

THE ORIGINAL "BILL'S STORY"

This is the first printed draft of the Big Book, which was mailed to various individuals for their comments and also as a fund raising tool. It is unclear at what time during the writing of the Big Book "Bill's Story" became chapter one. The language in this draft is in many ways different than the final manuscript. This illustrates the process of having many individuals add their opinions to the contents.

[archivist's note: All pages are 8.5" by 14"; marked text (underlined) means more than one letter was typed over another, or text was crossed out with x's though still readable]

[handwriting: "Wilson's original story"]

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Page 1.

1. When I was about ten years old my Father and mother
2. agreed to disagree and I went to live with my Grandfather,
3. and Grandmother. He was a retired farmer and lumberman. As I
4. see him in retrospect, he was a very remarkable man After he
5. returned from Civil War he settled in the small Vermont
6. town where I was later to grow up. His original capital con-
7. sisted of a small, unimproved hillside farm, as sweet and
8. willing helpmeet, and enormous determination to succeed in
9. whatever he attempted. He was a man of high native intelli-
10. gence, a voracious reader, though little educated in the
11. school sense of the word. There was plenty of financial
12. sense in his make-up and he was a man of real vision. Under
13. other conditions he might well have become master of an in-
14. dustry or railroad empire.
15. My Grandmother brought into the world three children,
16. one of whom was my Mother. I can still seem to hear her tell-
17. ing of the struggle of those early days. Such matters as
18. cooking for twenty woodchoppers, looking after the diary,
19. making most of the clothes for the family, long winter rides
20. at twenty below zero to fetch my Grandfather home over snow-
21. bound roads, seeing him of long before daylight that he and
22. the choppers might have their access thawed out so that work
23. might begin on the mountaintop at daylight- this is the thought
24. of tradition upon which they nourished me. They finally
25. achieved their competence and retired late in life to enjoy
26. a well earned rest and the respect and affection of their

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27. neighbors. They were the sort of people, I see now, who
28. really made America.
29. But I had other ideas - much bigger and better ones
30. so I thought. I was to be of the war generation which dis-
31. ipated the homely virtues, the hard earned savings, the
32. pioneering tradition, and the incredible stamina of your parents
parents
33. Grandfather and mine.
34. I too was ambitious - very ambitious, but very un-
35. disciplined. In spite of everyone's effort to correct that con-
36. dition. I had a genius for evading, postponing or shirking
37. those things which I did not like to do, but when thoroughly
38. interested, everything I had was thrown into the pursuit of
39. my objective. My will to succeed at special undertakings on
40. which my heart were set was very great. There was a persis-
41. tence, a patience, and a dogged obstinacy, that drove me on.
42. My Grandfather used to love to argue with me with the object
43. of convincing me of the impossibility of some venture or

44. another in order to enjoy watching me 'tilt at the windmill'
45. he had erected. One day he said to me - I have just been
46. reading that no one in the world but an Australian can make
47. and throw a boomerang. This spark struck tinder and every-
48. thing and every activity was instantly laid aside until it
49. could be demonstrated that he was mistaken. The woodbox was
50. not filled, no school work was done, nor could I hardly be
51. persuaded to eat or to go to bed. After a month or more of
52. this thing a boomerang was constructed which I threw around

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53. the church steeple. On its return trip it went into trans-
54. ports of joy because it all but decapitated my Grandfather
55. who stood near me.
56. I presently left the country school and fared forth
57. into the great world I had read about in books. My first
58. journey took me only five miles to an adjoining town where I
59. commenced to attend a seminary well known in our section of
60. the state. Here competition was much more severe and I was
61. challenged on all sides to do the seemingly impossible. There
62. was the matter of athletics and I was soon burning with the
63. ambition to become a great baseball player. This was pretty
64. discouraging to begin with, as I was tall for my age, quite
65. awkward, and not very fast on my feet, but I literally worked
66. at it while others slept or otherwise amused themselves and
67. in my second year became captain of the team, whereupon my
68. interest began to languish, for by that time someone had told
69. me I had no ear for music, which I have since discovered is
70. almost true. Despite obstacles I managed to appear in a few
71. song recitals whereupon my interest in singing disappeared
72. and I got terribly serious about learning to play the violin.
73. This grew into a real obsession and to the consternation of
74. my teachers, grew in the last year and everyone else it be-
75. came the immediate cause of my failing to graduate. This was
76. my first great catastrophe. By this time I had become Presi-
77. dent of the class which only made matters worse. As in every
78. thing else I had even very good in certain courses of study

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79. which took my fancy, and with others just the opposite,
80. indolence and indifference, being the rule, So it was that
81. the legend of infallibility I had built up around myself
82. collapsed.
83. In the ensuing summer I was obliged for the first
84. time to really address myself to the distasteful task of re-
85. pairing my failure. Although my diploma was now in hand, it
86. was by no means clear to my grandparents and parents what
87. they had better next try to do with me. Because of my interest
88. in scientific matters and the liking I had to fussing with
89. gadgets and chemicals, it had been assumed that I was to be
90. an engineer, and my own learnings were towards the electrical
91. branch of the profession. So I went to Boston and took the
92. entrance examination to one of the leading technical schools
93. in this country. For obvious reasons I failed utterly. It
94. was a rather heartbreaking matter for those interested in me
95. and it gave my self-sufficiency another severe deflation.
96. Finally an entrance was effected at an excellent
97. military college where it was hoped I would really be disci-
98. plined. I attended the University for almost three years
99. and would have certainly failed to graduate or come anywhere
100. near qualifying as an engineer, because of my laziness and
101. weakness mathematics. Particularly Calculus, in this

102. subject a great number of formulas have to be learned and
103. the application practiced. I remembered that I absolutely
104. refused to learn any of them or do any of the work whatever

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105. until the general principles underlying the subject had
106. been made clear to me. The instructor was very patient,
107. but finally through up his hands in disgust as I began to
108. argue with him and to hint pretty strongly that perhaps he
109. didn't quite understand them himself. So I commenced an in-
110. vestigation of the principles underlying Calculus in the
111. school library and learned something of the conceptions of
112. the great minds of Leibnitz and Newton whose genius had
113. made possible this useful and novel mathematical device.
114. Thus armed I mastered the first problem in the textbook and
115. commenced a fresh controversy with my teacher, who angrily,
116. but quite properly, gave me a zero for the course. Fortunate-
117. ly for my future at the University, I soon enabled to
118. leave the place gracefully, even heroically, for the
119. United States of America had gone to war.
120. Being students of a military academy school
121. the student boy almost to a man bolted for the first
122. officers training camp at Plattsburgh. Though a bit under
123. age, I received a commission a second lieutenant and got
124. myself assigned to the heavy artillery. Of this I was
125. secretly ashamed, for when the excitement of the day had
126. subsided and I lay in my bunk, I had to confess I did not
127. want to be killed. This bothered me terribly this suspicion
128. that I might be coward after all. I could not reconcile
129. it with the truly exalted mood of patriotism and idealism
130. which possessed me when I hadn't time to think. It was

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131. very very damaging to my pride, though most of this damage
132. was repaired later on when I got under fire and discovered
133. I was just like other people, scared to death, but willing
134. to face the music.
135. After graduating from an army artillery school,
136. I was sent to a post which was situated near a famous old
137. town on the New England coast ones famous for its deepxsea
138. whaling, trading and Yankee seagoing tradition. Here I made
139. two decisions. The first one, and the best, to marry. Th
140. second decision was most emphatically the worst I ever mad took up with

took up with

141. I made the acquaintance of John Barleycorn and decided that
142. I liked it him.
143. My wife to be
144. Here I set out upon two paths and little did I realize
145. how much they were diverge. In short I got married
146. and at about the same time, took my first drink and decided
147. that I liked it. But for undying loyalty of my wife
148. and her faith through the years, I should not be alive today.
149. She was a city bred person and represented a background and
150. way of life for which I had secretly longed. Her family
151. spent long summers in our little town. All of them were
152. highly regarded by the natives. This was most complimentary
153. for among the countrymen there existed strong and often un-
154. reasonable prejudices against city folks. For the most
155. part, I felt differently. Most city people I knew had money,
156. assurance, and what then seemed to me great sophistication.

