LETTER TO A DIARY
By Mrs. Paul E. King

I just had to talk to someone, so here I am, Diary. Since no one is at home, and since this will always be a day to remember and to cherish, I guess the best thing I can do is to "talk" to you via pen. This way, in the years to come, I'll be able to "look back" by leafing through your pages and recalling the specialness of this very special day.
You have been like a close friend to me, Diary: on your pages I have poured out my sorrows and regrets, as well as my happy moments; my failures and, thankfully, my successes; my mistakes, and ultimately, my accomplishments; my weaknesses and, through Christ, my victory over those weaknesses.

You have been my silent listener and, unless I chose to show your pages to anyone, you kept my secrets well guarded between your covers. Not that I have written anything for which I would have cause to hang my head in shame; I haven't. You and I both know this. Through Christ my blessed Savior, Sanctifier and Friend, my spirit, soul, body, and mind have been kept pure and clean. I have tried to keep it this way by guarding my entire being carefully and prayerfully: my mind, by thinking upon those things that are lofty and pure and holy, and by reading only good, clean, and wholesome books and literature; my eyes, by being careful what I look at; my ears, by refraining from listening to gossip and corrupt communication of any kind; my heart and soul, by watchfulness in prayer and supplication and Bible reading.

Yes, Diary, you have been like a friend. A very close friend, indeed. So today I feel I must share my happiness by once again "talking" to you via pen.

Today is an epochal day in my life: Matthew and I have been married one year! And what a year it has been! Pure bliss, and something akin to Heaven on earth!

When I think where I might have been today, and how I might have been living, had I not heeded the gentle proddings and checks of the sweet Spirit of God, as well as my mother's and father's prayerful and careful advice and guidance, I almost shudder with fear. How many times did I think I was in love; three? Or was it four? I see now that it was and is all a part of the growing-up years, a thing I didn't realize or know then. But thank God for Spirit-filled mothers! Mine especially. She guided me, prayed with me and for me, and helped me to move cautiously, carefully, and slowly during that transitional period of not-fully-grown woman and neither little girl.

Remember how I "told" you about Ben and Allen? How could I have been so foolish as to think I loved them! Not at the same time of course, as you well know. Ben came into my life first; that, I-notice-you-in-a-special-way sort of thing, I mean. How great and wonderful I thought he was! Remember?
Then, almost as quickly as he became Mr. Special, he faded into oblivion with the overwhelming presence of Allen Smith.

Aren't we silly creatures, diary? Poor Ben! Allen so far outshone Ben (in my now newly-opened eyes) that all I could think about was Allen, with his laughing dark brown eyes, his instant wit and his deep bass voice which, to my way of thinking, comprised the biggest and most important part in the young men's quartet in our church.

Both Ben and Allen were fine young men. Each possessed a set of deeply ingrained Christian values and principles. They treated me with utmost kindness and respect. But for a marriage to be happy and stable, more than respect and kindness must go into the whole of it, necessary though these qualities are.

Dear Diary, I almost shudder when I recall the year when I was so sure that Christopher was the one for me. Allen passed out of my life, like Ben did, with the discovery that Christopher thought I was special and someone quite wonderful. He made me feel truly grown up and mature. The year itself was an exciting one; I was president of the school class; young people's leader in our local church and Sunday school teacher for a class of busy, but noisily-wonderful preschoolers. And then Christopher came along and entered my life, making the year even fuller and more exciting. I was madly in love. Or so I thought.

Diary, you know the blow I received when my father forbade me to see Christopher again. I told you all about it. It's recorded on your pages. I was devastated. Utterly and completely devastated. Christopher was a shining star in my life; but to Daddy he was a two-timing hypocrite. (How my dear father found out that Christopher was dating Sandy Reynolds, and that he told someone that he merely made a profession of faith in order to see me between his dates with Sandy, is still a mystery to me.)

