

The Eastroyds and the Murwoods

BY SARAH SELINA HAMER, IN THE 'ALLIANCE NEWS.'

(Chapter VI.—Re-union.—Continued.)

Soon after six one bitter December morning Dr. Hasleham was roused from a sound sleep by the loud ringing of the night-bell close to the head of his bed. Hastily throwing on a dressing gown he went downstairs, to find that his services were needed for his brother-in-law, Edward Eastroyd. Some mill folk, on their way to work, had found him lying on the footpath between Clapperton and his home, and he had been carried by them to the latter place. He had presumably left the 'White Hart' at closing time, and being much the worse for drink had reeled and fallen. From some cause, probably the same, he had been unable to raise himself again. At least, such was the presumption, for he was in an unconscious state when found. A strong scent of alcohol from his breath had, however, told its own tale.

Lucy had also been roused by the ringing of the bell, and as he quickly dressed the doctor explained to her what had happened.

'It would have been a serious thing for any man to have lain exposed all night to this bitter cold,' he said: 'but for a man in drink, and with a weak heart—indeed with Edward's condition generally—I cannot help fearing the worst.'

'I will get up and follow you,' said Lucy. 'Poor Annie, what a shock for her!'

'It will be better for you to wait until after breakfast,' said the doctor; 'though I promise to send for you at once if I find you can be of any service.'

Annie Eastroyd had long since ceased to wait up for her husband, and on the previous night having been suffering from a slight attack of neuralgia, she had mixed herself so strong a 'nightcap' that she had herself fallen into a sleep little short of what might be truthfully termed 'drunken.' In consequence of that she had not missed her husband from her side, and only awoke when the loud ringing and rapping of the men who had borne him home roused the whole household. Dazed and frightened at the loud talking below she was sitting up in bed when the housemaid came into the room.

'Oh, ma'am,' she cried, 'they've brought master home; they've found him i' the road, an' he's as cold as a stone, they say—nearly gone, he is.'

Annie sprang out of bed, a cold spasm of fear gripping her heart.

'Are they to carry him upstairs? They want to know, said Betsy.'

'I suppose so,' said Annie, in a bewildered manner.

'See, ma'am, I'll carry your things into the blue room,' said the housemaid; 'and then they can come.'

And shivering with physical cold and nervous agitation Annie followed the maid into an adjoining room, and there dressed as speedily as she could under the circumstances, and with the sound of that dreadful trampling up the stairs, which always accompanies the bearing of a heavy, helpless burden, falling upon her ears.

Annie's love for Edward Eastroyd, never of a very deep nature, had not survived his neglect of her. Still, he was her husband, and no woman with any heart in her at all could remain unmoved by such a catastrophe as this. And when at length she stood by his bedside and saw him lying there, so utterly helpless, some stirrings of the old tenderness led her to take first one of his cold hands and then the other, and gently chafe them in her warmer ones, whilst blankets were speedily made hot and wrapped about his chilled body.

And thus Arthur Hasleham found her when a few minutes later he arrived on the scene. And all was done that care and skill could devise, but with no effect. Before that day ended another victim to alcoholic poisoning—for this, and exposure, were the united

causes of death—had gone to his account. And Annie Eastroyd was a widow.

And when all came to be arranged she was not so rich as she thought she ought to have been. For Edward Eastroyd had made no will, and he had wasted in drink and gambled away at billiards a good part of his personality, a third only of which his wife could claim. A pair of unhappy, useless, discontented widows she and her mother dwelt together, and there are not wanting well-founded rumors that they both seek solace far too often in the cup that inebriates.

Of Tom Eastroyd there are some hopes of reclamation, Edward's sad end, and the combined influence of his remaining brother and brother-in-law, working in that direction.

But Mark Murwood is lost to his family and friends. Matthew and he remained partners for a time after their failure, but eventually the former found himself compelled to pay Mark out, so untrustworthy did he again prove, drink more and more gaining the mastery over him, and he utterly refusing to try the remedy which had resulted so well in Ellen's case.

There have been a few times when Ellen Murwood has felt the old craving seize upon her; but, fortified by her year's compulsory abstinence, and with her whole moral and spiritual fibre strengthened by the atmosphere of the 'Home' in which she had dwelt, and now in her own home upheld by her husband's example and influence, and surrounded by loving, sympathizing friends, she has so far resisted and maintained her integrity. And as five years have already rolled by since she came home to Beech Cottage there is little likelihood that she will ever again fall away. Another little son, too, now brightens the home of herself and her husband.

