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A monthly journal devoted to those seeking further knowledge on the problem of alcoholism, in the hope that it may prove a unifying bond to all alcoholics everywhere. Individual opinions expressed here are not, necessarily, those of A.A. as a whole.

Epic Gathering Marks Tenth Anniversary

Symbolizing the unity of A.A., over 2,500 members of the fellowship and their friends from 36 states, two Canadian provinces, and Mexico gathered in Cleveland's Music Hall on June 10 to commemorate and pay tribute to Hill W. and Dr. Bob on the 10th anniversary of the founding of the movement.

Held under the sponsorship of Greater Cleveland's 44 groups, the near-capacity Music Hall audience heard Bill and Dr. Bob characterize the gathering as an unprecedented outpouring of the grace of God; heard them strike a keynote of gratitude, humility, unity, and simplicity "born on that wave of destiny that comes out of Heaven itself."

Entertained Saturday (June 9) afternoon and evening by five Cleveland open house group meetings, parties, and a tea, a thousand from the historic Music Hall meeting (Sunday afternoon) later dined at the Carter Hotel to conclude the first glorious decade of A.A.... sober, grateful, happy, united.

Inspired in his address to the largest crowd of A.A.s ever assembled in one place, Bill, who preceded Dr. Bob on the program, traced the development of A.A. He voiced the hope that A.A. would always remain simple... that while we were quite settled on the fundamentals of the movement, the process for seeking an answer to the question, "What kind of a society is this?" was still evolving... that "the problems of A.A. are the touchstones of our progress."

Dr. Bob, in turn, expressed his gratitude for the divine source of strength on which we all may call and receive... for the meeting with Bill in Akron "made under divine guidance" ... for the selected human agency that caused that meeting... for all of the people who in the early days of and before A.A. "were a source of help and inspiration in my trouble"... for his pastor and the ladies of A.A., and Anne,

his wife, who shared with him a common interest, and without whose cooperative spirit "I would not have maintained my sobriety"... for those A.A.s of Cleveland who took the time and trouble to come to Akron while the fellowship was still young... for the members of The Alcoholic Foundation who have met once a month "for roughly eight years without compensation"... for having acquired a wealth of returned and new-found friends... for those at the Music Hall whose presence "gives us an added incentive to be more cooperative and helpful to each other."

Bill voiced a final tribute to Dr. Bob in the same vein of joyous thankfulness when he said, "Although we have had many differences, we have never had an angry word."

Concluding with the thought that there never was a real beginning of A.A.... "This could not have been but for others," Bill opened his

Music Hall talk with a brief re-telling of how he had been condemned by an eminent New York psychiatrist to die unless he stopped drinking... how a few months later an old friend appeared with the news he was suffering from an illness not only of the mind, emotions, and body, but of the soul... how he had discovered from this friend he had been living his life on a demand basis... how he would have to lose his life in order to find it.

Honesty First

This friend, Bill explained, showed him he would have to become honest with himself ... he would have to make peace with his fellow man... he would have to envision and live a new kind of giving—the kind which demands no return.

Shortly after, Bill continued, he found him-
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Where the A. A. Beacon Was Lit

Akron, "the hill where the A.A. beacon was first lit," was a mecca for approximately 400 other A.A.s on the same evening (June 10) that the anniversary meeting in Cleveland was drawing to a close.

The occasion was the Founders' Day Dinner, held at the Hotel Mayflower, and the group of speakers included those who helped to light the beacon. Bill W. and Dr. Bob, hurrying over from the Cleveland meeting, spoke, as did Bill D., of Akron, who was a part of that A.A. nucleus. Other speakers were Jake H., one of the organizers of the Pittsburgh group; and Earl T., of Chicago. Joe P., of Akron, was toastmaster and Wally G., also of Akron, was chairman of the dinner committee.

Attendance at the dinner reached approximately 80 percent of the membership of Akron's eight sizable and highly active groups.

Drawing on the fact that the name "Akron" is derived from a Creek word meaning "summit," Bill said at one point in his talk:

"It was here that the miracle really happened. This is the hill where the A.A. beacon was lit 10 years ago. From here the light spread outward to guide others and is now casting its glow over a widening area."

Both Bill and Dr. Bob recalled briefly the beginnings of A.A. and with obvious gratitude and pleasure referred again to their first meeting in Akron. "No wonder," said Bill, "that we have a particular feeling for Akron."

EDITORIAL:

On the 9th Step . . .

"Made direct amends to such people wherever possible except when to do so would injure them or others."

Like others of the Steps, Number Nine is closely related to Number Three—"to turn our will and our lives over to God *as we understood Him*". If we have accomplished this step to any measurable degree, we have attained at least a small measure of humility and a realization of our dependence on Him.

Having prepared a list of all people we have harmed and brought ourselves to the point where we are *willing* to make amends to them, our Ninth Step is one calling for positive *action*. There is a world of difference between being *willing* to do a thing and actually *doing* it. How many times in the pre-A.A. state have we said "I am sorry, I won't do it again" and felt that that constituted complete amends.

A sincere apology, with a true explanation to the person harmed, of what we believe to be the reason for our past actions can quite frequently readjust personal relations—but the A.A. realizes that this cannot take care of the ones we have really hurt and invariably these are the ones we should and do love most.

