

# ***Our Roots:***

**A Collection of Documents  
Relating to the  
Origins and Evolution  
of  
Our Fellowship**

**Volume 1**

*Editor's Note.* The material in this volume is available freely to all who look for it on the internet. All I have done is taken the liberty of collecting, reformatting, and compiling it into a form that is easier to store, read, etc. Volume 2 (which is ready to go to "press") will deal with the stuff I found on the Washingtonians

Of course you should feel free to distribute this copy as is, for others to read and/or copy; or, if you know someone who wants their own copy, have them contact me, and I will do it for my cost.

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# 1 Origins of AA: Henrietta Seiberling Transcript

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May, 1972. In the spring of 1971, the newspapers reported the passing of Bill Wilson of New York City, who as one of the two co-founders of Alcoholics Anonymous. The other co-founder, Dr Robert Smith of Akron, Ohio, has passed on some years earlier. Shortly after Bill's death, the Akron Alcoholics groups asked my mother Henrietta Seiberling, to speak at the annual "Founders Day" meeting in Akron, which is attended by members of Alcoholics Anonymous from all over the world. She lives in New York and did not feel up to traveling, so they asked me to speak in her place. I agreed to speak but felt that it would mean most to them to hear some of her own words, so I called her on the telephone and asked her to tell me about the origins of Alcoholics Anonymous so that I could make sure my remarks were accurate.

I made a tape recording of the conversation and played part of it at the 1971 Founders Day meeting, which was held in the gymnasium at the University of Akron with a couple of thousand people present. So many people have asked for a transcript of the recording that I have finally had one typed. Attached is a copy of the transcript, which follows the tape recording as closely as possible, with only my own remarks and some of the conversational asides and redundancies edited out.

The first meeting of Bob and Bill, described in the attached transcript, took place in the summer of 1935 in Henrietta's house in Akron, which was the Gatehouse of Stan Hywet Hall, then my family's estate, now the property of Stan Hywet Hall Foundation. Henrietta was not an alcoholic. She was a Vassar college graduate and a housewife with three teenage children. She, like Bob and Bill, would be deeply disturbed by any inference that she or they possessed any extraordinary virtues or talents. On the contrary, they would all emphasize the power of ordinary people to change their lives and the lives of others through the kind of spiritual discipline so successfully exemplified in Alcoholics Anonymous. I am happy to make this transcript available to persons who are sincerely interested in learning more about Alcoholics Anonymous and its message. It is a way of sharing some of the insight's which made and still make Alcoholics Anonymous a vital force in people's lives. I ask only that the transcript be held in the spirit in which it is offered and not used for publicity or in an effort to magnify any individual.

John F. Seiberling

## **Transcript of Remarks by Henrietta B. Seiberling**

I would like to tell about Bob in the beginning. Bob and Ann came into the Oxford Group, which, as you know, was the movement which tried to recapture the power of first Century Christianity in the modern world, and a quality of life which we must always exercise. Someone spoke to me about Bob Smith's drinking. He didn't think that people knew it. And I decided that the people who shared in the Oxford group had never shared very costly things to make Bob lose his pride and share what he thought would cost him a great deal. So I decided to gather together some Oxford Group people for a meeting, and that was in T. Henry Williams' house. We met afterwards there for five or six years every Wednesday night.

I warned Ann that I was going to have this meeting. I didn't tell her it was for Bob, but I said, "Come prepared to mean business. There is going to be no pussyfooting around. And we all shared very deeply our shortcomings, and what we had victory over, and then there was silence, and I waited and thought, "Will Bob say something?" Sure enough, in that deep, serious tone of his, he said, "Well, you good people have all shared things that I am sure were very costly to you, and I am going to tell you something which may cost me my profession. I am a silent drinker, and I can't stop." This was weeks before Bill came to Akron. So we said, "Do you want to go down on your knees and pray?" And he said, "Yes." So we did.

