

## AMY AND BESSIE;

OR,

BEARING ONE ANOTHER'S BURDENS.

CHAPTER V—Continued.

LESSONS.

longing, so that she might be there with her friend and cheer her up a little." And then with a playful smile she added, "Did Amy bear any part of Bessie's burden?"

"I never thought of that, mother," said Amy.

"No, I know you didn't," said her mother. "Well, what was the other part of the text, Amy? Read it over, my dear."

And Amy read again:—"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."

"Yes," said Mrs. Joy, "the law of Christ is the law of love. It was the law of His whole life. He loved us, and gave Himself for us; He took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses. He loved us so much that every sorrow of ours was a burden to Him. And this law of love which He followed, He expects us to follow also. 'A new commandment,' He says, 'I give unto you, That ye love one another: as I have loved you that ye also love one another.' And if we do so, Amy, we show by that we are really His disciples. There," she added, with a smile, "is a little sermon for you, Amy."

Amy thought it was a very nice one. She was just going to say so, when voices were heard at the garden gate. Mrs. Joy looked up from her work.

"Why, Amy," she said, "here are the girls! Let them in, dear. I thought they were all at home by this time."

"Come in, May; come in all of you!" said Amy, as she opened the door. "Oh, but let me look at your flowers. How beautiful they are! Don't they smell sweet?"

She was so taken up with the flowers that it was a minute or two before the girls could get in.

"Why, girls," said Mrs. Joy when they did, "I thought you were all at home before this time."

"So we should have been, ma'am," said May Sunley, "only we wanted to bring Amy some flowers first." And Fanny Goode came forward with one of the two bunches they had made up in the fields.

"There, Amy," she said, "as you couldn't go with us we thought you would like to have



SPREADING FLOWERS ON BESSIE'S GRAVE.

some of these flowers, so we've made up this nosegay for you."

"Well, that is kind of you!" said Amy. "How nice they are! I may give a few of them to Bessie, mayn't I?"

"There!" cried May, laughing, "didn't I tell you she'd be wanting to give them to Bessie as soon as she'd got them? Oh, we know you, Amy, we know you! But I'll tell you what we've done: we've been to Bessie's, and taken her a bunch exactly like yours. There, now you'll be satisfied, won't you?"

Well, Amy certainly seemed so. She did not know how to thank them enough.

The girls now began to take their leave of Mrs. Joy, who told Amy that she might as well go a little way along the lane with them; her father was expected home, and she would no doubt meet him on the road, and could return with him. Amy only stayed to put her flowers into a jug of water, then away they all went, as happy, it seemed, as though they were only beginning their holiday instead of just ending it.

## CHAPTER VI.

"FOLDED IN THE SAVIOUR'S ARMS."

The spring was passing into summer, and poor Bessie was drawing near her end. The trees whose budding she had watched with so much interest were now rich with foliage; but she had not noticed them. The swallows—her little friends the swallows—had come back to their nests above her window; but she had scarcely heard their twittering. Her favorite rose tree, the one she had planted with her own hands, was now full of beautiful flowers; but she had not seen it. In the meadow before her window—where she had seen the first daisies peep out from the ground, and the first buttercups open to the sun—the scythe had been at work, and grass and flowers lay low like herself; but she knew nothing of it. Poor Bessie! she was past taking notice of these things now.

It was half-holiday again at the village school; but the children did not come trooping out as they were used to do, with merry

shouts and ringing laughter, for Amy had told them with tears how much worse poor Bessie was, and how the doctor had said that he feared she could not live the day through. So the girls parted sorrowfully at the school door and went quietly home. They could not play! Even Polly Selve had no heart to think of play! Amy did not go home when she left school. Her mother had told her to go straight to Bessie's, as she herself was going there to stay with Mrs. Lorn till the evening. When Amy arrived she found her mother busy with household matters, and poor Mrs. Lorn sitting by the bedside, gazing with tearful eyes at the suffering child. Poor Bessie! how changed she was, even since the morning!

"I'm afraid she won't know you, my dear," said Mrs. Lorn, sorrowfully, as Amy drew near, "she has been wandering dreadfully all the morning. But speak to her, Amy, she may perhaps remember you."

Amy bent lovingly

over the bed, and whispered softly—

"Bessie dear!"

Ah there was music in that sweet voice to recall the wandering mind. The weary eyes opened slowly, and looked enquiringly around until they rested on her little friend. Then a change passed over that pallid face as if a ray of sunshine had broken in upon it, and the little hand moved slightly on the bed. Amy knew what it meant. Oh, yes, yes, Amy knew. If that poor wasted arm could but have been lifted from the bed it would have been thrown lovingly around Amy's neck. If those pale lips could but have uttered the thought within they would have murmured, "Dear, dear Amy!"

But the arm was powerless, and the lips did but slightly quiver. Amy took the little hand in her own, and tenderly kissing her dear little friend, put up a silent prayer to God to make her happy even now. As she raised herself again she noticed that the lips still moved, though no sound escaped them.