Most of us had at least a few years of real pathological drinking behind us when we first learned of the Twelve Steps. Those terrible years are the ones that become repulsive to us as we progress in our new-found life program for order and happiness—years in which our every action was influenced by alcoholic thinking, with all its implications. It naturally follows that whatever our state in life may be, those close to us bore the brunt of our outrageous behaviour. How can one make amends to a dear wife, son or daughter or parent who through no fault of their own truly suffered physically and financially and more important, mentally, the humiliation and embarrassment of going through life with a drunkard? A simple "I am sorry; it won't happen again" is not enough. It is not enough for us and it is not enough for the aggrieved person.

Direct amends, by all means, is a must, in restoring physical property to the rightful owner, paying debts willingly within our ability to do so and retracting the lie that hurt a reputation; but the real amends are made in scrutinizing our day-in and day-out conduct and keeping that conduct "on the beam." The loved ones whom we have hurt don't want their "pound of flesh." Whether they are still in daily contact with us or not, amends are best made to them by restoring the love and confidence and respect they once had for us by the *action* of right living. With that thought clearly in our minds that "first drink" is an improbability, even an impossibility and the well-rounded, good life we all yearn for becomes readily visible to us.

B. W., Forest Hills, N. Y.

Letters to the Grapevine...

Dear Sir:

I attended "Harvey" on A.A. night, and thought it a very poor play for A.A. to patronize. Some of my reasons for this opinion are:

1. The play made drinking attractive.
2. Elwood P. Dowd was obviously not an alcoholic so much as a schizophrenic—if you have even a smattering of psychiatric knowledge.

Unfortunately, most A.A.s don't have even that smattering, and accepted Dowd as an alky.

3. The play made fun of psychiatry in just the way that stupid, frightened laymen who know nothing about it make fun of it. (And the tip-off is that they *do* make fun of it just

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The Grapevine:

Past, Present and Future

by Bill W.

The Grapevine has just completed the first year of its existence. Scores of enthusiastic letters are coming in. They are written from all parts of the linked States and some from foreign countries. They congratulate *The Grapevine*: staff and ask them to keep up their good work.

To these felicitations I'd like to add my own. A grand job has been done by the volunteer staff, who gave freely a vast amount of time and labor. And some gave money, too; you don't start a paper on hay. To the retiring volunteers, I want to say, along with every *Grapevine* subscriber, "Congratulations and thanks."

How did *The Grapevine* start, and where does it go from here?

Last summer several New York A.A.s decided it was about time the groups in our metropolitan area had a monthly publication. At first there was some discussion about getting it suitably endorsed by the local groups, The Alcoholic Foundation, or somebody. But no one could endorse a magazine that hadn't yet appeared. The Grapeviners went ahead anyway on the theory that if their sheet was good enough it would take on; if it proved too corny or dull it would flop automatically — and quickly! People could, the Grapeviners said, "take it or leave it alone."

In a burst of local pride *The Grapevine* staff mailed the first printing to all the groups in the United States. No pressure or soliciting. They just mailed it. Subscriptions began to filter in from everywhere. No longer a trickle, they are today a stream. *The Grapevine* now has subscribers in every one of the 4-8 states and even abroad.

Foreseeing a broader activity, members of *The Grapevine* staff were good enough to ask me a few months ago if I would take an interest in the venture for the coming year. They told me they thought the magazine might be enlarged to national dimensions; that ultimately it should be incorporated, and finally, perhaps, hooked up with The Alcoholic Foundation, which, as nearly every A.A. knows, is the sponsor of our Central Office and all our national undertakings.

This conversation made it abundantly plain that while rotating squads of volunteers might

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HISTORY OFFERS GOOD LESSONS FOR A.A.

A.A.s need to warn each other about becoming too confident. Over-confidence can have sorry consequences. Individual A.A.s need to take the warning to heart; A.A. as an organization of individuals can also profit from it.

All of us, attending meetings of our various groups, have heard, and taken part in, conversations like this:

"D'ja read that story about A.A. in this week's *Squint*?" "Not yet, but Joe was talkin' about it. Any good?" "Yeah, a pretty good piece. You know, those editors must think we got somethin'." "Sure, they wouldn't be giving us space, what with the war and all, if they didn't think a lot of their readers wanted to know about us."

Rosy contentment settles over speakers and listeners.

How many of the readers of *The Grapevine* have heard about the Washington Temperance Society?

It was quite an organization in its time—in the 1840's. Its organizers called themselves "reformed drunkards" and they set about "reforming" other drunkards.

Does the idea seem familiar?

Claimed 100,000 In 3 Years

They did all right, too. They got going in the Spring of 1840, in Baltimore. In early 1843, they were claiming that they had persuaded 100,000 habitual drunkards to sign the pledge.

Older temperance organizations had to stand aside—or climb onto the bandwagon. The new society was getting the headlines. It organized a mass meeting in City Hall Park in New York City in 1841 that attracted more than 4,000 listeners—the speakers stood on upturned rum kegs—and it had 1,800 new members when it closed its campaign in that city.

There were triumphal parades in Boston—where historic Faneuil Hall was jammed to the doors to hear the speaker—and in other eastern cities. Speakers toured the West and South.

The press of the day gave the society uncounted columns of publicity. The society's unusual methods were NEWS.

And then—in less than ten years—the society petered out.

The "why" contains a lesson—and a moral—for A.A.

There was no ONE reason, of course. A reason was that older temperance organizations hired some of the society's better speakers. That reason couldn't have wrecked the society if it had had its feet solidly on the ground.

