



VOL. III, NO. 1, JUNE, 1946, P. O. BOX 328, GRAND CENTRAL ANNEX, NEW YORK 17. YEARLY, \$2.50; COPY, 25c

*The national monthly journal of Alcoholics Anonymous, devoted to those seeking further knowledge on the problem of alcoholism, with the hope that it will help all alcoholics everywhere. Individual opinions expressed here are not, necessarily, those of A.A. as a whole.*

*Contents of this publication copyrighted, 1946 by A.A. Grapevine Inc. with all rights reserved.*

## GROWING PAINS HERE AND ABROAD

The founding of a new group of Alcoholics Anonymous is considerably more difficult and complicated than opening up a new roadside hot dog stand.

Although this fact is self-evident it does seem to be occasion for surprise and discouragement here and there as new A.A. groups get underway throughout this country and other countries. Frequently the enthusiastic sponsors of new groups become baffled to the point of despair when called upon to share in the growing pains of a new group. Some are apt even to become disillusioned when they learn that a new group cannot always be started with a merry wave of the hand, and that the first meeting does not necessarily set in a motion a steady and serene growth.

Perhaps it is natural to expect that an idea as inspiring and demonstrative as A.A. can be planted easily, will take root quickly and will grow rapidly, almost without any further care

### March of Time Film

Release date for *The March of Time* documentary film on alcoholism has been announced as June 14.

The picture includes scenes taken at the A.A. Central Office in Manhattan; the NCEA (National Committee for Education on Alcoholism); New York's Knickerbocker Hospital; the Yale School for Alcohol Studies; and at the clubrooms of one A.A. group—chosen by *The March of Time* people because it seemed typical.

A.A.'s anonymity has been respected throughout. No A.A.'s face is shown in the film. The faces distinguishable in the shots taken at the Central Office are those of non-alcoholics. And those seen at the group's clubrooms are actors.

The one exception is Marty M., who emerged from her anonymity when called upon to become executive director of NCEA.

and cultivation. In his own boundless enthusiasm, the A.A. whose anticipations run this way is forgetting that although the idea he is attempting to plant and make grow is good, he is still dealing with alcoholism, which sprouts many tough weeds.

The proper A.A. mental stance by the would-be sponsor or sponsors is the first step in the founding of a new group. The sponsor who realizes that new groups inevitably experience a variety of troubles will be prepared for them. Differences of opinion as to policy, where to meet, what kind of meetings to have, how to pay the rent, what to do about "slips," and all of the other tribulations that pop up are to be expected.

A.A. is now enjoying its most rapid growth. New groups are mushrooming all over God's acres. The difficulties of starting new groups are therefore obviously not preventing the spread of A.A. throughout the world.

But, the difficulties may be minimized and the wear and tear on members who help start new groups will be lessened by a better understanding of the obstacles. Many will find much reassurance and guidance by directing their thoughts back to the story of how A.A. started. That first group consisted of just two men. Then there was a third. For a long, long time there was only a handful. They had no money, no clubrooms, no publications to help them spread the word, no sympathetic audience to listen, no inspiring record to support them. They had no sympathetic public to help them and wish them well. The press didn't know them, nor did the ministry or the medical profession.

But out of that discouraging beginning, the whole of A.A. began.

No matter what the troubles of starting a new group may be today, they scarcely can compare to the troubles that the first A.A. group

experienced. But it is not necessary even to go back that far to find comparative encouragement. For example, it is indeed much less difficult to found a new group now in the United States where A.A. is well and favorably known from coast to coast and border to border—much less difficult than to start a new group in some other country where it is not known.

Below are excerpts from a letter received by a member here from the sponsor of the first group in Australia, or as he writes, the first group in the British Empire outside of Canada. After reading of the troubles they have been experiencing in Sydney, those encountered in this country may not seem as large. And it is most

*(Continued on Page 5)*

### THE USE OF CONFESSION

(Cardinal Newman)

*Reprinted in part by request.*

How many are the souls in distress, anxiety, or loneliness, whose one need is to find a being to whom they can pour out their feelings unheard by the world? Tell them out they must; they cannot tell them out to those whom they see every hour. They want to tell them and not to tell them; and they want to tell them and yet, be as if they be not told; they wish to tell them to one who is strong enough to hear them, yet not too strong to despise them; they wish to tell them to one who can at once advise and can sympathize with them; they wish to relieve themselves of a load, to gain a solace, to receive the assurance that there is one who thinks of them and one to whom in thought they can recur, to whom they can betake themselves, if necessary, from time to time, while they are in the world.

If there is a heavenly idea, surely, . . . confession is such. . . .

# EDITORIAL: On the 8th Step...

**"Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all."**

The list that some of us had to make in applying this Step would compare in length to current real estate lists of house and apartment applicants. The length of the list of people we had harmed grew with the degree of our honesty and the accuracy of our memory.

Perhaps some people do come into A.A. with a fortunate record of having harmed only a few. We doubt, however, that anyone need turn in a blank piece of paper—not if he thinks long enough and honestly enough. What, for instance, of the business associates who took on some of our work during our absence from the office or on those days of the shakes and low efficiency? What of the friends whose time we wasted with such very boring blabber? And, too, there are those intangible but damaging effects of the example we set for others; the good we might have done but didn't; the contributions we could have made to helping some one else in some way, or just making a moment or two more pleasant—but didn't; the success of someone else we might have boosted along, but didn't.

Anyone except a saint will find that he has harmed someone, somewhere, and that he has harmed society and his fellow men by failing to do the things for which he had the time, the talent and the opportunity, but not the sense of responsibility.

Even the rare, quiet and so-called well-behaved alcoholic can make a list. And the ordinary variety of drunks, which the great majority of us are, can usually make a list from here to Timbucktoo, beginning with the wife, the youngsters, the relatives and the boss, and extending on through the people we borrowed from and didn't pay back, the people we lied to—and so on and on and on.

The challenge of making amends is indeed a formidable matter to contemplate. In some instances, even to make amends to some one person, such as a particularly hated enemy, seems more than anyone can undertake.

But this process of self-inventory and self-cauterizing also offers one of the most restorative experiences to be found through A.A. The experience begins to unfold, too, while making the list of people we have harmed and becoming "willing to make amends to them all."

Let us note that wording—"became willing to make amends. . . ." We may not be able to make amends to everyone we have harmed. Circumstances may prevent us from making amends to all, and there may be reasons why we should not undertake to make amends to some—as suggested in the 9th Step. But there is nothing at all to prevent us or to restrain us from becoming *willing* to make amends.

The point here is that in order to become *willing* to make amends we have to admit to ourselves without reservations and without quibbling or reciting reasons why we did it, that we did commit the harm. We have to attain the attitude in which we say to ourselves that whether or not the other person was wrong or right, we were wrong. Maybe the person we harmed was a louse. That doesn't make our brand of lousiness any better. It's no excuse. The louse we harmed must go on the list along with the good people we've harmed.

Reaching the degree of self-analysis and honesty which carries us to a *willingness* to make amends to all helps to set the stage for the beginning of real progress in A.A., or real progress in any way of life. This is part of the conditioning process for attaining honesty and humility and helpfulness; part of the process of fitting ourselves again

(Continued on Page 6)

# Trustee Vote Fixes Policy On Gift Funds

By Bill

Discussing this topic in last month's *Grapevine* we made the following observations:

(a) That the use of money in A.A. is a matter of the gravest importance. Where its use ends and its misuse begins is the point we should vigilantly watch.

(b) That A.A. is already committed to a qualified use of money, because we would not think of abolishing our offices, meeting places and clubs simply for the sake of avoiding finances altogether.

(c) That our real problem today consists in setting intelligent and traditional limits upon our use of money, thus keeping its disruptive tendency at the minimum.

(d) That the voluntary contributions or pledges of A.A. members should be our principal, and eventually, our sole support; that this kind of self support would always prevent our clubs and offices from getting out of hand because their funds could readily be cut off whenever they failed to serve us well.

(e) That we have found it generally wise to separately incorporate those special facilities which require much money or management; that an A.A. group is a spiritual entity, not a business concern.

(f) That we must, at all costs, avoid the professionalization of A.A.; that simple 12th Step work is never to be paid for; that A.A.s going into alcohol therapy should never trade on their A. A. connection; that there is not, and never can be, any such thing as an "A.A. therapist".

(g) That A.A. members may, however, be employed by us as full time workers provided they have legitimate duties over and beyond normal 12th Step work. We may, for example, surely engage secretaries, stewards and cooks without making them professional A.A.s.

