THE IDEAL DAUGHTER.

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It is often my duty and privilege to assist at the prize distributions of the excellent day-schools in my parish, and I have lately been struck with the thought that the young girls who have just left school might like to hear something about the new life opening up to them, with its possibilities for education, usefulness, service and happiness. Those of you who heard a charming address delivered by that gifted authoress, Miss Sarah Doudney, to the members of one of these schools, on "Day-Dreams," will remember that she said that day-dreams within limits are not wrong, and she expressed belief that the best of them come true in the best and highest way. Golden girlhood is the most delightful time in a young woman's life. It comes only once and is quickly passed, but the way in which it is spent affects the whole of the after life. The interval in a girl's life between the time of leaving school and the time when her work in life begins definitely settled, either as a domestic career or as a business one, is to be regarded as a life of preparation. Be careful as to what shall be your mental attitude towards study and self-improvement. Do not be like certain public-school boys who burn all their school books on the day they leave school, and in wild glee declare their satisfaction at the thought that never again shall they be obliged to learn anything. But our education is never done, and we ought to love to learn to the latest moment of our life. You may find special effort required, after the help of school routine is removed. At school the bell rings and the task must be commenced at once. You have not the trouble of making up your mind. It is made up for you, and you are saved much uncertainty as to what you shall do. Start the new home-life with its fresh freedom with a determination to make your life real earnest, busy and useful. I say, be real; there are many shamers about; girls whose only attractions are due to the rouge-pot and the milliner, and whose ideas of pleasure is flirtation and gossip, and who flatter away the precious lovely period of early womanhood. Allow me to give you some homely advice, not because it is homely, but because the time of life through which you are passing is novel to you. What is A B C to those who are older may still be most salutary to the young. One caution is needed on the threshold.

Don't ape the man. Keep to woman's kingdom; it is a domain large enough for any queen. Men may pretend to admire the loud talking, the slang phrases, and the forward manner of the "mannish" girls, but it is not among them that honest sensible men desire to find their wives. If some of you, who imagine you can by such ways fascinate and attract, could only hear the criticism the very men pass upon you, who, only an hour ago, posed as your willing slaves, you would understand how all men in their hearts despise these new fangled ways, and their foolish talk and their fashions. They are not allowed to drift into frivolity and nothingness, or will you deliberately, persistently train yourself to do good, honest, unselfish work in the world assigned to you by circumstances?

Secondly—Avoid discussions as to whether women are inferior to men. The sphere of each is separate. The two can never be properly compared. Man and woman are mutually supplemental and con-
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The girl's own paper, and to argue as to which is the noblest, the superior, the more intellectual, the more admirable, is to mistake the end for the means. He who serves the noblest end will be the noblest. It is not a question of rivalry, but of respective excellence. There is far too much thoughtless talk nowadays on the subject. I would advise any young girl to avoid the modern
type of flippant conversation which is always proclaiming the "equality of women." Such talk has been called the "Fool of Idleness." In nine cases out of
ten, in family life, idleness means quarrelling.

Being busy means being happy. Surely no
girl, just emerged from the school-room, could be content with idleness! To look forward to
having nothing to do, as though such a condition
were an advantage, seems to me something
despicable. To waste the years from
say, sixteen to twenty-five in idleness and self-indulgence, instead of in vigorous systematic self-culture, is absolutely wicked. How
young people can ever get a real, genuine, demanding
living merely existing, without any attempt to
become first-rate in any department, or to do
anything really well, I cannot understand. If they
fit themselves for it, and He rewards work with
more work, and thus, as we render ourselves
more apt and capable, greater, better, the cycle
continues. Now the ideal daughter will be one who abhors laziness, but she will have
powers of adaptation. There are many varties
of homes, and each will modify the conduct of the daughter. It is clear that in the
home of affluence, where there are servants in
abundance, there will be no need for the
daughter to belittle herself to households
drudgery; but still, if wise, she will acquaint herself with all the methods and details of a
well-regulated house, so that, should circumstances change for the worse, she may not be
ignorant of what it would then be her duty to
attend to. Still, in the home of affluence,
there will be more time for self-culture, and
what are called "accomplishments" will occupy a larger portion of time. To be able
to please people, and to give pleasure by one's
talents, thoroughly cultivated, would then be
a prominent place in the self-cultivation of the
daughter. But the home about which I would
speak particularly is that where there is
only just enough income to maintain the
honesty of life, and where numberless diseases have to be
be practised, and where little acts of personal
self-denial and unselfish deeds will form by
habitual, with a view to "making both ends
meet," as the phrase goes. In such a case
the father works very hard, supplementing the
ordinary day's work by extra labour in later
hours. He is passing through a phase of
home life, we all know well either by
experience or observation, where the children
are growing up and the parent's concern
upon the father's purse, and where the
struggle with scanty means is very real and
very wearisome. But if the father works
hard, so also does the mother; very hard
indeed, from morn till eve, and sometimes on
into the night, not to mention the hours
during which she lies awake, puzzling her
desk tired but over-weighted brain as to how and
where still further reductions of expenditure
may be contrived and carried out. In
such a home the help of the eldest daughter
becomes more valuable, and the ideal will require great self-sacrifice, skill, energy and tact, if it is
even, dimly, to be seen. I trust that every house one questions
will be asked over and over again by the
ideal daughter within herself; one thought
will abide daily in her heart—"How can I help
the poor mother?" And one more question, care of
her tolls, relieve her mind, and lift some of
her cares out of the way?" Why should girls
dress themselves up and walk about to be
admired, while their mothers are kept indoors
doing the rougher work of the house? Let
me impress upon the daughters in homes
where money is scarce, and labour abundant,
the paramount act of the child of God is to lighten
the weight of care pressing upon the
mother. Let a loving motive overcome
any disgust for menial work, and then
all domestic toil will be elevated into a kind of
heavenly pleasure, and nothing will seem
degrading; if the doing of it is for the sake of the
mother who has done so much for you—who fed
you, nursed you, clothed you, prayed over
you, and who has literally given herself for her
children. Your first thrilling thought of pleasure
as you leave school will be,"Now I can help mother." There are many somewhat
practicable things to be done, such as cooking,
dressmaking; also the weekly attempt to reduce
that heap of things to be mended—a heap
which grows with sad rapidity. There is
the nursing of that little brother or little sister;
then there are the various duties which come
under the general suggestion; these,
and the like will not be thought derogatory
to the dignity of the ideal daughter, but will
form an important part of that useful life, to
be lived in the earnestness of the young
windsurfing, hard-working economic home, by the
girl whose chief aim is to be on the alert for acts
of kindness, especially where the mother's life
can thus be easier.