Another reason was that politicians looked hungrily at its swelling membership. Some of them climbed aboard the wagon (there is infer-

ence that in those times, at least, some politicians could qualify for membership) and they helped to wreck local groups through their efforts to line up votes.

The Abolition movement was gaining strength and there was division within groups as men took their stand on the issue of slavery.

The Washingtonians were confident. They rebuffed overtures of older temperance organizations, they scorned old methods. Local groups went their separate ways, made their own mistakes, learned their own lessons. Some, with larger membership, dipped into their treasuries to finance their own publications. There was no over-all direction of editorial policy. Editors of local society publications got into squabbles with editors of other temperance papers.

Factions Within

There was division, in those times, among the older organizations. Some of them plumped for total abstinence as a rule of conduct; others hedged and wanted to direct their efforts against use of spirituous liquors, accepting use of wines and beers as normal conduct. Some of the more hardy souls already were clamoring for legislation that would outlaw the traffic in beverage alcohol. All of these factions pulled and hauled on the society's members.

Older temperance organizations were finding it increasingly difficult to interest the public in their aims. The Washingtonians with their unique methods—their missionary work among drunkards, their open-air parades and mass meetings, their "experience" programs that afforded a thrill-seeking public the opportunity of enjoying vicariously the degenerate experiences of sodden sinners—were stealing the show. The older organizations borrowed Washingtonian speakers and methods to draw larger audiences to their meetings.

Because the Washingtonian movement, in its beginnings, was concerned only with the reclaiming of drunkards and held that it was none of its affair if others used alcohol who seemed to be little harmed by it, the makers and sellers of alcoholic beverages looked on the new movement with a tolerant, even approving, eye. The habitual drunk was no more welcome in the nineteenth-century grog-shop than he is in the present-day cocktail lounge.

One Fatal Omission

But in its zeal to increase its membership as rapidly as possible, the society pledged many persons to total abstinence who were intemperate drinkers, probably, but who were not alcoholic in the present-day definition of the term.

The Washingtonian movement might have survived, however, might have triumphed over its mistakes, and its enemies (and well-wishers), except for one fatal omission.

Its organizers believed they could get along without a Higher Power.

It wasn't a particularly religious time. And inebriates, then as now, had generally lost touch with Him. Many of them, in fact, were outspoken in their denunciations of all of His works, especially as demonstrated in the activities and attitudes of so-called Christian folk. The meetings of the society's groups were conducted usually without reference to Him.

Washingtonians were not atheists; it just hadn't occurred to them that God as we understand Him could help them to stay sober. In fact, some of them believed that if they invited God into their councils, sectarianism also would push its way in, and their movement would be taken over by one or another of the churches.

The society wasn't on God's side and, consequently, it disintegrated.

Source of Strength

An editor of that day wrote:

"That the exclusion of all religious forms and the entire abstraction of religion from temperance, was necessary for the reclamation of the drunkard, we have never believed... The drunkard may have felt hostile to religion while in the bar-room and amid the fumes of liquor, and he may feel so after he has reformed and been taught to believe that he is better than a Christian, but never did a poor drunkard go up in sincerity to sign the pledge, without feeling himself a prodigal, commencing a work of return to his Heavenly Father, and needing that Father's help; and who would not have gratefully knelt and listened to a prayer for that help on his new endeavors. And we believe that if the hundreds of thousands of signatures in our country had been accompanied with prayer and some religious enforcement, their power and efficiency would have been incomparably stronger."*

Is it necessarily true that there's nothing new under the sun," or that "history repeats itself?"

A.A. IS new, a new partnership with God in a useful endeavor. History NEED NOT repeat, in the case of A.A., the sorry story of the Washingtonians' rise and fall.

There are, however, lessons to be learned from history.

C. H. K., *Lansing, Mich.*

* The editorial quotation is from John Allen Krout's book, *The Origins of Prohibition*, published by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., in 1925.

Only Nice Things Happened

One afternoon a little more than three years ago, I was riding down First Avenue in a cab. I was wedged in the corner of the seat and my brother propped me up with his two hands. With my two hands I propped up a pint of rye. The rye was a decoy to get me into the cab and to my destination—Bellevue Hospital. I'd been there before, and I knew I wasn't going to like it.

I'd been drunk a little over a month that time and after five years of kicking it around, I'd finally managed to lose a pretty good job that I'd had for 22 years. I was up to my neck in debt and all the friends I had in the world could have held their annual meeting at the Commodore—in a phone booth.

If you had met me that afternoon and said, "Kel, how are you doing?" honesty would have compelled me to admit that I wasn't doing so well.

There followed four rugged days as a guest of the Department of Hospitals. I was discharged on March 16, 1942, to make room for the expected arrival of fellow Hibernians who had overtrained for the parade and had become tired and confused.

After that there were six weeks at a place, Chester Crest, and if that name suggests a country club, I'll hasten to add that it is formally known as the New York Christian Home for Intemperate Men. I was both Christian and intemperate—and had been called worse.

The first three weeks up in the country I learned to eat and sleep again and to walk out into the daylight without blinking. The last three weeks, when my head had cleared, I did some serious thinking.

It was during that time that I decided that I didn't really want to be a bum and that I would have to stop drinking. I left Chester Crest in good physical condition but I was loaded down with fears.

