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*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.*

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## Remembering a Girl—Defeated Except Once

*From Arlington, Va.*

TODAY I am remembering. Remembering a girl of 25 who was buried not so long ago. This remembering is a form of insurance for me, insurance for more days like today. I don't want to forget the conflict, the frightening struggle she had I had. I don't want to forget how often she won. I do not resent her, and I do not fear her any longer, for now she will have to fight both God and me. And God never loses.

### Roundup In Texas Set for June 16-18

The Top o' Texas Group's National Round-up and Barbecue will be held at Amarillo on June 16-18, it has been announced through the *Weekly Bulletin* of that group.

Preliminary estimates of the attendance indicate 5,000 alcoholics and their wives as a possible attendance as the dates were arranged to fall in vacation season and on Monday through Wednesday when hotels and tourist courts, which have promised full cooperation, will be best able to handle visitors.

The idea of a National Round-up of Alcoholics Anonymous was first brought up last fall by Horace Fort, assistant director of the National Committee for Education on Alcoholism, in a meeting at Carlsbad, N. M. The plan was adopted enthusiastically at a meeting of the Amarillo Group and was first announced outside at the state convention in Austin, Tex., in October. Texas groups immediately endorsed the idea and pledged full support.

*The Weekly Bulletin* is now going to all groups in Colorado, Kansas, Missouri and Arkansas in addition to the regular circulation to all Texas, New Mexico and Oklahoma groups, and is being extended to cover the entire United States by April 1. Full information on plans and program will be carried. Nationally known speakers, a three-day rodeo, barbecues, dinners, luncheons and other entertainment are planned.

I want to remember the day she acknowledged with quiet despondency that she was hopelessly addicted to alcohol, that it was no mere beverage, but the food and drug of her soul. And with that acknowledgment began the, fear of source of supply far more than the fear of inevitable consequences. Intellectually she knew the outcome—emotionally she could not see far enough ahead to care. And a drink always pushed the care aside temporarily.

I want to remember the nights I talked to her—talked, threatened, pleaded, ridiculed and condemned her. How often we tried to get together to whip this thing! I told her no one else drank as she did, that she had everything she wanted, so why didn't she stop? I watched her try to pray, saw her fumbling to remember the words of the De Profundis: "Out of the depths I have cried to Thee, O Lord." And then we would resolve that tomorrow would be different—we would start with a clean slate.

But tomorrow was no different. She arose full of determination, but ridden by fears of almost certain defeat. There was grit, but small hope. And before long, our time-worn game of duplicity was being played. We fenced with one another and her strokes became more and more forceful until she won. And with her victory, again I had to sit as an onlooker, with pity but no strength to help in my heart, and watch this awful thing she was doing to herself. I watched her as she slipped beyond my reach,

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### 'SIWASH' RANCHERS WORK OUT UNIQUE 12th STEP TECHNIQUE

*From Denman Island, British Columbia*

Remember back when you took the Scout oath and pledged yourself to do your daily good deed? Well, there's an A.A. in Victoria, B. C., who practices this Scout pledge and his idea came to us from a visitor who knew his technique. Each day he performs one unselfish act which, in the ordinary course of events he would not have done. When our visitor mentioned it we agreed casually that it seemed to be sound procedure and it was not, until the following day that my wife and I (we're both alcoholics) almost simultaneously realized that here was the answer in, simple, easy terms to a problem we had magnified to formidable proportions.

Our place, called locally a "Siwash ranch" or broken-down farm, is on a little island 60 miles from the nearest group and there are no potential contacts here unless the neighbors go suddenly native, which I doubt very much. We, therefore, have often wondered what we could do in our daily living and thinking to take the place of 12th Step work or even compensate for the lack of contact with fellow A.A.s; we were really quite concerned with our seeming inability to start repaying a very heavy debt to society. Well, here it was; all we must do was to find the opportunity to perform at least one unselfish act each day, something a little bit hard or difficult or even unpleasant. Each act, we felt, would be one more cut taken at the toughest and thickest root of our alcoholic characters—selfishness.

What to do? Nothing very dramatic, I'm  
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# EDITORIAL:

## On the 5th Step . . . .

*"Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs"*

ADMITTING "the nature of our wrongs" to God and ourselves sounds much easier than confessing to another human being. We can do the first in complete privacy. No one is listening, we say. Yet, it's not so easy that we all are able to accomplish this Step in one sweeping confession. Several false starts sometimes are necessary before we find both the courage and the insight to admit even to ourselves the true, unvarnished nature of our wrongs.

One of the obstacles to applying this Step is our deep-rooted habit of refusing to face facts, or admit the truth even to ourselves if and whenever the truth was unpleasant. We are grooved in the pattern of glossing over, covering up, beating around the mulberry bush, sticking our head in the sand—or any of the other old cliches which are simply an indirect and longer way of spelling "I-i-e."

The truth is that during the active drinking period the patient has been doing more lying to himself than to anyone else and even after he has decided to turn to the truth finds the way strange and difficult to follow. After 15 to 20 years of self-deception the truth is not easily recognized.

At first, the application of part of this Step may seem to have been achieved. The newly enlightened patient has had a heart-to-heart talk with himself. He has admitted to himself the nature of his wrongs. Or, has he admitted only part of the nature of his wrongs? Has he spared himself just a little, left just a little of the varnish on the truth? Has he spared himself again in just a bit more self-deception, in just one or two self-pitying reasons or explanations of the wrongs?

Frequently, a second and a third confession, or more, is needed before the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth is brought to light. Sometimes a great deal of digging is needed to get beneath the many layers of self-deception that have been piled on each other and become virtually petrified over the years.

Courage implemented by searching analysis and perseverance are needed here, the courage to face and admit the truth as it's brought to the surface, and the perseverance to keep digging until it is.

Usually the presence of an audience intensifies the difficulties of admitting self-truths, even when the audience is a sympathetic friend. Sometimes the mere voicing of inner secrets is a wrenching process, especially for anyone who for years has been hiding all unpleasant facts even from himself. Furthermore, one must forgive himself before he is ready to forgive the world of which he has been so resentful.

For these reasons many who have succeeded in the full practice of this Step recommend that it be started with one's own conscience as the sole audience. Better begin there, they say, first to learn what there is to be admitted and, second, to generate the courage to take another into the confidence.

But, all who have practiced the Step successfully are quick to say, too, that the tremendous relief which follows richly compensates for whatever mental pain and labor may be experienced in the beginning. Confession, of course, has eased men all through history. Its rewards have not diminished and are within reach of the A.A. who has advanced to this point in his recovery of a useful and happy way of life.

## *Our Children, Too, Appreciate What A. A. Has Given Us*

*(The following letter was written to an Oklahoma City A. A., R.W.S., by his college student daughter)*

My Darling Daddy:

I just got back from Vespers— and just had to write you another letter. The speaker was George B., the man I was telling you about—and daddy, his talk was *simply wonderful!*

He was a man about 40, I guess — and graduated from law school when he was 21. He took his pre-law course at Washington University—which is when he started drinking—first just socially with his fraternity brothers—then on and on till he became a chronic alcoholic. When he graduated, he was given the position as assistant United States attorney — and he said at that, time he *knew he had arrived*. At that time there was prohibition—and he sort of laughed and said, "The U. S. Marshal's office was right next door to mine — with all the liquor that had been collected—I felt it my duty to help relieve them of it—so I confiscated a great deal of it for them." Then I think he must have been removed from that office—because he said he and his father were trying everything imaginable to solve his problem—even to the extent that he wanted to go to a mental institution if he thought it would help him. By this time, he said he had lost all of his friends—and had caused very much tragedy to his loved ones. And also he had been in and out of hospitals at least 40 or 50 times between 1928 and 1941. And finally his father discussed his case with a perfectly strange doctor (his father was also a doctor) and he found out about A.A., and has now been sober for five years, he also told about the, program—the meaning of A. A.—and just *everything* about it. I saw him in the hall later with his wife and mother and father — and daddy, they looked so *very very* proud of him. I wanted to talk to him—but there were so many people around, that I couldn't get to him.

All I could think about during the whole talk was you, daddy—and how awfully proud I am of you. I know now, I should have been going to every meeting with you — because I guess I'm more grateful to A. A. than anything. It almost seems impossible now, that you ever drank—and that we were ever unhappy—because I've been happier since you've been in A.A. than I've ever been in my whole life. It makes me want to do better —and to make you just as proud of me as I am of you.

When that man was talking about how hard he tried to quit drinking, I thought of the times when I used to take you down to have a steam

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# Dangers In Linking A.A. to Other Projects

*By Bill*

Our A.A. experience has been raising the following set of important, but as yet unresolved questions. First, should A.A. as a whole enter the outside fields of hospitalization, research and non-controversial alcohol education? Second, is an A.A. member, acting strictly as an individual, justified in bringing his special experience and knowledge into such enterprises? And thirdly, if an A.A. member does take up these phases of the total alcohol problem, under what conditions should he work?

