GOOD MEASURE... RUNNING OVER
By Mrs. Paul E. King

Jennifer buried her face in the pillow, trying to muffle the sobs and the prayer which came from a burdened heart and gave voice to its plea from her lips. God had promised; He would fulfill that promise, this she knew.

"Jen," a voice broke in upon the sobbing. "Jen, don't you know it's late? It's almost time for you to get down to the kitchen, and you haven't even been
to bed," and the bootie-footed, robe-clad Marilyn hovered over the form of her huddled-in-the-corner roommate.

"I . . . I can't leave now, Marilyn. I'll be ready for kitchen work when the hour comes, believe me. What's more, I'm already dressed. . . ."

"You haven't even had your skirt and blouse off!" Marilyn exclaimed, noticing Jennifer wearing the previous day's outfit of clothes. "Oh, Jennifer, you'll go down physically. A whole night in prayer! That's hard work!"

"It's delightful, when the Lord comes down and meets with you, and the Heavens bend low. It's the most refreshingly wonderful thing in all the world. Please, don't worry about me."

Marilyn backed slowly out of the odd-shaped little room where luggage was stored and kept for the girls in that end of the dorm, her eyes wet with tears. So that was the unusual strength and power of her roommate! she thought, as she walked silently down the hallway to their room. She closed the door quietly then walked over to the dual windows. Pulling the drapes aside, she looked out upon a sea of twinkling, winking, blinking lights. From the vantage point on the hill, the myriad lights looked beautiful. Very beautiful. But those same lights represented people. Thousands of people. People of all classes; of different races; diversified colors; of varied personalities and facial beauty, and of mixed emotions and human characteristics, too. But for all the diversity and variety, in one aspect or respect, each was on a common ground: Each possessed a soul!

The thought of so many never-dying, living-forever souls, sent a shower of tears rolling down Marilyn's cheeks. Could this be what had caused her roommate to spend one entire night on her knees alone with God in prayer? she wondered Would she, Marilyn, be willing to do as much? The question, so profound, so shocking and so shaking, sent a shiver through her being. She had never spent even two hours alone in prayer one night!

She looked down upon the sea of merry looking lights. Souls Souls. Souls. Where would all those people, in all those many houses and apartments, be spending eternity? Heaven or hell? That question shook her. Jennifer had always carried a heavy burden for souls.
Her thoughts turned back to Jennifer now. Jennifer with her shy but sweetly-winsome ways and personality. And, her entirely-dedicated and deeply-spiritual life. Jennifer took the things of God seriously. Extremely seriously. Nothing of spiritual essence, nature, or character was esteemed lightly nor "handled" carelessly. Any and all things spiritual were of prime importance to Jen, whose spiritual "pores" absorbed spiritual things like the dry, cracked earth drank in and absorbed water after a prolonged dry spell.

Jennifer was poor. That is, she came from a family of poor means How did she, Marilyn, now? Had Jennifer ever said as much or told her so? No. That sweet girl would tell no one of her direst needs even. No one, that is, but God. One of the girls in the dorm had let the "poor" bit of information slip off her tongue.

Marilyn pulled her shimmering pale-pink robe more closely around her, comparing her room-mate's scanty wardrobe to her own crowded, crammed and packed side of the closet

"Here, Marilyn," Jennifer had said one day when she could cram nothing more . . . positively nothing . . . inside her closet on a hanger. "I have room over here on my side. Why not hang your coats and your robes over here; that will give you more room for your dresses and the blouses and skirts. And, since they'll all be less wrinkled by hanging loosely, you'll have less ironing and pressing to do. It seems like you're almost always ironing."

Fresh tears slid from Marilyn's eyes. Walking over to where Jennifer's side of the closet was, she opened the door and looked inside. The first thing she saw was the total order and neatness of its interior. Everything was in the place designated and allotted to it. It was neatness and organized order throughout. A small piece of cardboard on the clothes rod marked the place where Jennifer's clothing occupied the rod and where hers, Marilyn's took over.

She gasped. Jennifer's supply of clothing was even more scant than she had thought it was. But each dress and each blouse and skirt had the appearance of just having been freshly washed and pressed. The closet smelled deliciously fragrant of a faintly subtle floral blend of something or other, too, Potpourri! That's what it was. Jennifer had very casually mentioned one day how her mother and a younger sister and she made gay
little nosegays and heart-shaped pillow potpourris for a gift shop near their home.

Marilyn felt a wave of admiration wash over her for the girl whose love for the Lord never ceased to amaze her from the time when she first met Jennifer until now. Always, it seemed, she was discovering something new and admirable about her. Could it be that the nosegays and the potpourri pillows helped to make the Bible School training possible? she wondered. She was almost certain that it did, and it had.