I was afraid that I couldn't stay sober. I was afraid that I couldn't get a new job which would enable me to support my two children. I was worried because I'd failed to file an income tax return and because I hadn't the money to pay the tax, if I had filed. I was worried because I knew that if I had a job, however small, it was only a question of time before the bloodhounds from the finance companies would pick up the trail and come yapping at my heels.

When I got back to New York, I met an old friend, a woman I'm very fond of. While I'd been sweating it out up at Chester Crest, she had found A.A. and it wasn't long before I found

myself in the old 24th Street clubhouse. When I got an idea of what A.A. was all about, I grabbed on like a drowning man would grab a life preserver and after three years I'm still holding on.

And here's the funny thing—NONE OF THE THINGS I WORRIED ABOUT EVER HAPPENED!

I got a job and was able to take care of the children and myself.

I went to the Internal Revenue boys and explained that I hadn't filed and couldn't pay because I was a drunk and I told them what I was trying to do about it. The deputy with whom I talked said that he had thousands of good answers for as many excuses but he was darned if he had one for that and he guessed he would have to sit it out and hope for the best. I stopped running from the bloodhounds and they skidded to a stop and decided, too, to wait.

After I'd been dry a year I asked for and got my old job back. Six months later the firm inquired about my debts and gave me the money to clean them up. I'm still paying back the company in slow and easy stages.

Only nice things happened to me and all I did was stay sober, stick close to A.A., and try to carry out the suggested steps of the A.A. program. Yes, only good things, thanks to A.A., and the help which I must have received from the Higher Power that I call God.

E. K., Jersey City, N. J.

THE WAY WE HEARD IT

It seems that....

His wife had been doing a great deal of talking about this thing A.A. Morning, noon and night she had been dinging it at him. He wasn't at all sure that he needed or wanted any part of it. In fact, for the moment he had heard enough about it.

So he went out to the garage. Cached inside was a bottle; just outside was a bench in the sun—a perfect combination for "peace and quiet."

Seated on the bench he was tilting his head back for a long one. Just then a plane passed overhead in line with his upturned eyes. On the wings of the big liner he saw printed in large letters, "A.A."

"Cripes," he exclaimed. "If they're going to all that trouble to get me, I might just as well give up now."

WHAT CONSTITUTES A GOOD SPONSOR, AS MINNEAPOLIS SEES IT

(Many groups have used to good advantage the sponsor system, one of which is outlined below. Other methods followed by other groups will be outlined in subsequent issues.)

1. Sincerity in A.A. and dry for certain length of time.
2. Must have friendly altitude toward new member. If that is not possible, do not accept the sponsorship.
3. Work on only one member at a time.
4. Come to *all* the classes with the new member.
5. Keep in close touch by telephone.
6. See that the new member comes to all the meetings and be there also.
7. See that he meets people.
8. Have older members talk to him.
9. Don't sell the club to new members.
10. Don't quote the big names in the group.
11. Uphold other members to the new member.
12. Do not encourage discussion of personalities.
13. Do not make things too easy, such as lending money, etc.
14. Help straighten out new member's financial and domestic problems by pointing out what experience has shown to be the best way.
15. When drunk goes to another sponsor with tales of persecution, if the second sponsor doesn't talk it over with the first sponsor, the issue becomes one of personalities, and the second sponsor will find that the slipper has outsmarted him.
16. Don't listen to a lot of gossip by slippers.
17. Second sponsor of same member should get in touch with the first sponsor and find out what has been done—what were the reactions of the slipper—so that he can't pull the same stuff on the second sponsor.
18. If a new member alibis about coming to classes and the Tuesday night meetings and the group meetings, after a short while, the sponsor should impress on him the importance of attendance at these meetings by both the husband and the wife. If you can't get him to come, then he has put you in a position where you cannot help him, as he will not let you. So drop him. The seed has been planted; redirect your energies elsewhere. Somewhere along the line he will be back when he *wants* A.A.
19. A good sponsor will not have more than two neophytes a year. But he will do a thorough job on those two.

Mail Call for All A.A.s in the Armed Forces

Some months ago we suggested on this page that perhaps A.A.s in service often worked out their not inconsiderable problems more realistically than their civilian brethren and that, almost certainly, they had to place greater dependence on the spiritual aspects of the program. The quotation below is part of a recent letter from a soldier stationed in France:

"In the old days (and it's a wonderful thing to think of them as 'old days') most of us didn't face these conflicts, but they must be faced now, and faced squarely. So for me there's only one answer and that is our 3rd Step. That is the answer to so many things if we only be mindful of it. However, like everything else, now and then we forget. I was feeling particularly low and in need of help. I got just the lift I needed from my old friend Chet through his piece on the 3rd Step in the March *Grapevine*.

"This has been a very personal letter. However, isn't that what this is all about—getting the right slant on the things that bother us?"

* * * * *

A Marine Tells Us

The following is our first letter from an A.A. who is also a member of the Marine Corps. It is from a sergeant with a Marine fighter squadron now in the Pacific, and was written to a friend in the Buffalo group. We think it bears out our comment at the beginning of this page.

"It was pretty rough most of the way over, but after leaving Honolulu most of us were pretty good sailors but our only wish was to set foot on terra firma once again. Had my fill of the deep blue sea—it really is blue and at night when there is no moon one would think that there was some sort of indirect lighting due to the phosphorus in the water glowing as the prow of the boat would churn it up.