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157. and Most of them had family trees. There were servants,
158. fine houses, gay dinners, and all of the other things with
159. which I was wont to associate power and distinction. All
160. of them, quite unconsciously I am sure, could make me feel
161. very inadequate and ill at ease. I began to feel woefully
162. lacking in the matter of poise and polish and worldly know-
163. ledge. Though very proud of the traditions of my own people,
164. I sometimes indulged in the envious wish that I had been
165. born under other circumstances and with some of these advan-
166. tages. Since then immemorial I suppose the country boyshav
167. thought and felt as I did have thought and felt as I did.
168. These feelings of inferiority are I suspect responsible for
169. the enormous determination many of them have felt to go out
170. to the cities in quest of what seemed to them like true
171. success. Though seldom revealed, these were the sentiments
172. that drove me on from this point.
173. The war fever ran high in the city near my
174. post and I soon discovered that young officers were in
175. great demand at the dinner tables of the first citizens of
176. the place. Social differences were layed aside and every-
177. thing was done to make us feel comfortable, happy, and heroic.
178. A great many things conspired to make me feel that I was im-
179. portant. I discovered that I had a somewhat unusual power
180. over men on the drill field and in the barracks. I was about
181. to fight to save the world for democracy. People whose
182. station in life I had envied were receiving me as an equal.

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183. My marriage with a girl who represented all of the best
184. things the city had to offer, was close at hand, and last,
185. but not least, I had discovered John Barleycorn, Love, ad-
186. venture, war, applause of the crowd, moments sublime and
187. hilarious with intervals hilarious - I was a part of life
188. at last, and very happy.
189. The warnings of my people, the contempt
190. which I had felt for those who drank, were put aside with
191. surprising alacrity as I discovered what the Bronx cocktail
192. could really do for a fellow. My imagination soared - my
193. tongue loosened at last - wonderful vistas opened on all
194. sides, but best of all my self consciousness - my gaucheries
195. and my ineptitudes disappeared into thin air. I seemed to
196. the life of the party. To the dismay of my bride I used to
197. get pretty drunk when I tried to compete with more ex-
198. perienced drinkers, but I argued, what did it matter, for
199. so did everyone else at sometime before daylight. Then
200. came the day of parting, of a fond leave taking of my brave
In
201. wife. Amid that strange atmosphere which was the mixture
202. of sadness, high purpose, the feeling of elation that pre-
203. cedes an adventure of the first magnitude. Thus many of us
204. sailed for 'over there' and none of us knew if we should re-
205. turn. For a time, loneliness possessed me, but my new
206. friend Barleycorn always took care of that. I had, I thought
207. discovered a missing link in the chain of things that make
208. life worth while.

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209. Then w were in dear old England, soon to cross
210. the channel to the great unknown. I stood in Winchester
211. Cathedral the day before crossing hand in hand with head
212. bowed, for something had touched me then I had never felt

213. before. I had been wondering, in a rare moment of sober
214. reflection, what sense there could be to killing and
215. carnage of which I was soon to become an enthusiastic part.
216. Where could the Deity be - could there be such a thing -
217. Where now was the God of the preachers, the thought of which
218. used to make me so uncomfortable when they talked about him.
219. Here I stood on the abyss edge of the abyss into which
220. thousands were falling that very day. A feeling of despair
221. settled down on me - where was He - why did he not come-
222. and suddenly in that moment of darkness, He was there. I
223. felt an all enveloping, comforting , powerful presence.
224. Tears stood in my eyes, and as I looked about, I saw on the
225. faces of others nearby, that they too had glimpsed the great
226. reality. Much moved, I walked out into the Cathedral yard,
227. where I read the following inscription on a tombstone. 'Here
228. lies a Hampshire Grenadier, Who caught his death drinking
229. small good beer - A good soldier is ne'er forgot, whether
A
230. he dieth by musket or by pot.' The squadron of bombers
231. swept overhead in the bright sunlight, and I cried to myself
232. 'Here's to adventure' and the feeling of being in the great
233. presence disappeared, never to return for many years.
234. --

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235. I was twenty two, and a grisled veteran of foreign wars.
236. I felt a tremendous assurance about my future, for was not
237. I the only officer of my regiment save one, who had re-
238. ceived a token of appreciation from the men. This quality
239. of leadership, I fancied, would soon place me at the head
240. of some great commercial organization which I would manage
241. with the same constant skill that the pipe organist does
242. his stops and keys.
243. The triumphant home coming was short lived. The
244. best that could be done was to secure a bookkeeping job in
245. the insurance department of the one of the large railroads.
246. I proved to be a wretched and rebellious bookkeeper and could
247. not stand criticism, nor was I much reconciled to my salary,
248. which was only half the pay I had received in the army. When
249. I started to work the railroads were under control of the
250. government. As soon as they were returned my road was re-
251. turned to its stockholders, I was promptly let out because I
252. could not compete with the other clerks in my office. I was
253. so angry and humiliated at this reverse that I nearly became
254. a socialist to register my defiance of the powers that be,
255. which was going pretty far for a Vermonter.
256. To my mortification, my wife went out and got a
257. position which brought in much more than mine had. Being ab-
258. surdly sensitive, I imagined that her relatives an my newly
259. made city acquaintances were snickering a bit at my predica-
260. ment.

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261. Unwillingly, I had to admit, that I was not
262. really trained to hold even a mediocre position. Though
263. I said little, the old driving, obstinate determination to
264. show my mettle asserted itself. Somehow, I would show these
265. scoffers. To complete my engineering seemed out of the ques-
of

266. tion, partly because/my distaste for mathematics, My only
267. other assets were my war experiences and a huge amount of
268. ill-assorted reading. The study of law suggested itself, and
269. I commenced a three year night course with enthusiasm. Mean-
270. while, employment showed up and I became a criminal investi-
271. gator for a Surety Company, earning almost as much money as
272. my wife, who spiritedly backed the new undertaking. My day-
273. time employment took me about Wall Street and little by
274. little, I became interested in what I saw going on there.
275. I began to wonder why a few seemed to be rich and famous
276. while the rank and file apparently lost money. I began to
277. study economics and business.
278. Somewhat to the dismay of our friends, we moved
279. to very modest quarters where we could save money. When we
280. had accumulated \$1,000.00, most of it was placed in utility
281. stocks, which were then cheap and unpopular. In a small way,
282. I began to be successful in speculation. I was intrigued by
283. the romance of business, industrial and financial leaders be-
284. came my heroes. I read every scrap of financial history I
285. could lay hold of. Here I thought was the road to power.
286. Like the boomerang, episode, I could think of nothing else.