With respect to these questions, almost any opinion can be heard among our groups. Generally speaking, there are three schools of thought, the "do everything" school; the "do

something" school; and, the "do nothing" school.

We have A.A.s so fearful we may become entangled, or somehow exploited, that they would keep us a strictly closed corporation. They would exert the strongest possible pressure to prevent all A.A.s, whether as individuals or groups, from doing anything at all about the total alcohol problem, except, of course, their straight A.A. work. They see the spectre of the Washingtonian movement among alcoholics of a hundred years ago which fell into disunity partly because its members publicly took up cudgels for abolition, prohibition—and what not. These A.A.s believe that we must preserve our isolation at any cost; that we must keep absolutely to ourselves if we would avoid like perils.

Then we have the A.A. who would have us "do everything" for the total alcohol problem—anytime, anyplace and any way! In his enthusiasm, he not only thinks his beloved A.A. a "cure-all" for drunks, but he also thinks we have the answer for everything and everybody touching alcohol. He strongly feels that A.A. ought to place its name and financial credit squarely behind any first rate research, hospital or educational project. Seeing that A.A. now makes the headlines, he argues that we should freely loan out our huge good will. Says he, "Why shouldn't we A.A.s stand right up in public and be counted? Millions could be raised easily for good works in alcohol." The judgment of this enthusiast is sometimes beclouded by the fact he wants to make a career. But with most who enthuse so carelessly, I'm sure it's more often a case of sheer exuberance plus, in many instances, a deep sense of social responsibility.

## Policy Now Clear

So we have with us the enthusiasts and the ultra-cautious; the "do everything" and the "do nothings." But the average A.A. is not so worried about these phenomena as he used to be. He knows that out of the heat and smoke there will soon come light. Presently there will issue an enlightened policy, palatable to everyone. Tested by time, that policy, if sound, will become A.A. tradition.

Sometimes I've feared that A.A. would never bring forth a workable policy. Nor was my fear abated as my own views swung with complete inconsistency from one extreme to the other. But I should have had more faith. We are commencing to have enough of the strong light of experience to see more surely; to be able to say with more certainty what we can, and what

we surely cannot do, about causes such as education, research and the like.

For example, we can say quite emphatically that neither A.A. as a whole nor any A.A. Group ought to enter any other activity than straight A.A. As groups, we cannot endorse, finance or form an alliance with any other cause, however good; we cannot link the A.A. name to other

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## An Open Letter

to

*Dr. W. D. Silkworth*

*From Philadelphia*

Almost six years ago Dr. C. Dudley Saul, just recently deceased, did more than any other individual to start me on my road to recovery in Alcoholics Anonymous. Since that time I've seen many doctors befriend many alcoholics in the same manner; until today we recognize doctors everywhere as our best friends.

During the same six year period I have read many articles by psychiatrists, doctors, psychologists and therapists; and I have heard many speak at A. A. meetings. Handicapped, perhaps, by having had little contact with any of us until after we had become active alcoholics, these people invariably class us as mentally and morally abnormal. Their theme has been that we took to drink because we had failed to grow up; we refused to face life's responsibilities; we suffered every sort of fear complex; we lived in a mental state of childhood; we were so far below par in society that we became alcoholics. We are almost convinced that to admit being an alcoholic is tantamount to an admission of inferiority in basic character.

That I cannot take! I want to consider myself an average person; a member of a cross section of the community of which I am a part. I admit, thank God, that I am an alcoholic; that my life is unmanageable when I drink; that I can never again safely take a drink containing alcohol. But I want to continue to believe that I am and always have been an average person. That, being an alcoholic, my pattern of drinking led to excesses which created in me all the character deficiencies, the abnormalities which so many of you and your associated professions cite as the cause or origin of my alcoholism.

I find in your article in the recent *A. A. Grapevine* a comforting confirmation of my belief. You have been a friend indeed. For me, and I am confident for many other alcoholics, you have contributed greatly to a sure confidence in recovery. — *F. H. C.*

## 12 STEPS IN REVERSE

*From Chicago, Ill.*

Everyone is always talking about the 12 Steps in A. A. Another way of thinking about it are the 12 Mis-Steps of A. A. Here they are:

1. Start missing meetings for any reason, real or imaginary.
2. Become critical of the methods used by other members who may not agree with you in everything.
3. Nurse the idea that someday, somehow, you can drink again and become a controlled drinker.
4. Let the other fellow do the 12th Step work in your group. You are too busy.
5. Become conscious of your A. A. seniority and view every new member with a skeptical, jaundiced eye.
6. Become so pleased with your own views of the program that you consider yourself an "elder statesman."
7. Start a small clique within your own group, composed only of a few members who see eye-to-eye with you.
8. Tell the new member in confidence that you yourself do not take certain of the 12 Steps seriously.
9. Let your mind dwell more and more on how much you are helping others rather than on how much the A. A. program is *helping you*.
10. If an unfortunate member has a slip, *drop him at once*.
11. Cultivate the habit of borrowing money from other members; then stay away from meetings to avoid embarrassment.
12. Look upon the 24-hour plan as vital to new members, but not for yourself. YOU have outgrown the need of that long, long ago.—*C. L.*

# Phone Call Across the Ocean Sets A. A. in Motion

At 10 o'clock on the morning of Tuesday, January 28, the switchboard operator at the Alcoholic Foundation, general headquarters of Alcoholics Anonymous, received a signal from the transatlantic telephone operator in New York.

"Will someone there be available for a call from Nordholz, Germany, at 2:30 p. m. tomorrow?" she asked.

"Yes, of course. Can you tell us the nature of the call?"

"No, but I can say that the call is urgent," the operator replied.

Shortly before 3 o'clock the following afternoon, the transatlantic telephone contact was made. The message set in motion a series of events that taxed the imagination and ingenuity of the A. A. general headquarters secretaries and numerous other A.A.s and friends.

The telephone call came from the base surgeon at an Army hospital in Germany. He was troubled about his friend and patient, Captain B. The captain, it developed, was in serious trouble. In fact, he had been tried by a military court in Germany and sentenced to dismissal from the service. Would A. A. help?

According to the base surgeon, Captain B.'s troubles began when he tried again to drink "socially." A member of A. A. in a western state, the captain had earned an excellent record in the Army during the war. When the war ended, he was stationed in Germany where eventually he attempted "to take a few drinks." The inevitable happened and now the captain had been convicted of drunkenness on duty. Was there anything A. A. could do?

Further conversation with the base surgeon disclosed that Captain B. was aboard an Army transport, arriving in New York at 8:30 a. m., February 1. The general headquarters secretary promised to do everything possible.

Realizing that time was short, the A. A. secretaries immediately went to work on the problem. A telephone call was put in to an A. A. friend,

## THINK IT OVER!

*From While Plains, N. Y.*

Then there was the gal who thought she only needed 10 of the 12 Steps. The other two were for the suckers and she decided she could skip them. She stayed sober but didn't get complete release and happiness. One day, as she was struggling up the stairs (56 of them) from cellar to attic, bowed down under the weight of a heavy box spring and mattress, she had a sudden flash of illumination. "I'd be in a hell of a mess," she reflected, "if I thought I could skip two of these steps!"—L. K.

a former Army officer. Fortunately, this man was available. He agreed to drop everything in order to help.

He pointed out that the first problem would be to get to the man when the ship arrived in New York. To arrange this detail, he got in touch with a bishop of the Catholic Church who is also a friend of A. A. On learning the facts, the bishop readily agreed to help.

The bishop contacted the Port of Embarkation in New York. There he discovered that the Father in charge formerly had been chaplain on the same transport! This meant that the Father would have no trouble boarding the ship to contact Captain B.

Meanwhile, the A. A. ex-Army officer sought and obtained the help of a lawyer who was friendly to A. A.

The Father reported that his interview with

Captain B. had gone well, he said that the man was indeed worth helping. He also reported that the captain was deeply grateful for everything being done for him and was enormously surprised, that anything was being done!

At present, the captain awaits the disposal of his case at Camp Kilmer, N. J. He is under arrest, but the A. A. secretaries have arranged for visitors to see him.

The lawyer is standing by for approval or disapproval of the decision in Washington.

The Father at the Port of Embarkation has communicated with his colleagues at Camp Kilmer. They, too, have promised to do whatever is possible for the captain. In any event, the young captain is not without friends.

The message from Germany was the first transatlantic telephone call received by the Alcoholic Foundation.