"We were able to pitch a one-day liberty in Honolulu and I really took in the sights—saw the famous beach at Waikiki and also stopped in a quaint little church and thanked Him for keeping me "dry" and asked Him to help all of us in our struggle with alcohol. He has been very good to me, John.

"We finally arrived on this little rock of coral and sand where the Navy and Marines left a tree or two standing when they knocked the little monkeys out of here some time back.

"Each day gets hotter and, although the nights cool off, even they are starting to get a bit warmer. We used to have our choice of either two bottles of cold brew or two cokes every other night but now they are out of cokes so I'm drinking warm water out of Lyster bags. Yes, I know just what two beers would do to me—even out here—and I don't care to experiment. I'll wait until medical science can find a remedy. This is all I'm allowed to write. It is lonesome here and I'd sure enjoy hearing from some of the boys."

Dick F. M., Sgt. V. S. Marines, April 8

Our most faithful correspondent in the Pacific seems to have gotten into the thick of things again, but is still calling on his A.A. philosophy whenever the going gets tough:

"I have really been busy. Am receiving *Grapevine* and enjoy it so much. M——is sending *September Remember* which I look forward to enthusiastically. Y. (a naval lieutenant) wrote from Boston. He must have been very active. He is a grand fellow and the new A.A. member should be helped by people like him. We are getting well set up now. Had my first shower in six weeks yesterday and you would be surprised how one gets used to taking a bath in a helmet. We spend considerable time in foxholes but as yet I haven't caught cold. The snakes around here have me worried—especially when I spend the night on the ground. We have killed a couple of them and they were deadly. Oh, well, it's just like a lot of other things—bad, but not too bad. My spirits are well up these days and now I'm happy with a little less. Thank God, it has ended in Europe."

John N., Lt. U. S. Army

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A Soldier Avoids That Fatal First Drink

"I have had several pleasant visits with a family I met in Rheims. There was, at first, a rather awkward situation created by my not taking a glass of wine at dinner. I'm sure my friends consider it very queer, but the matter is settled and they have accepted the fact of my not drinking.. Later on, I should like to tell them about A.A. They are intelligent, alert people, and I might be able to convey the general idea to them."

John D., U. S. Army, France, May 25

Copies of *The Grapevine* are sent free to all A.A. servicemen and women. If you know of any member of the Armed Forces' who is not on the mailing list, please send his or her name to the Editors.

TIME ON YOUR HANDS

The term "hobby" not only refers to an occupation pursued as a pastime but also means "a slow and steady horse." To me, the latter definition is more important to an alcoholic because it's so patently the reverse of the kind of animal he used to be. One of our most potent slogans is "easy does it" . . . and I think that philosophy should be especially followed when it comes to picking hobbies.

The reason we're looking for hobbies is because we know that too much loose time on our hands represents the most frightening saboteur we have to face in our aim toward continued sobriety. But, for an alcoholic, too much intensity toward any objective is equally dangerous, because should circumstances deprive us of our "hobby crutch" we're ripe for a slip.

So, in my very humble and still inexperienced opinion, we should take our hobbies where we find them and have as many as possible that fit into everyday living instead of concentrating on one or two important ones. For example, you'd hardly call your family a hobby but it can function very well as such with priority—and more satisfyingly so than any I have found. The time I spend planning and executing for my wife and son the many ordinary pastimes and associations which they missed during my drinking days has proven to be the happiest heritage which A.A. has given me. There is no need to expand on that statement—every alcoholic will recognize immediately what I'm trying to say.

The only other important hobby I have (excepting of course my A. A. group) is to associate as much as possible with friends who are not alcoholics, but who are fully aware of my status as one and my desire to stay dry. It's been amazing to me how much help I can get from these friends who, although they may not fully understand why a guy can't take a drink now and then, respect and encourage my aims. I guess you'd call that being something of an "alcoholic hero" to the folks outside of A.A. who are important to me, but if that be treason, I still feel that I can make the most of it as a hobby—and you'll agree that results are what count.

Jim D.

Tenth Anniversary

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self in the hospital again, where, in a deep depression he finally called on the God against Whom he had always rebelled, to show Himself. "Release came. And with it a new sense of freedom filled my being," Bill quietly said. "It was as simple as that."

Following this spiritual experience, Bill told how subtle conceits soon entered his life. Laughing, he recounted how "I set out to sober up all the drunks in the world. I was determined every drunk should have his hotflash."

Without a single convert six months later, Bill found himself in Akron on business where, following a bitter disappointment, he was faced with a wave of self pity.

"For the first time I realized," Bill explained, "I needed to talk to a drunk just as much as the drunk needed me." Whereupon the "strange chain of circumstances" unfolded which culminated in Bill and Doc's meeting... the random selection of the minister's name... the long list of people who failed to respond... the final spark in Henrietta S.... the eventual meeting with Dr. Bob after a Mother's Day bender.

"Something passed between us," Bill stated. And a "beginning greater than either one of us was made."

A Word for Anonymity

Back-tracking from the present, Bill talked briefly on how the book was written four years after his meeting with Dr. Bob... how he considers himself not its author but the umpire for all of the contributors to it... how from literally scores of suggestions it was titled "Alcoholics Anonymous" instead of "The Way Out" ("There were 13 books that had been published, called 'The Way Out' and that was not only too many, but unlucky," Bill smiled)... Show there have always been in A.A. differences of opinion over our anonymity, and how most of the "older folk" hope that it is kept unless there is some "very grave or good reason to the contrary," adding that "to be truly adult in this to be truly modest"... how there is a fortunate absence of a "professional class" in A.A.

