DEAR DAUGHTER
By Mrs. Paul E. King

My Dearest Danae,

I just came from your bedroom where I hung the freshly washed and ironed curtains up at the sparkling-clean windows. Everything looks and smells so clean in your room (I pray your heart is still spotless and clean and holy.)
I miss you dreadfully. The house is too quiet and extremely empty since you left for college. When (and if) I get too overcome by the "empty nest" feeling, I go into your room, sit in the rocking chair and count my blessings: you were always such a bubbly, happy little thing! From the time of your birth, you were always smiling and pleasant, it seemed. I suppose we should have given you the more fitting name of Naomi instead of Danae, (According to Biblical definition, Naomi means pleasantness, as you well remember, my dear.)

Your father and I were conversing over breakfast this morning about the rapid changes in life: only yesterday, it seems, our children were small and we were all together as a very happy family. And now, here we are, alone: just the two of us, back to where and how we started. Where have those beautiful years of togetherness flown to! I understand the meaning of the Biblical descriptions about life more fully now; terms, "like a weaver's shuttle"; "a vapor"; "a morning cloud"; "his days are as grass: as a flower of the field"; all of these describe the brevity of life; how fleetingly it passes by and is gone.

I rejoice with you for the answer to prayers in giving you a Spirit-filled and spiritual roommate. This puts my heart at ease. But each of you is still vulnerable to the enemy's attacks upon the soul; guard this sacred citadel carefully and with much prayer.

College days are not like your days at home were, my dear Danae. You will encounter days of such busyness and hectic schedules as to make it appear perfectly legitimate and, at times, almost mandatory that you forget your "secret closet," where you rendezvous with God. Don't be deceived! The devil comes to us with all kinds of suggestions . . . "You really must get that lesson finished first;"

"Just once won't harm you nor make you grow lean in your soul. . . ."

Don't listen to him, Danae; rebuke him in the name of the Lord and through the blood of Jesus Christ. Always remember, and see to it, that Christ has first place in your life; first place and prime time in and for your devotions (don't "hurry" through these, my dear); first place in your choices and decisions (they will be numerous and varied); and, finally, first place in your dating courtship days. If you will seek first and only to please Christ and
to find and know His will, you will have a sure guarantee of joy unspeakable and a satisfaction deep inside you which none but those who walk close to God know anything about.

God wants His children to be fat and flourishing spiritually. The Bible states that he (the righteous) "... shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon," and that he shall "cast forth his roots as Lebanon."

What a lesson for us here, Danas! Shallowness and true God-likeness don't synchronize; they don't mix. So many people in our world are shallow; they have no depth (spiritually, I mean). And "in nothing is shallowness more contemptible than in the great things that belong to the kingdom of God. Whatever excuse there is for any measure of superficiality in the ordinary things of life, when it comes to the soul, the Kingdom, our calling and/or God's cause, shallowness cannot for one moment be tolerated." So stated the late, saintly, Spirit-filled and courageous Commander Evangeline Booth.

I pray that you will continue to have your conviction deep! "When the roots of conviction are deep," this same God-fearing and sacrificial woman stated, "the north winds of adversity may blow as a very hurricane against the cedar-like character, but it rears itself amid the boisterous storm, unmoved. The hot sun of prosperity may pour its withering rays down upon it for a long season, but that sun will not scorch because of the depth of the root. The tempest-flood of temptation and persecution may strike at the 'cedar' of your life with merciless fury, but the very fury of the storm will tend (only) to lengthen the roots and tighten their hold on the underlying, immovable Rock.

"This depth of conviction always gives birth to an equal depth of purpose, such as found expression in the words of Paul when he cried: 'Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel!' and, 'This one thing I do.' Conviction is seeing the need -- hearing the call. Purpose is to resolve to do. The intent, the aim, the plan of life must all be made to harmonize with that view, that call, that conviction."

Isn't this wonderful, Danae! I was blessed as I read it, and since each of us has always shared our "gems" and "gold nuggets" with the other, I felt I had to share this, still another, "gem" with you via letter. I'm sure it will strengthen and bless your soul like it did mine.
She stated this, furthermore, regarding the cedar and its roots: "Storm-defying roots must always include a great love -- a love that is stronger than death. Whatever else we may have of wisdom and wealth and learning and language, or whatever else we may do in the matter of song or service or toil or entertainment, will fall short of the work without this all-qualifying power of love. This is that which will prove to be the all excelling force, giving efficiency and permanence to our work of winning men to Christ.

"Let us turn once more to another rugged tree and measure, if we can, while we linger at Calvary, that measureless love, the infinite depth of its roots, that held on while the unutterable storm of a world's sin and woe broke over Him. Then in the light of a fuller vision and with the strength of a firmer purpose let us pour our hearts out in the cry: 'Give me love like Thine!'

"With roots such as these you need have no fear as to the strength and permanence of your character or the beauty and utility of your service. Like the Lord, you shall be 'excellent as cedars.'"

This address was given to cadets in the Salvation Army in 1915, Danae, and still its God-inspired and God-anointed message gives a spiritual uplift today. I know it has encouraged my soul; I'm sure yours will be encouraged also.

Read Solomon's description of the Savior, dear: "His countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as cedars." Cedars -- excellent? It is quite amazing to find (if one will look and study and meditate) so much in the sacred page which sets forth the worth of character under this lovely figure. The cedar! Wonderful in girth, matchless in height, finest in grain, greatest in strength, deepest in root, and the king of the forest!

Because of its durability, the cedar's value for structural purposes is mentioned over and over again in scripture. When a temple or a palace had to be built, the cedar was requisitioned. The beauty and fineness of its grain makes it susceptible to a very high polish. The sweetness of its fragrance gives it an advantage over any other wood, while the bitterness of its taste makes it impervious to insects. It is a wonderful tree. This is why we should aspire to become "excellent as cedars."

I see so many spiritual lessons and implications regarding this tree of the forests and vales, but I must stop right here, lest you wonder if there is no
news about the family. Sometimes, like this morning, when I get to studying God's Word, I could go on and on in praise and testimony and thanksgiving for the blessings bestowed, the strength gained, the lessons learned and the greater maturity (in Christ) attained. Oh, Danae, I love God's Word! I love my Lord! (I just had to share this with you, honey.)

Mittens seems "lost" since you left! She sits and mopes and meows pitifully. I tell her you're away, learning. She only looks up at me with her great, perfectly round, green-blue eyes and meows. Needless to say, your father and I are giving a "lot-o-lovin'" to a certain yellow/white cat! She'll survive, I'm sure! Like us, she's in her "adjusting" period -- adjusting to you not being here!

We heard from Thomas and Gaff; the twins are thriving and gaining weight since they are in their own little beds and are now finally home. Not bad for such tiny little preemies! To God be all the glory! Thomas said they are seeing new faces almost every week in their church services. He feels they are on the verge of a Holy Ghost revival; he can sense it as he preaches and prays. We don't want to forget to intercede for them, that this will become reality. Amen!

Jean and her family are doing well. Bill's working for a Christian business man and loves it. The children are growing tall. They, like Thomas and Gaff, all send you their warmest love and affection.

Your father sends his deepest love and warmest affection as well as his earnest prayers.

May God bless you, Danae, our beloved daughter. You may count on our prayers.

Our love --
Mother and Dad