## 118 New Groups Reported In Last Two Months

New groups reported to the Central Office between Dec. 11 and Feb. 11 are as follows:

ARIZONA—Downtown Tucson.

ARKANSAS—Jonesboro.

CALIFORNIA—Walnut Creek; Polk-Gulch (San Francisco); Porterville; Bay Cities of Santa Monica, Highland Park, Eureka; Tehachapi Institution for Women, Eldorado County; Del Paso Heights; Burbank #3; Amazon (San Francisco); Hawthorne.

CONNECTICUT—Southington.

FLORIDA—Delray Beach; Lake Worth; Men's Group, Daytona Beach; Hollywood.

GEORGIA—Cuthbert; Manchester.

IDAHO—Anderson Dam.

ILLINOIS—Bloomington #2 and #3; Dupo.

INDIANA—Thorntown; Franklin.

IOWA—Carroll; University of Des Moines; Monday Night of Sioux City; Sunday Afternoon Group of Sioux Group; Cumberland.

KANSAS—Coffeyville; Honor Farm Group; United States Penitentiary at Leavenworth.

KENTUCKY—Fort Knox.

LOUISIANA—Crawley.

MASSACHUSETTS—Hingham; Malden; Seamen's Club, Boston.

MICHIGAN—Tawas City; Center Line; Cosmopolitan (Grand Rapids); Saturday Night Group of Flint; Tuesday Group of Grand Rapids.

MINNESOTA—Robbinsdale.

MISSISSIPPI—Amory; Houston.

MISSOURI—Macon; Evergreen Group of St. Louis.

NEBRASKA—Scotts Bluff; Hastings; Hastings State Hospital at Ingleside.

NEVADA—Nevada state Prison at Carson City.

NEW JERSEY—Ironbound Group (Newark); Fairlawn; Dumont.

NEW MEXICO—Silver City; Espanola of Sante Fe.

NEW YORK—Franklin Square; New York City Salvation Army Group; Mt. Vernon; Scarsdale; Orangeburg; Johnstown; Southampton; Fleetwood Group of Mt. Vernon; Sidney; Canton; St. Nicholas Group of New York City.

NORTH CAROLINA—Rowland; Graham.

NORTH DAKOTA—New Rockford.

OHIO—Findlay; Linden (Cleveland); Veterans Hospital, Marion; Saturday Night of Dayton; Crossroad of Cleveland; Aurora; Saturday Night West Side (Columbus); Carrollton; Superior (Cleveland); Dorr (Toledo).

OKLAHOMA—El Reno; Pauls Valleys; Hobart.

PENNSYLVANIA—Chambersburg; Upper Darby (Philadelphia); Ridgway; Bradford; Coatesville.

SOUTH DAKOTA—Camel Club of Aberdeen; Battle Mountain.

TENNESSEE—Paris.

TEXAS—Crockett; Gatesville; San Angelo; Palestine; Tyler; Centerville; Henderson; Athens; Goose Creek; St. Cleburne; Shamrock.

VIRGINIA—Richmond.

WASHINGTON—Bellingham.

WEST VIRGINIA—South Side Group of Charleston.

WISCONSIN—Fond du Lac; Superior; Madison #2; Oshkosh.

WYOMING—Big Horn.

CANADA—Exeter, North Bay, Wallaceburg, all of Ontario; Saskatoon; Banff; Beacon Hill of Victoria; New Glasgow.

CUBA—Havana.

## Dangers In Linking A.A. to Other Projects

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enterprises in the alcohol field to the extent that the public gets the impression we have abandoned our sole aim. We must discourage our members and our friends in these fields from stressing the A.A. name in their publicity or appeals for funds. To act otherwise will certainly imperil our unity, and to maintain our unity is surely our greatest obligation—to our brother alcoholics and the public at large. Experience, we think, has already made these principles self-evident.

Though we now come to more debatable ground, we must earnestly ask ourselves whether any of us, as individuals, ought to carry our special experience into other phases of the alcohol problem. Do we not owe this much to society, and can it be done without involving A.A. as a whole?

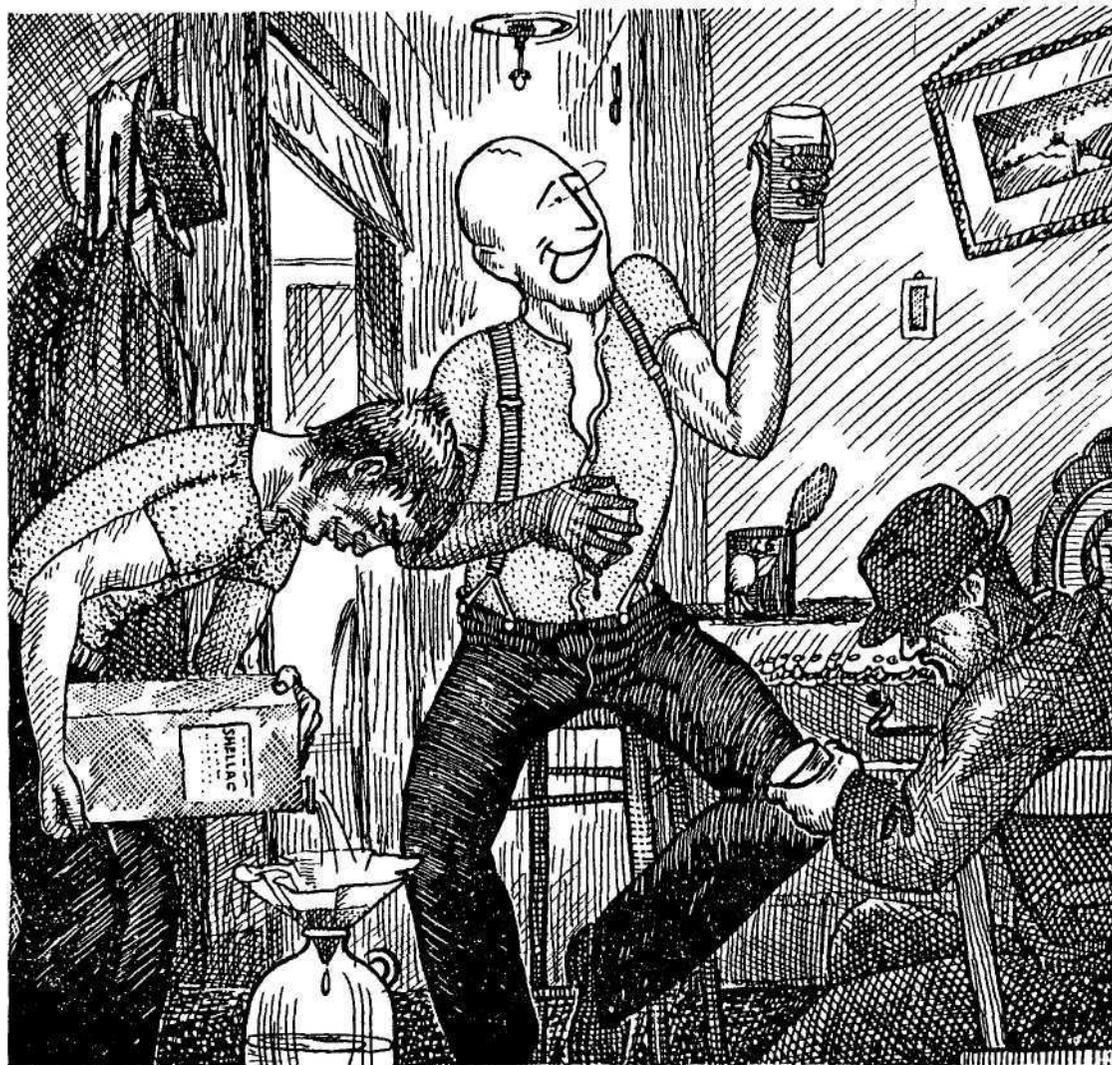
To my mind, the "do nothing" policy has become unthinkable, partly because I'm sure that our members can work in other non-controversial alcohol activities without jeopardizing A.A., if they observe a few simple precautions, and partly because I have developed a deep conviction that to do less would be to deprive the whole of society of the immensely valuable contributions we could almost certainly make. Though we are A.A.s, and A.A. must come first, we are also citizens of the world. Besides, we are, like our good friends the physicians, honor-bound to share all we know with all men.

### We're A.A.s First

Therefore it seems to me that some of us must heed the call from other fields. And those who do need only remember first and last they are A.A.s; that in their new activities they are individuals only. This means that they will respect the principle of anonymity in the press; that if they do appear before the general public they will not describe themselves as A.A.s; that they will refrain from emphasizing their A.A. status in appeals for money or publicity.