Nor is A.A. without its "sins," Bill pointed out. Not the least of which, he explained, were "those A.A.s, often including himself, who 'viewed with alarm the A.A. movement and the problems within it.'" Citing a personal experience wherein he was derelict in his responsibility, he also deplored the frequent neglect of the new man and the failure in some instances to give him his shot at A.A. In this regard, he referred to the excellent sponsorship system in Cleveland, urging closer inspection for those interested in well-conceived 12th step work.

Currently, Bill concluded, there's the problem of leadership despite claims there are no leaders nor elected officers... the problems of remuneration for A.A. secretaries, janitors, and all those falling in this area of special functions. On this latter matter, Bill voiced the feeling that spiritual activity was never paid for, although functional activity, just as everywhere, was.

While on leadership, Bill said, he regarded a leader as one who has learned to love the best in men; one who has worked at the program; one who has stayed sober; one who has come to the realization that "A. A. is much bigger than any of us," and, as a result of that realization, has stepped aside for others to share the limelight. As for himself, Bill humorously finished, he and Dr. Bob look upon themselves as purely "a couple of old, cracked antiques who have had a little more experience than others."

Dr. Bob's Reasons

Dr. Bob, in a different vein, indicated he felt we need to follow the steps in our program as long as we live, particularly himself. For he realizes, he said, he has the best reason except Bill for not taking a drink... his 10 years of sobriety. And he stated. "I most certainly don't care to get tight any more."

"Blindly groping for the truth," Dr. Bob continued, "the early development of the activity in Akron was not easy. It was mostly by the trial and error method. We had no precedent whatsoever, gleaning a fact here and there as time went on. Eventually a generalized procedure was discovered with a reasonable hope of acceptance."

The religious group to whom he had gone for help to solve his alcoholic problem. Dr. Bob went on, told him "to bury the past and not visit the grave too often." Wryly, he commented... "I want a very faint recollection of the past—but not too faint."

Proceeding along a spiritual line, Dr. Bob told how we have all been taught to avoid religious discussion or argument. But he said that he has averaged at least an hour's reading each day for the past 10 years on some spiritual subject. However, he hastened to say, he has always returned to the simple teachings of The Sermon on the Mount; the Book of James, and the 13th Chapter of Corinthians in The Bible for his fundamentals.

Man's Triumvirate

Stating that the A.A. program is not an intellectual program, Dr. Bob talked of the three divisions of man—the physical man, the mental

ANNIVERSARY NOTES

Two members from a California group came all the way from the coast in a day coach. Originally scheduled for different trains, the station master, on hearing where they were going and why, moved them on to the same train at a great deal of trouble to himself.

*

The manager of the Carter took particular pains to mention to Dick S., chairman of the Tenth Anniversary Committee, that he considered the manner in which the anniversary party was conducted and the behavior of the guests the best of all "conventions" in his memory.

All A.A.s and their friends were welcomed to Cleveland at the Music Hall by Doctor T., a prominent member from the Lee Road Thursday Group. Dick S. introduced Dr. Bob and Bill. Jack D. was toastmaster at the banquet.

Over 250 women A.A.s and their friends attended the tea on Saturday afternoon at The Carter, where they met Anne S., Lois W., and Bobbie B., secretary of The Central Office in New York.

man and the spiritual man. And he uttered the hope that he was developing into a well-integrated individual.

"Because the spiritual search is a long search and requires unrelenting effort," Dr. Bob said, he has attempted to acquire a satisfactory understanding of the teachings in The Bible.

On The Twelve Steps, he stated that they've been alive for seven years. And that there's been no suggestion of a change in them. Furthermore, he hopes there will not be a change, unless they can be bettered.

Some of them, he pointed out, interfere with our personal schedules. "And we sometimes feel we don't need all of them—although there has never been a protracted success with a modified program."

"So we'd better accept it in its entirety," Dr. Bob advised. "For John Barleycorn's a tireless and relentless instructor. Today, thousands of people are sober because they've followed the program."

Winding up his remarks, Doc indicated that "our program must be followed by each individual. And each individual is the only one who can do it for himself. Let none of us ever forget—love and service keep us dry... love for our Father and our neighbors... love, through service, in never refusing our aid to anyone."

John J., Cleveland, O.

A. A. 's COUNTRY-WIDE NEWS CIRCUIT

It was a big night at New York's 48th Street Theatre, June 15, when A.A.s bought out the house and intermittently laughed with delight or felt strangely nostalgic, as Frank Fay of "Harvey" fame subtly put one Elwood P. Dowd through his teetering paces.

Frank Fay read his lines like an angel, imbuing every word he spoke with the magic of an artist. And he pantomimed so vividly his physically non-existent friend Harvey that we felt the presence of the six-foot-tall rabbit with ears that big, right there on the stage before us. Together with the ebullient Josephine Hull, Frank Fay makes "Harvey" the fascinating, amusing play it is.

We, a member of A.A., went to see a play about a drunk—or in the polite language of medicine, an alcoholic—and his imaginary animal, Harvey. We saw instead a lovable, divinely wistful tippler who might be a potential, but he's far from being an actual alcoholic. And as for Harvey, well, if we alcoholics could have conjured up such a wonderfully understanding pal as Harvey, we'd probably still be at the bottle.