Continuing now the discussion of professionalism: A.A.s frequently consult local committees or The Alcoholic Foundation saying they have been offered positions in related fields. Hospitals want A.A. nurses and doctors, clinics ask for A.A.s who are social workers, universities ask for A.A.s to work in the field of alcohol edu-

(Continued on Page 8)

# ANOTHER PLEA FOR KEEPING OUR ANONYMITY

Headed by Bill's observations on anonymity, I have noticed several other articles in *The Grapevine* in recent editions treating upon the same subject. Although each had a slightly different approach, I noticed that all met on the common agreement that anonymity is one of the most important features A.A. has.

Yet, I have seen many instances in which the tradition—I think it certainly is that—is violated. No doubt I have been guilty of a few violations myself. In fact, isn't it true that many of us have, and isn't it also true that all of us should be on our guard against treating this matter carelessly?

I wonder how many "prospects" have been

## *New Information Center Set Up in Youngstown*

A Tri-County Alcoholic Foundation, a non-profit organization, has been chartered under the laws of Ohio, at Youngstown, including Mahoning, Trumbull and Columbiana Counties.

The trustees at present consist of four alcoholics, A.A.s for periods of from four to six years, and five civic-minded non-alcoholic citizens who believe that the problems of alcoholism should be brought to the attention of the public.

At the information center at 145 Lincoln Avenue, Youngstown, any individual or group may receive literature or personal consultation on the problems of alcoholism. The center will also furnish speakers for civic groups.

The organization will work with doctors, ministers, priests and others who are continually confronted with alcoholic problems.

The foundation, trustees say, will try to better treatment accorded alcoholics. Until this time, this problem has been considered in Youngstown entirely either from a criminal or moral standpoint rather than from the view that alcoholics are actually sick people.

The Foundation will make efforts to improve facilities for hospitalization of alcoholics, so that they may first of all recover physically. The new Mental Receiving Hospital on Indianola Avenue in Youngstown will be used in this connection and a private hospital has been established at the new Foundation Center on Lincoln Avenue.

Previously, patients needing hospitalization in Youngstown, were forced to go to Cleveland, Akron, Cuyahoga Falls, Mercer, Pa., or elsewhere.

Funds for the Tri-County Foundation have been contributed entirely by non-alcoholic citizens who believe the undertaking worthy of their aid.—*J.H.A., Jr., Youngstown.*

frightened away when they heard A.A.s scatter the names of other A.A.s about the premises. It's all right to say, in noble and holy tone, that no one who really wants A.A. can be frightened away. Perhaps it is true that even if frightened away for a while, the desperate one will return. But why put anyone through that extra misery if we can get them in sooner simply by demonstrating that the second word in Alcoholics Anonymous really means what it says?

The fact is that most people who come into A.A. are extremely skittish in the beginning about the matter being known. Of course, it isn't logical that they don't want it known that they are making contact with A.A., when their drinking has been public information throughout their town. But logical or not, this extreme shyness is common, not unusual, among newcomers.

Shall we, perhaps forgetting our own similar nervousness, say that their attitude is wrong, and thus risk driving them away? Or shall we live up to our name and reassure them by demonstrating that we do really respect our anonymity?

Anyone who wants to make it known for some good reason that he is a member of A.A. certainly has a right to do so, providing he is not exploiting it for some personal reason. But I don't believe any one has the right to make it known outside of A.A. that somebody else is a member.

One of the places where the second word in our name is made to appear meaningless is at the open meetings at the Manhattan club house. These meetings are really open. Anyone can come to them. At every meeting, among the audience undoubtedly are some people who are there out of curiosity. I don't think anyone has the right to get up on the platform and use names, including full and last names, of other A.A.s in his or her speech. But many do.

I personally have been in long enough to reach the point where I don't care who knows I am an A.A. In fact, as with most of us eventually, I am proud to have it known. But that certainly does not give me the right to be tossing somebody else's name around from the speaker's platform or anywhere else.

When I came into A.A. I was made to feel sure by the understanding A.A.s who took me under their wing that my entry would not become public property, that they would respect my wishes to remain anonymous—that the name Alcoholics Anonymous did mean something. That seemed vital to me at that moment.

There are several other reasons why I believe we should guard our principle of anonymity, as Bill suggested. But certainly one good reason is consideration for the new prospect, the poor

timid and shaken soul who is taking that first nervous, hesitant step—even as you and I did.

Let's think of him. Let's respect the other fellow's anonymity. Let's be anonymous. Or let's be honest and change our name.—*D.Y., Manhattan.*

## *"Slip Clinic"*

The time to give earnest consideration to "slips" is *before* they happen!

It is little use going back for one's umbrella after the storm breaks. Better to have taken it along.

The direct or overt cause of a "slip" is known only to the person involved. But the real, fundamental cause is easily found.

Somewhere along the line, one or more of the 12 Steps has been overlooked, by-passed, or neglected!

Even *one* neglected step can cause all the trouble.

One slip on an icy pavement is all that is needed to break one's leg or fracture a skull.

The 12 Steps earnestly followed, prepare one for every contingency.

The 12 Steps need no amendments. They cover everything necessary to our new pattern of life and every safeguard for maintaining complete sobriety!

They are not local, or national only. They have a universal significance and application. They work as effectively in China or Peru, as they do in New York or Oregon.

There is no imperfection in them. The imperfection is in ourselves.

To score one hundred percent in applying the 12 Steps in all the affairs of our daily life is impossible.

But so far as maintaining sobriety is concerned we can so improve our score that these unhappy "slips," if they do not become impossible, will become far less frequent, less prevalent, and more and more on the way to becoming "unthinkable."

"Controlled *slipping*" leads to an attempt at "controlled" drinking.

The 12 Steps can't be edited, nor "blue-penciled."

We "shot the works" when we were on our bats, binges, and benders.

And now if we want to *stay* dry, we have to "shoot the works" on The Program.—*L.C., Portland, Ore.*

# A.A. Discussed on 'We, the People' Program

*Editor's Note: In answer to numerous requests, The Grapevine reprints that portion of the We The People radio program on Sunday, May 4, in which Marty M. explained Alcoholics Anonymous and the work of the National Committee for Education on Alcoholism.*

**BOULTON** (Master of Ceremonies): The story of the young lady who is beside me now at our microphone, can be told in just seven words. I want her to repeat those seven words for you.

**MARTY:** For ten years, I was an alcoholic.

**B:** That's a shocking statement, isn't it? And what courage it must take to make such an admission. But it's just that sort of courage that has made this young lady who is our guest on *We The People* tonight one of the leaders in the fight against alcoholism. She is a member of Alcoholics Anonymous and executive director of the National Committee for Education on Alcoholism. Welcome to *We The People*.

**M:** Thank you, Mr. Boulton. The name Alcoholics Anonymous speaks for itself. We are a group of alcoholics who have anonymously banded together to help ourselves and each other get well. We have preferred to remain anonymous for obvious reasons. But—as director of the National Committee for Education on Alcoholism, I am glad to use my name. The purpose of the National Committee is to teach people the truth about alcoholism—that this is a disease—and alcoholics are sick people. By using my name and telling my story, I believe I can further that truth. My name is Mrs. Marty Mann, and I live here in New York City.

**B:** Mrs. Mann, it seems incredible that a young and beautiful woman like you should have once been an alcoholic.

**M:** Mr. Boulton, I still am an alcoholic.

**B:** But—I thought you'd been cured.

**M:** Oh, no. You must realize that alcoholism is a disease—a disease which today is as prevalent as tuberculosis or cancer. My illness has been arrested, and I think and hope it will stay that way, but people like me can never safely touch alcohol again, so we can never say we're cured.

**B:** Mrs. Mann, before you continue your story, I want to tell our listeners why we invited you to be our guest tonight. Alcoholism is mounting at an astounding rate in this country. Reliable sources have informed us that there are an estimated three million alcoholics, and that one in every six are women. *We The People*, feel that the hush-hush policy that has always surrounded this subject will no longer work in the face of such figures, and that by bringing it out into the open we may contribute one step toward combatting the problem.

**M:** Mr. Boulton, I'm so glad you said that,

because that's the reason I consented to come on this program tonight. I don't enjoy airing my personal life, but perhaps others may profit by my counsel.

**B:** Mrs. Mann, will you tell us now how or why it was you started to drink to excess?

**M:** First let me tell you a little bit about my background. I was born in Chicago, and my family had a good deal of money. I had everything a girl could ask for. I went to a boarding school, finished abroad, and had the usual coming-out party when I returned. I was young and happy and gay and thought it was fun to drink.