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287. How little did I see that I was fashioning a weapon that
288. would one day return and cut me to ribbons.
289. As so many of my heroes commenced as lawyers,
290. I persisted in the course, thinking it would prove useful.
291. I also read many success books and did a lot of things that
292. Horatio Algers's boy heroes were supposed to have done.
293. Characteristically enough I nearly failed my
294. law course as I appeared at one of the final examinations
295. too drunk to think or write. My drinking had not become
296. continuous at this time, though occasional embarrassing in-
297. cidents might have suggested that it was getting real hold.
298. Neither my wife or I had much time for social engagements
299. and in any event we soon became unpopular as I always got
300. tight and boasted disagreeably of my plans and my future.
301. She was becoming very much concerned and fre-
302. quently we had long talks about the matter. I waived her ob-
303. jections aside by pointing out that red blooded men almost
304. always drank and that men of genius frequently conceived
305. their vast projects while pleasantly intoxicated, adding for
306. good measure, that the best and most majestic constructions of
307. philosophical thought were probably so derived.
308. By the time my law studies were finished,
309. I was quite sure I did not want to become a lawyer. I know
310. that somehow I was going to be a part of that then alluring
311. maelstrom which people call Wall Street. How to get into
312. business there was the question. When I proposed going out

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313. on the road to investigate properties, my broker friends
314. laughed at me. They did not need such a service and pointed
315. out that I had no experience. I reasoned that I was partly qualified
316. /as an engineer and as a lawyer, and that practically speaking
317. I had acquired very valuable experience as a criminal investi-
318. gator. I felt certain that these assets could not be capita-
319. lized. I was sure that people lost money in securities be-
320. cause they did not know enough about managements, properties,
321. markets, and ideas at work in a given situation.
322. Since no one would hire me and remembering that
323. we now had a few thousand dollars, my wife and I conceived

324. the hare-brained scheme of going out and doing some of this
325. work at our own expense, so we each gave up our employment
326. and set off in a motorcycle and side car, which was loaded
327. down with a tent, blankets, change of clothes and three
328. huge volumes of a well known financial reference service.
329. Some of our friends thought a lunacy commission should be ap-
330. pointed and I sometimes think they were right. Our first ex-
331. ploit was fantastic. Among other things, we owned two shares
332. of General Electric, then selling at about \$300.00 a share.
333. Everyone thought it was too high, but I stoutly maintained
334. that it would someday sell for five or ten times that figure.
335. So what could be more logical than to proceed to the main of-
336. fice of the company in New York and investigate it. Naive
337. wasn't it? The plan was to interview ohe officials and get
338. employment there if possible. We drew seventy five dollars

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339. from our savings as working capital, vowing never to draw
340. another cent. We arrived at Schenectady, I did talk with
341. some of the people of the to company and became wildly en-
342. thusiastic over GE. My attention was drawn to the radio end
343. of the business and by a strange piece of luck, I learned
344. much of what the company thought about its future. I was
345. then able to put a fairly intelligent projection of the
346. coming radio boom on paper, which I sent to one of my brokers
347. in town. To replenish our working capital, my wife and I
348. worked on a farm nearby for two months, she in the kitchen,
349. and I in the haystack. It was the last honest manual work
350. that I did for many years.
351. The cement industry then caught my fancy and we
352. soon found ourselves looking at a property in the Lehigh
353. district of Eastern Pennsylvania. An unusual speculative
354. situation existed which I went to New York and described to
355. one of my broker friend . This time I drew blood in the
356. shape of an option on hundred shares of stock which
357. promptly commenced to soar. Securing a few hundred dollars
358. advance on this deal, we were freed of the necessity of work,
359. and during the coming year following year, we travelled all
360. over the southeast part of the United States, taking in power
361. projects, an aluminum plant, the Florida boom, the Birmingham
362. steel district, Muscle Shoals, and what not. By this time
363. my friends in New York thought it would pay them to really
364. hire me. At last I had a job in Wall Street. Moreover, I

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365. had the use of twenty thousand dollars of their money.
366. For some years the fates tossed horseshoes and golden bricks
367. into my lap and I made much more money than was good for me.
368. It was too easy.
take
369. By this time drinking had gotten to be a very
370. important and exhilarating place in my life. What was a
371. few hundred dollars when you considered it in terms of ex-
372. citement and important talk in the gilded palaces of jazz up-
373. town. My natural conservativeness was swept away and I began
374. to play for heavy stakes. Another legend of infalability
375. commenced to grow up around me and I began to have what is
376. called in Wall Street a following which amounted to many
377. paper millions of dollars. I had arrived, so let the scoffers
378. scoff and be damned, but of course, they didn't, and I made
379. a host of fair weather friends. I began to reach for more
380. power attempting to force myself onto the directorates of

381. corporations in which I controlled blocks of stock.
382. By this time, my drinking had assumed
383. serious proportions. The remonstrances of my associates ter-
384. minated in a bitter row, and I became a lone wolf. Though I
385. managed to avoid serious scrapes and partly out of loyalty,
386. extreme drunkenness, I had not become involved with the fair
it
387. sex, there were many unhappy scenes in my apartment, which
388. was a large one, as I had hired two, and had gotten the real
389. estate people to knock out the walls between them.

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390. In the spring of 1929 caught the golf fever. This
391. illness was about the worst yet. I had thought golf was
392. pretty tepid sport, but I noticed some of my pretty
393. important friends thought it was a real game and it
394. presented an excuse for drinking by day as well as by
395. night. Moreover some one had casually said, they didn't think
396. I would ver play a good game. This was a spark in a
397. powder magazine, so my wife and I were instantly off to the
398. country she to watch while I caught up with Walter Hagen.
399. Then too it was a fine chance to flaunt my money around
400. the old home town. And to carom lightly around the exclusive
401. course, whose select city membership had inspired so much
402. awe in me as a boy. So Wall Street was lightly tossed
403. aside while I acquired drank vast quantities of gin and
404. acquired the impeccable coat of tan, one sees on the faces
405. of the well to do. The local banker watched me with an
406. amused skepticism as I whirled good fat checks in and out
407. of his bank.
408. IN October 1929 the whirling movement in my bank
409. account ceased abruptly, and I commenced to whirl myself.
410. Then I felt like Stephen Leacock's horseman, it seemed as rapidly
411. though I were galloping/in all directions at once, for the
412. great panic was on. First to Montreal, then to New York, to
413. rally my following in stocks sorely needing support. A few
414. bold spirits rushed into the breach, but it was of no use. I
415. shed my own wings as the moth who gets to near to the candle
416. flame. After one of those days of shrieking inferno on the
417. stock exchange floor with no information available, I lurched
from
418. drunkenly an the hotel bar to an adjoining brokerage office
419. there at about 8 o'clock in the evening I feverishly searched
420. a huge pile of ticker tape and tore of about an inch of it.
421. It bore the inscription P.F.K. 32.. The stock had opened at
422. 52 that morning. I had controlled over one hundred thousand
423. shares of it, and had a sizable block myself. I knew that I
424. was finished, and so were a lot of my friends.
425. I went back into the bar and after a few
426. drinks, my composure returned. People were beginning to jump
427. from every story of that great Tower of Babel. That was high
428.

