

"BURDENS."

BY ERNEST GILMORE.

Christie Duncan sat lost in thought, an unhealed of thing for that usually thoughtless, merry-faced girl. An elderly gentleman who had remained all night in the Duncan mansion had led family worship that morning. It had proved a revelation to Christine. She watched him as he read from the Book of books. Her eyes were full of admiration, for she had the eye of a true artist for a beautiful picture. Unmistakably he made a beautiful picture. Possessed of a fine face, enshrined in that crown of glory, silver hair, with eyes expressive of mighty intellect, purity and clarity to all men, surely he was well worth looking at. Clearly, it might be, he finished the reading with the verse, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."

Then such an earnest, beautiful prayer followed, explaining involuntarily, as it were, the meaning of bearing one another's burdens, that Christine felt lifted up in some strange, unexplainable way. But she felt very much ashamed, very down hearted just now, sitting by the window. "I've never borne the least part of any one's burdens. I do believe; what a burning shame for a girl of my age to say!" was her unspoken thought.

"There never seemed any particular burden to bear at home. We are wealthy and mamma has always had a maid. Papa is away all day, and don't seem to care for anything much except rest when he comes home evenings. Then besides that I am generally over to Floy Rathbone's evenings. It's pleasant there, and here it's lonely. I wish the two children who died when they were little had lived, then I'd have some burdens to bear just as Floy has. I wonder how it would seem to wash little faces as Floy does. But then if they had lived, probably mamma would never want me to wash faces; she would employ nurses for that."

A sad look overshadowed the bright face as Christine began to realize her uselessness. Unshed tears were in her blue eyes as she thought.

"I would like to fulfil the law of Christ. I want to bear some one's burdens. I must try to think where to go."

Ned, the canary, sang on; Christine, unheeding, thought on, and then a prayer, the first real prayer, simple yet full, was uttered.

"Father forgive me for leading so thoroughly selfish a life. Show me, I beseech of Thee, how to bear another's burden." This was her prayer and the answer soon came, a light dawned.

"Oh! what a blind girl I have been," she said sorrowfully. "Here I've utterly ignored the burdens in my own home. I'll begin here with papa. Now, as I think seriously, I believe papa has many burdens. He looks pale, worn, and weary."

"That evening as Mr. Duncan left the street-car at the corner and walked toward his home his heart was very heavy. He was tired and going home. Why did not his face brighten? Because he was weary of the same old routine. He knew it by heart. He would let himself into the front hall with the help of his night key. A dim light would be burning there but no one in sight. Then he would throw aside his heavy coat, his hat, and overshoes and make his way to the library, which was never lighted until he came and struck the match. His wife would be up in her room and Christine either in hers or over to Floy Rathbone's; he would see them at the table a half-hour later, when Dorcas had supper ready. Then after supper he would return to his library, his wife would run over to some of the neighbors' or perhaps to her room, and Christine would entertain callers in the parlor or busy herself in some out-of-the-way corner. That is the story he could have told you, but then he would not; Mr. Duncan was too proud a man to let the world know that his home life was not quite satisfying. He had some unhidden thoughts as he walked along.

"Wallace Mayne wanted me to join their 'club' this evening. They've been fitting up the rooms in crimson satin upholstery, have new chandeliers, and an elegant new wine service, cut-glass and silver. He says they have jolly times there. Ah! what am I thinking of? Pah! what does a sober family man like me mean to be thinking of a 'club' like that?" And a look of pain came into Mr. Duncan's eyes. He reached his own door, put the key in the lock but did

not turn it; the door was opened for him by Christie who greeted him finely.

"You look cold and tired, papa," she said, kissing him. "Let me help you out with your coat."

"What does it all mean, dear?" Mr. Duncan asked in a sort of dazed way, which made Christine's heart ache, although she asked merrily, "What does what mean, papa?"

"Why, everything—you here to meet your father, the bright hall, the sitting-room and library all aglow. Have you company, Christie?"

"Not unless you call yourself company, come into the sitting-room, papa."

Mrs. Duncan was there with a smile upon her face. "Christie has everything ready for you this time," she said.

Mr. Duncan glanced around. His large chair stood near the grate, the foot-rest conveniently near. Christie stood holding his dressing gown, while his slippers were warming on the hearth. Rich and influential though he was, this home attention was something new to him. As he sat down there were tears in his eyes. He put out one hand; Christie was beside him, half-laughing, half-crying. "O papa! I never in my life felt so ashamed and humbled, to think such a trifle of attention from a daughter is so new an occurrence as to surprise you. Can you, will you forgive me?"

