guilt of man before God. See Luke 5, 1. Here, then, we have the silence of abasement, the silence which is equal to a confession of sin and an abandonment of self-righteousness.

4. Then lastly comes the feast kept by all the people of Israel, after which they returned to their homes "joyful and glad of heart." The very core and essence of the rejoicing was this: that they were the people of God; his absolutely and entirely, not their own. The silence of submission was at the root of this gladness.

The silence of awe we all feel at times; we cannot help it; it is kept involuntarily by those who are not living in obedience to God. I have read of a man whose life was given to deeds of lawlessness, that a sublime view from a mountain-top hushed him into reverent awe, and drew from him the words, "I believe there is a God." But this is not enough. Jas. 2, 19. We are bound to give him the silence of attention and to hear what he has to say to us. Psa. 50, 7. Where this is done truly and honestly it will certainly cause the silence of