

6. The dying saint shows a likeness to Christ in his last utterances, and the spirit of Christ is praying for his enemies. v. 60.

7. The dying saint passes away in peace, and falls asleep in the arms of his Saviour. v. 60.

8. The death of the saint, though mourned by men, is precious in the sight of God. v. 2.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

2. *What is your body?*

My body is this outward frame.

3. *What is your soul?*

My soul is that within me which thinks and knows, wishes and desires, rejoices and is sorry—which my body cannot do.

There is a spirit in man; and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.—Job 32. 8.

Who teacheth us more than the beasts of the earth, and maketh us wiser than the fowls of heaven.—Job. 35. 10, 11.

ENGLISH TEACHER'S NOTES.

The word "martyr" is so connected in our minds with suffering, and is so often faultily used to designate a mere sufferer, that we are apt to overlook its original meaning, which is simply a "witness." The revisers of the New Testament have helped to keep this in notice, as they have retained the old translation "martyr" in but one of the three passages in which it formerly occurred, namely, in Rev. 17. 6. Stephen is now simply called the "witness," (Acts 22. 20.) and Antipas, "my faithful witness." Rev. 2. 13. The word "martyr," however will always mean, first and chiefest, one who has borne witness for Christ unto suffering and unto death.

And of these Stephen is the first. The apostles had borne noble and powerful witness for Christ before him. But to Stephen it was first given to seal that witness with the sacrifice of his life, and thus to head the long roll of those whose blood has always proved itself "to be the seed of the Church." Yet the difference between his witness and that of any obscure but faithful follower of Christ is one of degree only. And although comparatively few are called to lay down their lives for the Master they serve, all may learn something from the history of this first "martyr."

Let us ask four questions.

1. To what did Stephen bear witness?

(a) *To unseen things.* He testified, like the apostles, of "Jesus of Nazareth," who had been crucified—testified of him as living, and ruling, and working—as the Lord, having power to order his Church, power to forgive, power to save, power to receive the

souls of his servants into glory. This is the witness needed in the world. We all know something of the things round about us here, of worldly work and wages, demand and supply, profit and loss, pain and pleasure. But these things are temporal. It is the unseen things that are eternal. 2. Cor. 4. 18. At death we must part with the things seen. Men, and women, and children want some one who will tell them of the unseen, eternal things.

(b) *To things of which he himself had experience.* Hearsay is of little use when we come to things unseen. The question is, Do I know something of Him whom none can see? Has He revealed himself to my heart? Has He saved me, blessed me? If so, I can witness of Him. But not otherwise. Geographers at home made maps of the interior of Africa as they supposed it to be. But their witness was wrong. And when travellers who had been to see for themselves returned home they told a very different tale. If we would give a true report of Christ, we must know him ourselves.

2. What was the most powerful witness borne by Stephen?

There will be but one answer to this. It was not his eloquent speech, nor his convincing arguments. It was not even the signs and wonders done through his instrumentality. What is it that arrests our attention as we read his story? It is the "angel face" which he opposed to the frowns of his enemies. It is the calmness with which he met their fury. It is the steadfast look up to heaven, which was rewarded with that wondrous sight of the Lord in glory. It is the confident "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." It is the prayer offered up with his latest breath for those who had murdered him. In all this there was no learning, no talent, no skill, no superiority of intellect; nothing that is beyond the reach of the simplest believer. Yet it was a witness that could not and cannot be borne but by the power of the Spirit. Stephen "being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven."

Many who will never be called to actual martyrdom may bear this witness. It will suit the home, the school, the workroom, the crowded street, or the chamber of suffering. No testimony can be borne to any physician so powerful as the healthy appearance and easy movements of the patient he has cured. It is not the handsome casing of a musical instrument, but the sweetness and fullness of its tone, which proves the skill of the maker.

3. How was the witness of Stephen received? With opposition, with contradiction, with anger, with fury, with stopping of