These simple principles of conduct, if conscientiously applied, could soon dispel all fears, reasonable and unreasonable, which many A.A.s now entertain. On such a basis A.A. as a whole could remain uncommitted yet friendly to any non-controversial cause seeking to write a brighter page in the dark annals of alcoholism.

A concluding word. Several years ago, I believed that we might, in a limited and cautious way, lend our name to selected outside ventures. One of these was a very promising educational project. I was asked by faculty members of Yale University sponsoring the National Committee for Education on Alcoholism whether they might



*"This shellac lasted better the last time—when we mixed a little fruit juice with the thinner."*

hire an A.A. And could that A.A., for this special purpose, break anonymity? My answer was that of course an A.A. could be engaged; that such an engagement could not, by any imagination, be a professionalization of A.A. as the work to be done would be in another field entirely; that if an A.A. could make a better educator, then why not? Though there has never been much question that this was sound enough policy, the same could not be said for my reply on the matter of dropping anonymity, to which, in this instance, I gave approval.

That course has since proved mistaken. A good A.A. friend of mine took this particular post and then dropped anonymity. The first effect was good. It brought A.A. a considerable amount of publicity and many members. On the educational side the public was made conscious as never before that alcoholism is a sickness and that something could be done about it. So far, very good.

But of late, some confusion has arisen. Because of the large amount of publicity linking the A.A. name and that of the educational project, the public tends to think A.A. as a whole has gone in for alcohol education. And when

the A.A. name became associated in the public mind with a fund raising campaign, there was still more confusion. Some givers were under the impression they were contributing to A.A., only to be told by friends that A.A. did not solicit money. Hence a long-term liability of dropping anonymity is beginning to offset its short-term advantages. As experience makes this more clear, not only to me, but to my friends of the university and of the educational committee, they agree perfectly and are now endeavoring to correct the situation.

Naturally, and most earnestly, I hope that none of those involved or the work of the committee will suffer to any degree from our mistake. Such, after all, is the purpose of trial and error by which we all learn and grow.

Briefly summarizing, I'm rather sure our policy with respect to "outside" projects will turn out to be this: A.A. does not sponsor projects in other fields. But, if these projects are constructive and non-controversial in character, A.A. members are free to engage in them without criticism if they act as individuals only, and are careful of the A.A. name. Perhaps that's it. Shall we try it?

# On the Subject of Drugs, by One Who Took to Them

*From Chicago*

Regardless of the merit of a single code of conduct, two codes of conduct still prevail in the emotional, if not the intellectual, make-up of the world at large. The drunken woman is more despised and far less tolerated than the drunken man.

Deceit, resentment, intolerance and false pride are prevalent in the average woman alcoholic. The woman alcoholic has for years or months, as the case may be, tried to hide her affliction from family, friends, grocers, butchers, laundrymen, repairmen, and the host of people with whom her pursuit of daily affairs throws her into contact. Deception has been a necessity! Deception has become a major habit! Therefore, it is extremely difficult to meet this group and suddenly realize that complete honesty means *very existence*—complete honesty meaning the ability to be entirely honest with one's self as well as one's fellow man. It is difficult—but it is a requisite in this way of life.

Resentment and intolerance are also major characteristics to be eliminated, but in my opinion the elimination of these traits is a slow and constant process. The eight-year associate, as well as the two-month associate, is constantly striving to overcome old or new resentments and to maintain an attitude and practice of tolerance.

## Let's Face the Problem

The total breakdown of false pride is a drastic procedure. The very presence of us women alcoholics in A.A. means that at some time we have had to let go the last vestige of that false pride.

The peace, joy, self-respect and the respect of her family and community are large rewards she finds through A.A.'s way of life and amply repay her for all the initial doubt, fear and trepidation.

I would like to discuss a problem pertinent to both the man and woman alcoholic—sedatives and narcotics.

I would venture to say one-third of the members of the group have had some experience with barbiturates or narcotics. This subject seems taboo for the new man—and some not so new—who feels that to admit attraction to sedatives should be either forgotten or ignored. I think the man or woman with any acquaintance with the host of sedatives or narcotics—nembital, sodium-amytal, seconal, pheno-barbital, codeine, morphine, pantapon and many others—should by all means be perfectly frank about using or having used them. There is no

more degradation attached to their use than having drunk to excess.

It must be impressed on the alcoholic that to take any form of sedation is dynamite for him or her. In my opinion the alcoholic is the potential sedative or drug addict.

These tricky little pills that bring momentary surcease are value changers. We strive for a new set of values when we dry up, using the conscience as a yardstick. Then it stands to reason that we must be in full control of our faculties if we want to progress. We are only in complete control when we are using our brains in full consciousness. The sedative acts upon the brain in the same theoretical, although more subtle, way that alcohol does.

We are aware of the personality change that look place after taking a few drinks—we know our resolutions went out the window and our sense of values was no longer the same. So it is with the sedative and narcotic user. Drugs change the whole thought process of an individual. For *every* alcoholic the sedative or narcotic is dangerous, but to the alcoholic who has at any time used either to any extent, it is tantamount to suicide for him or her to resort to sedation.

People have said to me, "My doctor prescribed this sedative for my nerves, therefore it must be all right for me to take it." My answer

## 'SIWASH' RANCHERS

*(Continued from Page 1)*

afraid, just simple things like my wife's carrying our spare milk every day—in some pretty bad weather, too—for an elderly couple whose cow had gone dry. She has so far outscored me in her endeavors for I miss quite a few days, but I have discovered that I have more spare time than I thought and have been able to help out various neighbors with tough jobs. Sometimes we discover to our mutual embarrassment that we are helping each other out!

Actually, it works like a charm. It's so much easier than trying to change one's entire character overnight or making a dramatic gesture towards the welfare of the world in general. It's simply the principle of "easy does it," the old 24-hour schedule again.

Anyway, it works for us and we are just as pleased as if our hens were each laying two double-yolk eggs a day or if Baby, the cow, had presented us with twin heifer calves.

It may be that some lone members could use the idea with as much profit as ourselves.—  
*Ted M.*

to that statement is this: To be frank with your doctor, whether he be your family physician or a new doctor you are seeing for the first time. Tell him you are alcoholic and therefore allergic to any stimulant or depressant. After your candor he will not prescribe sedation except in specific illness or emergency. Keep in mind that the average doctor has been at wits' end for years dealing with alcoholism and is usually only too glad to hear from an A.A. who has self-knowledge and information to impart.

If I sound dictatorial, I have not meant to preach. I am a secondary sedative and narcotic addict, just as I am a primary alcohol addict. I use the term "primary" in connection with alcohol because I was first alcoholic, and "secondary" in connection with my drug addiction because in trying to control my alcoholism I became acquainted with sedatives, then narcotics. I say "I am" addicted because my addiction is arrested only if I stay away from the first sedative and the first drink.

## A.A. not a Drug Cure

People ask whether A.A. is the answer for drug addicts. I, of course, am not qualified to answer that question, but, in my opinion, A.A. is not the specific for a primary drug addict, that is, the man or woman with no history of alcoholism. I base my opinion on this premise: We, as alcoholics, have the common bond of pattern experience, pattern behavior and pattern recovery or arrestment; on the other hand, if the alcoholic with no drug history were called to see a fellow-being in the throes of narcotic or sedative agony the inexperienced alcoholic would have no personal knowledge to draw on and therefore lack the very quality that the drug addict needs—understanding.

We all feel the fellowship that comes from mutual understanding of a mutual problem, and I think that common bond would be lacking between the primary alcoholic and the primary drug addict.

I do not for one moment believe that Alcoholics Anonymous principles can only be utilized by alcoholics. I cannot think of any person in any situation to whom the 12 Steps would not bring great comfort and alleviation. However, I believe that to be most effective there must be similar experiences shared and similar recoveries or arrestments to serve as examples.

If at any time I can share my experiences with any one of you who has had this problem personally, or is sponsoring someone with a sedative or narcotic problem, my time is yours.—  
*Mary M.*



# The Pleasures of Reading

*Great Adventures & Explorations*, edited by Vilhjalmur Stefansson (Dial Press, \$5)

From *The Paradox*, Kansas City, Mo.

The English barmaid was a flirtatious piece and the tall, sunburned Texas private was right down her alley. The MP had left the bar for a moment and the barmaid cuddled up to the Texan and murmured, "Here's your chance, big boy."

"You said it," agreed the private enthusiastically—and drank the MP's beer.

\* \* \*

From *Utah State Prison Group*

At a recent A.A. meeting one member remarked that it had always been his habit to use a drink to steady his nerves. Another remarked, "Yeah, me too, but after a while I began to overdo it and sometimes my nerves became so steady I couldn't even move!"

\* \* \*

from *C. W.F., Portland, Ore.*

Oldtimer: "How long you been in A.A.?"