**B:** How old were you then?

**M:** Eighteen. If that seems young to you—remember that was in the 20's, and that was the era when decent young men thought it was smart to carry hip flasks. I didn't know then—in fact I didn't find out until seven years ago—

## *Better to Be Drunk Than Merely Sober*

"If coming into A.A. meant nothing more to me than being sober, I'd get out of it, get drunk and stay drunk!" said H.D., a tall personable gent, as his opening blast at a regular meeting of the Orange (New Jersey) group.

"What I mean is," explained H.D., "if I continued to think and act and live the way I used to in my drinking days, I'd be so unhappy and miserable I'd simply *have to* drink."

H.D. was expressing his own opinion but it turned out that it was actually the keynote of this particular A.A. group. Starting out with seven members a little over a year ago, they now number around 60 and have made quite a name for themselves. They aren't very interested in the drinking histories of the new recruits and you don't hear the blow-by-blow accounts of drunks, even in their open meetings. "All us alcoholics sound alike—why listen to a lot of chatter about binges?" they say.

As a result their meetings are very alive and not at all repetitious—everyone tells what's happened since he got into A.A. "It's a cinch nobody would be fooling around here if he hadn't had trouble with liquor. We want to hear what people've done since they got 'dried up', not before."

This bunch subscribes unanimously to the belief that they were pretty unhappy people or they wouldn't have become alcoholics; they felt the irresistible compulsion to drink to escape from life. They feel that if they merely get

(Continued on Page. 12)

that I'm one of those people who should never have tasted liquor. I thought I could drink in moderation. I thought I could stop anytime

**B:** When did you discover that you couldn't stop?

**M:** A couple of years before I landed in a sanitarium. But those years in between were frightful and frightening. I had married an alcoholic. He should have been an example to me, but he wasn't. After our divorce I drank even more. Then my family suffered financial reverses, and I had to go to work. My drinking still *seemed* under control. Then I remember later telling myself I was drinking for business reasons. Still later it was to calm my nerves, for by then the liquor was beginning to affect my nervous system. I thought I was going crazy. I had to have a drink to make myself feel normal. I reached the melancholic stage and twice tried to commit suicide. I was a confirmed drunk—and didn't know it. It was then that my friends persuaded me to go to a sanitarium.

**B:** What treatment did they use there?

**M:** Psychiatric treatment and it helped a lot—but not enough. Then one day my doctor handed me a copy of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*. I was furious with him. I was not an alcoholic! In a fit of temper I threw the book across the room. The book landed on the floor open. More angry than ever I went across the room to pick it up and my eyes lighted on the words. "We cannot live with anger." The words were so apropos of my mood it startled me, and I began to read. As I read, the truth became apparent, and I admitted to myself for the first time—I was an alcoholic.

**B:** Well, then—I assume that Alcoholics Anonymous is responsible for your rehabilitation.

**M:** Indeed they are. They didn't lecture me, or look down on me, or make me sign a pledge. They did advise me to promise myself that I would not drink for 24 hours, and when the 24 hours were past, to make myself another promise. *They taught, me to live without alcohol.* I slipped once or twice in the beginning, but today, because of their help, I'm well. We know the alcoholic can be helped and is worth helping. We feel this is a public health problem, and therefore a public responsibility. We want the public to realize drunks shouldn't be jailed, but sent to hospitals—because a drunk is as sick as a man with a mortal disease. But he can, with proper treatment, become a useful citizen. I am proof of that. And I am devoting all my energies to aid those who are afflicted with this dread disease.

## GROWING PAINS IN AUSTRALIA

(Continued from Page 1)

encouraging to note from the letter below that notwithstanding the difficulties, the new group in Australia—now 17 months old—is growing.

"After many false starts we eventually managed to get a branch of A.A. going in Sydney. This was about 12 months ago (as of Jan. 21, 1946). Now we have a group of about 20. Some of our members relapse at times but many are much better than they were. It is becoming our experience that most of our members after being sober for some weeks are sure that they have the thing beaten, have one drink and then we have the devil's own job with them.

"It would seem that it takes one or two relapses to convince most members that they have no control over their drinking. This was probably your experience in the U.S.A.

"We also are finding out that as the group continues to grow, clashes of opinion occur amongst members as to policy. We are having many ups and downs but in spite of all of this we are making definite progress. If you could see the branch after 12 months you would heartily agree. Inquiries come in the whole time and inebriates themselves are beginning to turn to us for help. They know that they are beaten and we are the only ones capable of helping them.

"We are meeting many difficulties. In the first place none of our members yet know enough of A.A. This is the first branch formed in the British Empire (Canada, of course, excepted) and whilst we are full of enthusiasm our technique is poor. We still require much more experience.

"Americans are more religious than Australians and the religious side is the greatest difficulty our members face. This will come later but very gradually. In other words we have not yet learned how to correctly interpret A.A. principles to suit Australians. We want guidance and often have I wished that your visits to Australia would be very frequent to keep us free from error and to show us the right path. When one of your members can come to Sydney to spend a holiday he will be kept very busy explaining A.A. and showing us what mistakes we are making and why we lose so many prospective members.

"In The second place our greatest stumbling block is The drying out of members. Time and time again we are approached by members, by relatives of inebriates to 'get them off the booze.' At the present time we can do nothing. I take a few home but this is unsatisfactory. Members are trying to get a home with three or four beds to nurse them but the house shortage is

## *The Pleasures of Reading*

PEACE OF MIND, By Joshua Loth Liebman (Simon and Schuster; \$2.50)

To those of us who have difficulty with the spiritual part of the A.A. program. Dr. Liebman gives a compelling answer. Indeed the goal of all mankind, the path toward that sine qua non of the happy life is to be found within the 203 pages of the rabbi's book, *Peace of Mind*.

He goes on the thesis that religion and psychiatry are mutually supplementary. Both teach the value of knowing ourselves. The personal inventory of the 10th Step he considers of immeasurable importance—probing out the causes of our fears, hates, failures. He points out that the fears of men are identical, fear of loneliness, rejection, inferiority, anger, illness, yes, and even of death. Psychology and religion agree that we can never become adequate, happy individuals while we are inwardly tormented, emotionally depressed. He stresses the need for forgiveness and tolerance.

His chapter, "Conscience Doth Make Cowards," succinctly states the 24-hour plan. We live in today, not yesterday or tomorrow. That we treat ourselves more fanatically, more vengefully, more cruelly than we do others comes almost as a revelation. We should view ourselves neither as naughty children nor as spotless angels, but accept ourselves as mature men and women with all our imperfections.

When Liebman speaks of loving ourselves properly, he does not mean egoistic self-love but rather of the positive good of self-respect. "The human self is not a gift," he says, "it is an achievement." Again, "To learn how to be good to oneself is often more difficult than to learn how to be good to others." We alkies will find a pipe-full in that one. To accept oneself, then, to stop being what we thought we were and be ourselves, to think clearly of our relation to the world, that is the foundation of a personal philosophy. Instead of holding our own capabilities and virtues in contempt, we begin to see them in focus. For we can never love others if we do not love ourselves. We can not have faith in God or mankind if we do not have faith in ourselves.

If our first responsibility is to ourselves, then the second and even larger is that to others. We affect either for good or ill all those who come within our radius. Ha, the 12th Step again! The necessity of love is of the very fabric of life, our capacities depend as much upon being on good terms with ourselves as upon our maturity. "Love or Perish!" he heads the chapter, and we know this to be true.

As true as the battle against fear. Fear arising as a blackmailer from childhood. Most of us can claim unhappy childhoods, but now we are grown and can put aside the child's feeling of helplessness, of inadequacy and inferiority. The drive to grow up, to accept adult responsibilities becomes a basis for freedom. We learn not to expect perfection but escape from self-pity through the dignity of work.

Liebman's chapter on grief is a treasury of wisdom and solace for those who have lost loved ones. His chapters on faith and religion this reviewer finds slightly less dynamic.

But in the summing up of his thesis he stresses the value of hero-worship—to select a person we can wholeheartedly admire and try to live as he would live, on a reality principle rather than the pleasure principle. And not to scatter ourselves among conflicting desires but rather to unify them into one overwhelming purpose.

Surely this is a book that can be read with benefit by all of us in quest of that priceless possession—peace of mind.—*Priscilla P., Manhattan.*

so bad that this is impossible at present. A syndicate of business men is flirting with the idea of starting a private hospital for the treatment of wealthy inebriates. This would solve some of our difficulties. Also the government may start a clinic to treat inebriates in hospitals instead of in gaol.