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429. that I was not so weak. I realized that I had been care-
430. less, especially with other peoples money. I had not paid
431. attention to business and I deserved to be hurt. After a few
432. some more whiskey, my confidence returned again, and with it
433. an almost terrifying determination to somehow capitalize this
434. mess and pay everybody off. I reflected that it was just
435. another worthwhile lesson and that there were a lot of
436. reasons why people lost money in Wall Street that I had not

437. thought of before.
438. My wife took it all like the great person she is.
439. I think she rather welcomed it the situation thinking it
440. might bring me to my senses. Next morning, I woke early,
441. shaking badly from excitement and a terrific hangover. A
442. half bottle of Gin quickly took care of that momentary weak-
as
443. ness and I soon as business places were open I called a
444. friend in Montreal and said -"Well Dick, they have nailed my
445. hide to the barn door" - said he "The hell they have, come
we
446. on up". That is all he said and up W went.
447. I shall never forget the kindness and generosity
448. of this friend. Moreover I must still have carried one
449. horseshoe with me, for by the spring of 1930, we were living
450. in our accustomed style and I had a very comfortable credit
451. balance on the very security in which I had taken the
452. heaviest licking, with plenty of champagne and sound
453. canadian whiskey, I began to feel like Napoleon returning
454. Melba. Infallible again. No St Helena for me. Accustomed
455. as they were to the ravages of fire water in Canada in those
456. days, I soon began to outdistance most of my countrymen both
457. as a serious and a frivolous drinker.
458. Then the depression bore down in earnest. and
459. I, having become worse than useless, had to be reluctantly
459. Though I had become manager of one of the departments of my
460. friend's business, my drinking and nonchalant cocksurenness,
461. had rendered me worse than useless, so he reluctantly let me
462. go. We were stony broke again, and even our furniture
463. looked like it was gone, for I could not even pay next months
464. rent on our swank apartment.
465. We wonder to this day how we ever got out of
466. Montreal. But we did, and then I had to eat humble pie. We

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467. went to live with my Father and Mother-in-law where we
468. happily found never failing help and sympathy. I got a
469. job at what seemed to be a mere pittance of one hundred
470. dollars a week, but a brawl with a taxi driver , who got
471. very badly hurt, put an end to that . Mercifully, no one
472. knew it, but I was not to have steady employment for five
473. years, nor was I to draw a sober breath if I could help it.
474. Great was my humiliation when my poor wife was
475. obliged to go to work in a department store, coming home ex-
476. hausted night after night to find me drunk again. I became
477. a hanger-on at brokerage shops, but was less and less wel-
478. come as my drinking increased. Even then opportunities to
479. make money pursued me, but I passed up the best of them by
480. getting drunk at exactly the wrong time. Liquor had ceased
481. to be a luxury; It had become a necessity. What few
482. dollars I did make were devoted to keeping my credit good at
483. the bars. To keep out of the hands of the police and for
484. reasons of economy, I began to buy bathtub gin, usually two
485. bottles a day, and sometimes three if I did a real workman-
486. like job. This went on endlessly and I presently began to
487. awake real early in the morning shaking violently. Nothing
488. would seem to stop it but a water tumbler full of raw liquor.
489. If I could steal out of the house and get five or six
490. glasses of beer, I could sometimes eat a little breakfast.
491. Curiously enough I still thought I could control the situation
the
492. and there were periods of sobriety which would revive a flag-

493. ging hope of my wife and her parents. But as time wore on
494. matters got worse. My mother-in-law died and my wife's health
495. became poor, as did that of my Father-in-law. The house in
496. which we lived was taken over by the mortgage holder. Still
497. I persisted and still I fancied that fortune would again shine
498. upon me. As late 1932 I engaged the confidence of a man
499. who had friends with money. In the spring and summer of that
500. year we raised one hundred thousand dollars to buy securities
501. at what proved to be an all time low point in the New York
502. stock exchange. I was to participate generously in the
503. profits, and sensed that a great opportunity was at hand. So
504. ????

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505. prodigious bender a few days before the deal was to be
506. closed.
507. In a measure this did bring me to senses.
508. Many times before I had promised my wife that I had stopped
509. forever. I had written her sweet notes and had inscribed
510. the fly leaves of all the bibles in the house with to that
511. effect. Not that the bible meant so much, but after all
512. it was the book you put your hand on when you were sworn in
513. at court. I now see, however, that I had no sustained de-
514. sire to stop drinking until this last debacle. It was only
515. then that I realized it must stop and forever. I had come
516. to fully appreciate that once the first drink was taken,
517. there was no control Why then take this one? That was it-
518. never was alcohol to cross my lips again in any form. There
519. was, I thought, absolute finality in this decision. I had
520. been very wrong, I was utterly miserable and almost ruined.
521. This decision brought a great sense of relief, for I knew
522. that I really wanted to stop. It would not be easy, I was
523. sure of that, for I had begun to sense the power and cunning
524. of my master - John Barleycorn. The old fierce determination
525. to win out settled down on me - nothing, I still thought,
526. could overcome that aroused as it was. Again I dreamed
527. of my wife smiling happily, as I went out to slay the dragon.
528. I would resume my place in the business world and recapture
529. the lost regard of my fiends and associates. It would take
530. a long time, but I could be patient. The picture of myself
531. as a reformed drunkard rising to fresh heights of achieve-
532. ment, quite carried me away with happy enthusiasm. My wife
533. caught the spirit for she saw at last that I really meant
534. business.
535. But in a short while I came in drunk. I could
536. give no real explanation for it. The thought of my new re-
537. solve had scarcely occurred to me as I began. There had
538. been no fight - someone had offered me a drink, and I had
539. taken it, casually, remarking to myself that one or two
540. would not harm a man of my capacity. What had become of my
541. giant determination? How about all of that self searching I
542. had done? Why had not the thought of my past failures and
543. my new ambitions come into my mind? What of the intense de-

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544. sire to make my wife happy? Why hadn't these things - these
545. powerful incentives arisen in my mind to stay my hand as I
546. reached out to take that first drink? Was I crazy? I hated
547. to think so, but I had to admit that a condition of mind re-
548. sulting in such an appalling lack of perspective came pretty
549. near to being just that.
550. Then things were better for a time. I was

