

*There could have been none but Jews present, for to reach this court it was necessary to pass through the Chel or terrace surrounding the actual buildings of the Temple to which, as is well*



*The Healing of the Lame in the Temple.*

J. J. T.

known, Gentiles were not admitted. The Temple at this early hour is full of the poor; the rich with their wide phylacteries and their gorgeous fringes will arrive later. In the distance can be seen the semi-circular steps of the Degrees, or Psalms, at the base of which devotees danced with torches in their hands at the ceremony of water-pouring at the Feast of Tabernacles. Originally this Festival was celebrated by a mere procession; but later, with a view to making it more impressive, specially decorated torches were introduced, and, as with all such customs, abuses gradually crept in. The Talmud refers to certain eccentricities of behaviour which drew considerable attention on those who practised them. Ben Joades, for instance, boasted of the extraordinary leaps he took at the celebrations of festivals. We are also told that Ben Simon ben Lakist danced whilst juggling eight golden torches at once without letting them touch each other or dropping a single one. He bent his knees, linked his thumbs together, turned a somersault, and with a rebound stood once more upright, which reads, as will strike everyone, like a description of some modern acrobat's dangerous feats. In these festivals, moreover, if we are to believe the Talmudic accounts, there were singers who did wonderful things with their voices: a certain Higras, we are told, had an immense variety of melodies in his repertory, and, by putting his thumb in his mouth as he sung, he produced such extraordinary modulations of sound, that his brother Priests held their heads in both hands in their astonishment. This