Elwood P. Dowd's life hasn't at all become unmanageable from alcohol, though the lives of his sister and niece do grow hilariously complicated. The road that lies between the peace-loving Elwood and an honest-to-goodness drunk is long and laborious, to put it mildly. And by the time the end of that road is reached an alcoholic is far from having fun with his drinking.

"No one ever brings small things into a bar," Elwood says in a chef d'oeuvre of a scene where the A.A. audience sat and breathed and lived Frank Fay's soft-spoken words, communicating as they did a very real sensation of the nostalgic yearning that floats along with the transcending of reality, the fleeing beyond reality into a beautiful world of one's own imagining. This is something every alcoholic has experienced, to the depth of his being. It is a state of mind which we alcoholics longed in vain to achieve and to sustain, and failed. Only the Elwood P. Dowds of fiction can do it.

In his witty curtain speech Frank Fay, who is off the stuff these days, made it quite clear that Elwood's antics are all in fun, whereas too much booze is in reality no fun at all. "If I could have been as nice as Elwood P. Dowd," Frank Fay said, "I don't know as I would ever have given it up."

We don't know what sort of a fellow Frank Fay was in his drinking days, but he impressed this reporter, in a backstage chat after the show, as being quite as nice as Elwood ever was. "The A.A.s were a swell audience, you tell them for me," he said, grinning happily.

The 25 "squads," which the groups in Minneapolis, Minn, are called, keep track of each other's activities via their printed news bulletin *Hi and Dri*.... The Des Moines, Iowa, A.A.s display an admirable confidence, as evidenced by this item in their news bulletin *AA Tribune*: "In the event that anyone is downtown at any hour the club isn't open, you can always get the key at the Travelers' Aid Society next door, by asking them, and, being sober."

Also from Iowa, as reported in the Marshalltown group's *Camel Club Chronicle*, comes this story. A drunk who had just lost his home, waiting for a trolley in St. Louis, Mo., picked up a stray alley cat, took it aboard the trolley, and sold it as a pedigreed animal to a fellow seated next to him who also had one too many. Moral: The cat got a home and the drunk got plastered.

Raymond J. McCarthy, field investigator of the Yale Plan Clinic, was guest speaker at a meeting of the Ansonia, Conn., group at the Veteran's Memorial Home in that city.... There'll soon be a new group in Mt. Morris, N. Y., where a Rochester A.A. has been doing some speaking at various clubs, aided by Dr. Kirby Collier, psychiatrist of Rochester.

* * *

Mississippi has a brand new group in Greenwood. The flourishing Jackson group was formed five months ago.... The Saginaw, Michigan, A.A.s have grown sufficiently numerous to branch out on their own, independent

No Repeaters!

To avoid possible disadvantage to the hospital, New York's Knickerbocker Hospital service for A.A.-sponsored alcoholics (*The Grapevine*, June, 1945) provides for acceptance of an alcoholic patient only once. No repeaters.

of the Bay City group of which they are an offshoot.... Wisconsin is another state that is rapidly expanding, with its latest group in Kenosha. A.A.s from Milwaukee, Racine, Evanston and Chicago have been cooperating to get the Kenoshians started.... The South Shore members of New York's Nassau County group now hold their closed meetings apart from the Mineola, N. Y., group, due to growth in attendance.

* * *

Decatur, Illinois, reports that its growth is slow but sure, and the same goes for Springfield.... *The Toss Pot*, an inter-group news bulletin of Charleston, Virginia, reporting also

for Huntington, Parkersburg, Logan, Wheeling, Beckley, and Gauley Bridge, salutes two members who commute regularly to Huntingdon meetings from Ohio, one from Gallipolis, the other from Sciotoville.

* * *

Municipal Judge William Shane, of Ashtabula, Ohio, who long has been active in promoting A.A., spoke at a meeting in Conneaut, Ohio, with members attending from Meadville, Erie and Ashlabula groups.... Adelaide Hawley's radio program from Manhattan lately featured a talk by Marty Mann on the work of the NCEA, Marty, as always, announcing herself as a member of A.A.

Who Wrote It?

(Editor's Note: Several readers of The Grapevine have expressed particular appreciation for a short article which appeared in an early issue, and ham: written to ask about its authorship. The Grapevine editors do not know, and so we reprint the piece which has proved inspiring to many already. Do you know who wrote it?)

YESTERDAY... TODAY AND TOMORROW

THERE are two days in every week about which we should not worry, two days which should be kept free from fear and apprehension.

One of these days is YESTERDAY with its mistakes and cares, its faults and blunders, its aches and pains. YESTERDAY has passed forever beyond our control.

All the money in the world cannot bring back YESTERDAY. We cannot undo a single act we performed; we cannot erase a single word we said. YESTERDAY is gone.

The other day we should not worry about is TOMORROW with its possible adversaries, its burdens, its large promise and poor performance. TOMORROW is also beyond our immediate control.

TOMORROW'S sun will rise, either in splendor or behind a mask of clouds—bill it will rise. Until it does, we have no stake in TOMORROW, for it is as yet unborn.

This leaves only one day—TODAY—. Any man can fight the battles of just one day. It is only when you and I add the burdens of those two awful eternities—YESTERDAY and TOMORROW that we break down.

It is not the Experience of TODAY that drives men mad—it is remorse or bitterness for something which happened YESTERDAY and the dread of what TOMORROW may bring.