"Our third difficulty is finding club rooms . . . and office accommodations cannot be found in Sydney today.

"It was yourself that gave me the idea of A.A. and to you we feel eternally grateful. M——got on the booze and was picked up dead in one of the lowest slums in Sydney—a tragedy that should have been prevented. But

we hear of these things happening every day and we want to prevent them. Please God we will be able to do so in the near future.

"I certainly would like your version of the 12 Steps. I personally feel that in the rapid expansion during the past 12 months we tend here to lose sight of these Steps and that is why so many of our members have relapsed at times. We now intend to read the 12 Steps at each meeting and to analyze and discuss them.

"I am looking forward to meeting you at some time in the future, perhaps in America, perhaps in Australia. Wherever you are rest assured of my good wishes and that I am ever grateful to you for your friendship."

## VINO VIGNETTES: He Couldn't Let Go

For years Mac has been associated with the real estate firm through which the Denver Central Group rents its present club quarters. For over a year he had handled the account and once or twice had occasion to call at the club-room for business reasons. Realizing that his drinking problem was getting to be a serious one, he resolved last September to visit the club and find out what it was all about.

Not with any idea of wanting to remain strictly sober, you understand, but with the hope that A.A. had some formula whereby he could get slightly spifflicated over the weekend—come Monday morning he could forget all about a drink, carry on through the week and again woo Spiritus Frumenti the next weekend! At the club he learned of the 24-hour program, started practicing it, and derived no little pleasure in telling of the simplicity of staying sober. Then, too, he enjoyed taking a call and telling how this was the first time in over 30 years that he had been completely sober for over a week at a time.

Came the holidays and Mac fully expected to get drunk for Christmas. He always had and naturally it was the thing to do. His A.A. reasoning then came to the fore and through it he figured out that perhaps for his own good, and at the same time to surprise his family, the proper thing to do was to stay sober for that particular day.

But New Year's! Hadn't he stayed sober over Christmas? Didn't he deserve a good drunk? And anyway at no time had he promised to stay sober for a certain length of time. In fact, he was even surprised at himself for having been sober as long as he had, so what the hell, New Year's wouldn't be New Year's unless he got drunk—and he fully expected to go out New Year's eve and do the thing up brown.

Again that line of reasoning came to the fore and Mac proceeded to reason himself out of his expressed intention of getting drunk. He most certainly had enjoyed his sobriety, so why not continue it?

Then *"The Lost Weekend"* came to town and Mac look his family to see the picture that had won all Academy awards. After their arrival home a discussion of the picture followed. Mac stressed the wonderful acting of Ray Milland and over and over stated just how good that guy was. Noticing that his two daughters and his wife were laughing and seemingly didn't appreciate the histrionic ability of Milland as did he, Mac inquired. "What is the matter with you folks? Don't you know that that was the best piece of acting ever shown on any screen?"

To which one daughter replied, "Yes, Pop, Milland was good. He was really trying to act

the part and deserves all the credit given him. But, Pop, we have seen you put on so much better a show time and time again, and you weren't trying—that we are just beginning to realize how wonderful you are and what A.A. means to so many families."

Mac is still a regular attendant at the club. Fairly beams like a kid with a pair of new red top boots when you speak of how he found something that he wasn't looking for, and is constantly on the look out for someone who needs it, to tell them just what A.A. has done for him.—C. T. B., *Denver*.

---

### "DEFROSTING ROOM"

*Front. Fort Worth, Tex.*

The Fort Worth Group of Alcoholics Anonymous rents their clubhouse from an individual who also owns and operates a comfortable residential hotel. In that hotel the group keeps, from day to day, a room rented for the purpose of "defrosting" prospective and worthy people that ultimately become members of this group—and they come in from three and four hundred miles away. Many days and weeks we have three-rooms-in-a-row-busy. The three in a row are sometimes called "The Bridal Suite", "The Rest Room" and "The Honeymoon's Over." These last names were coined by the Hotel PBX Operator but the "Defrosting" room was and is first in the hearts of many of these Fort Worth members and our group dispatcher reminds many members each week that they are needed for two-hour service and attendance in that room to help others just as they were helped.

Of the many tales that come from the "Defrosting" room there is still fun in recalling the actions of one of our present day good members. On his last spree, and before he found A.A. he had rented a taxi in Fort Worth and gone cruising into Oklahoma territory where his taxi driver was jailed for possession of liquor, etc. This member was delivered to us sick and sour but willing and eager to get straightened out. Then came two days and nights of suffering but

*(Continued on Page 12)*

---

### Editorial on the 8th Step *(Continued from Page 2)*

into society; a very vital step in the rehabilitation of the alcoholic.

We know that when drinking we are selfish, self-centered, egotistical and self-dramatists. We are filled with self-pity over the great wrongs everyone has done us, how we are misunderstood, how thoughtless others are towards us.

The 8th Step is an excellent purgative for the kind of thinking, as well as acting, that we've been doing. Drink long and deeply of this Step, because while it may taste very bad going down, the effects are miraculous.

## Barley !!! CORN !!!

*(What's the funniest A.A. tale or quip you've heard? Others would like, to hear it, Send it in.)*

From *S.H.*, *North Hollywood, Calif.*

A drunk popped his head into the Hollywood A.A. Group meeting at the writers' round table in the Hollywood hotel.

"Is it true," he hiccuped, "that you guys ain't got any names?"

\* \* \*

Suggested new alibi if caught sleeping in the gutter:

"But, officer, you know how hard it is these days to find an apartment."

\* \* \*

From *Hi and Dri*, *Minneapolis, Minn.:*

"Why is your tongue black?"

"I dropped a bottle of Scotch where they were tarring the road."

\* \* \*

From *B.H.* *St. Petersburg, Fla.*

Have you heard about the A.A. who sits on the floor once a week to count his tea bags? After counting them, he totals them up ... so that he can say honestly that he's a teetotaler!!

\* \* \*

**MOST DRUNKS ARRIVE TOO LATE WITH TOO MUCH.**

\* \* \*

One of the Akron members who is on the police force, Jerry C., said this happened during a recent traffic safety drive.

Cop: "Pull over to the curb so I can tell you what I'm arresting you for, you idiot! You are the worst driver I've ever had to chase. You've crashed a red light, you drove the wrong way on a one-way street, you hit 50 or better right down Main St., AND you haven't paid any attention to my siren for the last 10 blocks!"

At this point the offender's wife leaned across her silent husband, smiled sweetly and said:

"You mustn't mind him, officer—HE'S DEAD DRUNK!"

## The Clip Sheet

New York, N. Y., *World Telegram*: "Tom Collins, announcer on the Cavalcade of America program, faced a pretty little crisis when the script a few weeks ago featured a dramatization of the work of Alcoholics Anonymous.

"The irony of signing off such a show with his usual tag was more than he wanted blame for. So he made a slight revision. 'This is Tom W. Collins,' he said firmly. Prior to this, nobody ever knew he had an initial."

\* \* \*

In a recent Jimmy Fidler column from Hollywood, this comes forth: "Did yuh hear about the actor who refused to join Alcoholics Anonymous because he never goes into anything without proper billing?"

\* \* \*

Richmond, Va., *News-Leader*: "A separate state institution for the care and treatment of alcoholics is possible today without additional legislation beyond the appropriation of funds for buildings," G. W. Gwaltney, executive secretary of the State Hospital Board, said in an address to the Richmond Chapter of Alcoholics Anonymous.

". . . Mr. Gwaltney said that the board hopes, in moving Western State Hospital to a new site, to be able to utilize enough buildings at the old location to make an institution for inebriates. In pointing out that additional legislation would not be necessary in order to provide for a separate institution for alcoholics, Mr. Gwaltney said that the 'Inebriate Law' of 1916, as part of the State Hospital Code, gives the Hospital Board authority to establish an institution for inebriates."