"If there is ought to be forgiven, you are forgiven, dear child. I am a happy man to-night."

After supper Christie read the evening paper for her father. Home had never been so sweet before.

"You have saved my eyes some hard work, my darling; the paper is almost too fine print for me."

"Then count on me every night, papa."

The days rolled on, Christie learning new lessons in burden-bearing. The opportunities were many, now that she had open eyes and loving heart. She found that her father enjoyed all her little attentions. She could play, sing, or read to him as he desired. Sometimes a plate of fruit with a napkin and knife were waiting for him, sometimes a dish of nuts and raisins, sometimes a laughter-provoking article was marked specially for his benefit, and through it all he could feel his daughter's love, and life grew easier.

Then, too, Christie helped her mother bear her burdens. The weak, grieving mother grew stronger in character until she became in deed and word a true helpmeet.

"We can't bring the children back, mamma," Christie reasoned, "but we must live so as to go to them."

There was burden-bearing in the kitchen, too. Nora was overjoyed when one day Miss Christie enquired kindly about her friends and dressed a doll gaily with blue silk and lace for her sister's little crippled child. As for Martha, the chambermaid, she looked upon Miss Christie as almost a saint. She told her friend Biddy King, "Shure an' didn't she take the bonnet that almost crazed me thyrin' to trim it decent an' fix it elegant wid her own pretty fingers; an' didn't she cut up two of her very own dresses an' make the swatest clothes for poor Mike's gurrils; an' didn't she talk so swate an' be so kind that poor Mike gave up the drink intirely. Ay, she did. Mike's a sober fellow now. Blessin' on her."—National Temperance Advocate.

"ETERNITY."

"A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver." (Proverbs, xxv., 11.) The following incidents will illustrate the above text:

"I never can forget that word which was once whispered to me in an enquiry-meeting," said a pious man once to a friend. "What word was it?" It was the word eternity. A young Christian friend who, yearned for my salvation, came up to me as I sat in my pew, and simply whispered, 'eternity,' in my ear, with great solemnity and tenderness, and then left me. That word made me think, and I found no peace till I came to the cross."

"A single remark of the Rev. Charles Simeon on the blessings which had resulted from the labors of Dr. Carey, in India, first arrested the attention of Henry Martyn to the cause of missions. His mind began to stir under the new thought, and a perusal of the life of Brainard fixed him in his resolu-

tion to give himself to the dying heathen."

"It is said that Harlan Page once went through his Sabbath-school. Coming to one of the teachers, he said: 'Shall I put you down as having a hope in Christ?' The teacher replied, 'No.' Then, said he, very tenderly, 'I will put you down as having no hope.' He closed his little book and left him. That was enough. God gave that young man's soul no rest till he found a hope beneath the cross."—Rev. J. F. Whiteley.

HINTS TO TEACHERS ON THE CURRENT LESSONS.

(From Peloubet's Select Notes.)

March 18.—Acts 7: 54-60; 8: 1-4.

ILLUSTRATIVE.

I. "Wickliffe and his doctrine." In obedience to the order of the Council of Constance (1415), the remains of Wickliffe were exhumed and burnt to ashes, and these cast into the Swift, a neighboring brook running hard by, and "thus this brook hath conveyed the ashes into Avon, Avon into Severn, Severn into the narrow seas, they into the main ocean. And thus the ashes of Wickliffe are the emblem of his doctrine which is now dispersed all the world over."—Fulber's Church History.

"The Avon to the Severn runs,  
The Severn to the sea;  
And Wickliffe's dust shall spread abroad,  
As wide as the waters be."  
Bartlett's Familiar Quotations.

II. "The spread of truth through persecution. (1) Persecution is like scattering living seeds over the ground in spring, in order to destroy it; (2) like scattering burning firebrands over the city, in order to put out the fire; or (3) like snuffing the clapper against the sides of a bell to stop its noise.—P. (4) The banner which hangs in idle folds in the sultry stillness of the summer noon, is unfurled by the wintry wind, and men may see in the latter case the emblem and inscription which were invisible in the former. (5) Here is the real Phoenix; for when its enemies have thought they have burned it, in burning its preacher, it has risen from the flames with new strength of wing to take a wider and a loftier flight.—W. M. Taylor.

PRACTICAL.