Newcomer: "Two months."

Oldtimer: "Take it easy, bub, you're not even dry behind the ears yet."

Newcomer: "I'm not interested in 'behind the ears'; what I want to do is get dry 'between the ears.'"

\* \* \*

From *The Brighter Side*, Waterloo, Iowa

Time tells on a man—especially a good time.

\* \* \*

A lady drunk was overheard to say early New Year's morning, "All are not bugs that jitter."

\* \* \*

Chuck: "What in the world makes your tongue so black?"

Chick: "I once dropped a bottle of whisky on a freshly tarred road."

\* \* \*

From *The Central Bulletin*, Cleveland, Ohio

Woman is an extravagant creature, but here are a few things she doesn't do:

Shoot two bucks worth of shell at a two-bit rabbit. Buy a 55-cent meal and give the waitress a quarter for smiling at her. Hire a boat for \$50 to get where the fish ain't. Play her winnings from a roll of quarters back into the one-arm bandit. Pay \$8 for a quart of liquor. Buy the house a drink when she owes the rent, the butcher, etc.

\* \* \*

*Keep an open mind, but be sure it isn't open at both ends!*

Here is an integrated, colorful, and muscular chronicle of the great adventures and explorations which opened up a planet to its inheritors. The major discoverers, from earliest times to the present, tell the reader, in their own words, what they saw. The editor's attitude is as unorthodox as it is fascinating.

By letting these colorful adventurers recount their stories in their own way, the editor has preserved the flavor, ambitions, and emotions of other times. Readers may wonder if these travelers to strange and remote countries weren't rebels getting away from it all, as alcoholics often do. Of course, these explorers traversed real deserts of scorching sand and actual swamps of dark and reeking muck, and climbed towering mountain ranges. Vivid prose catches the roar of tropical storms, the groan of tumbling ice floes, and the boom of the surf upon lonely islets.

Many world-discoverers were rebels—ruthless, undaunted, and ambitious—their gallantry was fabulous, and their skepticism of things as they seemed was notorious. They were driven by curiosity, by lust for wealth and glory, and they created their own destinies. Such motives were their chief attributes.

There is Leif Ericsson, shadowy in the chiaroscuro of the Aurora Borealis, who discovered North America; Columbus, nakedly and unashamedly seeking the fabulous Indies, a liar, braggart, salesman, and hero; Magellan, glowering eastwards from Goa in his quest for cloves and nutmegs, finding death midway in his search. Theirs was the burning desire to see what lay beyond the "sunset and the baths of all the western stars," to glimpse those newer worlds which have haunted the imaginations of all great explorers since Pytheas the Greek, of Marseilles, made the first recorded Arctic voyage in 330 B.C.

Other stories re-told are those of Balboa and Pizarro, the Spanish Conquistadores; Frobisher and Drake, Elizabethan freebooters; the conquerors of the North and South Poles; the first navigators of the world's great rivers—almost all these adventurers sought personal gain, and many cheated and murdered to bring their dreams to realization. The reader experiences vicariously the mighty accomplishments of discovery throughout the ages.

The careers of these picturesque figures were magnificently adventurous; each was impelled by large and spacious ideas—curiosity and the yearning for glory and wealth—all great, all tragic; in the imagination of each adventurer was sounding

"the noise of a nameless sea

On an undiscovered isle,"

and not a few of them found

"The undiscovered country, from whose bourne no traveler returns."—*R.E.B., Greenwich Village, New York City.*

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## Children Appreciate A.A.      Prison Plan Successful

(Continued from Page 2)

bath—and of the afternoon when I went down with you to get that medicine—and of all the mornings I called you at the office and told you please not to get drunk that day. And then finally of the time you were all packed and mother took you to the hospital—and told me you were going on a little trip. And daddy—although I loved you more than I could ever tell you *before* you took that little trip—now, I not only *love* you more than anyone in this whole world—I think you're the finest and most wonderful man I've ever known or ever hope to know.

I'd better close and start studying.—*Nancy*

A year ago a member of the Glen Ridge, N. J., Group organized a plan of rehabilitation for alcoholics in cooperation with Warden D. Knowlton Read of Essex County Penitentiary at Caldwell, N. J., with the recovery of many men and women resulting. Warden Read is a strong supporter of A.A. and went all out for the program which began by segregating alcoholics from the criminal element by placing them in separate tiers. This was followed by a screening to determine those receptive to the A.A. program, then interviews with those ready to begin the A.A. program. After many weeks the inmate, if he has advanced to the point where adjustment is assured, has his case presented by an A.A. before the judge who committed him and his release *is* sought.

## THE CLIP SHEET — Excerpts from the public press

Hartford, Conn., *Times*: "The State Commission on Alcoholism, using funds authorized by the 1945 General Assembly, has selected Hartford as the location for a hospital for treatment of 20 to 50 alcoholics.

"The hospital, first of several planned for major population centers throughout the state, will be a 'pilot set-up' for other institutions in the state. Considerable research work will be conducted at the institution, according to Dr. Dudley Miller, executive director. Work on the hospital will begin as soon as a desirable building can be found or land can be purchased and a building constructed, Dr. Miller said.

"The commission, which has received wide recognition throughout the country for its program on alcoholism, is financed by approximately nine per cent of liquor license fees."

\* \* \*

Glasgow, Scotland, *Bulletin*: "While during the festive season thousands throughout the world will be thinking of Scotland, one Scot, by the name of Beveridge, will be dreaming of his native country as a place where habitual drunkenness is unknown.

"Determined to make his dream as close to reality as possible, Mr. Beveridge—Charles, 53 years of age, a machine-shop worker, of 182 Boreland Drive, Knightswood, Glasgow, and 'no bigoted teetotaller'—is engaged in a one-man crusade to form groups all over Scotland of an American organisation which claims to have cured thousands of alcohol victims.

"Nor is the organisation, which carries the name of Alcoholics Anonymous—A.A.—and already has branches in a number of countries outside the U.S., a temperance society in the ordinary sense. Its one purpose is to help the sick alcoholic recover if he wishes.

"Principal point about A.A. is that it is run for alcoholics by alcoholics and former alcoholics. Its prospective Scottish founder, however, is none of them. But, he said, the need for such a body was so urgent that he had taken on himself the task of starting it.

"Plans include the formation of a committee of interested people and a public meeting in Glasgow with a view to starting a group in the city."

\* \* \*

Akron, Ohio, *Beacon-Journal*: "Postwar improvements in home environment were credited today with cutting juvenile crime by 40 per cent in Portage County (Ohio) in 1946. This was disclosed by Juvenile Judge Clay Deitrich in his annual report to the Portage County Youth Commission last night.

"Alcoholics Anonymous also received a pat

on the back for salvaging many households that were being destroyed by booze, the judge said. Fathers who before drank and would not support their families are now model parents, thanks to the A.A.s, Judge Deitrich said."

\* \* \*

Nashville, Term., *Banner*: "A plan that would permit the General Sessions Court and Davidson County to treat alcoholism as 'the disease which it is' instead of a moral issue which holds that every intoxicated person is steeped in sin, was proposed today by Judge Henry K. Todd.

"Most radical, for Davidson County, was Judge Todd's plan to have at least eight beds as a starter set aside in some hospital for such alcoholics who are sent there by General Sessions judges, instead of bundling them off to the workhouse or imposing fines."

\* \* \*

Dayton, Ohio, *News*: "'Alcoholism begins at home,' Alson J. Smith, writing in *The Woman*, says in an article illustrated by a drawing of a grim looking papa pouring his toddler a slug of whiskey.

"An alarming number of children drink, Smith reports, adding that 'even when children do not drink, the roots of a future addiction to alcohol are to be found in childhood.'

"Statistics reveal, he says, that the majority of America's chronic alcoholics began their drinking as children. Alcoholics Anonymous recently distributed a questionnaire, and of those replying, he says: '65.3% confessed that they had become drunk for the first time between the ages of 15 and 19; 6.1% between the ages of 10 and 14; and 1% under the age of 10.' The figures, he emphasizes, indicate only the first drunk—not the first drink.

"It has been found, he also notes, that one of the characteristics of the average alcoholic is that he is neither the oldest nor the youngest child in the family. Explanation is that the 'in-between' child is most likely to feel discriminated against or unloved."

\* \* \*

Boston, Mass., *Christian Science Monitor*: "Alcoholics Anonymous undoubtedly represents the most promising therapeutic resource for alcoholism now available, Dr. Harry M. Tiebout, psychiatrist and authority on inebriety, said in a radio broadcast last night on the problem drinker.

"Twelve years ago a most hopeful present-day treatment for alcoholism had its inception when the man who founded A. A. had the experience which brought sobriety to him,' Dr. Tiebout told his audience.

