

said, with flashing eyes. "I wouldn't take a message from Edward. I have no desire to bring them together again. I would not have Helen marry Edward on any account now."

Mrs. Leslie was satisfied. She could rely upon Fanny's truthfulness, and she considered that she had acted with great ingenuity. She had no intention of allowing Fanny to take up governing permanently, but under the pretext of humouring her whim she would get her out of Julia's way. She really believed that had Fanny known why she wished her away she would have refused to go, so entirely was the girl's true character misunderstood.

She wrote off triumphantly that she had obtained permission, and that for the first year she could consent to take nothing; afterwards, as she wished to be entirely self-dependent, she would be glad to have sufficient to buy herself necessary clothing, but that need not be discussed at present. "If you give me a home I shall consider the favour all on your side; I want to share your struggles, not to hinder you," she added, by way of conclusion.

It was not until the arrangements were really being made that Helen fully realised how great those struggles would be. A house was advertised for and chosen in a country town far enough away, Mrs. Hardinge and Mrs. Dalrymple spending a day on its inspection. It was very small and mean, but it was not safe to be more venturesome at first, and they could easily leave when they were justified in doing so. There was a tacit understanding that it would not do to depend upon Mr. Dalrymple—his health and prospects were alike broken down and ruined. It was little enough he would be able to do for his family for the next year at least.

When the house was chosen there was neither furniture nor money to buy it, only those few things Dr. Hardinge had saved from the sale, useful in themselves, but utterly inadequate for the most modest requirements. There was only one apparent solution of the difficulty, which was to hire such things as were absolutely necessary, paying for them in instalments.

Not one of Mrs. Dalrymple's friends had come forward with any offers of help, nor could she find it in her heart to solicit any. Helen was inclined to be despondent in the face of this grand difficulty.

"Is it honest?" she asked, nervously. "We shall be in debt."

"No one will trust you unless they are fully secured from loss, and if you fail to pay, the things will be taken from you, so that you really run the greatest risk," Dr. Hardinge replied. He very well knew that without his aid they could not have done even this.

But while the point was being anxiously discussed a sudden solution came in the shape of four five-pound bank notes enclosed in an envelope to Miss Dalrymple. There was no clue whatever to the name of the sender, and after the first surprise was over, and every possible and impossible conjecture had been raised and considered, Mrs. Dalrymple

and Helen came to the conclusion that some of their relatives, pitying their misfortunes, but not caring to acknowledge them openly, had subscribed this timely help. It seemed the most probable explanation, and was ultimately received by everyone but Grace, who had her own theory, but which she would not even hint at, since the transaction was evidently intended to be a secret.

Twenty pounds! Under present circumstances what a fund of wealth it seemed. It would give them a start. The practical doctor shook his head and cautioned them against depending too much upon it.

"You will still have to get some things on the obnoxious plan," he declared.

"Nothing more than we can help," Helen said, resolutely.

Fanny arrived from Alverstone the day before the Dalrymples were to take their departure. She was in high spirits, and although Helen painted a most doleful picture of the life she must expect, she would not be cast down. "The greater the difficulties, the more credit for overcoming them," she declared, cheerfully. "You will see how I will teach those children, and how we will get on. I have bought a cookery book and I made cook tell me lots of things, and give me the recipes for all her nice puddings. I have provided myself with aprons, and the neatest of cotton dresses; furbelows and lace, and all that won't do in our cottage of course, and we shall have to make our own things, I reckon, so we must not expect to be smart, for we shan't have too much time. You see how practical I am, Mrs. Hardinge, and do you know I have brought all my pictures and odd and ends to furbish up our bedrooms with. I hope after that no one will say that I am not equal to the occasion."

Everyone laughed at Fanny's enthusiasm, but everyone was pleased. Mrs. Hardinge thought she would be a great help and protection to poor Helen, who seemed still far too weak and languid to bear any strain. "Won't I tuck you up in bed and make you a fine basin of gruel," she said to Helen, pityingly, for indeed she was grieved and shocked beyond measure to see the alteration in her friend. Thin, haggard, and spiritless; she looked indeed, as Grace had said, at least ten years older. The brightness of her beauty had departed, and had become replaced by a patient, weary expression, most touching to see. It seemed cruel almost to let her go away to this new untried life, but that there were such urgent reasons for it. Both she and her mother were anxious to have the new home ready for Mr. Dalrymple's return, and Helen would not leave her mother to do it alone; moreover, Dr. Hardinge considered that the interest and occupation might rouse her from the utter dejection into which she had fallen.

So they took their departure amid the earnest good wishes and blessings of their kind friends. No eyes were dry but Fanny's, and they sparkled merrily.

She was apparently in her element, taking care of Helen and her mother as though she had been a man.

The journey was long, and would have been dismal but for Fanny, whose spirits were inexhaustible. Helen and her mother had been to bid a temporary good-bye to Mr. Dalrymple, and could not feel cheerful, but Fanny kept them from utter despondency.

