

June 1945

EDUCATIONAL PLAN

The Wilson Club, one of the four St. Louis A.A. groups, is now using a very satisfactory method of "educating" prospects and new members. It has done much to reduce the number of slippers among new members. In brief, it is somewhat as follows: Each new prospect is asked to attend four successive Thursday night meetings, each one of which is devoted to helping the new man learn something about Alcoholics Anonymous, its founding, and the way it works. The new man is told something about the book, and how this particular group functions.

At the first meeting Bill's background is sketched - his drinking career and the various events which led to his drying up; his trip to Akron, his meeting with Bob, and the subsequent growth of A.A. up to the time it reached St. Louis. We give some of the local history on the formation of the Wilson Club. During a fifteen minute recess, each man is asked to write in a few words just what he considers an alcoholic to be. Then a few answers are read, followed by the reading of an address made by one of our best doctors discussing what an alcoholic is from the medical angle.

The second Thursday covers the spiritual angle, trying to help clarify many of the 12 steps. This is followed by the

reading of an address by a greatly revered Jesuit priest, Father Dowling, who really started the St. Louis groups.

At the third Thursday meeting, all chapters of the book proper are highlighted and discussed, followed by the reading of a talk given us by a very prominent Protestant minister, who has read the book many times and has made Alcoholics Anonymous the subject of several of his sermons.

Then at the final meeting, the A.A. literature is reviewed, including our own pamphlets, and the Wilson Club operation is explained to them in detail; such as our methods of revolving chairmen, the functions of the board of directors, how to hospitalize prospects. We finish with a serious talk on practicing the 12th step, closing with, "You have the tools and need not fear being unable to explain A.A. or reluctant to make calls."

Wilson Club members are not considered full, active members until they have attended these four educational meetings. They are then presented with a Wilson Club membership card - a white one. At the end of one year's sobriety this is replaced by a gold card, not exactly solid gold, but covered with gold paper.

Dick W., St. Louis, Mo.