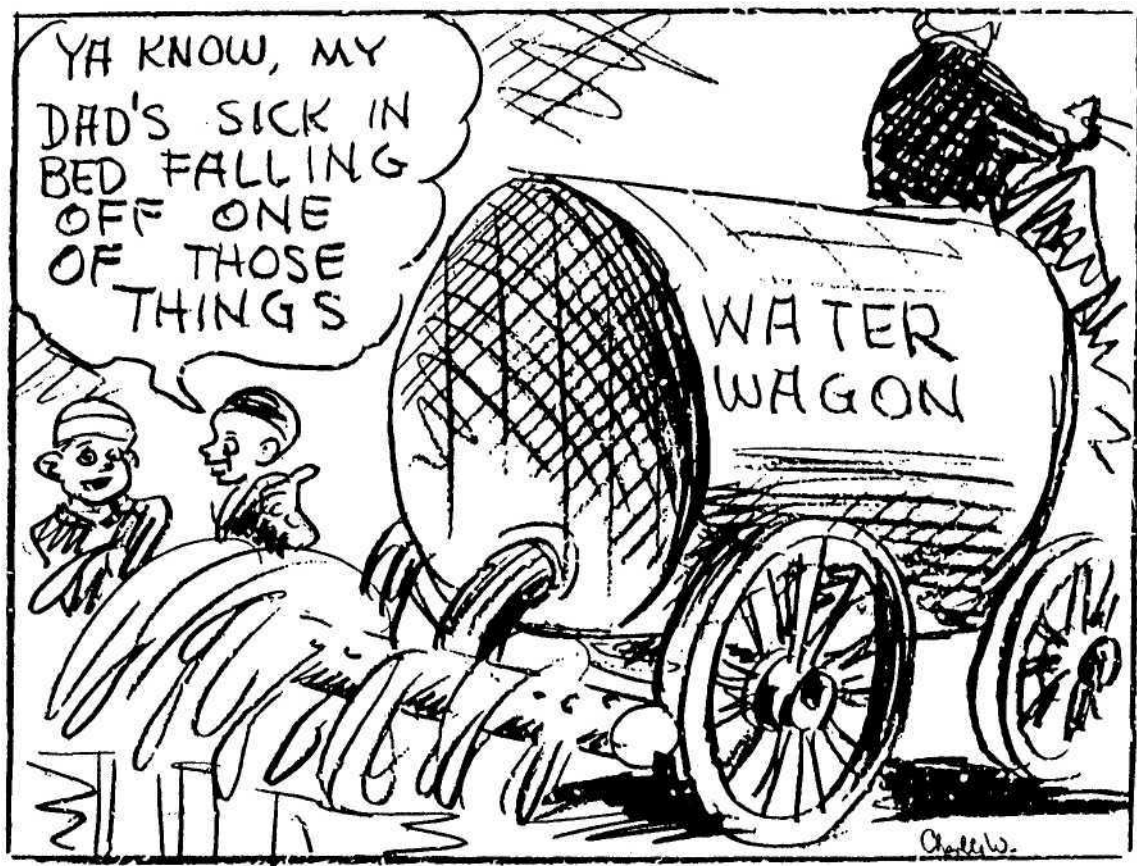
\* \* \*

Salem, N. J., *Sunbeam*: "A century-old 28-room Georgian mansion, once owned by a whiskey distiller known as 'The Lord of Jericho,' opened May 1 as a home for the care and rehabilitation of alcoholics. The huge, three-story red brick building, Ivy Manor, is located on 200 acres of farm and woodland, seven miles west of Bridgeton at Jericho—and seven miles from the nearest taproom.

"It was purchased by a group of Philadelphia and Camden businessmen, headed by J. Robley Tucker, realtor, Camden, N. J.

"The project has been indorsed by Alcoholics Anonymous, the celebrated self-help group which has aided thousands of alcoholics to permanent rehabilitation, Tucker said. 'We will call for patients by station wagon within a 100-mile radius,' Tucker added. 'But we do not

(Continued on Page 12)



## A.A. DIGEST—Excerpts from Group Publications

V *The Brighter Side*, Waterloo, Iowa: "THE NEW RECRUIT—

- "1. He is the most important person in A.A.
- "2. He is not dependent on us, we are dependent on him.
- "3. He is not an interruption of our work—he is the purpose of it. We are not doing him a favor by serving him—he is doing us a favor by giving us the opportunity to do so.
- "4. He is a flesh and human being with feelings, emotions, and problems like our own.
- "5. He is a person who has failed through no fault of his own, to live the life of happiness and usefulness. We have the means and tools to rebuild his life from despair to hope, from darkness to light. . . ."

\* \* \*

*Central Bulletin*, Cleveland, Ohio: ". . . Those of us who don't struggle against names and who have no hesitancy in saying that our help comes from God receive additional help since we are able to benefit by the experiences of all others who acknowledge that their help comes from God\_\_"

\* \* \*

*Camel Club Chronicle*, Marshalltown, Iowa: "Yesterday is a canceled check, tomorrow a promissory note, today is cash, spend it wisely.' How true. Yes, yesterday is a canceled check;

it is gone and what we have done is gone forever. Let us not forget our bad checks of yesterdays. If we do, we may return to writing rubber ones. Yes, we can and should profit from our bad checks, our past mistakes, and we will if our thinking is straight. And we can also write good promissory notes for the future. Now, as for today, it comes only once in a lifetime and with today we should use good old common horse sense. By so doing we can get to any desired goal by asking God as we understand him to help us. . . ."

\* \* \*

*Hi and Dri*, Minneapolis, Minn.: "An attitude of ever-present thankfulness infuses our temper of mind and in turn, we infuse our efforts and our influence with a constructive, positive, progressive quality. . . ."

"An altitude of plain humility is a quality of simplicity—a simplicity that is at once charming and yet revealing for it clothes and enhances a certain unassuming dignity which reflects man at his highest and best. . . ."

"An attitude of lively aspiration is a lively sense of ambition; an eagerness to advance to the limit of one's powers. An attitude of abiding faith in human nature is that attitude of mind vital to new strength in an advancing world. A strong sense of obligation is that altitude which gives us the satisfaction of doing good in addition to doing well. . . ."

## TRUSTEES VOTE GIFT POLICY (Continued from Page 2)

cation on a non-controversial basis and industry wants us to recommend A.A.s as personnel officers. Can we, acting as individuals, accept such offers? Most of us see no reason why we can not.

It comes down to this. Have we A.A.s the right to deny society the benefit of our special knowledge of the alcohol problem? Are we to tell society, even though we might make superior nurses, doctors, social workers or educators in the field of alcohol that we cannot undertake such missions for fear of professionalizing A.A.? That would certainly be far fetched—even ridiculous. Surely no A.A. should be barred from such employment because of his membership with us. He needs only to avoid "A.A. therapy" and any action or word which might hurt A.A. as a whole. Aside from this he ought to be just as employable as the non-alcoholic who would otherwise get the job and perhaps not do it half as well. In fact, I believe we still have a few A.A. bartenders. Though bartending, for obvious reasons, is not a specially recommended occupation I have never heard anyone cry out that these few members are professionalizing A.A. on account of their very special knowledge of barrooms!

Years ago we used to think A.A. should have its own hospitals, rest homes and farms. Nowadays we are equally convinced we should have nothing of the sort. Even our clubs, well inside A.A., are somewhat set apart. And in the judgment of practically all, places of hospitalization or rest should be well outside A.A.—and medically supervised. Hospitalization is most definitely the job of the doctor backed, of course, by private or community aid. It is not a function of A.A. in the sense of management or ownership. Everywhere we cooperate with hospitals. Many afford us special privileges and working arrangements. Some consult us. Others employ A.A. nurses or attendants. Relationships such as these almost always work well. But none of these institutions are known as "A.A. hospitals".

We have also had some experience with farms and drying out places which, though outside A.A. and medically supervised, have nevertheless been managed and financed by A.A. members. Some of these operations have done well, others very badly. And with one or two conspicuous exceptions, the worst possible set-up has been that in which A.A. groups, with group money and management, have gone into the "drying out" business. Despite exceptions, these "A.A. hospitals" seem the least promising of all. The group which takes one on usually finds that it has contracted an unnecessary responsibility and a heart breaking amount of dissension. Be-

ing a group project it cannot be "taken or left alone". Either it has to be abandoned or it remains a raw sore on the body politic. These experiments have well demonstrated that the A.A. group will always have to be a spiritual entity, not a business concern. Better do one thing supremely well than two things badly!

Now what about donations or payments to A.A. from outside sources? There was a time some years ago, when we desperately needed a little outside aid. This we received. And we shall never cease being grateful to those devoted friends whose contributions made possible the Alcoholic Foundation, the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* and our Central Office. Heaven has surely reserved a special place for everyone of them. They met a great need, for in those days we A.A.s were very few and very insolvent!