551. constantly on guard. After two or three weeks of sobriety
552. I began to think I was alright. Presently this quiet con-
553. fidence was replaced by cocksureness. I would walk past my
554. old haunts with a feeling of elation - I now fully realized
555. the danger that lurked there. The tide had turned at last -
556. and now I was really through. One afternoon on my way home
557. I walked into a bar room to make a telephone call, suddenly
558. I turned to the bartender and said "Four Irish whiskies -
559. water on the side" - As he poured them out with a surprised
560. look, I can only remember thinking to myself - "I shouldn't
561. be doing this, but here's how to the last time". As I
562. gulped down the fourth one, I beat on the bar with my fist
563. and said, "for God's sake, why have I done this again?" Where
564. had been my realization of only this morning as I had
565. passed this very place, that I was never going to drink again
566. I could give no answer, mortification and the feeling of
567. utter defeat swept over me. The thought that perhaps I
568. could never stop crushed me. Then as the cheering warmth
569. of these first drinks spread over me, I said - "Next time
570. I shall manage better, but while I am about it, I may as
571. well get good and drunk". And I did exactly that.
572. I shall never forget the remorse, the horror
573. the utter hopelessness of the next morning. The courage to
574. rise and do battle was simply not there . Before daylight
575. I had stolen out of the house, my brain raced uncontrollably.
576. There was a terrible feeling of impending calamity.
577. feared even to cross a street, less I collapse and be run
578. over by an early morning truck. Was there no bar open? Ah,
579. yes, there was the all night place which sold beer - though
580. it was before the legal opening hour, I persuaded the man be-
581. hind the food counter that I must have a drink or perhaps die

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582. on the spot. Cold as the morning was, I must have drunk
583. a dozen bottles of ale in rapid succession. My writhing
584. nerves were stilled at last and I walked to the next corner
585. and bought a paper. It told me that the stock market had
586. gone to hell again - "What difference did it make anyway,
587. the market would get better, it always did, but I'm in hell
588. to stay - no more rising markets for me. Down for the count-
589. what a blow to one so proud. I might kill myself, but no -
590. not now," These were some of my thoughts - then I felt
591. dazed - I groped in a mental fog - mere liquor would fix
592. that - then two more bottles of cheap gin. Oblivion.
593. The human mind and body is a marvelous
594. mechanism, for mine withstood this sort of thing for yet
595. another two years. There was little money, but I could al-
596. ways drink. Sometimes I stole from my wife's slender purse
597. when the early morning terror of madness was upon me. There
598. were terrible scenes and though not often violent, I would
599. sometimes do such things as to throw a sewing machine, or
600. kick the panels out of every door in the house. There were
601. moments when I swayed weakly before an open window or the
602. medicine chest in which there was poison - and cursed my-
603. self for a weakling. There were flights from the city to
604. the country when my wife could bear with me no longer at
605. home Sometimes there would be several weeks and hope would
606. return, especially for her, as I had not let her know how
607. defeated I really was, but there was always the return to
the
608. conditions still worse. Then came a night when the physi-
609. cal and mental torture was so hellish that I feared I would

610. take a flying leap through my bedroom window sash and all
611. and somehow managed to drag my mattress down to the kitchen
612. floor which was at the ground level. I had stopped drinking
613. a few hours before and hung grimly to my determination that
614. I could have no more that night if it killed me. That very
615. nearly happened, but I was finally rescued by a doctor who
616. prescribed chloral hydrate, a powerful sedative. This reliev-
617. ed me so much that next day found me drinking apparently
618. without the usual penalty, if I took some sedative occasion-
619. ally. In the early spring of 1934 it became evident to

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620. everyone concerned that something had to be done and
621. that very quickly. I was thirty pounds underweight, as I
622. could eat nothing when drinking, which was most of the
623. time. People had begun to fear for my sanity and I fre-
624. quently had the feeling myself that I was becoming deranged.
625. With the help of my brother-in-law, who is a
626. physician I was placed in a well known institution for the
627. bodily and mental rehabilitation of alcoholics. It was
628. thought that if I were thoroughly cleared of alcohol and
629. the brain irritation which accompanies it were reduced, I
630. might have a chance. I went to the place desperately hoping
631. and expecting to be cured. The so-called bella donna
632. treatment given in that place helped a great deal. My mind
633. cleared and my appetite returned. Alternate periods of
634. hydro-therapy, mild exercise and relaxation did wonders for
635. me. Best of all I found a great friend in the doctor who
636. was head of the staff. He went far beyond his routine duty
637. and I shall always be grateful for those long talks in which
638. explained that when I drank I became physically ill and that
639. this bodily condition was usually accompanied by a mental
640. state such that the defense one should have against alcohol
641. became greatly weakened, though in no way mitigating my
642. early foolishness and selfishness about drink, I was greatly
643. relieved to discover that I had really been ill perhaps for
644. several years. Moreover I felt that the understanding and
645. fine physical start I was getting would assure my recovery,
646. Though some of the inmates of the place who had been there
647. many times seemed to smile at that idea. I noticed however
648. that most of them had no intention of quitting; they merely
649. came there to get reconditioned so that they could start in
650. again. I, on the contrary, desperately wanted to stop and
651. strange to say I still felt that I was a person of much more
652. determination and substance than they, so I left there in
653. high hope and for three or four months the goose hung high.
654. In a small way I began to make some progress in business.
655. Then came the terrible day when I drank again
656. and could not explain why I started. The curve of my de-
657. clining moral and bodily health fell of like a ski jump.
658. After a hectic period of drinking, I found myself again in

[archivist's note: the typewritten manuscript text continues correctly with
page 23, but line numbers 659 - 679 remain unknown]

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680. Everyone became resigned to the certainty that I
681. would have to be confined somewhere ore else stumble
682. along to a miserable end, but there was soon to be
683. proof that indeed it is often darkest before dawn,
684. for this proved to be my last drinking bout, and I am
685. supremely confident that my present happy state is to be

686. for all time.
687. Late one afternoon near the end of that
688. month of November I sat alone in the kitchen of my home.
689. As usual, I was half drunk and enough so that the keen
690. edge of my remorse was blunted. With a certain satis-
691. faction I was thinking that there was enough gin se-
692. creted about the house to keep me fairly comfortable
693. that night and the next day. My wife was at work and I
694. resolved not to be in too bad shape when she got home.
695. My mind reverted to the hidden bottles and at I carefully
696. considered where each one was hidden. These things must
697. be firmly in my mind to escape the early morning tragedy
698. of not being able to find at least a water tumbler full
699. of liquor. Just as I was trying to decide whether to risk
700. concealing one of the full ones within easy reach of my
701. side of the bed, the phone rang.
702. At the other end of the line Over the
703. wire came the voice of an old school friend and drinking
704. companion of boom times. By the time we had exchanged
705. greetings, I sensed that he was sober. This seemed
706. strange, for it was years since anyone could remember his
707. coming to New York in that condition. I had come to think
708. of him as another hopeless devotee of Bacchus. Current
709. rumor had it that he had been committed to a state institu-
710. tion for alcoholic insanity. I wondered if perhaps he had
711. not just escaped. Of course he would come over right away
712. and take dinner with us. A fine idea that, for I then
713. would have an excuse to drink openly with him. Yes, we
714. would try to recapture the spirit of other days and per-
715. haps my wife could be persuaded to join in, which in self
716. defense she sometimes would. I did not even think of the
717. harm I might do him. There was to be a pleasant, and I