LET US, THEREFORE, LIVE BUT ONE DAY
AT A TIME.

The Grapevine

(Continued from Page 2)

always continue to procure and edit pieces for *The Grapevine* and participate in setting its policy, there could be no doubt that continuous paid help and enlarged working facilities would soon be necessary. They asked if I would help with these arrangements and perhaps contribute a piece occasionally. These things, health permitting, I agreed to do.

Besides the volunteer staff, we now boast one part-time paid secretarial worker to help handle details. This work, however, continues to mount, as does the volume of potential editorial content. More paid help will probably become necessary and the size of the magazine may have to be expanded, all of which would require a slight increase in the subscription rate. *The Grapevine* is self-supporting now and should be kept that way always, rather than be dependent on subsidies or gratuities, to insure its continuity, quality and service.

Though *The Grapevine* is young, it is commencing to have its own tradition. Every member of the staff aspires to make the paper a true voice of A.A. All of us are very sensitive to the thought that it ought never to be sectional in its appeal nor should it take sides on any controversial question. While it must constantly talk of people, in its news and views, it ought never to glorify or belittle anyone, nor lend itself to a commercial undertaking, nor become a mere mouthpiece for any of us, even the Central Office or The Alcoholic Foundation. Of course, everybody will see pieces in *The Grapevine* now and then with which he will not agree. So it must always be understood that these pieces reflect the thoughts and feelings of their authors but not necessarily those of *The Grapevine*. To crystallize these traditions and principles we ask for more contributions from all parts of the country.

Meanwhile please don't expect too much of

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us too quickly. We are still understaffed; we can't possibly answer all of your letters and inquiries. I am afraid that will have to go for me, too. I shall be unable to engage in personal correspondence. I can only write a piece to all of you now and then.

If agreeable to the subscribers I would like to discuss in coming issues such topics as anonymity, leadership, public relations, the use of money in A.A., and the like. Upon matters such as these, our tradition and practice is by no means well settled. Like most older A.A.s I have come to place great reliance on the ability of our groups to work out correct principles, once given sufficient experience. The purpose, therefore, of the forthcoming pieces will be to present the current thought, the pros and cons, on these moot questions. These articles will be suggestive only. Their object will be to promote further discussion rather than to announce any new principle.

We of *The Grapevine* once more affirm that this is your periodical. It will be the vehicle for your thoughts, your feelings, your experiences, and your aspirations—if you care to make it that. While we can only publish a fraction of the material which will come to hand you may be sure that we shall do our fairest and best in making the selections. Always wishing to reflect A.A., and nothing but A.A., it will be the ideal of *The Grapevine*, always to serve, never to dictate or command. Please help us make it a true voice.

STATISTICS

Statistically speaking, the celebration in Cleveland was astronomical in A.A. history, as well as being an epic anniversary.

If you are interested in figures and geography, here are generous portions of both: More than 2,500 attended the climactic meeting Sunday afternoon, June 10, in Cleveland's Music Hall.

Represented in the audience were 91 cities in 36 states, two Canadian provinces and Mexico.

Close to 1,000 A.A.s attended the dinner Sunday evening.

How Times Have Changed!

A member of the Miami, Florida, group who has been very active in 12th-step work, confined to a hospital for a "legitimate" illness, received flowers from many grateful A.A.s. But the largest bouquet came from—you'll never guess—the South Florida Liquor Board!

* * *

"God grant me the serenity to accept things I cannot change, courage to change things I can, and wisdom to know the difference."

Letters

(Continued from Page 2)

because they are afraid of it, that is, *afraid of learning the truth about themselves.*)

I hope I'm wrong but I'm afraid that many slips will be found to have been caused by attendance at "Harvey."

This wail, of course, is just one man's opinion.

G. M.

(Editor's note: The following letter is not the usual testimonial, of an ex-rummy, but rather the testimony of his employer after the formerly errant employe had completed three years of sobriety in A.A.)

Dear Ed: This, Ed, is a letter of reference to the fellows in A.A., to your family, and to the world in general.

A little more than three years ago you were a pretty bad specimen—a disgrace to yourself, your family, your fellow-workers and to society generally, and if I knew how to use stronger language in this letter of recommendation, I'd do it. Right from the shoulder, Ed, you were one of the worst, one of the most difficult to handle. You will remember. And maybe we should be thankful that I threw up the sponge, and gave you up as a lost cause. Possibly, the only link that you and I had left was the literature that I handed you of an organization of which I knew very little, but had a feeling that no matter how bad or good it was, it couldn't make you any worse than you were: A.A.

And so the letter of reference continues: tonight, Ed, you're dry these three years—your wife is proud of you—your kids love you—and you're now a "Grandpop" who can safely rest a young child on his knees and rock it soberly to sleep.

Out of your determination, you've built a new home for yourself and yours, and if you did nothing else, you might be said to have built a world.

Today, Ed, I want to congratulate you as a worthy member of this society, and one in whom I have the utmost confidence, and one who I think rates higher than most of the folks who go along their pagan way in this world of war. You have earned a badge of decency and a chin-up attitude that to me has an aura as great as the heroes of the war that we're winning. You're a hero of another kind of war, and you are an instrument of good that no one should discount. Tonight's performance in leading that meeting makes of you a man of substance and utility, and I should like to greet you on this occasion and say how proud I am of the things that you've done, are doing, and I know will continue to do.

S. H.