

the ears (ver. 57,) with a cruel death. And all this was followed by a hot persecution of other witnesses. Does this look discouraging? It is just what our Lord had foretold. "When the Comforter is come....ye also shall bear witness....they shall put you out of the synagogues," etc. John 15. 26, 27; 16. 1, 2. The world is slow to accept testimony, even on earthly matters. It has calumniated and persecuted those who saw further than their fellows into the mysteries of science, such as Roger Bacon, Galileo, and others. Shall we wonder if it rises up against a testimony to unseen things which brings all its own reckonings to nothing—if Christian meekness, patience, and forgiveness are branded by it as weakness, cowardice, folly? Rather beware of a supposed witness-bearing which calls forth no opposition.

4. What was the fruit of Stephen's witness? First, The dispersion, by persecution, of believers, and the preaching of the word. Second, The career of the great apostle of the Gentiles. Third, The voice which proceeds from that death-scene, sounding out to all ages an echo of the Lord's words, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." If a believer will witness truly and faithfully for Christ, Christ will take care of the fruit. It will come in his own good time. A brave English officer half a century ago refused to pay homage to some idolatrous form of Hindu worship. For this he was dismissed from the service! But his witness bore fruit. The wicked custom that demanded the payment of such homage by our soldiers in India was from that time laid aside. The world needs more martyrs of this sort. And Christ will own them when he shall come "in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

#### BEREAN METHODS.

##### Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

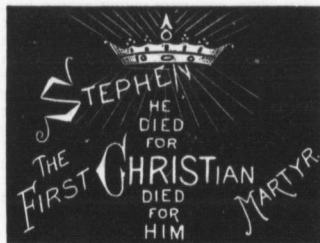
Begin with the picture of the scene: Council with angry faces in a double semicircle, sitting; Stephen standing with face of an angel; Saul in the crowd looking on.... The purpose of Stephen's speech. (See General Statement.).... The facts of the lesson..... The place of Stephen's martyrdom; draw map and show traditional localities.... Show to the class the picture of Damascus Gate in Lesson Commentary.... The method of stoning amongst the Jews.... A second word-picture, the scene at the stoning—Stephen; crowd; witnesses; Saul; above, the opened heavens.... The spirit of Stephen as here shown—what traits?.... The Spirit of the slayers.... The spirit of

young Paul: 1. Energy; 2. Leadership; 3. Perverted conscience; 4. Determination.... The third word-picture: the Church after Stephen's death—slaughter, scattering, etc.... What blessings of persecution are here shown?.... ILLUSTRATIONS. Instances of martyrs in the Bible—Zechariah. 2 Chron. 24. 20-22; James the apostle. Acts 12.... Instances of persecution—Jezebel, Manasseh, Herod, etc.... In the Tower of London may be seen instruments of torture used in the ages of persecution.... Accounts of martyrs in the Reformation—Ridley, Latimer, Cranmer, etc.... Hymn No. 231, Methodist Hymnal, is the one sung by Jerome of Prague at the stake.... Persecution is the wind which scatters the seed of the word, and gives it space for greater growth.

**References.** FOSTER'S ILLUSTRATIONS. Vers. 55-60; Poetical, 4018, 4019. Ver. 56: Prose, 1718. Ver. 58: Prose, 4398. Ver. 59: Prose, 10,133, 11,827. Ver. 60: Poetical, 3741; Prose, 1350. Ver. 2: Prose, 7803, 10440. Ver. 4: Prose, 9160.... **FREE-MAN:** Ver. 55: Testimony given standing, 661. Vers. 55, 56: Post of honour, 686. Ver. 58: The outer garments, 205. Ver. 58: Executions outside the gate, 727.

#### Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, REQ.



Draw the crown with yellow crayon, the name of Stephen in red. The words "he died for" and "died for him" should be of one colour. The letters forming the name of Christ will look best made with white crayon shaded with blue; all the other words and letters should be one colour.

Another blackboard design, and one formerly published in the BANNER, is a cross, and above it a crown. The word "here" is written before the cross, and the word "there" before the crown.

#### Primary and Intermediate.

BY M. V. M.

**LESSON THOUGHT.** "He that loses his life shall find it."