"Spurred by what had happened to him, he

was able to help others, and with them formed a group which worked out a set of principles, the following out of which could produce sobriety.

"Basically religious in inspiration, but drawing strength from the group fellowship and from the practice of helping other alcoholics, A. A. now has a membership of more than 30,000. They estimate that 50 to 75% are free of their former compulsion to drink!"

\* \* \*

Philadelphia, Pa., *Record*: "A Kentucky gambler has started an organization called Gamblers Anonymous, modeled after Alcoholics Anonymous. His purpose is to save gamblers from the gambling habit by forming clubs and having the members encourage each other to stop gambling.

"But isn't it possible that in these quiet evenings in the Gamblers Anonymous club the ex-horse and poker players might start having a few snifters to pass the time in lieu of passing the blue-chip bet?

"And then suppose that across the street, in an Alcoholics Anonymous club, some of the boys started a little game of stud, with one-eyed jacks wild, just to take their minds off having a few snifters?

"Supposing, again, that the anonymous alcoholics (cured of the drink habit) became gamblers and the anonymous gamblers (cured of gambling) became alcoholics?

"Perhaps this tragedy might be overcome, in a way. The victims of the 'new' vices could change their club memberships and start all over again.

"Most of us are in favor of both Anonymouses. We hope the G.A. is half as successful as the A.A."

### Toronto A.A.s Busy

A new Toronto, Ontario, Can., Group, the Parkdale, has been organized and all groups there report satisfactory results with the women's group doing especially fine work. Much favorable newspaper publicity has been received in Toronto, both on general understanding of the alcoholic problem and one article, a half-page spread, "Only Alcoholics Need Apply," described an A.A. party and told of outstanding business and professional men who have been rehabilitated through A. A.

The successful growth of A.A. in this area was also demonstrated at the fourth anniversary banquet held in Toronto and attended by approximately 600. Dick S., New York, was the principal speaker. Twenty-two Canadian and U. S. groups were represented at the affair which began with open house followed by a buffet supper, a large open meeting and, lastly, a closed meeting at the clubhouse.

# 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 A.A. 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

## Hook Encourages Wife

*From Keokuk, Iowa*

Two days ago my husband, a member of A. A. for four months, had a "slip"—the first since joining. But, for the first time, I do not feel discouraged. Instead my heart is filled with more hope, courage, and more enthusiasm for A. A. than ever before.

You see, I've read the book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, and was so moved over the soul-searching technique of the chapter, Into Action, that I searched my own heart for the times when I, too, have failed. The chapter, To Wives, has constantly been a help when I have been tempted to be resentful and say things so much better left unsaid. At these times I've read again the helpful words and then asked God to give me strength to be more understanding and helpful.

I read the other day a prayer that seemed to fit so aptly the wives' part:

"Lord, make me an instrument of Thy peace.  
Where there is hatred, let me sow love.  
Where there is doubt, faith. Where there is despair, hope. Where there is darkness, light. And where there is sadness, joy.

"O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved, as to love; for it is in giving that we receive, and it is in pardoning that we are pardoned."

I have come to love the A. A. book as it has given me an insight that I've never had before. Anyone could profit by its teachings. Its words on "God as you understand Him" have brought me for the first time to a daily communion with God. Always having believed in God, I felt that I wasn't worthy of His help because of a lot of little wrongs I had done and was doing.

But through this book, I've come to feel that we are only humans and cannot be perfect, but can daily strive to live the way God would have us live; and through our strivings become closer to Him.

Now you know why I am not discouraged about this "slip." The Lord is on our side, and I feel that He will answer my prayers, and open my husband's eyes to where he has failed in his

A. A. program. And I pray that together we will find a brighter tomorrow.—*Doris R.*

## Is It Really Anonymous?

*From Winter Haven, Fla.*

A very interesting story appeared in a local paper recently, outlining a talk given to one of our men's clubs by a member of the Tampa A. A. Group. We have a friend whom we feel is just about ripe, and while I have not been personally associated with the movement, I have heard enough good things about it to recommend it highly to him. The biggest bridge he has to cross is that admission of being an alcoholic, as I imagine it is for most people in his position. The man may have a lot of false pride, but who among us hasn't to some degree and in some respects? Naturally, that came to the fore when he read the article which I had just skimmed, for it named two members of the Tampa Group, thereby giving him a fine argument against my exhortations that A. A. was all the name implied. Is this a new policy? If so, as an outsider, I feel that it will set a good many people back a long stretch. From all I've ever heard or read, that has been one of your strongest selling points, and it's been one of the refreshingly different things about your movement. In small towns anonymity is a hard thing to maintain, but the public print tears away any semblance of it, and scares people who are still trying to put up any front for the sake of their families and jobs. Maybe this isn't a moot question, but seeing the names linked to A. A. surprised me.—*J. K.*

## Wants Anonymity Protected

*From Jersey City, N. J.*

The enclosed clipping (from the *Jersey Journal*, reporting a talk given by an A. A. who dropped his anonymity publicly and allowed his name to be published) caused quite a bit of comment around these parts. Is he a fanatic or is he running for dog catcher? We're all proud to be members of A. A. but honestly hope there will not be a flood of these people to drown the effectiveness of A. A.—*B. B.*

## Grateful for Year's Sobriety

*From St. Joseph, Mo.*

As I am not able to be in attendance at the meeting this evening, I would like to write a few words to express my appreciation and thanks for what A. A. has done for me. Tonight, I completed my first year of sobriety—so I am most thankful to God and A. A. for that and many other things. I cannot find words to express my gratitude but let me say this, I have never felt

better nor have I ever been happier than I am at present. So to all the members, and especially the newer ones, I'll leave this thought—if we will let the A. A. program help us, we cannot fail. We may get disgusted and become depressed, but if we will stick to the 24-hour program and trust in God, everything else will take care of itself and work out all right. I hope that I do not sound as if I were preaching. I am very, very sincere in that thought. So thanks again to A. A. and all my fellow members for the help they have given me, and for the satisfaction that is mine, due to the most wonderful organization in the world.—*B. A.*

## Helping Hands and Hearts

*From Binghamton, N. Y.*

I was helped out of a taxi, half carried up two flights of stairs into a large room; helped into a chair and here let to cry, rave and rant my head off. I was dirty, tired, mentally and physically. I was once more desperately seeking help. I had been on a week's bender and I was utterly sick to find I had done it again.

A member of A. A. sat across from me listening and calmly smoking and offering me cigarettes. Finally into my ears came these words, "My dear, I understand." These were the first words after years of hell that meant a thing. "I understand." Here in this room I heard the most amazing facts I ever heard. Did I know there were thousands just like me? Didn't I know I had already started to lick John Barleycorn? John Barleycorn? Lick him?

"You admit your life has become unmanageable." "You have an honest desire to stop." "You believe in a higher power." That's your beginning.

I was immediately given medical care. I was taken into a member's home and the treatment I received from this member cannot be described in words. I was beginning to see A. A. in action. I was given every consideration. People came to see me. Happy people, telling me tales that I could hardly believe to look at them. People who said, "We alcoholics." I wasn't alone anymore. Each of these people was going to help.

I started attending meetings. Here I learned so very much. People from all walks of life making the admission, "I am an alcoholic." Telling what A. A. had done to help them. Stressing God as she or he understood Him. The Lord's Prayer took on a new meaning. Listening to this group of people praying earnestly, "Thy will be done," I could feel God.

With these people I learned to accept facts about myself, not pleasant ones, either. No one pointed a finger at me. I am striving to live

(Continued on Page 10)

# Remembering a Girl—Defeated Except Once

(Continued from page 1)

into the never-ending flight, chasing an ideal, and not knowing what she wanted or why, but wanting it desperately. I watched her as she rode the highway of phantasy:—she was a great writer; she called her book *The Battle of The Bottle*, but the first line of her message for posterity was never written. She was a great pianist, but her genius was thwarted by the affliction she bore. She was the personification of the perfect wife, and would be the perfect mother, too, if only given a child to prove it. She was a well-balanced, cultured, charming young woman, an inspiration to all who knew her. She was artistic, creative, enthusiastic, bountiful and compassionate—oh, infinitely compassionate. But misunderstood, and alone. So alone. I followed in her shadow and thought, like Miniver Cheevy, she too was:

. . . "born too late,

Scratched her head and kept on thinking,  
She, too, coughed, and called it Fate,  
And kept on drinking."