- 1. Verse 54. Fidelity to truth may provoke antagonism.—Taylor.
2. Conviction of sin, if it do not produce conversion, will enrage the heart against the truth, and the preacher of the truth.
3. Verse 55. Jesus is ever watchful over his disciples, and ready to aid them.
4. Our brightest visions often come in our hardest trials, as Jacob saw his vision from a pillow of stone.
5. Verse 58. Words that seem to have been in vain are not always fruitless. Stephen failed in his defence, but Paul was converted.—Taylor.
6. Verse 59. To pray to Christ is to pray to God. There are three advantages in praying to Christ: 1. He may be approached with less dread; 2. He may be more easily apprehended; 3. It tends to impress us with the importance of the station which he holds in Zion.—Pres. E. D. Griffin.
7. Verse 60. The Christian wishes only good to his enemies.
8. The Christian never dies, but falls asleep to awake in heaven.
9. There are many martyrs who are unknown to the world, crucified on unseen crosses, burned in invisible flames, stoned with reproaches, temptations, sneers; but each one shall receive his crown.
10. Verse 1-4. Persecution of living Christians spreads the truth.
11. The Christian should preach the Gospel wherever he goes—in business, in pleasure, at home.
12. The more men oppose the truth the more it grows.
13. "All at it, and always at it," is the mark of an active Church.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

Stephen's name means "a crown." In this lesson we find his three crowns. The subject may well be the cross and the crown. (1) The crown of Christ's approval and visible presence, verses 54-56. (2) The crown of martyrdom, verses 57-60. Who are martyrs, and what their reward? (3) The crown of great results in a wider spread of the Gospel, verses 1-4. The great crown is to see the work we love prosper, and the world receiving the Christ we adore.

PUZZLES.

STAR PUZZLE.

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From 1 to 3, walked; from 2 to 4, rered; from 3 to 5, portrayed; from 4 to 1, tidy; from 5 to 2, something often seen on a boy's hand.

PROGRESSIVE WORD-SQUARE.

- 1. An extinct bird.
2. A perfume.
3. A girl's name.
4. By word of mouth.

NUMERICAL ENIGMA.

I am composed of 27 letters.
My 21, 3, 15, 23 is separated or parted from.
My 25, 14, 5, 8, 19, 9, 17 is an unaffected person.
My 1, 20, 18, 6, 24 is a liquid substance.
My 12, 26, 2, 7, 1 is an expression of contempt.
My 10, 13, 22, 27 is a cheap kind of food.
My 11, 16, 25, 4, 18 is a substance used in making bread.
My whole is a familiar quotation from Shakespeare.

LETTER PUZZLE.

Words with first two letters the same, each of which, when cut off, leaves a word.
1, morbid baldness; 2, not plentiful; 3, to escape; 4, to affront; 5, to chide; 6, amplitude of view; 7, an account; 8, a discontented look; 9, anything thin or lean; 10, to cry out; 11, a wooden rule.

SCRIPTURE ACROSTIC.

A wise man.
One struck dead for disobeying God's commands.
A Roman governor.
A musical instrument mentioned in Daniel.
A great reformer in Old Testament times.
A bird spoken of in Leviticus.
A grandmother.
Saved from death by God.
A pious New Testament child.
A book of the New Testament.
A wild beast spoken of in Hosea.
One who restored a dead child to life.
Christ's own city.
A sacred mountain.
A prophet who spoke very plainly about the person of Christ.
A liquid measure in Leviticus.
A shepherd.
An officer of the king of Persia.
Grandson of Adam.
A leper.
Birthplace of Paul.
An animal used for sacrifice.
A spice growing in Ceylon.
A son of Joktan.
Official title of a butler in the court of Nebuchadnezzar.
One of the greater prophetic books.
A river in Persia.
A Christian at Laodicea.
A metal brought by the Tyrians from Tarshish.
The eleventh stone in the High Priest's breast-plate.
One who chose the good part.
One of Paul's first converts in Achaia.
The primals form an injunction of Christ.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES.

ENIGMA—Rainbow.

DIAMOND—

P
L I C
L I L L E
P A L M Y R A
C L Y D E
E R E
A

HIDDEN AUTHORS—1. Keats. 2. Stowe. 3. Tolstoy. 4. Verbe.

SUBTRACTION PUZZLE—

Chorally—coal.
Gladiate—gilt.
Blackberry—baker.
Reindeer—ride.
Fairness—fins.

ENIGMA—Geranium.

WELL-KNOWN NOVELS—1. Iyrboc. 2. Penderis. 3. Block House. 4. Middlemarch. 5. Lothair. 6. Sevenoaks.

Answers to some of the puzzles have been received from Sara Bell McKinnos. J. H. M. sends a geographical puzzle of her own composing but neglected to send the answer. Will she kindly do so, giving her full name, and will other puzzle workers follow her example and contribute to this column.