When at length they reached their little house, to which some few most necessary things had been sent on beforehand, its bare and cheerless aspect on this winter afternoon was anything but encouraging. Fires had been lighted by a woman in charge, but in the helpless way of an incompetent person, and were black and smoky. Poor Helen, weak and tired, sat down and cried helplessly.

"This will never do," cried Fanny, briskly, taking upon herself to order the woman about pretty freely.

"Bring in heaps of wood and make a blaze," she exclaimed, and she stood by till it was done. Then she made Helen and Mrs. Dalrymple come close round while she flew to unpack a small hamper which Mrs. Hardinge's forethought had fortunately provided.

By dint of gigantic exertions she succeeded in getting some sort of a meal placed upon the table.

"I have learnt one thing," she said, laughing. "We must find a domestic who knows how to light a fire. By-the-by, Helen, didn't we learn that at school in our Household Science? Of course we did, and to-morrow it shall have practical application. Come, Helen, let us coach each other up and see if we remember the rules."

(To be continued.)

A GIRL'S OWN PAPER THREE HUNDRED AND SIXTY YEARS AGO.



ORE than three hundred and fifty years ago a great and marvellous empire was discovered by Europeans on the new-found continent of America. The empire was Mexico, the people — its inhabitants — the Aztecs. Ever since their first

discovery by the people of the Eastern hemisphere, it has been a question eagerly, earnestly, learnedly discussed, how far they had advanced on the path of civilisation. It would certainly be very well for England if all English matters were as far advanced on that path, as Aztec mothers were noble enough, wise enough, civilised enough to give to English girls such precepts as trained and strengthened the Aztec girls of Mexico.

The following letter, copied out in full by Prescott, in his "History of Mexico," is too absolutely and plainly appropriate to THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER not to find its fitting place in its pages, as a counsellor to other girls

than the one for whom it was composed, who departed to her Father and our Father nearly 400 years ago.

Mr. Prescott says he translates this letter from Sahagun's "Historia de Nueva Espana," lib. vi., cap. 19, adding that "it is a strange mixture of almost childish simplicity and of moral sublimity, the product of the twilight of civilization." Where the Spanish historian, Sahagun, saw the original Aztec letter is not stated, but Prescott would not have given the translation if he did not believe it to be genuine. The tone is like that of the moral treatises of the Chinese, and adds confirmation to the theory that the early American civilization came from Asia.

AN AZTEC MOTHER TO HER DAUGHTER.

"My beloved daughter, my dear little dove,—You have already heard and attended to the words which your father has told you; they are precious words, and have proceeded from the heart, in which they were treasured up.

"Although you are a woman, and are the image of your father, what more can I say to you than has already been said? What more can you hear than what you have heard from your lord and father, who has fully told you what it is becoming for you to do and to avoid? Nor is there anything remaining which concerns you which he has not touched upon. Nevertheless, that I may do towards you my whole duty, I will say to you some few words.

"The first thing that I earnestly charge upon you is, that you observe, and do not forget, what your father has now told you, since it is all very precious; and persons of his condition rarely publish such things, for they are the words which belong to the noble and wise—valuable as rich jewels. See, then, that you take them, and lay them up in your heart, and write them in your bowels. If God gives you life with these same words, will you teach your sons and daughters, if God shall give you them?

"The second thing that I desire to say to you is, that I love you much—that you are my dear daughter. See that you receive your parents' words, and treasure them in your breast.

"Take care that your garments are such as are decent and proper; and observe that you do not adorn yourself with much finery, since this is a mark of vanity and folly. As little becoming is it that your dress should be very mean, dirty, or ragged, since rags are a mark of the low, and of those who are held in contempt. Let your clothes be becoming and neat, that you may neither appear fantastic nor mean.

"When you speak, do not hurry your words from uneasiness, but speak deliberately and calmly. Do not raise your voice very high, nor speak very low, but in a moderate tone. Neither mince when you speak, nor when you salute, nor speak through your nose; but let your words be proper, of a good sound, and your voice gentle. Do not be nice in the choice of your words.

"In walking, my daughter, see that you behave yourself becomingly, neither going with haste, nor too slowly; since it is an evidence of being puffed up to walk too slowly, and walking hastily causes a vicious habit of restlessness and instability. Therefore, neither walk very fast nor very slow; yet, when it shall be necessary to go with haste, do so—in this use your discretion. And when you may be obliged to jump over a pool of water, do it with decency, that you may neither appear clumsy nor light.

"When you are in the street, do not carry your head much inclined, or your body bent; nor as

little go with your head very much raised, since it is a mark of ill-breeding; walk erect, and with your head slightly inclined. Do not have your mouth covered, or your face, from shame, nor go looking like a near-sighted person, nor, on your way, make fantastic movements with your feet. Walk through the street quietly, and with propriety.

"Another thing that you must attend to, my daughter, is, that when you are in the street, you do not go looking hither and thither, nor turning your head to look at this and that; walk neither looking at the skies nor on the ground. Do not look upon those whom you meet with the eyes of an offended person, nor have the appearance of being uneasy, but of one who looks upon all with a serene countenance; doing this you will give no one occasion of being offended with you. Show a becoming countenance, that you may neither appear morose, nor, on the other hand, too complaisant.

