

pen to tell the story. But for all who know and love the word and who fully yield themselves to be filled with the Spirit it is written, "Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savor of his knowledge by us in every place." "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." This is practical; you can test it and prove it.

But this high plane of life is not the place to find what the world calls happiness. Those who choose it find what Stephen found—often persecution and suffering; always the joy of fellowship with Christ, power to influence men, a spirit of love and forgiveness toward all who oppose or differ from them, an open vision of heaven, a joyful assurance of being received into the presence of Jesus the moment the body falls asleep in death. Compare this with what the world calls happiness, and see which best deserves the name. Phillips Brooks says: "If duty brings sorrow let it bring sorrow. It is the joy of service that makes the life of Christ; and for us to serve fellow-man and God as he served fellow-man and God, whether it bring pain or joy. If we can only get into our souls the thought that it matters not if we are happy or sorrowful if only we are dutiful, faithful, brave, and strong, then we shall be in the atmosphere, the great company of the Christ," and, too, in the great company of St. Stephen and all the martyrs of former and latter days.

The early Christians would not allow themselves to be called martyrs. They lost the sense of the stoning mob and the suffering body in the vividness of their spiritual vision. In the Church calendar the dying day of St. Stephen is called his birthday, and is placed near Christmas, the birthday of Jesus. The thought is both beautiful and true. Because He lives we shall live also. Death for the Christian is only the gateway to life. For you, my class, I pray:

"O, may thy soldiers, faithful, true, and bold,
Fight as the saints who nobly fought of old,
And win with them the victor's crown of gold!"

The Teachers' Meeting.

SUGGESTIVE OUTLINES. I. 1. Stephen Standing Before the Sanhedrin; 2. The Scene Outside the City Gates. II. 1. The Exasperated Sanhedrin; 2. Stephen's Vision; 3. The Murder of Stephen; 4. The Consequent Persecution; 5.

The Reaction of Feeling. .III. The Spirit of the Church: 1. A spirit of equal love to all, Hellenists and Hebrews; 2. Boldness in denouncing error; 3. In harmony with the Spirit of God; 4. Pervaded by the truth of the Holy Scripture; 5. Gifted with divine insight; 6. Turning persecution into a means to spread the Gospel. IV. A Character Study: 1. Stephen. (1) "Full of the Holy Ghost;" (2) Lifted above earthly pains; (3) Personally cared for by the Lord; (4) Full of forgiveness and charity; (5) Peaceful while in the hands of a mob; (6) Leaving a precious memory; (7) Successful through failure. 2. Saul. (1) A leader by congenial superiority; (2) Sincerely prejudiced throughout; (3) Failing even in his success.

SUGGESTIVE LINES OF THOUGHT. 1. Palestinian Jews and Hellenists. 2. Reasonableness of the dissatisfaction concerning the distribution of funds. 3. The qualities of church officials. 4. Why Pharisaic hatred centered on Stephen and spared the apostles. 5. Analysis of Stephen's address. 6. Causes for alienation of popular sympathy from the Church.

Blackboard.

BY THOMAS G. ROGERS.



Stephen was a man who lived in deeds rather than in years. His generous service, unwearied zeal, and fearless defense of truth indicate his usefulness to the struggling Church, yet his enemies were permitted to put him to a cruel death. When falsely arraigned he pleaded the cause of God rather than his own, and charged home the unsoftened truth with an earnestness and energy that enraged while it convicted his jurors, and in the extremity of their wrath they stoned him to death. So died the first Christian