But times have changed. Alcoholics Anonymous now has more than 24,000 members whose combined earnings this year ought to be many millions. Hence a very powerful feeling is spreading among us that A.A. ought to be self-supporting. Since most members feel they owe their very lives to the movement they think we A.A.s ought to pay its very modest expenses. And isn't it, they ask, high time that we commenced to revise the prevalent idea that an alcoholic is *always* a person who must be helped—usually with money. Let us A.A.s, they say, be no longer takers from society. Instead, let us be givers. We are not helpless now. Neither are we penniless any more. Were it possible to publish tomorrow that every A.A. group had become fully self-supporting, it is probable that nothing could create more good will for us than such a declaration. Let our generous public devote its funds to alcohol research, hospitalization or education. Those fields really need money. But we do not. We are no longer poor. We can, and we should, pay our own way.

Of course, it can hardly be counted an exception to the principle of self support if a non-alcoholic friend comes to a meeting and drops a dollar in the hat. It is doubtful, too, if we should refuse the relative who sends in his \$5 mite; a token of appreciation for the recovery of someone close. Perhaps we would be ungracious to refuse his gift.

But it is not these small tokens of regard which concern us. It is the large contributions, especially those that may carry future obligations, which should give us pause. Then too, there is evidence that wealthy people are setting aside sums for A.A. in their wills under the impression we could use a great deal of money if we had it. Shouldn't we discourage them? And already there have been a few alarming attempts at the public solicitation of money in the name of Alcoholics Anonymous. Few A.A.s will fail to

imagine where such a course could lead us. Every now and then we are offered money from so called "wet" or "dry" sources. Obviously dangerous, this. For we must stay out of that ill starred controversy. Now and then the parents of an alcoholic, out of sheer gratitude, wish to donate heavily. Is this wise? Would it be good for the alcoholic himself? Perhaps a wealthy A.A. wishes to make a large gift. Would it be good for him, or for us, if he did so? Might we not feel in his debt and might he not, especially if a newcomer, begin to think he had bought a ticket to that happy destination, sobriety?

In no case have we ever been able to question the true generosity of these givers. But is it wise to take their gifts? Though there may be rare exceptions, I share the opinion of most older A.A.s that acceptance of large donations from any source is very questionable—almost always a hazardous policy. The struggling club may badly need a friendly gift or loan. Even so, it might be better in the long run to pay as we go. We must never let any immediate advantage, however attractive, blind us to the possibility that we may be creating a disastrous precedent for the future. Strife over money and properly has too often wrecked better people than us temperamental alcoholics!

It is with the deepest gratitude and satisfaction that I can now tell you of a recent resolution passed by our general service committee, the Trustees of The Alcoholic Foundation, who are the custodians of our national A.A. funds. As a matter of policy, they have just gone on record that they will decline all gifts carrying the slightest obligation, expressed or implied. And further, that the Alcoholic Foundation will accept no earnings which may be tendered from any commercial source. As many readers know we have been approached of late by several motion picture concerns about the possibility of an A.A. film. Naturally money has been discussed. But our Trustees, very rightly I think, will take the position that A.A. has nothing to sell; that we all wish to avoid even the suggestion of commerce, and that in any case A.A., nationally speaking, is now self supporting.

To my mind, this is a decision of enormous importance to our future—a very long step in the right direction. When such an attitude about money becomes universal throughout A.A., we shall have finally steered clear of that golden, alluring, but ever treacherous reef called *Materalism*.

In the years that lie just ahead Alcoholics Anonymous faces a supreme test—the great ordeal of its own prosperity and success. I think it will prove the greatest trial of all. Can we but weather that, the waves of time and circumstance may beat upon us in vain. Our destiny will be secure!



# Mail Call for All A.A.s at Home or Abroad

Letters to this department are invited on any subject pertinent to A.A. Due to space limitations you are asked to hold your letters to a maximum of 350 words.

Only initials will be published unless the writer authorizes use of his first name as identification for A.A. friends.

The Grapevine will not divulge the full name of any writer but will forward A.A. communications addressed to the writers of letters published here.—The Editors.

## No Time for Mere Tolerance

*From Detroit, Mich.*

We in A.A. are set in a great system of reciprocity and interdependence upon which our whole existence rests. We cannot follow the modern-fashion. It will take stronger stuff than this to build in a world so near to catastrophe. What we need more than a fashionable tolerance, which is fundamentally patronizing in spirit, is a burning faith which can change men's lives. Power comes not by supposing that one view is as good as another, but by finding in honest inquiry what the objective truth seems to be and then following it with stubborn courage tempered by humility.—*Sarah K.*

\* \* \*

## Hitting A 'Norm'

*From Los Angeles, Calif.*

During my first year in A.A. I went to a great many meetings, formal and informal. In fact, I was at some kind of an A.A. meeting, talk-fest or get-together just about every night in the week. When my wife asked—and I now recall how hesitantly she asked—if it would be "safe" for me to spend an evening or two away from A.A. and at home, I was annoyed. "Even if I have to go to an A.A. meeting every night," I would answer, "isn't it better than being drunk?" Of course, she could answer that in only one way.

Now I realize how unfair I was and how I was actually using A.A. as an escape, and a prop, just as I had used liquor, though of course with less drastic effects.

Undoubtedly at certain stages one needs a lot of A.A. And one had better get too much than too little. But I am now convinced that we are failing to grow and failing to get the best of what A.A. has to offer if we have to continue to lean entirely and completely on meetings and the activities even after we've been dry a considerable spell.

Naturally, we will always want to live by the principles of A.A., and I want them to be at work every day. But if after several months in A.A. we are still going to meetings every night,

or we're still out at something every night, maybe we had better examine ourselves carefully to see if we really are getting the true idea of the basic principles and purposes of A.A.—*B.G.W.*

\* \* \*

## No More Competition

*From Stony Creek, Conn.*

When I was a young boy the neighborhood kids went in for field and track athletics as well as football, swimming, baseball, etc. My brother excelled in all and could run the 100 yards in 10 seconds flat. I couldn't run the 100 in 25 seconds due to faulty placement of leg muscles. Added to this there was little coordination between mind and muscle. They used to say I had three hands, right, left and "behind" hand.

To compensate for this, God had endowed me with . . . the ability to concentrate easily. So what to do? You guessed it, outsmart the gang, of course. Result? Not much popularity by a long shot. Again what to do? Drinking liquor with the best of them solved this problem, because I became entertaining and amusing even though I was a clown. The public has always loved clowns.

Now the competition to get ahead in the world, to assume responsibilities and make money and to drink like the rest of my associates, etc., etc. You all know the rest of this story—crashing headlong up against society, down and up and up and down again ad infinitum. Repeated failures—then A.A.

A new world, no more competition, with anything nor anyone. I find everybody in A.A., who is succeeding, no longer trying to get ahead of anyone. Par for this course is just staying away from *one*. drink *one* day and the daily search for the truth.

However, the rising ego with its attendant competitive spirit will forever try to assert itself in me, which if I fight it will drive me to the soothing caress of the bottle for my injured egotistical pride.

Wherein shall I find the answer? First in the non-competitive, surrendered belief that there must be a better God than the bottle and in the knowledge that He not only exists for me but will guide me if I let Him today. How do I get this way today? By trying to increase my understanding and practice of the 12 Steps and by exercising the greatest of all the soothing virtues, which is the charity that can best be expressed in 12th Step work. Yes, no more competition. Let's go, and let God. Peace! (It's wonderful!)—*C.W.*

## A.A. Songsters

*from Iowa City, Iowa*

Would you kindly express publicly through your columns the thanks and appreciation of the joint committee of the Cedar Rapids, Iowa City and Marengo groups to the "Northernaires" of St. Paul?

This group of 12 trained voices traveled from St. Paul, Minn., to Iowa City, Iowa, and really put on a program of entertainment that was marvelous.

For those who have never heard them may I say they are all A.A. members. . . . Were I to say that everyone of the nearly 600 who heard them at Iowa City would gladly do it all over again I would not be exaggerating in the least.—*John J. D.*

\* \* \*

## Recording Apropos

*from Manhattan, N. Y.*

I have just purchased a phonograph recording of a beautiful hymn entitled "Just For Today," sung by the baritone, John Charles Thomas. It so aptly expresses the philosophy of our 24-hour program that I thought all A.A.'s should know about it.—*John D.*

\* \* \*

## Group Strength

*from Cedar Rapids, Ia.*

The success achieved by Alcoholics Anonymous as an instrument for the rehabilitation of alcoholics, is perhaps the most unique and phenomenal in the entire history of group-welfare efforts. That from so small a beginning, this organization should have expanded into so powerful a force for the reclamation of the alcoholic, is not so unusual as the unique means by which it attains its goal. Certainly it constitutes one of the brightest and most promising eras in the "dark and tragic annals of alcoholism".