"See, my daughter, that you give yourself no concern about the words you may hear in going through the street, nor pay any regard to them; let those who come and go say what they will. Take care that you neither answer nor speak, but act as if you neither heard nor understood them, since, doing in this manner, no one will be able to say with truth that you have said anything amiss.

"See, likewise, my daughter, that you never paint your face, or stain it, or your lips, with colours, in order to appear well, since this is a mark of vile and unchaste women. Paints and colouring are things which those use who have lost all shame and even sense, who are like fools and drunkards. But, that your husband may not dislike you, adorn yourself, wash yourself, and cleanse your clothes.

"My daughter, this is the course you are to take, since in this manner the ancestors from whom we spring brought us up. Those noble and venerable dames, your grandmothers, told us not so many things as I have told you. They said but few words, and spoke thus:—'Listen, my daughters,—In this world it is necessary to live with much prudence and circumspection. Hear this allegory, which I shall now tell you, and preserve it, and take from it a warning and example for living aright. Here, in this world, we travel by a very narrow, steep, and dangerous road, which is as a lofty mountain ridge, on whose top passes a narrow path. On either side is a great gulf without bottom, and, if you deviate from the path, you will fall into it. There is need, therefore, of much discretion in pursuing the road.'

"My tenderly-loved daughter, my little dove, keep this illustration in your heart, and see that you do not forget it. It will be to you as a lamp and a beacon, so long as you shall live in this world.

"Only one thing remains to be said, and I have done. If God shall give you life, if you shall continue some years upon the earth, see that you guard yourself carefully, that no stain come upon you. When it shall please God that you receive a husband, and you are placed under his authority, be free from arrogance, see that you do not neglect him, nor allow your heart to be in opposition to him. Be not disrespectful to him; beware that in no time or place you commit treason against him; see that you give no favour to another, since this, my dear and much-loved daughter, is to fall into a pit without bottom, from which there will be no escape. From this will arise a stain and dishonour upon our ancestors, the nobles and senators from whom we are descended. You will tarnish their illustrious fame, and their glory. Your name will be forgotten or abhorred. Of you will it be said that you were buried in the dust of your sins. And remember, my daughter, that though none shall see you, God, who is in every place,

sees you, and will be angry with you, and will be avenged upon you as He shall see fit.

"My dear daughter, whom I tenderly love, see that you live in the world in peace, tranquillity, and contentment all the days that you shall live. See that you disgrace not yourself, that you stain not your honour, nor pollute the lustre and fame of your ancestors. See that you honour me and your father, and reflect glory on us by your good life.

"May God prosper you, my firstborn, and may you come to God, who is in every place."

VARIETIES.

PLENTY TO DO.—The more people do the more they can do; she who does nothing renders herself incapable of doing anything; whilst we are executing one work we are preparing ourselves for undertaking another.

A SURE TEST.—There is no surer mark of the absence of the highest moral and intellectual qualities than a cold reception of excellence.

MILD, BUT FIRM.—Firmness without mildness is harsh and forbidding; mildness without firmness becomes weak and contemptible; both united make a character respectable and amiable.

THE SECRET OF FAILURE.—An old Scottish merchant was once asked how his son and daughter-in-law had not succeeded so well in life as he himself had. "That's easily explained," said he; "we old folks began with a little house and a plain table, with porridge and a herring, and bit by bit advanced to tea and a 'chuckie' (chicken); but the young folks started with a braw house and tea and chuckies and silks, and never buckled up their sleeves to work."

THE TRUE PHILOSOPHER.—It is easy to be merry when the heart is light; but the true philosopher is she who can make sunshine in a cloudy day.

ANSWER TO DOUBLE ACROSTIC.—No. 1 (page 263):—

P E E R I (a)
R E A D I N G
E I L D O N
J E D D O
U T H E R (b)
D A N A (c)
I X I O N
C A M B R I C (d)
E U S T A C E (e)

Prejudice. Ignorance.

(a) In Moore's "Lalla Rookh."
(b) The father of King Arthur.
(c) Author of "Two Years Before the Mast."
(d) First made at Cambray.
(e) Son of Stephen; at his death, in 1153, the king made a final treaty with the Empress Matilda, by the terms of which he should remain undisputed possessor of the English throne, and, at his death, be succeeded by her son, Henry Plantagenet.

ANSWER TO DOUBLE ACROSTIC.—No. 2 (page 263):—

V E S P A S I A N (a)
E U R O P A
N E A P
I R W E L L (b)
C O N S T A N C E (c)
E P I C T E T U S

Venice. Naples.*

(a) In whose reign the Roman legions, under his son, Titus, destroyed Jerusalem.
(b) The river on which Manchester stands.
(c) In Shakespeare's *King John*.
(d) The Neapolitans say "Vedi Napoli e poi morire."