

Family Reading.

The Charge of the Heavy Brigade.*

BALAKLAVA, OCT. 25TH, 1854.

BY ALFRED TENNYSON.

The Charge of the gallant Three Hundred, the Heavy Brigade! Down the hill, down the hill, thousands of Russians, Thousands of horsemen drew to the valley—and stayed.

The trumpet, the gallop, the charge, and the might of the fight! Down the hill, slowly, thousands of Russians Drew to the valley, and halted at last on the height,

Fell, like a cannon shot, Burst, like a thunderbolt, Crashed, like a hurricane, Broke the mass from below,

But they rode, like victors and lords. Through the forests of land and swords, In the heart of the Russian hordes They rode, or they stood at bay;

Glory to each and to all, and the charge that they made! Glory to all the Three Hundred, the Heavy Brigade!

*The three hundred of the Heavy Brigade who made this famous charge, were the Scots Greys and the second squadron of the Inniskillings, the remainder of the Heavy Brigade subsequently dashed up to their support.

Select Serial.

THE KING'S SERVANTS.

BY HESBA STRETTON.

CHAPTER XIX.

MY BROTHER AND I.

It is I, Millicent Carr, who have written down the foregoing narrative, from the lips of Mrs. Transome herself, scarcely venturing to alter a word in them; yet now and again retouching them, as fondly and carefully as one brushes away a speck from a portrait that we love.

And now that the time is come when the whole is completed, and the past has orb'd into the perfect star, we saw not when we dwelt therein; and I can look back at it, with eyes still dimmed with tears, and see it shining with a brightness that grows more and more unto the perfect day—now I am ready to tell you myself all that is lacking to finish the history Alice Transome began.

First of all, then, you must be told how empty and dreary my own existence had become, even before I had fairly passed through my girlhood. My brother, George Carr, was suffering from a spinal complaint, which would make him for life a prisoner in his own room.

Our house was a detached dwelling; one of those places in Brompton, presenting a blank side to the road, and surrounded by high walls over which no passer-by can catch a glimpse of the interior. It had been bought by my father purposely for George, who could be carried out upon the lawn, when the summer was hottest, and lie there under the rustling leaves of the elms, where the birds chirped drowsily from their hiding-places amidst the foliage.

But all this wore out my girlhood. The long seclusion made me shy and formal: and it had become difficult, if not impossible, for me to form any friendship, should the chance come across me. I did not know how to respond if any stranger spoke to me, except on mere matters of business.

By the time I was five-and-twenty, I felt as old as many women are at fifty. All the possibilities of my life seemed exhausted; and only a vast barren wilderness stretched before me, which made me shudder as I looked forward, and saw nothing between me and the far horizon except a level flat, threatening a perpetual monotony and weariness.

'Milly,' said George to me, one day when he was unusually well, 'you and I need more interest in our lives. What do you say to adopting a child?' 'Adopting what?' I cried, feeling sure I had not understood him aright.

'A child!' he repeated: 'a boy, I think; for if he were too noisy and boisterous, we might send him out of the way when I could not bear with him. So far as I can see, there is no chance of your getting married, my dear, is there?'

'No, George,' I answered, laughing, yet with a little bitterness and regret in my secret heart. It would have given me pleasure to have had at least the chance of marrying; but I had never

had any, and was never likely to have now. 'If you had a child to think of,' he went on, 'you would feel younger again; and, perhaps I should as well. I fancy I should like to watch a boy playing in the garden, or hear him whistling about our quiet house, or coming in from school every evening.'

'But there are your bad days,' I objected. 'Well! I really think I give way to my bad days,' he said; 'but when I cannot bear a noise, he must stay out of hearing somewhere or learn to be quiet for awhile. At any rate, we could try it for three months; we should know by the end of that time.'

We talked it over for a day or two; and the plan took deeper hold of us both, until at last I wrote out an advertisement, similar to some I had seen in the Times, and sent it to that paper. I had often been struck by the number of benevolent persons who offered to adopt children; so I followed their example, and waited with great anxiety for the answers.

There were a good many of them; very peculiar ones I thought most of them. But as nearly all the children offered to us were babies, I had to reply stating more particularly what we were looking for. After that I had several very extraordinary persons coming to the house, with boys of different ages, who did not at all answer my expectations. I began to think that our plans must fall to the ground.

