

lated by another because we have never enjoyed a similar experience. It is an obvious fact that some men are able to penetrate more deeply into the secrets of the physical world than others. A great mathematician can reason about the forces which play in the universe in such a way that very few can follow him. A great man of artistic temperament goes into ecstasies over a scene in which a less sensitive person sees nothing out of the common. We do not doubt that the things which the mathematician knows and the artist feels are really in nature though we may not perceive them. We accept their testimony, partly because they have no reason to deceive us and partly because of the effect on them of their vision. Why should we doubt that Stephen here and that Saul afterwards saw the risen Saviour? They have no reason to deceive us, and the effect of the one vision was a heroic death and of the other a transformed life.

Calling upon the Lord (Rev. Ver.), v. 59. Stephen gives us the first recorded instance of prayer directly addressed to Christ. But this was beyond question the universal

practice of the early church. In the address of Paul's first epistle to Corinth are the words: "With all that call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." Early in the second century, one of the leading features of the new sect as it appeared to an intelligent pagan was that "they sang an hymn to Christ as God." Canon Liddon has shown that in the Liturgy of the Church of England there are 193 devotional addresses to Christ. From its very commencement the church has held that Christ is divine, and this doctrine has been the sheet anchor of its faith.

Lord, lay not this sin to their charge, v. 60. God's attitude to sinners is a willingness to forgive. If you refuse to forgive your fellow-sinner you set yourself in opposition to God, and until you lay aside that opposition, there can be no forgiveness for you. There are two considerations which ought to make it easy for us to forgive those who do us wrong. One is that God, as in the case of Joseph, over-rules the wrongdoing of men for the good of His people and cause, and the other is that God, for the sake of Christ, has freely forgiven us.

POINTS AND PARAGRAPHS

By the Associate Editor

To know one's sin is not always to hate it. v. 54.

The upward look makes the fearless heart. v. 55.

While Christ stands, His servants cannot fall. v. 55.

Heaven's music needs the listening ear. v. 57.

A merciful heart is better than a faultless observance of forms. v. 58.

The believing soul finds its home in God. v. 59.

The Christian should be a reproduction of Christ. v. 60.

The believer will have a joyful awakening from the sleep of death. v. 60.

The post of honor is the post of danger. ch. 8: 1.

There is no fatal sin but the sin of unbelief. Even these murderers of God's Son

might have been saved if they had listened to Stephen and turned to the Saviour whom he preached.

"He heeded not reviling tones,
Nor sold his soul to idle moans,
Though scorned and mocked and bruised
with stones.

But looking upward full of grace,
He prayed and from a happy place,
God's glory smote him on the face.

The death of Stephen is the New Testament "translation," and he is to be set as the third with Enoch and Elijah, only higher, inasmuch as each manifestation of God rises while time moves on. It is a greater thing to overcome death than to be carried past it, and here is no fire-chariot which lifts to heaven, but the outstretched hand of Christ, according to His own word, "I will come again and receive you unto Myself, that where I am there ye may be also."—Dr. John Ker.