'God has been far better to me than I deserve,' Ellen said to Kate, with tears in her eyes, on the advent of the little stranger.

Kate bent over her and kissed her.

'We may all say that, Ellen,' she said; 'especially you, and I, and Lucy. I wonder sometimes whether there are three happier wives in England.'

'And under God we owe it to you, in a great measure,' said Ellen, solemnly.

'Nay, if to anybody human, to my father,' cried Kate. 'If you are going back at all, let us go to the root, his training and influence, and firm principle. But the old darling is waiting for me this very minute, I know, so I must be off. Good afternoon!'

(The end.)

The Japanese Mirror.

Florence's mother was going away to be gone several months, and it seemed to the little girl as if she could not bear it. Mrs. Harris felt badly about the separation also, but she knew that it was necessary for her to go. She knew that her daughter would miss her greatly and she also feared that she would forget about doing what was right, for Florence had a bad temper and it took all her mother's tact and patient efforts to prevent her giving way to the naughty words and acts it prompted her to say and do.

A short time before she went away Mrs. Harris called Florence to her side and talked with her about the matter. She told her how wrong it was and how it grieved her to have her little girl let her temper be master.

'Why, mamma, dear, I don't mean to be naughty. It just does itself. I wish I could be like you and never say anything cross, no matter what happens.'

'There is a little Japanese legend that perhaps may help you. The story is that a man in one of the remote towns of Japan went to one of the large cities. No one from their little village had ever been to the city

before and it was considered a great event. He was gone some time, but when he came back he brought a number of presents for his wife and little girl, but the one that seemed to them the most wonderful of all was a mirror, for there had never been anything of the kind in the village before. At first the mother and daughter spent much time in looking into the mirror and smiling and talking into it, but then the mother thought that she was being very vain, so she put the mirror away and never looked into it any more. After a number of years she was taken ill and she knew that she must die. She felt very sad to think that she must leave her daughter, and she feared the daughter might forget her.'

'Oh, Mamma, I won't forget you!'

'But will you always remember what mother has said to you?' asked Mrs. Harris. 'Well, this Japanese mother thought of the little mirror and brought it out again. Her daughter looked very much like the mother, so the mother said, "I want you to promise me to look into this mirror every night and every morning, so that you may know that even though I am away I am still thinking about you and caring for you. Whenever you are sad you will see that I am sad; whenever you are happy you will thus know that I am happy with you." Now, the Japanese daughter really thought it was her mother whom she saw when she looked into the mirror, and she told her whatever had happened during the day, and the mother seemed to talk back to her, although she could not understand what she said. Each day the daughter tried to be more kind and loving that she might please the mother whom she saw only in the mirror, and each day she grew more and more like that sweet mother.'

'That is just what I want to do, Mamma,' said Florence, as she put her arms about her mother's neck.

Florence, dear, you look much like me except that I am older looking. Now, suppose you look in this mirror, not only each morning and evening, but whenever you feel cross or when things do not go just to please you, and try and think that it is mother's face you see in the mirror. If you will do this faithfully every time that you feel the least little bit cross, I do think it will help you to remember; and then suppose you sometimes look into the mirror when you feel real happy, then you will know how glad mother is.'

Florence promised, and she kept her word, and when she saw the cross look on her face as she looked into the little mirror, it instantly changed to a bright, sunshiny look that reminded her of her mother, and she got so she called the cross look the 'shadow' that came before, and she disliked the shadow so much that she learned to get rid of the cross look before she looked into the glass. Soon people began to say, 'How much Florence is growing to be like her mother in disposition as well as in looks.' When she heard this Florence was indeed happy.—Ruth Mowry Brown, in 'The Child's Hour.'

The 'Messenger' has, for some time past, presented to its readers the announcements of the Robert Simpson Company, Limited, Toronto, and it is hoped that the news of this great store has been found of interest by many of the homes where the 'Messenger' makes its weekly visits. Among the great institutions that have brought the city of Toronto, and indeed the Dominion, into its present envious position, the Simpson Company may be mentioned as a leading one. Its enormous business is conducted in the most modern manner and no facility that would tend to perfection is omitted. With its great progress there has been no deviation from the principles of integrity and fair dealing that have characterized the firm since its inception. Among other pleasing comments that one hears throughout the country regarding Simpson's is that the smallest mail order receives the same prompt and thorough attention as the largest purchase.

The 'Messenger' devotes but little space to advertising purposes, but feels that the weekly announcements of such a firm are not only interesting, but very helpful to its readers, inasmuch as it brings under their notice the advantages to be derived from dealing with an establishment that is so well able to serve them.