But one morning a letter in a child's writing, a large, round hand, with very shaky upstrokes and downstrokes, slanted all ways, came to me by post. I opened it with some curiosity, and read it aloud to George.

'My father is Captain John Champion, and he's gone to see a long while ago, and never came back. I am living with Mrs. Brown in castle street, Burn Side, Lankysheir, and go to School, were I lerne to rite and read. I will try to be good, for I no Jesus loves me, and wants me to be good. Pless let me cum for 3 months, and see how you like me, and if I am a good boy. I was eight years old last birthday, and father's been away 3 years, and long wile. he told me be good and tell the truth, till I come back, and I am going to do it. I want to lern a grate deal before he comes back again. I am philip, at mrs. browns, castle stret, Lankysheir. I havent any mother or brother, or sister, only father; and mrs. brown ses she must send me to the yreuson if father dosant come home soon. I am very sorrrie and tritened.'

Poor little letter! and poor little writer! We laughed; but we did not care to meet each other's eyes, for fear of seeing tears in them. It happened that my brother's doctor came that very day; and it turned out that he had some friends in Burnstone, to whom he offered to write about the boy. This gentleman saw Mrs. Brown, and Philip Champion, learned the boy's story, and gave us so favorable an account of him, that I forwarded money and directions to the woman to send him up at once to me in London.

I remember that the day Philip came was one of George's worst days. From early in the morning he had been lying in a stupor, if it could be called a stupor, which was miserably sensitive to every sound; and I had been sitting with him, at his feet, facing him, so that he could see me without stirring. Both of us heard Thomas leave the house, about the time when the train which brought the child was due at Paddington; and both of us heard him come in again about an hour afterward. But neither of us spoke or moved. George lay like one dying, and I sat still with a sinking heart, as I dreaded to hear the shrill voice of a child breaking through the profound silence. I began to fear that neither of us had counted the cost as we should have done.

But the silence was not broken. The twilight came on, and George slept a little while. When he woke up again, he spoke in quite a blithe and cheerful tone. 'It's past, Milly,' he said; 'one more day is gone forever, thank God! Now run and look at your boy, and send Thomas with my tea.'

CHAPTER XX.

ONE OF THESE LITTLE ONES.

I was glad to move, for I was stiff

and cramped with my long watch. Very heavy and bowed down I felt; and my heart was heavy with the thoughts that had passed through my brain during the day. How many days there were in every year! and how many years in a lifetime! My spirit seemed cramped as well as my body, and I could not force it out of its attitude of dull melancholy and foreboding. How long were we to bear the burden of such lives as ours? I could not even wish to see the child I sent for. I went into my own room, and had tea there alone, shrinking from the charge I had undertaken. I felt a desire to send him away again without seeing him. It seemed to me, perhaps because I was brought into personal contact with so few people, that to see any of our fellow creatures involved us in a new and stronger relationship toward them. When we awake from our dream of death, and our open eyes look upon Him who has loved us, and in whom we have believed though we saw Him not, what new tenderness and discipleship, strengthened a thousand-fold, will spring up in our hearts for Him!

But I could not send the boy away unseen. Martha waited upon me very slowly, and coughed a short irritated cough now and then as if about to speak, but I would not give her the opportunity. After I had finished my tea I put off going down stairs as long as I could, and then I went reluctantly, looking forward with dismay to the three months trial we had partly promised to the boy.

I opened the door of the dining-room so gently, from long habit, that the child did not hear me. A blazing fire filled the grate, but there was no other light. He was sitting in my father's large old arm chair, drawn in front of the fire; and his curly little head was resting on his hand, as he gazed dreamily at the glowing embers. There was a wistful subdued quiet about his face and posture that went straight to my heart: He was waiting patiently, that was evident, for something unknown to come to him. I did not think, as Mrs. Transome did, of the one Blessed Child, who has made all children's lives sacred; but his face called to my mind those angel faces to be seen in the pictures of the old religious painters.

As I paused on the threshold, the boy became-conscious of my presence, and slipped down from his high seat; crossing the room on tiptoe, and speaking in a whisper almost too low for me to hear.

