

June 1944

CENTRAL OFFICE NOTES

May 1st was moving day for the Central office into larger quarters on Lexington Avenue near Grand Central Terminal, a much more accessible spot to out-of-town visitors. (New address - P.O. Box 459, Grand Central Annex, New York 17, N.Y.) We are already national in scope and certain to become world-wide. Hence this seems a most appropriate time to explain what the Central Office has been doing, and how well the Trustees and its staff have managed. Being somewhat responsible for the creation of the Central Office, I feel I have never made enough effort to let everyone know just how much it does.

Actually the Central Office belongs to all Groups everywhere; it is your good-will and financial support which makes it possible; it is one of your main contacts with the general public and it is one of your principal means of carrying the 12th step of the A.A. program to untold thousands of alcoholic sick people who don't yet know they can get well. In matters pertaining to the office. The Trustees are your Service Committee; its Secretary is your National Secretary.

In the month of March alone, for example, the work turned out by the secretary and her three assistants (including some overtime) was as follows: 1 - They wrote 2,695 personal letters. Approximately 2,000 of these were answers to first inquiries of alcoholics and their families averaging 100 words each.

About 400 letters were written to the

groups, mostly group problems. The balance was miscellaneous. 2 - Six hundred telephone and telegraph messages. 3 - About 100 out-of-town A.A. members visited the office. 4 - Something like 400 bookkeeping entries. 5 - Over 5000 A.A. pamphlets and 672 A.A. books, about a ton of material, were wrapped and shipped. 6 - A detailed monthly report was made to the Trustees. 7 - In addition, the Secretary participated in several conferences on future publicity and spent a week on the road visiting six of the A.A. groups with which she corresponds.

A small but willing staff of four turned out this large volume of work. Our Central Office has nearly always been understaffed. Our condition right now is such that a good piece of publicity would throw us weeks behind on these vital first inquiries. We should have more help - perhaps two more typists before long.

About the offer of A.A. pins to the membership - those pins supposedly deigned and approved by me! The offer was made by Royal Incentives, a perfectly reputable firm, which was sold a "bill of goods" by an alcoholic who has had a rather hectic A.A. career. Of course I knew nothing whatever of this deal. Royal Incentives, recognizing the mistake, is sending all groups a letter of explanation and apology.

As ever, Bill