In A.A. the alcoholic is brought to realize that due to the peculiar nature of his physical and mental constitution, he can never become a controlled drinker. He realizes at long last that he must at all costs, refuse that first drink. Because in his case, it is that first drink that is almost invariably disastrous. Therefore, he must abandon forever, the fond illusion that he will some day be able to drink like ordinary people. For, in his case, even one seemingly harmless glass of beer may easily be the beginning of a disastrous debauch that will once more plunge him into the depths of misery, degradation and despair.

Although the alcoholic often finds it a Herculean task to resist the lure of alcohol, experi-

ence has proven that his chance for recovery is immeasurably increased by the advantages of membership in an A.A. group. For, ordinarily, it is only in such a group that he will find the strength necessary to combat his alcoholic tendencies. He does find the necessary strength in A.A. for the reason that his membership in this group provides him with an effective weapon against his own weakness.

Before attempting a brief description of the nature of this weapon, I admit that this description may be both superficial and inadequate. But I believe that when we interpret its meaning in the light of the happiness it has brought us, we will agree that we all share substantially the same idea of its effectiveness.

I should say then, that this weapon with which A.A. has enabled us to emancipate ourselves from the slavery of alcoholism, is the growing strength which we derive from our deep sense of moral obligation to one another. It is a compound of sympathy, understanding, solicitude and mutual helpfulness. It was born of a great need, and is mutually reciprocated among a group of kindred spirits whose minds and hearts are sincerely united in a common effort, whose energies are concentrated on the same goal, and whose interests are united by the bond of a common affliction.

We who have floundered helplessly for so long in the storm-swept sea of alcoholism, have at

last been pulled from the waves by the life lines of the good ship A.A. And now, in the "happiest, sunniest hour of all the voyage while eager winds are kissing every sail," we are resolved that no negligence of ours shall ever again cause us to "dash against the unseen rock and in an instant hear the billows roar again above a sunken ship."

We of A.A. have faith in ourselves and are confident that with the help of God, we shall win through to the peace, happiness and contentment that come with permanent sobriety. But we also believe that consistent and conscientious effort toward the rehabilitation of our brother alcoholics is an indispensable condition to the preservation of our own sobriety. We are convinced that the statement "Faith without works is dead", applies more particularly to our organization than perhaps to any other. And finally, we believe that the full realization and sincere application of these truths will enable us when tempted, to say with DeQuincy, "Why should I subject myself to such a yoke of misery, voluntarily incur a captivity so servile, and knowingly, fetter myself with such a seven-fold chain?"

It is our fondest hope that we now leave the hideous quagmire of alcoholism in the past, and with light hearts and high hopes, march triumphantly onward to meet the "golden dawning of a grander day."—H.T.C.

### Daily Moral Inventory

From Jackson, Miss.

Enclosed (reproduced below—Ed.) you will find a little card which I designed with the idea of forcing myself to make that moral inventory with regularity.

After a losing battle with old John Barley-corn for 40 years I found A.A. and it has certainly been a life-saver. I will always be genuinely grateful to those who started this plan and those who interested me in it.

We started this group about 16 months ago with four or five members. We now have around 50. It is certainly inspiring to attend meetings and to realize that we are all sincerely trying to be *genuine* with each other. Never have I been in an organization where that is so manifest. No sham, no alibis, no pretense, no make-believe. Just simple realism. It is a great moral uplift.

For the benefit of those members who have "slips," I would like to say that after being in the group for about nine months, and having acquired an attitude of complacency, I had a slip which was a world's wonder. But I believe that it was the finest thing that ever happened to me because it really aroused my thinking and gave me, for the first time, a definite and correct picture of myself. Since then, I am really finding what humility is, and my ambition now is to keep right on growing, day by day and the rest of my life. I have far to go.—Mark W.

### MY DAILY MORAL INVENTORY

Month \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

Check Results DAILY in Proper Column

**LIABILITIES**

Watch for —

**ASSETS**

Strive for —

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	
Self Pity																																Self-Forgetfulness
Self Justification																																Humility
Self Importance																																Modesty
Self Condemnation																																Self Valuation
Dishonesty																																Honesty
Impatience																																Patience
Hate																																LOVE
Resentment																																Forgiveness
False Pride																																Simplicity
Jealousy																																Trust
Envy																																Generosity
Laziness																																Activity
Procrastination																																Promptness
Insincerity																																Straightforwardness
Negative Thinking																																Positive Thinking
Vulgar, Immoral, Trashy Thinking																																High-Minded, Spiritual, CLEAN Thinking
Criticizing																																Look for the GOOD

Eliminate the Negative

Accentuate the Positive

**CHECK THE SCORE EVERY NIGHT — TRY TO GET THE SLATE CLEAN**

# A.A.'s Country-Wide News Circuit

A combination of membership growth and the housing shortage caused the Denver, Colo., Group to schedule two open meetings a week instead of only one as previously. Continued growth of the group's building fund promises that in the not-too-distant future Denver A.A.s will have their own clubrooms. . . . The Jefferson City, Mo., fellowship, which now comprises over 25 members, has found it necessary to divide for discussion purposes. . . . In Rochester, N. Y., where an Alcoholic Information Center and Clinic have been established, A.A.s recently celebrated their *fourth anniversary*.

\* \* \*

Several additional groups have gotten under way in Toronto, Canada, in the last six months. The parent group had its *third birthday* last March. A woman's group, formed the first part of the year, has been developing steadily.

Along Toronto's Skidrow there was recently formed the Victor Group of the A.A. fellowship—the latest Toronto group to get going. They started in April, meeting at the Fred Victor Mission, and had an opening attendance of 76. This old mission is located at the intersection of Queen and Jarvis Streets. Here the boys used to pay two bits for a bottle of "basic" (bay rum) and this was where most of the derelicts eventually arrived. One of them, after finding A.A. himself, started the Skidrow Group.

In the months to come Toronto A.A.s expect to open a North End and a West End Group.

\* \* \*

The New Orleans, La., Group, started March 30, 1943, has grown to an active membership of almost 200. They have been instrumental in assisting to organize groups in Covington, Abbeville, and Pollack, La.; and Tylertown, Miss. The latest one started on the Mississippi Gulf Coast includes members from Gulfport, Biloxi, and other towns in the vicinity. This group was suggested by the major in charge of the Veterans Hospital at Gulfport, who is interested in A.A. work. The same applies to the Marine Hospital in New Orleans, where the chief psychiatrist is a friend of A.A. and has made some several talks before the group.

\* \* \*

At a recent open meeting of the Tacoma, Wash., Group the hall was crowded to capacity with members from that city and Seattle. The secretary of the Tacoma Group, who was called "Joe Alcohol Jr." for the evening, acted as chairman and introduced as the man responsible for the establishment of A.A. in the Pacific-Northwest a member who traced the history of A.A. Other speakers were a private in the

Army, who is a member of the Philadelphia Group, and is temporarily stationed in Washington; a woman member; and one of the state's oldest A.A. members, dubbed "Joe Alcohol Sr." for the occasion.

\* \* \*

In Sacramento, Calif., they've just settled a vexing telephone problem, the solution for which, they think, might help other groups in small cities. The group was too small to afford a downtown office with a paid secretary, but members felt there should be a telephone listing so prospects could call. The satisfactory solution came through engaging 24-hour telephone service with a phone bureau.

\* \* \*

In Vancouver, Canada, at some of the meetings a questionnaire is used. "How did you first come to join?", "What is the chief cause of slips?", and so on. Members are called upon without warning for two-minute impromptu talks in answer.

\* \* \*

Oklahoma City A.A.s are now holding their meetings in a brand new modernistic, brick building, the property of the group and strictly a membership proposition, built from plans drawn by members, constructed by members,

## 32 New Groups

New groups formed in the month ending May 10 include:

CALIFORNIA—Maywood and West Adams (Los Angeles).

INDIANA—Union City.

IOWA—Eldora and Sioux City Friday Night.

KENTUCKY—Ashland.

LOUISIANA—Monroe.

MASSACHUSETTS—Lawrence.

MICHIGAN—Mt. Pleasant.

MINNESOTA—East Side Minneapolis.

MISSISSIPPI—Gulf Coast.

MISSOURI—Windsor.

NEBRASKA—Wakefield-Pender.

NEW JERSEY—East Orange, Lyons, and Toms River.

NEW YORK—Byron, Kenmore, Kings Park, and Jamaica.

NORTH CAROLINA—Lenoir and Washington.

OHIO—Berea and Fairmount (Cleveland).