'Is he better now?' he asked: 'have I made any noise?' The earnest, uplifted face was so winning, that I bent down, and pressed my lips to the soft cheek as fondly as if it were no new face to me. Ner did it seem new. That old trick of the brain which makes us feel as if we could dimly remember the present in the long-forgotten past, brought to me the sensation of having looked upon it, and cared it in some former life.

'Yes; he is better now,' I said, sitting down in the chair he had left, and taking him on my knee, 'and you've been as quiet as a little mouse.' 'I knew he'd be better soon,' he answered, with a beaming glance at once shy and merry, 'because as soon as that man told me he was ill, I asked God in a minute to make him better. I knew God would do it.'

'Are you sure of it?' I asked; for it had been plain to me long ago that our prayers were too feeble to reach the ear of God. 'Sure!' said the child, 'why! isn't he better? You only asked to see what I'd say. My mother told me God is everywhere, and I must ask Him for what I want, just as I asked her. I was a very little boy then: but I've never forgotten it.'

'You must never forget it, Philip,' I said. But had not I forgotten it! Was there not within me the lurking unbelief that God was so near as to catch every whisper, nay, even to see my thoughts afar off! I leaned back in the chair, with my arm about the child, who knew so little of me, yet trusted me so simply that already his face was bright with a smile as he looked up to me. Was it possible that I might so lean upon God of whom I knew so little, and look up into his unseen face with a trust as full? Was his arm really about me, as mine was about Philip?

'If you love me,' he said, 'and let me live here till father comes home, I'll try to be very quiet and good. Mrs. Transome said you'd be sure to love me if you hadn't a heart of stone. You haven't a heart of stone, have you?'

'I hope not,' I answered, stroking his wistful face. 'Nor him that's ill?' he continued; 'it frightened me to think of you having hearts like that you know. But Mrs. Transome promised me if you had, she'd let me go and live with her in her little house, where there's a big old loom. I used to go to her school; and she taught me for nothing; only father's to pay well when he comes back.'

'But suppose he never comes back,' I suggested, gently. For there was no hope left that Captain John Champion was alive; and I wished to wean the child from a false idea that might give him continual sorrow. The little face clouded for an instant; the bright eyes shone through tears; and the beautiful lips trembled. Only for an instant, however. A smile broke out again, with something pathetic and incomprehensible about it, which made me ready to weep over the child's faithful love for his father.

'He will come some day,' he said, in a quiet, firm voice. 'He will come back again. I've never forgot to say, "Please God take care of him all this day," when I've awoke in the morning; and, "Please God take care of him all this night," when I've gone to bed. Father told me to do it; and I've done it always. God is taking care of him; and he's sure to come some day.'

Ought I to have reasoned with him? I had not time then; for Thomas came to say that my brother wished to see the boy. I waited a minute or two to tell Philip when he was going to visit, and how many years he had been ill; and how he had been suffering that very day. His bonny face grew grave and serious; and he trod along the carpeted hall with a careful and silent step. I wondered what he would think of George's white, worn, face, and low voice. He entered the room with me, unconsciously clasping my hand more tightly; but the moment he saw George, he stole forward on tiptoe again, and put his hand down softly on his pillow.

'Are you very ill?' he asked, in a low tone. 'Very,' answered George; and so you are come to be our boy, are you? 'If you love me, and let me stay,' he answered, 'Have you never asked God to make you quite well again?'

'Yes, thousands of times,' said George as gravely as the child had spoken. 'Then He knows it's best for you to be ill,' said Philip, 'but He loves you all the same, you know. Mrs. Transome says, He won't give us just what we ask for; and we must learn to be content, because He knows best. I asked Him for a pony ever so long, and He did not give me one; but it isn't because He does not love me: He chooses for old Transome to have bad pains, and old Transome says he'll be faithful to God in spite of them, for God had been faithful to him. When God chooses, it's all for the best, Mrs. Transome says.'

'Yes,' said George, holding the boy's small, brown hand in his thin, white fingers, 'and I must learn to be content too.'

It's like learning lessons,' Philip went on, in his clear young tones, 'Mrs. Transome told me so. It's just like learning our A B C. Sometimes I forgot A and knew B and C; but I was obliged to go back to A, you know. It took me a whole week to learn all the letters; that was a long while.'