Shame engulfed her when she realized how much she had and how little her room-mate had. Even the spread on Jen's bed was made by her mother. It was a beautiful thing, to be sure; all frilly with ruffles and edged in lace. And Marilyn now wondered how many little nosegays and potpourri pillows were made and then sold so the fabric and the lace could be bought to make the spread for the single bed. Coming to think of it, the three quilts were bits and pieces of fabric sewn into floral arrangements, squares, circles and rectangles, which were artistically and beautifully arranged around a particular design then quilted together by neat, even and tiny stitches, "all done by hand," in Jen's words.

Poor, but amazingly talented, clever, and thrifty, Marilyn thought.

Never before had she paused to give thought to her abundance. But she did now. She never lacked; not for money nor clothing. Her father made a good income for his family. Every month, she received an ample check from home. She lived "high," usually spending most of it for new clothing. Now, however, a pin-prick of conscience bothered her. Couldn't money be of better use than to be spent on something she actually didn't need? she reasoned.

Jennifer came to mind then. A bright idea projected itself to Marilyn's brain. Why not? she thought, as she turned the light on. Taking two good-sized bills out of her purse, she slipped them inside an envelope between a sheet of folded typing paper, then sealed the envelope and printed FOR JENNIFER on the envelope's exterior. She could still hear the muffled groans and sobs and the agonized prayer of importunity as she tiptoed along the hallway then ran down the steps into the kitchen.
In a quick movement, she taped the envelope to the handle of the refrigerator door then fled back upstairs to her room, feeling warm and wonderful and unusually happy. Jennifer had full charge of getting breakfast for the students and was always the first one into the kitchen. Five other students came in later to help her.

She crawled back in bed and was dozing peacefully when she heard the door open and Jennifer came inside. She went immediately into the bathroom and washed her face then she came back into their bedroom, smoothed her hair back into place, in case of any strays that may have slipped out from the pins, and :passed, almost noiselessly, out into the hall and was gone.

Marilyn fell asleep to the vision of a worthy girl making the discovery of the envelope and its contents taped on the refrigerator door handle, and not until the rising bell clanged and rang her awake did she so much as move.

Breakfast brought with it the usual motley crowd of sleepy-eyed girls and yawning boys, groomed but not yet well groomed, all taking and laughing and poking good humored banter at their counterparts. Jennifer produced her usual, well-balanced and nutritious breakfast. Marilyn noticed a tired look in the soft-blue eyes but a face that glowed with God's glory and a sort of secret inner joy that looked like it may run over any minute. Every now and then, she heard Jennifer say a heartfelt, "Thank Thee, dearest Jesus! Thank Thee!"

Eating her small helping of oats and a piece of whole wheat toast, Marilyn could hardly contain herself. Her own feelings were at the running-over point. She had never before known the joy and the blessing of giving. But that was because she had never given before. Her tithe, yes. But never a gift to help the poor.

The chapel service was filled with the presence of God that morning, and Jennifer's cup of joy ran over time and time again.

"'Give, and it shall be given unto you;'" she quoted, testifying, as happy tears trickled down her cheeks, "'good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. . . .' I am living proof of the fulfillment of this beautiful promise. I have had an urgent need. I told the Lord about that need last night again, and He has answered my
prayer. The need is met! Not only the need, but it is even to the 'shaken together, and running over' point. Oh, I bless His Holy name! It pays to be obedient to the voice of God, the Holy Ghost.

"Two weeks ago, when the offering was taken up to help that poor family, the Lord told me I was to give all that I had. It wasn't much. But to God it was a great amount, for it was, indeed, all that I had. With great delight and purest joy, I got those last four one-dollar bills out of my purse and dropped them into the offering plate, along with what few coins I possessed. Oh, I was so blest in my soul: Obedience always brings a blessing. Then numerous personal needs of my own arose and I had no means whatever with which to obtain them."

A joyous shout of victory rang out in the chapel as Jennifer shouted, "Then Jesus took over. O Hallelujah! I'll never know where His answer came from, nor through whom; but it came! And the blessed thing about it is, that nobody but God knew what I had done, nor that I had a need. No one, except the Lord."

Chapel time was a wide-awake, glory-filled time that morning. Cold hearts thawed and were melted and moved upon and ran, screaming, to an altar of prayer, where they found peace and victory with God.

Marilyn, kneeling at the front seat, her eyes spilling happy tears, made a covenant with God: She would be His silent, monthly payee to her roommate. She had learned, and experienced, one of the greatest lessons and blessings of all; that it is, indeed, far more blessed to give than to receive. Too, she was going to find a secluded area and give God, not only of her ample supply of money, but of herself: in prayer. Not for a few minutes or a half hour, as was her custom; but for hours. She could have all of God, and His good things, that she wanted. His supply was exhaustless. It was hers for the asking. And the waiting, too.

A great soul-burden gripped her for the thousands in the houses and the apartments below the school. She began to sob and to intercede for their salvation.

Above the volume of praying, rose Jennifer's happy shouts of joy and praise and thanksgiving.