I watched her slide from the phantasy of the perfect to the figure of the down-trodden reformer. Why must there be wars? Why were children starving? Who were the fools who ran things and how did they get there? And why didn't they have the intelligence of a chicken? A chicken for President! No—she was losing her grip. That wasn't sensible—she'd have to pull herself together. Do the housework, that was it. No—better read something first—elevate the mind. Too much superficiality in the world today. Not enough people read Shakespeare and the Bible. Why, did you know if you really knew Shakespeare and the Bible, you need never know another thing. Those two books had everything—all wisdom, all knowledge. She'd read the Book of Job. She was like Job herself—everything was wrong.

And then I watched the indignation at life come upon her. The world was run by ignoramus. She knew! She had worked at a war plant! And oh, the waste! She'd call the President. She dialed the White House. National 1414. He was busy. He couldn't talk to her. Some democracy!

And then the remorse and self-pity. I watched as she vaguely recognized her condition. Here she was, drunk, and only this morning she had been so full of determination to do better. She had tried—oh, yes, she had tried. In fact, all her life she had strived to be a real person. Lots of people floated along never giving a thought to the meaning of Life, but as far back as she could remember, she had consciously worked on herself. She had worked harder than most, she had read more, she had studied, every-

thing from Greek to millinery. She had known what she wanted and had bent all energies and capacities to get it, whatever it was. Oh, the cruelty of it all! What a dastardly trick Fate had played on her. She was of no use to herself or anyone else. And for a few minutes she got a morbid pleasure from these thoughts. How tragic! But sort of pathetically, beautifully tragic! Here she was, so young, so gifted, and the world would never benefit because of her cursed malady.

And then I watched the fear set in. At first, a mild rage at the unfairness of it all. But later, I saw her wracked in stark fear and hopelessness. She was frantic with fright—fright for her sanity, fright for her life. What was to become of her? I was as one on the outside, a spectator to this horrible transformation, and was helpless. She watched the door, furtively, anxiously, knowing it to be locked, yet afraid. She dared not look out the window for fear of vague faces. She dared not answer the telephone for fear of unknown voices. She could not read. She could not sleep. She could not pray. And she heard music—a fragment of a haunting theme, repeated and repeated, ending each time in a discord. And then oblivion.

No, I do not want to forget that girl. I want to remember that she is only one drink away. I don't want to forget what time was to her. She suffered through yesterday a thousand times in her remorse. She feared tomorrow with terror, and hoped by some means she could escape it. Today never existed for her. I am glad she is dead.

And who has taken the place of that girl? Quite a different person altogether. I find I am a simple person—no thwarted genius after all. That great American novel will have to be written by someone else. I find, after sober practice, that the concert stage can do without this average parlor pianist. I find that being a perfect wife requires some exertion other than dreams. I find that today builds into tomorrow. I find that we don't just "get somewhere"—we go there, one day at a time. I find it a luxurious sensation to be sane.

And what is time to me now? It is a most precious asset. I have the luxury of being able to cherish the memory of yesterday, to live today with serenity, to wait for tomorrow. I find great contentment in just knowing where I was and where I am. And I am grateful; grateful for the existence of Alcoholics Anonymous, grateful to my God for leading me to the doors of A.A. and to Himself grateful for hope. I am grateful for this minute. My eternity may be in it.—*C.F.McD.*

## Mail Call

(Cont. from Page 9)

the 12 Steps and herein I accepted a new way of life and am bettering myself.

After seven months (which I admit isn't much after years of drinking) I am happy. I am being of use to myself and others. I am gaining back my self respect and the respect of my family and friends. It is impossible to put in words what A.A. has done with and for me these past few months. There are so many, many things that make it stick. Gallons of coffee. Mountains of sandwiches. A, A. handshakes. Working 24 hours with God. Doughnuts. Gifts of a book or perhaps a chair. Laughter, fun. Winking like fury to beat John Barleycorn to the punch with another alky. Company from out of town.

What has made A. A. work for me? Only God and I know it couldn't all be put on paper. Believe me, I am so grateful.—*Elsie J. W.*

## Agrees Politics are Dangerous

*From Detroit, Mich.*

Just read Bill's article in the January *A. A. Grapevine* under the caption, "Will A. A. Ever Have a Personal Government?" Believe me, that is one of the finest and most timely messages that we A. A.s could get at this time.

Our experience here and elsewhere has taught us what you so concisely point out to us in this article.

Here's another thought along the same lines. When we were drinking heavily we were in the hands, in my opinion, of John Barleycorn and the devil. When we went into A. A., with God's help, we went dry, but the devil is not going to give us up so easily. In my own case, for instance, during my first year in A. A., I had less money than I had had since I was 13 years old, which would have given me an excellent excuse to resume drinking. I have always thought that the devil had his crack at me then. Thank God, I had His help when I asked for it, and now I have at long last, after over five years, with patient, persevering effort, located my position in the business world again. What I am getting at is that the devil not only works with us personally, but works to destroy our groups, and when that happens we must renew our efforts to swing heavily to the spiritual side of the program.

We must always remember that the saints of God were more severely tempted than others during their lives, so why should we expect, after our drinking and being alcoholics, becoming sane, sober and truly happy thru A. A., to find a royal road to success in it? We are always going to have our trials and troubles and tough tasks to meet, but with A. A., we have so much more with which to meet them. It has given us courage to overcome obstacles rather than letting the obstacles overcome us—*L. L.*

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

**Mayor In By Mistake.** —Syracuse, N. Y., A.A.s have been chuckling since the mayor of that city turned up at a meeting one night—not intentionally, though. He had gone to a local hotel to attend another meeting, originally scheduled for the room turned over later for the A.A. get-together. His error was duly recorded by the Syracuse press. Whether the mayor or the A.A.s were the more surprised by his appearance wasn't explained. The Syracuse Group now boasts attendance of 75 to 100 at closed meetings, and attracts twice as many at open meetings. Three shoots are growing out of this parent group—Liverpool, Cazenovia and Pulaski. The secretary of the recently organized Hollywood, Fla., Group writes that meetings are held Monday nights at St. John's Lutheran Church. A.A.s in Norfolk, Va., marked their first anniversary with a banquet, attended by two members of the Richmond, Va., Group who presided at Norfolk's first open meeting a year ago. Three charter members of the Norfolk Group traced the growth from the start of eight to the present enrollment of nearly 200, about 125 of whom remain active. The principal speaker, a Norfolk minister, highly commended A.A. from his pulpit two days later.

**He Didn't Lose His Lodging, But.** — A new group has been formed at Wallaceburg, Ontario, about 50 miles up the Detroit River from Windsor. The founder is a fellow who had a habit of breaking up furniture. It didn't cost him his living quarters, for it was his own furniture—he runs a hotel!—but it made plenty of people unhappy nonetheless. He first met A.A. in Windsor, but didn't completely succumb, he had another good drunk, then a friend got D.T.'s and 12th Step work came into play. The innkeeper took the pal to Windsor for treatment. Together they decided to try the program, and held their first meeting with the chairman of the Windsor South Group assisting. The Windsor A.A.s turned out in a body for the second meeting in Wallaceburg, and the new group is off to a flying start now, with five charter members. Attendance runs about 90 per cent in the new Woodland, Cal., Group, an offshoot of the Sacramento Group. Starting with eight, there are now 13 active members, meeting Tuesday evenings in members' homes. Socials, with wives and husbands joining in, follow the closed sessions.

**Advertise for A.A.s.**— The St. Johnsbury, Vt., Group has recently received several letters and phone calls in response to advertisements in the local paper. One ad said, "Is alcohol

your downfall? If so, let the A.A.s give you a hand. We have helped many overcome this and we can help you. Write to Alcoholics Anonymous, P. O. Box 342, St. Johnsbury, Vt." One of the letters read "I saw your ad in the paper. Would like to know if anyone could do this to anyone and not let them know about it. Please let me know and what the results would be!" The group recently held its first anniversary banquet.

**On the Air and In Clinics.** — A woman member of the Washington, D.C., Group appeared on Ruth Crane's "Modern Woman" program recently on WMAL. Last year the speaker was one who had attended the summer school session of alcoholic studies at Yale. There were questions and answers about A.A. objectives and principles, together with detailed and local information about the alcoholic clinic operated by the District of Columbia at which A.A. volunteers work. The program was aimed at housewives in the hope some member of a household might jot down the information and telephone numbers given for future reference. From Washington it is also reported that due to the constantly increasing number of patients and need for relief the Bureau of Mental Hygiene in the District of Columbia has extended its services in the two district alcoholic clinics. Dr. Leopold Wexberg, director of the Department of Mental Hygiene, is in charge of the clinics to which local A.A. groups lend their services.

**Visiting with Australia.** — Father Dunlea, sponsor of A.A. in Australia, and founder of its Boys' Town, recently spoke to the Omaha, Nebr., Group and said that he wished those attending might visit his group "down under." As a result a recording machine was set up, a special program was recorded during a regular meeting and talks and greetings were sent to the Australian group. Getting together through the columns of the *A.A. Grapevine* the Balboa (Canal Zone) and Omaha Groups plan to exchange letters and ideas on a regular basis. Members of a neighborhood unit of the Omaha Group met last month at a suburban district fire station at the request of the firemen.

