

Saturday Night Talks
By F. E. DAVISON
Rutland, Vt.

A PATTERN SAINT.

Feb. 21, '09—(Acts, chaps. 6-7).

Stephen's biography is all condensed into two or three chapters, and as we read it we are impressed with the fact first, that he had a good name in the community. As the Scriptures put it, he was a man of honest report. Many a man's religious profession is discounted because he does not bear a good name in the community. His life speaks louder than his words. Those who have had dealings with him pronounce him "crooked." People have no confidence in his piety. He is believed to be two-faced. He is regarded generally as serving God for what there is in it. His loudest and longest prayers have the brazen clangor of brass, they make about the same impression as tinkling cymbals, no depth, no body to them. It is worth everything to a professor of religion, to have a good name in the community. Men can overlook defects of grammar but they abominate defects of character. They may be vile themselves, but they know virtue when they see it. And the world demands that those who claim to be New Testament Christians shall at least have the respect and confidence of those who know them best. They must have a good name, either preserved in rectitude of life, or won by straight-forward, upright behavior after a life of wickedness. There are many obstacles thrown in the way of one who is honestly striving to win a good name, but it is bound to be won if he is aiming for it.

Must Have a Level Head.

It is said of Stephen that he was full of wisdom. That does not mean that he knew everything or that he always did the right thing, but it does mean that he was level-headed. Some men who are otherwise good men meet with a good deal of trouble because they are invariably "putting their foot in it." They stop over, they can always be depended upon to do the wrong thing. Their hearts are in the right place, but their heads are erratic, and since they go at everything head first they are too often like a bull in a china shop. They intend to do right, but their fingers are all thumbs, they have no tact, no fine sense of judgment, no discrimination. Such men ought to pray that God would make their heads as soft as their hearts, that He would give them sanctified common sense, that the helmet of salvation might never have its visor lifted as was that of Goliath, when David found the only vulnerable spot on that Hittite unprotected. It is a good thing to have brains, but it is better to have less brains and more common sense than to have great brains. Real saints have level heads.

Must Be Man of Faith.

It is also said of Stephen that he was full of faith. The men who have done the most for this world have been men of faith. Not necessarily evangelical faith, but men who were great believers. Some men show more faith in their disbelief than others do in the eternal verities. No man would lift a finger to pry into mysteries, to solve problems, to perform prodigies, to influence the ages if he was not moved by mighty faith. Stephen was a great believer. He believed that Jesus Christ was what he claimed to be, that the church was what its founder said it was, that the principles of religion were as axiomatic as geometry, and acted accordingly. And no man will ever amount to anything as a disciple of the Nazarene, who does not have that bed-rock of implicit faith planted in his soul. Character can not be built on a bank of fog; you cannot grow an oak tree in a flower pot.

Must Be Bible Student.

Stephen was full of the Scriptures. One of the best sermons in the Bible was preached by him. It is second only to the Sermon on the Mount. They put him on trial, but they never would have done it if they had anticipated such an outcome. When asked to plead guilty or not guilty, instead of making a personal appeal the prisoner opened his mouth and poured out such an evangelical gospel sermon as had not been heard in Jerusalem since the Day of Pentecost. It swept everything before it like a tidal wave. Such men as that are rare. Multitudes of Christians know more about politics than they do about Palestine, know more about the stock market than they do about salvation, know more about the newspaper than they do about the Bible. Hence, any little 2 by 4 infidel can tangle them all up in five minutes.

Now to be a saint it does not follow that everybody will love you. They did not love Stephen; they stoned him to death as a heretic. It is no particular credit to a man to say that he never had an enemy. That could not be said of Jesus Christ, and the disciple is not above his Lord. If you oppose sin, you will arouse its enmity. Stephen sealed his testimony with his blood, but the young man who held the garments of his executioners never got over that sight, until he accepted the testimony of the first Christian martyr and became the mightiest preacher of the ages—Paul, the apostle. And Stephen lives forevermore in the life and work of Paul.

REFUSE BURNING BASKET.

Device for Getting Rid of Household Accumulations.

"Oh, my! Whatever shall I do with all this rubbish?" exclaims the housekeeper, beholding a miscellaneous collection of papers, scraps and pasteboard boxes, the roundup of the regular weekly cleaning. "The ashman declines to take anything



but ashes, the rubbish man picks out only such as he can find use for, and the second-hand man will have nothing but the whole papers, and they must be clean at that." This little monologue may be heard most anywhere. The conditions are about the same in any city of large or medium size. There is a great deal of accumulated material around a house which is quite difficult to dispose of. It might be burned, but an effort to dispose of the mass in an ordinary stove would more than likely lead to disaster, even if the stove is of suitable proportions to accommodate the collection. Most of them are not. The housekeeper's quandary has led to the invention of a model device to be added to the equipment of the household. It is a refuse destructor, in which the accumulations of the household are to be disposed of by burning in the back yard without danger. The destructor is a basket of wire built on an iron frame, supporting it several inches above the ground. Into this the household accumulations are dumped, as well as the sweepings. A match applied soon reduces a big pile to a handful of dust. Such a device solves completely the problem of the disposal of a great deal of material.

Inquiry of Home.

It is only a little thing, but it makes a lasting impression, and that is the way some people make it a point always to ask after a certain member of the household. It may be the invalid mother, or father, or a convalescent child, or perhaps the baby. Just who is the subject of inquiry makes little difference, but the fact that a friend recognizes that your home life centers, for the time, more or less around one member is pleasing.

There are some good friends who never think to make inquiries about any of the family. It is impossible not to contrast them with those who are quite the opposite in their thoughtfulness. One person never fails to ask how near relatives are. She realizes how close the ties are. Does such an inquiry make the day brighter? Indeed, it does.

Glass Shelves.

At very little cost one can have a neat glass bathroom shelf made with nickel or porcelain brackets to hold the collection of bottles, brushes and salve pots that the modern woman includes among her toilet requisites. These shelves are sold in an assortment of sizes and are made of thick plain glass with rounded corners. A few of the self labelled drug and toilet bottles that are now offered at prices ranging from thirty-five cents up will be useful to hold toilet water, tooth wash and the other essential aids to cleanliness and daintiness.

The Odor of Paint.

Every one knows that an onion has a distinct and unpleasant odor, whether cooked or raw. But every one does not know that this odor of an onion will draw to it every other disagreeable odor and clear the atmosphere in a day. The onion can then be thrown away and with it goes the disagreeable smells that come about in a house that has been closed for the summer.

And this is also a good thing to know: That it will absorb all the odor from fresh paint and turpentine.

Housework Mittens.

Kitchen mittens can be bought in several thicknesses and sizes for various branches of housework. There are thick ones with straps across the wrist to wear when polishing the range, then there are others to put on when scrubbing floors or sinks and still thinner ones with chamois cloth insides to use for polishing silverware. These mittens are a great protection to the hands and finger nails, and they really simplify the work more than those women who have not availed themselves of this convenience realize.

Towel Rack.

We hang our dish towels on an ordinary wooden curtain pole, which is fastened with brackets at the top of the kitchen wainscoting and extends along one side of the room. There is length enough for several towels, and the whole extends only a couple of inches into the room.

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