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718. hoped an exciting interlude in what had become a
round
719. dreary waste of loneliness. Another drink stirred my
720. fancy; this would be an oasis in the dreary waste. That
721. was it - an oasis. Drinkers are like that.
722. The door opened and there he stood, very
723. erect and glowing. His deep voice boomed out cheerily -
724. the cast of his features - his eyes - the freshness of
725. his complexion - this was my friend of schooldays. There
726. was a subtle something or other instantly apparent even to
727. my befuddled perception. Yes - there was certainly some-
728. thing more - he was inexplicably different - what had
729. happened to him?
730. We sat at the table and I pushed a
731. lusty glass of gin flavored with pineapple juice in his
732. direction. I thought if my wife came in, she would be re-
733. lieved to find that we were not taking it straight -
734. "Not now", he said. I was a little crest
735. fallen at this, though I was glad to know that someone
736. could refuse a drink at that moment - I knew I couldn't.
737. "On the wagon?" - I asked. He shook his head and looked
738. at me with an impish grin .
739. "Aren't you going to have anything?"-
740. I ventured presently.
741. "Just as much obliged, but not tonight"
742. I was disappointed, but curious. What had got into the
743. fellow - he wasn't himself.
744. "No, he's not himself - he's somebody

is

745. else - not just that either - he was his old self, plus
746. something more, and maybe minus something". I couldn't put
747. my finger on it - his whole bearing almost shouted that
748. something of great import had taken place.
749. "Come now, what's this all about", I
750. asked. Smilingly, yet seriously, he looked straight at me
751. and said "I've got religion".
752. So that was it. Last summer an alco
753. alcoholic crackpot - this fall, washed in the blood of the
754. Lamb. heavens, that might be even worse. I was thunder-
755. struck, and he, of all people. What on earth could one

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756. say to the poor fellow.
757. So I finally blurted out "That's
758. fine", and sat back waiting for a sizzling blast on sal-
759. vation and the relation of the Cross, the Holy Ghost, and
760. the Devil thereto. Yes, he did have that starry edy
761. eyed look, the old boy was on fire all right. Well, bless
762. his heart, let him rant . It was nice that he was sober
763. after all. I could stand it anyway, for there was plenty
764. of gin and I took a little comfort that tomorrow's ration
765. wouldn't have to be used up right then.
766. Old memories of Sunday School - the profit
767. temperance pledge, which I never signed - the sound of the
768. preacher's voice which could be heard on still Sunday
769. mornings way over on the hillside beyond the railroad
770. tracks,- My grandfather's quite scorn of things some
771. church people did to him - his fair minded attitude that
772. I should make up my mind about these things myself - his
spheres
773. convictions that the fears really had their mooxx music -
774. but his denial of the right of preachers to tell him how
775. he should listen - his perfect lack of fear when he men-
776. tioned these things just before his death - these memories
777. surged up out of my childhood as I listened to my friend.
778. My own gorge rose for a moment to an all time high as my
779. anti-preacher - anti-church folk sentiment welled up in-
780. side me. These feelings soon gave way to respectful at-
781. tention as my former drinking companion rattled on.
782. Without knowing it, I stood at the great turning point of
783. my life - I was on the threshold of a fourth dimension
784. of existence that I had doubtfully heard some people des-
785. describe and others pretend to have.
786. He went on to lay before me a simple
787. proposal. It was so simple and so little
788. complicated with the theology and dogma
789. I had associated with religion that by
790. degrees I became astonished and delighted.
791. I was astonished because a thing so simple
792. could accomplish the profound result I now
793. beheld in the person of my friend. To say that
794. I was delighted is putting it mildly , for I
795. relized that I could go for his program also.
796. Like all but a few u human beings I had truele
797. believed in the existence of a power greater
798. than myself true athiests are really very scarce.
799. It always seemed to me more difficult and illogical
800. to be an athiest than to believe there is a
801. certain amount of law and order and purpose
802. underlying the universe. The faith of an athiest

803. in his convictions is far more blind than that
804. of the religionist for it leads inevitably to
805. the absurd conclusion that the vast and ever
806. changing cosmos originally grew out of a cipher,
807. and now has arrived at its present state thru
808. a series of haphazard accidents, one of which
809. is man himself. My liking for things scientific
810. had encouraged to look into such matters as
811. a theory of evolution the nature of matter itself
812. as seen thru the eyes of the great chemists
813. physicists and astronomers and I had pondered
814. much on the question of the meaning of life itself.
815. The chemist had shown me that material matter
816. is not all what it appears to be. His studies
817. point to the conclusion that the elements and there
818. myriad combinations are but in the last last
819. analysis nothing but different arrangements
820. of that universal something which they are pleased
821. to call the electron. The physicist and the
822. astronomer had shown me that our universe .
823. moves and evolves according to many precise
824. and well understood laws. They tell me to the
825. last second when the sun will be next eclipsed
826. at the place I am now standing, or the very day
827. several decades from now When Halley's comet
828. will make its turn about the sun. Much to my
829. x interest I learned from these men that great
830. cosmic accidents occur bringing about conditions
831. which are not exceptions to the law so much
832. as they result in new and unexpected developments
833. which arise logically enough once the so called
834. accident has occurred. It is highly probable for
835. example-that our earth is the only planet in the
836. solar system upon which man could evolve - and it
837. is claimed by some astronomers that the chance
838. that similar planets exist elsewhere in the universe
839. is rather small. There would have to be a vast
840. number of coincidences to bring about the exact
841. conditions of light, warmth, food supply, etc.
842. to support life as we know it here. But I used to
843. ask myself why regard the earth as an accident
844. in a system which evidences in so many respects the
845. greatest law and order' If If all of this law
846. existed then could there be so much law and no
847. intelligence? And if there was an intelligence
848. great enough to materialize and keep a universe in
849. order it must necessarily have the power to create
850. accidents and make exceptions.
851. The evolutionist brought great logic to bear
852. on the proposition that life on this planet began
853. with the lowly omebia , which was a simple cell
854. residing in the oceans of Eons past. Thru countless
855. & strange combinations of logic and accident man
856. and all other kinds of life evolved but man possessed
857. a consciousness of self, a power to reason and to
858. choose , and a small still voice which told him the
859. difference between right and wrong and man became
860. increasingly able to fashion with his hands and
861. with his tools the creations of his own brain .
862. He could give direction and purpose to natural laws
apparently
863. and so he, created new things for himself and of

864. [line number skipped in the typewritten manuscript]
865. and do he apparently created new things for himself an
866. [line number skipped in the typewritten manuscript]
867. out of a tissue composed of his past experience
868. and his new ideas. Therefore man tho' resembling
869. other forms of life in many ways seems to me
870. very different. It was obvious that in a limited
871. fashion he could play at being a God himself .
872. Such was the picture I had of myself and the
873. world in which I lived, that there was a mighty
874. rhythm, intelligence and purpose behind it all
875. despite inconsistencies. I had rather strongly
876. believed.
877. But this was as far as I had ever got toward
878. the realization of God and my personal relationship
879. to Him. My thoughts of God were academic and
880. speculative when I had them, which for some years
881. past had not been often. That God was an intelligence
882. power and love upon which I could absolutely rely
883. as an individual had not seriously occurred to me.
884. Of course I knew in a general way what theologians
885. claimed but I could not see that religious persons
886. as a class demonstrated any more power, love and
887. intelligence than those who claimed no special
888. dispensation from God tho' I grant de that
889. christianity ought to be a wonderful influence
890. I was annoyed, irked and confused by the attitudes
891. they took, the beliefs they held and the things
892. they had done in the name of Christ,. People like
893. myself had been burned and whole population put
894. to fire and sword on the pretext they did not
895. believe as christians did. History taught that
896. christians were not the only offenders in this
897. respect. It seemed to me that on the whole
898. it made little difference whether you were
899. Mohamadem, Catholic, Jew, Protesant or Hotentot.
900. You were supposed to look askance at the other
901. fellows approach to God. Nobody could be saved
902. unless they fell in with your ideas. I had a
903. great admiration for Christ as a man, He practiced
904. what he preached and set a marvelous example.
905. It was not hard to agree in Principle with
906. His moral teachings bit like most people, I preferred
907. to live up to some moral standard but not to others.
908. At any rate I thought I understood as well as any
909. one what good morals were and with the exceptions
910. of my drinking I felt superior to most christians
911. I knew. I might be week in some respects but at
912. least I was not hypocrritical, So my interest in
913. christianity other than its teaching of moral
914. principles and the good I hoped it did on
915. balance was slight.
916. Sometimes I wished that I had been religiously
917. trained from early childhood that I might have the
918. comfortable assurance about so many things I found
919. it impossible to have any definite convictions
920. upon. The question of the hereafter, the many
921. theological abstractions and seeming contradictions
922. - these things were puzzling and finally annoying
923. for religious people told me I must believe
924. a great many seemingly impossible things to be one
925. [line number skipped]