Again, this young girl, whose life I am
efforting to sketch, will often have to
consider a second question, what is the
influence upon my younger brothers and
sisters? They naturally look up to me. I have
left school; they have not; hence, in
their eyes, I am in an important position. Am
I fulfilling them wisely and wisely by
my example? They will be sure to imitate me.
Am I fit to be an example to them? Moreover,
where brothers and sisters of the same age
as yourself, to be given to accomplishments,
will have many opportunities for good.
To keep a young man out of mischief,
and away from doubtful amusements, by
taking him about with you, singing, and
by patiently playing his accomplishments,
is often a very real benefit. Girls can do
far more good than they are aware of, by
making a home for their brothers, and
their little brothers. The sweet influence of an
unschooled girl, forgetful of self, thoughtful for others, and
devoted to the home circle, is immense.

The third question is—"What can I do to
brighten father's life?" On his return home
each evening after the toils of the day are over, I will
qualify myself to be his companion. Let me
interest myself in the topics he cares for.
He shall feel that I can talk sensibly, even on
business subjects, and that when he bids me
at his regular business letter,
I will read books to enable me to
understand subjects worth the knowing.
Father shall have much in common in
music, literature, art, business, or whatever
else he wishes me to pursue. When
sensible men are talking I will learn to
listen, and will not sit sullenly in a corner of the
room, as though what was going on were
too deep for me. If I have not time to be highly
accomplished, at any rate I will take
my share in everything that goes on in the
house. I will live for my parents; I will dress to please
them; I will work to serve them; I will sing
to them, read to them, talk to them, and listen
to them, too. With a girl who is to be her own
desk, in this joyous interval between school and that
wider range of duty and pleasure possible in a few
years, how different. Say I do two things: first, let me repay to
my parents a little out of their past loving care and
kindness; and secondly, let me gather up all experiences and all
knowledge which may render me more capable, more
efficient, more useful, in the years before me.

Space will not permit me to deal with the
question of the modern girl's career, but one
or two remarks may not be out of place. What
is to become of you? Shall you marry?
Perhaps so, but perhaps not. No doubt a happy
marriage is the best of lives for anyone. St.
Paul said, "I will that the younger women
may, bear children, guide the house, give
none occasion to the adversary to speak
reproachfully:" but let me protest against the
idea that a girl's aim in life is to be "marriage at
all risks." A miserable marriage is the most
frequent cause of all miserable things. To
serve the family, to serve the world, unmarried women are thoroughly happy and
contented.

We are about to do something good in this
world. Work of some kind is the blessing all
are to enjoy, the privilege all are to share, the
reward all are to obtain; it may be in your
father's house, it may be in some business or
profession, where your energies will have full
opportunity, and where a healthy career lies
ahead of you. I am the last to countenance the
thought of neglect of the duties of home, but I
think it folly for a number of daughters to all live at home and do nothing,
until, when the father dies, they are obliged to
try and earn a living somewhere; especially, as
in cases known to me, their only apparent
qualification is that "father is dead."

My last word shall be upon the one great
essential which must pervade all your work.
For want of a better term, let us call it
heavenliness-mindedness. Like the atmosphere,
it is invisible, and will be felt rather than seen. There will
then be a tone of thought, and a sweetness
of motive easily recognised in even the most
ordinary things. Love to the Saviour, and a
love for all who are going on the same
way; love to the working man, to the poor;
and of helping as He would have helped,
will make all work willing and pleasant,
and will cause you to avoid that deadening spirit of
disharmony which is so prevalent in some
quarters. The sight of young girls, full of
hopefulness and romance, believing in human
nature, determined to uplift themselves, simple
in their ideas, unspoiled by society, amiable and
warm-hearted, yet inexperienced and impulsive,
is pathetic and beautiful. None of us who
are older can fail to see how delightful is
your views of what life ought to be from your
point of view; but here and now, before you
step forth from school-life into this newer and
freer world, let me beg you to value nobly,
use, and profit by the next few years and their
insoluble opportunities.

With the assistance of the Holy Spirit, the
Christian cardinal of Christ, and the honest
resolve to serve Him in your present bright
happy home, you ought so to conduct yourself
in that finer, loving circle, that when they
speak of you as their best daughter in the
world, and as they gaze into other homes and
observe other girls also living noble and
honorable lives, shall sting the others rather
than the rest, saying, "Many daughters have
done virtuously, but thou excellest them all."