Parents are wonderful; my parents especially. I will ever be grateful that I was obedient to my God-fearing, caring, and concerned parent, who saw what I couldn't and didn't see at that time, and knew what I was in total ignorance of. Yes, I will be thankful forever to my kind father. I obeyed his order, as per God's commands, and never again dated Christopher. And the amazing thing was that, after a few weeks of being away from him, I didn't even miss him! I came to the sudden realization that he wasn't as all-
important to me as I had previously thought he was. That was a real eye-opener for me. It "shook" me; frightened me, really. I could (so easily) have mistaken my infatuation for real love and have married Christopher! And have reaped the bitter results of my foolishness! (Only this past week a tearful Sandy told me that Christopher left her and is filing for divorce. Another woman, she said. And they have been married less than two years!)

Oh, Diary, my heart aches for my friend. Sandy deserved better than this. But while I am deeply grieved for Sandy, I am exuberantly happy for the Divine leadership and Guidance in my life. I will never cease to be amazed over God's appointed meeting for Matthew and me. Everything that God does is so perfect. And perfectly wonderful, too!

I'm glad I waited; glad I didn't rush into marriage when I thought I was in love those other times; glad, too, that I didn't love too rashly and lose control of my moral moorings. But, here again, I have God and my parents to thank. What responsibility a parent has to his child! I want to remember this for our child, when and if God sees fit to send us one. He deserves the same guidance and counsel that I received and the same careful, prayerful upbringing.

Matthew is the most wonderful husband in all the world. He uses his God-commanded head-of-the-house role without abusing or defaming it. He loves so spontaneously and genuinely and is so solicitous to and sensitive of my needs until I find it most enjoyable and delightful to serve the Lord. I guess what I'm trying to say, Diary, is that Matthew makes it more enjoyable than ever to serve the Lord because, through him and his beautiful Christian and Biblical example, I see my Heavenly Father more clearly. But isn't this, in part, what God's plan was and is for the husband; to manifest and reveal God the Father more clearly through the love and care and protection the husband bestows upon the wife? I'm sure it is, for God -- my dear Heavenly Father -- has all of the afore-mentioned attributes, plus many more.

One year ago today! I will never forget today. Nor that other "today" one year ago. When Matthew looked at the minister and uttered his unwavering "I do," I knew that the marriage bond was sealed for all of life. There's nothing frivolous or fickle about my husband. He's real and genuine and totally transparent. But then, a sanctified heart is transparent; there's nothing to hide nor conceal: every loathsome and carnal thing has been dragged out of its secret hiding place and has been confessed to God and been crucified utterly
and completely upon the altar of sacrifice. Matthew's life is as sweetly-fragrant as the rose; his every moment is filled with Divine Love. And to think that God sent him to me!

Sometimes I feel overcome with awe and amazement when I pause and consider the ways of God and the leadings of God in my life, insignificant and nothing more than dust though I may be. Why should He care so tenderly for me, and look out for me the way He has? I know He has no favorites, for He is a just and a righteous God, yet I feel like He has blest me super abundantly and far above and beyond what I deserve. Could it be because I have tried to always put Him first and foremost in my life in everything that I did? Or could it be because of my simple childlike obedience to His every do and don't?

I'm convinced that these things have had something much to do with His wonderful blessings upon my life, for does not a parent...an earthly parent...delight in pleasing his child with special blessings and benefits when the child has been obedient and submissive to his parent's will?

If the saying is true that one doesn't really or fully know the one he is marrying until he has lived with that mate for some time...and I believe this is true...then this year which I have shared with Matthew has revealed to me a mate of rare quality and worth: Matthew is pure gold. Now I know some will say I feel this way simply because I am in love with my husband. I confess to this truth; I am very much in love with him. But my day to day close contact with him has revealed the real man to me. (Isn't this always the case?)

Oh, Diary, where would I be today had I not heeded God's checks nor obeyed my parents' wishes and orders? It makes me almost tremble with fear just thinking about it. All I can say is, Jesus led me all the way. I will be forever grateful and thankful to Him. Oh, I love Him so deeply. I know not what the future holds, but this one thing I do know, and that is He who has guided me so carefully and tenderly along the pathway of life thus far will continue to guide, direct and lead Matthew and me the rest of the journey Home. By His grace and help, I will follow willingly. I am His willing and obedient love slave. And now, I must close for this time. I hear my beloved's footsteps coming along the hallway and I must go to him. I am so very happy, Diary! I am thankful I waited for God's choice.
Rejoicing in Him, Annabelle