926. of them. This insistence on their part plus a
927. powerful desire to possess the things of this life
928. while there was yet time had crowded the idea of
929. the personal God more and more out of my mind as the
930. years went by. Neither were my convictions strengthen
931. by my own misfortunes. The great war and its
932. aftermath seemed to more certainly demonstrate the
933. omnipotence of the devil than the loving care of
934. an all powerful God
935. Nevertheless here I was sitting opposite a
936. man who talked about a personal God who told me
937. how hw had found Him, who described to me how I
938. might do the same thing and who convinced me
939. utterly that something had come into his life
940. which had accomplished a miracle. The man was
941. transformed; there was no denying he had been re-
942. born. He was radiant of something which soothed
943. my troubled spirit as tho the fresh clean wind of
944. mountain top blowing thru and thru me I saw and
945. felt and in a great surge of joy I realized
946. that the great presence which had made itself felt
947. to me that war time day in Winchester Cathedral
948. had again returned.
949. As he continued I commenced to see myself as in
950. as in an unearthly mirror. I saw how ridiculous and
951. futile the whole basis of my life had been. Standing in
952. the middle of the stage of my lifes setting I had been
953. feverishly trying to arrange ideas and things and people
954. and even God, to my own liking, to my own ends and to
955. promote what I had thought to be true happiness. It was
956. truly a sudden and breath taking illumination. Then the
957. idea came - " The tragic thing about you is, that you
958. have been playing God." That was it. Playing God. Then
959. the humor of the situation burst upon me, here was I a
960. tiny grain of sand of the infinite shores of Gods great
961. universe and the little grain of sand, had been trying
962. to play God. He really thought he could arrange all of
963. the other little grains about him just to suit himself.
964. And when his little hour was run out, people would
965. weep and say in awed tones-' How wonderful'.
966. So then came the question - If I were no
967. longer to be God than was I to find and perfect
968. the new relationship with my creator - with the Father
969. of Lights who presides over all ? My friend laid down
970. to me the terms and conditions which were simple but
971. not easy, drastic yet broad and acceptable to honest
972. men everywhere, of whatever faith or lack thereof. He did not
973. tell me that these were the only terms - he merely said that
974. they were terms that had worked in his case. They were spiritual
975. principles and rules of practice he thought common to all of the
976. worthwhile religions and philosophies of mankind. He regarded them
977. as stepping stones to a better understanding of our relation to the
978. spirit of the universe and as a practical set of directions setting
979. forth how the spirit could work in and through us that we might
980. become spearheads and more effective agents for the promotion
981. of Gods Will for our lives and for our fellows. The great thing
982. about it all was its simplicity and scope, no really religious
983. persons belief would be interfered with no matter what his training ,
984. For the man on the street who just wondered about such things, it ws
985. Was a providential approach, for with a small beginning of faith
986. and a very large dose of action along spiritual lines he could be
987. sure to demonstrate the Power and Love of God as a practical

988. workable twenty four hour a day design for living.
989. This is what my friend suggested I do. One: Turn my face
990. to God as I understand Him and say to Him with earnestness - complete
991. honesty and abandon- that I henceforth place my life at His
992. disposal and direction forever. TWO: that I do this in the presence
993. of another person, who should be one in whom I have confidence and if
994. I be a member of a religious organization, then with an appropriate
995. member of that body. TWO: Having taken this first step, I should
996. next prepare myself for Gods Company by taking a thorough and ruth-
997. less inventory of my moral defects and derelictions. This I should
998. do without any reference to other people and their real or fancied
999. part in my shortcomings should be rigorously excluded-" Where have I
1000. failed-is the prime question. I was to go over my life from the

1001. beginning and ascertain in the light of my own present understanding
1002. where I had failed as a completely moral person. Above all things in
1003. making this appraisal I must be entirely honest with myself. As an
1004. aid to thoroughness and as something to look at when I got through
1005. I might use pencil and paper. First take the question of honesty.
1006. Where, how and with whom had I ever been dishonest? With respect to
1007. anything. What attitudes and actions did I still have which were not
1008. completely honest with God with myself or with the other fellow. I ws
1009. was warned that no one can say that he is a completely honest
1010. person. That would be superhuman and people aren't that way.
1011. Nor should I be misled by the thought of how honest I am in
1012. some particulars. I was too ruthlessly tear out of the past all
1013. of my dishonesty and list them in writing. Next I was to explore
1014. another area somewhat related to the first and commonly a very
1015. defective one in most people. I was to examine my sex conduct
1016. since infancy and rigorously compare it with what I thought that
1017. conduct should have been. My friend explained to me that peoples
1018. ideas throughout the world on what constitutes perfect sex conduct
1019. vary greatly Consequently, I was not to measure my defects in this
1020. particular by adopting any standard of easy virtue as a measuring
1021. stick, I was merely to ask God to show me the difference between
1022. right and wrong in this regard and ask for help and strength and
1023. honesty in cataloguing my defects according to the true dictates
1024. of my own conscience. Then I might take up the related questions
1025. of greed and selfishness and thoughtlessness. How far and in what
1026. connection had I strayed and was I straying in these particulars?
1027. I was assured I could make a good long list if I got honest enough
1028. and vigorous enough. Then there was the question of real love for
1029. all of my fellows including my family, my friends and my enemies
1030. Had I been completely loving toward all of these at all times
1031. and places. If not, down in the book it must go and of course
1032. everyone could put plenty down along that line.

(Resntments, self-pity, fear, pride.)