**Meet in state Hospital.** — In response to a call for speakers for a new group at Rockland, N. Y., State Hospital the Passaic, N. J., Group recently took over a meeting there with 16 alcoholic patients attending. The Passaic Group, eight months old, hopes to have larger meetings for both men and women at the institution soon.

**Club Ownership Changes.** — Three years after the San Francisco, Cal., Fellowship opened its first clubhouse, it turned over its second club at 143 Bush Street, with all physical assets, to the newly incorporated Alano Club, thus completing separation of the administrations of the Fellowship and the Club. Requirement for the Club membership is voting membership in the Fellowship. Guest memberships will be extended to new A.A.s, visiting A.A.s and relatives of members. The first club was outgrown in a year, after beginning with 35 at a meeting in February 1944. The second club has a seating capacity of about 250 and served as central meeting spot until nine months ago when it was necessary to rent an outside hall. The A.A. office will remain at the Club for the time being. San Francisco membership is estimated between 400 and 500 with ten weekly meetings.

**New Club Started.** — Approximately 150 members from various metropolitan groups have secured a clubhouse at 400 East 35th street, New York, N. Y., as a social center. It will not be considered an A.A. group nor will it function in that capacity, the members planning to continue their other A.A. activities through their respective groups. The club is open from noon to midnight under the usual rules and an additional order suspending for 30 days anyone entering while drinking. Members say the only difference between this and other social clubs will be the discussion of alcoholic problems as the principal conversation.

**Miami Gets Visitors.**—Many visiting A.A.s are reported from the Anona Club, Miami, Fla., with representatives from all over the United States. The Northwest group of Miami continues to grow while Ft. Lauderdale A.A.s heard Dr. R. S. recently.

**Anniversaries Rolling Up.** — Montclair, N.J., will celebrate the fifth anniversary as a group on March 28. Starting with ten, the group now numbers 90, though many have left to form new groups. Five of the original eight remain. One of the members spoke recently before the Baptist Ministerial Association of Northern New Jersey with 50 members present. At Tampa, Fla., the third annual banquet was held at the Bayshore Hotel with Jacksonville, Atlanta, and Cleveland, Ohio, speakers on the program and 300 attending. A fish fry with 97 A.A.s from the various groups in Northwestern Ohio was staged as the third anniversary of the Port Clinton Group recently, members being present from Sandusky, Fremont, Bellevue, Nor-

walk, Milan, Bowling Green and Toledo. A solitary A.A. in Oak Harbor reports prospects of a group there. First anniversary of the Tallahassee, Fla., Group was celebrated at the Cherokee Hotel with a speaker from Jacksonville. An offshoot of this group, Thomasville, Ga., is using the Detroit WWJ records after which they will go to the Federal Correctional Institution in Tallahassee. The group founded there a year ago is functioning with seven members. A two-year observance is reported from Springfield, Mo., while Columbia, Mo., had the first anniversary party at the Daniel Boone Tavern in Columbia. This group has also gotten a new club room. Council Bluffs, Ia., with the cooperation of the parent Omaha, Nebr., Group celebrated its first year recently with several hundred members and guests from Iowa and Nebraska attending the banquet at the Hotel Chieftain to hear three Iowa A.A.'s. A breakfast in the clubrooms and a two-day open house followed. About 200, including delegations from Minneapolis, Des Moines, Pocohontas, Marshalltown, Waterloo, Boone, Dubuque, Sioux Falls, Chicago, Carroll, Algona Kanwha, Britt, Spencer, Spirit Lake, Fonda, Rockwell City, Alden, Paton and Ogden attended the second anniversary at Ft. Dodge, Ia.

**Hear Psychiatrist.**—Dr. Theo. E. Tetreault, psychiatrist, who has had three years service with the Army in Europe, Africa and the Philippines, discussed what he had seen of alcoholism, especially while in England, before the Kent, Ohio, Group. A delegation of 36 Kent members went to Cuyahoga Falls to help celebrate the fifth anniversary there.

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**Entertainments Scheduled.**—The Token Club, social arm of the' Louisville, Ky., A.A. Groups began a series of entertainments under the guidance of a newly appointed activities committee. At its first meeting the committee discussed formation of a soft-ball league, fishing parties and other hobbies. A publication, "*Friend Al*," will keep members informed.

**Holds First Open Meeting.**—The Virginia Beach, Va., Group, which got under way only three months ago, held its first open meeting February 5. More than 150 visiting A.A.s and friends of the group from other Virginia cities and from North Carolina were welcomed by the mayor and other city officials. Five A.A.s from points in Virginia and one from Georgia originally were on the program. Because of family illness, the Georgia A.A. telephoned that, he was unable to attend. At the last minute, a speaker from New York rushed down to Virginia Beach to pinch-hit.

**Getting Going and Growing.**—E. K., a member from Hastings, Nebr., who made the program the hard way out on the lone prairie, conducted the first meeting of the Hastings Group at the Clarke Hotel there.recently. Thirty-four attended including many who have pioneered different groups in the Middle West, with speakers from North Platte, Nebr., Jefferson City, Mo., Grand Island, Nebr., Des Moines, Ia., Fremont, Nebr., and Ord, Nebr. A short time ago a North Platte contingent of two members started a series of district visits which called for much travel and long hours, but which paid off with groups now operating in Fremont, North Platte, Grand Island, Hastings, Lincoln and other cities. Seven members and wives of the Danville, Ill., group, organized about seven months ago, visited with Decatur recently. San Mateo, Cal., is introducing its year-old group which is one of the Peninsula Groups, which include Palo Alto, parent group, and Redwood City. The Peninsula Groups held an open house for the general public recently with three A.A. speakers, a clergyman, psychiatrist and a judge on the program. Small groups attend meetings in Agnew State Hospital and in Veterans Hospital, weekly and in San Quentin Prison monthly with good results. The Northeast Nebraska Group got going at Norfolk recently with a dinner at a hotel attended by 30 members including three from Sioux City, Ia., and four from Yankton, S.D. Dr. Charlton of the Norfolk State hospital allowed four patients to attend and has given his permission to hold meetings in the hospital. A doctor from the hospital staff spoke briefly as did Father Robert Byrnes. Portland, Ore., now has three groups with possibility of having to start a fourth as the result of continued growth. Nine A.A.s who

have been members in Duluth, Minn., recently started the Superior, Wis., Group which now numbers 19. Meetings are held Thursday evenings at Room 103, 1923 Hammond avenue. A high attendance record with only three slips and a growth from eight to 15 members in a few months is reported by Indianola, Miss., with some members in Greenville. In less than a year the Wichita Falls, Tex., Group has grown to 38, although no women are active as yet. Wives of the members recently started their own meetings. After getting going some time ago as Eau Claire, Wis., Group No. 2, the organization is changing its name to the Chippewa Valley Group of that city. Our reporter says the A.A. transcription is getting good attention under sponsorship of the Eau Claire Group No. 1. A.A. came quietly to Springfield, Mass., about three years ago in the person of a doctor from Boston, who was joined by a few others who fell away, leaving him alone again. However, he held steadfast and the group now numbers 106 in spite of withdrawals that saw the birth of successful and growing groups in Holyoke, Pittsfield and Greenfield. Springfield A.A.s have a regular schedule of talks at the State Hospital in Northampton, the Veterans' Hospital in Leeds, the county jail and before church, civic and educational organizations. To accommodate ever increasing attendance the open meeting on Wednesday night is now held at South End Community Center where over 200 gathered recently to observe the group's third birthday.

**Succeed After Eight Years.**—For the first time in its history the Saturday Night Group of Dayton, Ohio, has established a real Saturday Night group, holding a regular meeting at 8:30 in Anna May's Tea Room, 717 West Third street. This group has no affiliation with the club house, the correspondent reports.

**Attendance Growing.**—Attendance at the Lincoln Park, Mich., meetings has grown 75 percent in five short weeks with over 130 at a recent gathering. The A.A. *Grapevines* correspondent reports that the pastor of a local church has been very co-operative and has turned over the gymnasium of the church for meetings. Tuesday morning and Tuesday evening groups are meeting at the church in the heart of Detroit at Cass and Selden.

**Open Meeting Planned.**—the Stag Group of Erie, Pa., has planned an open invitation meeting for civic, business, professional and shop groups at which it is planned to give the leaders of the city's groups a clear understanding of A.A. the Rev. Fr. James P. Timmons and a member of the Manchester, Conn., Group were announced as speakers.