SOUTH CAROLINA—Conway.

TENNESSEE—Lawrenceburg and Murfreesboro.

TEXAS—McLean.

VERMONT—South Vermont.

WISCONSIN—Chippewa Falls and Mendota.

CANADA—Corteny, Vancouver Island.

and paid for from funds contributed by members. The auditorium seats approximately 400 and the Clubhouse has a dining room, kitchen, offices, and men's and women's rest rooms. Today's total membership is over 200 divided into small groups for discussion meetings.

Two of the Oklahoma City members outlined the principles of A.A. before the Kiwanis Club of that city recently. A return engagement was requested.

\* \* \*

The first joint meeting of the Greater Boston Groups of A.A.—for the financial benefit of the office of the Boston Central Service Committee—was attended by about 400. All contributions, and they were generous, went to help maintain Boston's Central Office. Visitors came from Hartford and Manchester, Conn.; Montpelier, Vt.; Maine, Massachusetts and other New England groups. One of the guest speakers was the Rev. Father James Timmins of Manchester, Conn.

Members from Boston attended meetings of two new groups recently: Lawrence, Mass., and Dover, N. H. . . . A group is getting under way at the Veterans Hospital, Bedford, Mass.

\* \* \*

The Montreal, Canada, Group is now well into its second year, the present membership totalling about 65, of which some 15 are women. The membership is divided into four groups, one of them an all-male section. The Building Fund for the Montreal clubhouse is growing.

\* \* \*

The Rev. Arthur C. James, pastor of the Broad Street Memorial Methodist Church of Drexel Hill, Pa., recently attended an A.A. meeting for the first time, at Upper Darby. He was so impressed that he invited members of the group to speak at an evening church *service*—before a congregation of about 600. . . . Shreveport, La., members have helped the Minden Group to get started with two meetings weekly. . . . The Seattle, Wash., Group now maintains a public clubroom downtown both for meetings and for dispensing information to those interested. Since July, 1945, the parent group of six members has grown to nine groups with over 200 in the fellowship. . . . Beaumont, Tex., A.A.s have reported a growth from two members two and a half years ago to a present membership of 36. . . . Flushing, N. Y., members marked their *third anniversary* with a dance.

\* \* \*

Glendale, Calif., A.A.s claim the distinction of having the oldest new A.A. member anywhere.

A man of 78 walked into the Monday night meeting under his own power, no sponsor, and shaking so badly he couldn't light his own cigarette. That was four months ago. He hasn't had a drink since.

Eighteen months ago the membership in the Glendale area was about 50, with two meetings a week. Today they number over 200, with nine meetings a week. They are sending members twice a month to meetings at the San Quentin Honor Road Camp, a group which they helped to organize over a year ago, and from which today they have some very active paroled members. Their women's group now totals 40, their sobriety running from a year to four and one-half years.

The latest group to get going in Manhattan is in the Chelsea district. It meets at the Y.M.C.A., 215 West 23rd St., on Wednesdays. . . . The Long Beach, Calif., Women's Group reports steady progress. . . . Ann Arbor, Mich., now has two groups with a total membership well over 50. The original group is 16 months old; the other was formed early this year.

Montpelier, Vt. A.A.s have accepted an invitation to a sugaring-off party on the farm of a fellow member. . . . Since organization of the Marin Group in San Anselmo, Calif., six months ago, membership has more than tripled and is now at about 20. . . . The Newark A.A. Group has assisted in inaugurating meetings at the Salvation Army Men's Social Service Center. From 25 to 30 men attend the meetings every Friday night. Mrs. Ivy Cunningham, personnel worker at the Center, is helping to sponsor the project, which is about four months old. . . . The Anderson, S. C., Group, is in its seventh month and is experiencing rapid growth—as are those

#### Cut This Out and Mail to:

*The Grapevine*

P.O.Box 328

Grand Central Annex, N. Y. 17, N. Y.

Herewith \$2.50 for one year's subscription to *The A. A. Grapevine* (Monthly).

For additional subscriptions enclose separate sheet with name and address clearly printed. Checks payable to *The A.A. Grapevine*.

Total Enclosed. . . . .

Renewal? (please check) . . . . .

PLEASE PRINT

Name . . . . .

Address . . . . .

Note: Subscriptions received prior to the 15th of June will begin with the July issue.

**As of January 1, 1946, the price of a year's subscription is \$2.50.**

in Greenville. Spartanburg, Columbia, and Charleston. . . . St. Petersburg and Tampa members joined Clearwater, Fla., A.A.s to celebrate the latters' *first birthday*.

City, criminal and juvenile judges were in attendance at the *third anniversary* banquet of the Jacksonville, Fla. Group. Other Florida groups represented were Daytona Beach, Gainesville, and Tampa. Georgia A.A.s came from Valdosta. Waycross. Atlanta, and Rome. A.A.s from Boston, Mass., were also present. With Jacksonville's several small group weekly meetings, new members are delighted that there are now meetings every night in the week.

When Paterson, N. J., A.A.s held their *second birthday* party recently, the 70 members were joined by several hundred guests from neighboring groups. The group grew from a nucleus of four members meeting in a hotel room two years ago. The Rev. Dr. Howard A. Adair, pastor of the Eastside Presbyterian Church, has befriended the group, which uses the church facilities for its meetings. . . . A series of radio programs devoted to A.A. and broadcast over the local station at Hartford, Conn., have won an award from Variety, national show business paper. A.A. Membership in the Hartford area has increased over 200 per cent, and nine new groups have been started, in two years.

The *eleventh anniversary* of A.A. will be celebrated by groups in two Ohio cities. It was June 10, 1935, that Bill's first successful 12th step case, Dr. Bob, took his last drink.

Dayton members will sponsor a banquet Saturday, June 15, at a local hotel with a well-known war correspondent as chief speaker. Groups in the Akron area will celebrate with an open meeting Sunday, June 9, for the convenience of out-of-town visitors. There will be talks by early pioneers in the fellowship.

Recently the Monday Men's Group and the East Akron Tuesday Morning Group had as guest speaker a Lutheran minister. He told of using the A.A. principles while serving as an Army chaplain. . . . In recent months a good many new members have come from far and wide to St. Thomas Hospital, Akron, for their introduction to A.A. and have carried it back to Beach City and Saginaw, Mich.; Bluefield, W. Va.; Johnstown and Pittsburgh, Pa.; Orrville, Denison, and Zanesville, Ohio, and many other towns.

Radio Station WWJ, Detroit, was given a merit certificate of award for the most effective public service radio broadcasts developed by a regional station. The program dealt with Alcoholics Anonymous.

## Better to Be Drunk

(Continued on Page 4)

"dry" and still remain in the old rut of thinking, living and working, they'll fall flat on their faces in slip after slip.

"If some guy is sitting around feeling awful and fighting off taking a drink—he might just as well go out and get himself stinking. On the other hand, if he's stepping right along into his new world he'll be too excitedly happy as new vistas of what his life *can* be, open up before him. It's as different as looking at the world from the bottom of well or from the top of a mountain."

One of the most interesting things about H.D. and his gang was the conversation after the formal part of the meeting. There was very little of the typical A.A. talk which is so often heard in most groups. Everybody was bursting with the things that had happened since the last time they were together—the new job, the new home, the different books they'd read, civic affairs, and what was the basic reason behind the drinking in the case of some newly contacted prospects.

It struck the writer that here was a crowd of A.A.s who were really concerned with the next 24 hours—not the last 24 years, weeks, days, hours—yes, minutes.—C.C., *Manhattan*.

## Clip Sheet

(Continued from Page 7)

want repeaters. . . . Ivy Manor may properly be looked upon as a sort of half-way house. After a patient has physically and mentally recovered, we will put him in touch with the A.A., if he so desires. From there on, it is up to him—and to them.' "

Washington, D. C., *News*: "Alcoholics Anonymous, working with District authorities, made 54 'saves' out of 66 attempts here in the first three months of this year, Municipal Probation Officer Robert J. Connor has reported. He credited the Municipal Court plan of treating alcoholism as an illness rather than as a crime with salvaging many shattered lives."

## "Defrosting" Room

(Continued from Page 6)

where the ordinary respectable drunk moans and groans in bed just as a dog whines when he is sick to express himself and get some sort of verbal relief, this particular drunk would pray to God for help and then end his prayers with a "WOOF WOOF" real loud and just like a dog's bark. Of course, after the alcoholic sobered up he returned to Oklahoma especially to get the taxi driver out of the clink and returned him to his family in Fort Worth.—H.D.