1033. my friend pointed out that resentment, self-pity, fear, in-
1034. feriority, pride and egotism, were thingsx attitudes which
1035. distorted ones perspective suc and usefulness to entertain such
1036. sentiments and attitudes was to shut oneself off from God and
1037. people about us. Therefore it would be necessary for me to
1038. examine myself critically in this respect and write down my
1039. conclusions.
1040. Step number three required that I carefully go over my
1041. personal inventory and definitely arrive at the conclusion that
1042. I was now willing to rid myself of all these defects moreover
1043. I was to understand that this would not be accomplished by
1044. [line number skipped]
1045. myself alone, therefore I was to humbly ask God that he take
1046. these handicaps away. To make sure that I had become really

1047. honest in this desire, I should sit down with whatever person
1048. I chose and reveal to him without any reservations whatever
1049. the result of my self appraisal. From this point out I was
1050. to stop living alone in every particular. Thus was I to rid keep
1051. myself free in the future of those things which shut out
1052. God's power, It was explained that I had been standing in my
1053. own light, my spiritual interior had been like a room darkened
1054. by very dirty windows and this was an undertaking to wipe them
1055. off and keep them kleen. Thus was my housekeeping to be ac-
1056. complished, it would be difficult to be really honest with my-
1057. self and God and perhaps to be completely honest with another
1058. person by telling another the truth, I could however be ab-
1059. solutely sure that my self searching had been honest and effective.
1060. Moreover I would be taking my first spiritual step towards my
1061. fellows for something I might say could be helpful in leading
1062. the person to whom I talked a better understanding of himself.
1063. In this fashion I would commence to break down the barriers
1064. which my many forms of self will had erected. Warning was
1065. given me that I should select a person who would be in no way
1066. injured or offended by what I had to say, for I could not expect
1067. to commence my spiritual growth at the expense of another.
1068. My friend told me that this step was complete, I would surely
1069. feel a tremendous sense of relieve accompanying by the absolute
1070. conviction that I was on the right road at last.
1071. 10 Step number four demanded that I frankly admit that my
1072. deviations from right thought and action had injured other people
1073. therefore I must set about undoing the damage to the best of my
1074. ability. It would be advisable to make a list of all the
1075. persons I had hurt or with whom I had bad relations. People I
1076. disliked and those who had injured me should have preferred
1077. attention, provided I had done them injury or still entertained
1078. any feeling of resentment towards them . Under no circumstances
1079. was I to consider their defects or wrong doing , then I was to
1080. approach these people telling them I had commenced a way of life
1081. which required that I be on friendly and helpful terms with every
1082. body; that I recognized I had been at fault in this particular
1083. that I was sorry for what I had done or said and had come to set
1084. matters right insofar as I possibly could. Under no circumstances
1085. was I to engage in argument or controversy. My own wrong doing
1086. was to be admitted and set right and that was all. Assurance was
1087. to be given that I was prepared to go to any length to do the
1088. right thing. Again I was warned that obviously I could not
1089. make amends at the expense of other people, that judgment and
1090. discretion should be used lest others should be hurt. This sort
1091. of situation could be postponed until such conditions became such
1092. that the job could be done without harm to anyone. One could
1093. be contented in the meanwhile by discussing such a matter frankly
1094. with a third party who would not be involved and of course on a
1095. strictly confidential basis. Great was to be taken that one
1096. did not avoid situations difficult or dangerous to oneself on
as possible
1097. such a pretext . The willingness to go the limit as fast had
1098. to be at all times present. This principle of making amends
1099. was to be continued in the future for only by keeping myself free
1100. of bad relationships with others could I expect to receive the
1101. Power and direction so indispensable to my new and larger useful-
1102. ness . This sort of discipline would helped me to see others as
1103. they really are; to recognize that every one is plagued by various
1104. of self will; that every one is in a sense actually sick with
1105. some form of self; that when men behave badly they are only dis-
1106. playing symptoms of spiritual ill health .
1107. one is not usually angry or critical of another when he

1108. suffers from some grave bodily illness and I would
 how
 1109. presently see senseless and futile it is to be disturbed
 1110. by those burdened by their own wrong thinking . I was to
 1111. entertain towards everyone a quite new feeling of tolerance
 1112. patience and helpfulness I would recognize more and more
 1113. that when I became critical or resentful I must at all
 1114. costs realize that such things were very wrong in me
 1115. and that in some form otro or other I still had the very
 1116. defects of which I complained in others. Much emphasis
 1117. was placed on the development of this of mind toward others.
 1118. No stone should be left unturned to acheive this end.
 1119. The constant practice of this principle frequently ask-
 1120. ing God for His help in making it work under trying
 1121. circumstances was absolutely imperative . The drunkard
 1122. especially had to be most rigorous on this point for one
 1125. burst of anger or self pity might so shut him out from his
 1124. new found strength that he would drink again and with us
 1125. that always means calamity and sometimes death.
 1126. This was indeed a program, the thought of some of the
 to
 1127. things I would have admit about myself to other people
 1128. was most distasteful - even appalling. It was only to o
 1129. plain that I had been ruined by my own colosal egotism
 1130. and selfishness, not only in respect to drinking but with
 1131. regard to everything else. Drinking had been a symptom
 1132. of these things. Alcohol had submerged my inferiorities
 1135. and puffed up my self esteem, body had finally rebelled
 1134. and I had some fatally affected , my thinking and action
 1135. was woefully distorted thru infection from the mire of
 1136. self pity, resentment, fear and remorse in which I now
 1137. wallowed . The motive behind a certain amount of generosity,
 1138. kindness and the meticulous honesty in some directions
 1139. upon which I had prided myself was not perhaps not so
 1140. good after all. The motive had been to get personal
 1141. satisfaction for myself, perhaps not entirely but on the
 1142. whole this was true. I had sought the glow which comes
 applause
 1143. with the flaws and Praise rendered me by others.
 1144. I began to see how actions good in themselves might avail
 1145. little because of wrong motive , I had been like the man
 1146. who feels that all is well after he has condesendingly
 1147. taken turkeys to the poor at Xmas time . How clear it
 1148. suddenly became that all of my thought and action, both
 1149. good and bad, had arisen out of a desire to make myself
 1150. happy and satisfied. I had been self centered instead of
 1151. God centered. It was now easy to understand why the taking
 this
 1152. of a simple childlike attitude toward God plus a drastic
 1153. program of action which would place himx would bring
 1154. results. How evident et became that mere faith in God
 1155. was not enough. Faith had to be demonstrated by works
 1156. and there could be no works or any worth while demonstrations
 1157. until I had fitted myself for the undertaking and had be-
 1158. come a suitable table agent thru which God might express Himself.
 1159. There had to be a tremendous personal housecleaning, a
 1160. sweeping away of the debris of past willfulness , a restoring
 1161. of broken relationships and a firm resolve to make God's
 1162. will my will . I must stop forcing things , I must stop
 1163. trying to mold people and situations to my own liking.
 1164. Nearly every one is taught that human willpower and ambition
 1165. if good ends are sought are desirable attributes. I too

1166. had clung to that conception but I saw that it was not good
1167. enough, nor big enough , nor powerful enough . My own will had
1168. failed in many areas of my live. With respect to
1169. alcohol it had become absolutely inoperative . My ambitions,
1170. which had seemed worthy at some time, had been frustrated.
1171. Even had I been successful , the pursuit of my desires
1172. would have perhaps harmed others add their realization
1173. would have added little or nothing to anyone's peace,
1174. happiness or usefulness. I began to see that the clashing
1175. ambitions and designs of even those who sought what to them
1176. seemed worthy ends , have filled the world with discord and
1177. misery . Perhaps people of this sort created more havouqx
1178. havoc than those confessedly immoral and krucked crooked
1179. I saw even the most useful people die unhappy and defeated.
1180. All because some one else had behaved badly or they had

[archivist's note: the rest of this manuscript is currently missing]