'Yes, it is a long while,' said George, but I knew he was not thinking of the child's lessons in the alphabet. No, it was his own harder task he was looking at. I am afraid we had both forgotten our first faith in God's love; and now we were sent back to it by the simple teaching of Philip, so that we might begin again a child-like life in his Kingdom.

'Milly,' said George, after the boy had gone away under Martha's care. 'God has sent us one of His own little ones.'

'It is not right to spoil a golden wedding,' was the ground on which a Missouri judge recently refused a divorce in a case where the parties had lived together forty-nine years.

Noble Courage.

A poor boy was attending school one day with a large patch on the knees of one of his trousers. One of his school-mates made fun of him for this, and called him 'Old Patch.'

'Why don't you fight him?' cried one of the boys. 'I'd give it to him if he called me so.'

'Oh,' said the boy, 'you don't suppose I'm ashamed of my patch, do you? For my part, I'm thankful for a good mother to keep me out of rags. I'm proud of my patch for her sake.'

This was noble. That boy had the courage that would make him successful in the struggles of life. We must have courage in our struggle, if we hope to come out right.

Scripture Enigma.

- No. 164. Find the following names, arrange them in order, and find in the initials an injunction given by John the Baptist: 1. An ancient city on an extensive plain. 2. An ancient garden. 3. One of the three Hebrew captives. 4. A Midianite chief. 5. The likeness of the first beast in one of Daniel's visions. 6. One who could dissolve doubts. 7. A title given to Nehemiah. 8. One who plotted evil against the Jews. 9. The Eunuch who drew Jeremiah out of the dungeon. 10. An evil name applied to one of the kings of Babylon. 11. The Chamberlain of Ahasuerus. 12. The mother of Cyrus. 13. Jeremiah's scribe. 14. A plain where Nehemiah was requested to meet his enemies. 15. A musical instrument used in the worship of the golden image. 16. One sent to explain the vision to Daniel. 17. One of the priests that sealed with Nehemiah. 18. The first Median king in Babylon.

CURIOUS QUESTIONS.

- Unfinished Prayer. -331. The following prayer is said to have been written in 1639. Complete the lines so that they rhyme two and two: Oh, that mine eyes might closed —, To what concerns me not to —; That deafness might possess mine —, To what concerns me not to —; That truth my tongue might always —, From ever speaking —; That no vain thought might ever —, Or be conceived within my —; That by each deed and word and —, Glory may to my God be —; But what are wishes? Lord, mine — On these is fixed, to thee I —! Wash, Lord, and purify my —; And make it clean in every —; And when 'tis clean, Lord keep it —; For that is more than I can —. 332. Transliterations. 1. Take a discoloration, change the letters and make a smooth silken fabric. 2. Take a competition, change the letters and make a piece of ground, change again and make caution. 3. Take a thick piece of wood, change the letters and make a halt, change again and make a mark. 4. Take something at rest, change the letters and make a capability.

Find answers to the above—write them down—and see how they agree with the answers to be given next week.

Answer to Scripture Enigma.

No. 163. Abijah, Ahaz, Hezekiah. 2 Chron. xxviii, xxix.

ANSWERS TO CURIOUS QUESTIONS. 323. Three brothers and two sisters—1 Sam. ii. 21. 324. Asked of God. 325. Joash—2 Chron. xxiv. 8. 326. 2 Kings xvii. 24. 327. Meshalemeth—2 Kings xxi. 19. 328. 6. Ezra iv. 1-5. 329. S. R E D R I V A L S E V E R A L D A R E D L A D L

- 330. Word building. Ate, late, elate, relate, prelate. TWO ACROSTICS. Read these texts of Scripture and you will find in them divine truth such as the person whose name the initials form, illustrated in her daily life: John ii. 2. 9.....Job xii. 9, 10..... Amos v. 4, 8.....Acts x. 42, 43..... Numbers xi. 2, 3.....Nehemiah vi. 3, 9. Exodus iv. 11, 31.....Ephesians i. 17, 18. Timothy i. 15, 16.....Titus ii. 13, 14..... Samuel ii. 2, 9.....Song of S. iv. 6, 16. Micah vii. 18, 19.....Mark iii. 21, 35..... Isaiah i. 18, 19.....Isaiah iii. 10, 11..... Thess. v. 9, 10.....Titus iii. 4, 5..... Habakkuk iii. 17, 18. Hebrews iv. 15, 16.