And the next morning, I, who knew nothing about alcoholism (I thought a person should drink like a gentleman, and that's all), was saying a prayer for Bob. I said, "God, I don't know anything about drinking, but I told Bob That I was sure that if he lived this way of life, he could quit drinking. Now you have to help me." Something said To me - I call it "guidance" - it was like a voice in the top of my head - "Bob must not touch one drop of Alcohol." I knew that wasn't my thought. So I called Bob, and said I had guidance for him - and this is very important.

He came over at 10 in the morning, and I told him that my guidance was that he mustn't touch one drop

of alcohol. He was very disappointed, because he thought guidance would mean seeing somebody or going someplace. And then - this is something very relevant - he said, "Henrietta, I don't understand it. Nobody understands it." Now that was the state of the world when we were beginning. He said, "Some doctor had written a book about it, but he doesn't understand it. I don't like the stuff. I don't want to drink." I said, "Well, Bob, that is what I have been guided about." And that was the beginning of our meetings, long before Bill ever came.

Now let me recall some of Bill's very words about his experience. Bill, when he was in a hotel in Akron and down to a few dollars and owed his bill after his business venture fell through, looked at the cocktail room and was tempted and thought, "Well, I'll just go in there and get drunk and forget it all, and that will be the end of it." Instead, having been sober five months in the Oxford Group, he said a prayer. He got the guidance to look in a ministers directory, and a strange thing happened.

He just looked in there, and he put his finger on one name: Tunks. And that was no coincidence, because Dr. Tunks was Mr. Harvey Firestone's minister, and Mr. Firestone had brought 60 of the Oxford Group people down there for 10 days out of gratitude for helping his son, who drank too much. His son had quit for a year and a half or so. Out of the act of gratitude of this one father, this whole chain started.

So Bill called Dr. Tunks, and Dr. Tunks gave him a list of names. One of them was Norman Sheppard, who was a close friend of mine and knew what I was trying to do for Bob. Norman said, "I have to go to New York tonight but you can call Henrietta Seiberling, "When he told the story, Bill shortened it by just saying that he called Dr. Tunks, but I did not know Dr. Tunks. Bill said that he had his last nickel, and he thought, "Well, I'll call her."

So I, who was desperate to help Bob in something I didn't know much about, was ready. Bill called, and I will never forget what he said: "I'm from the Oxford Group and I'm a Rum Hound." Those were his words. I thought, "This is really manna from Heaven." And I said, "You come right out here." And my thought was to put those two men together. Bill, looking back, thought he was out to help someone else. Actually, he was out to get help for himself, no thought of helping anyone else, because he was desperate. But that is the way that God helps us if we let God direct our lives. And so he came out to my house, and he stayed for dinner. And I told him to come to church with me next morning and I would get Bob, which I did.

Bill stayed in Akron. He didn't have any money. There was a neighbor of mine, John Gammeter, who had seen the change in my life brought by the Oxford Group, and I called him and asked him to put Bill up at the country club for two weeks or so, just to keep him in town. After that, Bill went to stay with Bob and Ann for three months, and we started working on Bill Dotson and Ernie Galbraith.

The need was there, and all of the necessary elements were furnished by God. Bill the promoter, and I, not being an alcoholic, for perspective. Every Wednesday night I would speak on some new experience or spiritual idea I had read. That's the way we all grew. Eventually the meetings moved to King School. Some man from Hollywood came, an actor, and he said that he had been all over the country and that there was something in the King School group that wasn't in any other group. I think it was our great stress and reliance on guidance and quiet times.

Bill did a grand job. We can all see in his life what the Oxford Group people had told us in their message: That if we turn our lives to God and let him run it, he will take our shortcomings and make them valuable in His way and give us our hearts desire. And when I got the word that Bill had gone on, I sat there, and it was just as if someone had spoken to me again on top of my head. Something said to me, "Verily, verily, he has received his reward." So I went to the Bible, and there it was, in Matthew VI. Then I looked at Bill's story in Alcoholics Anonymous where Bill had said that all his failures were because he always wanted people to think he was somebody. In the first edition of the book, he said he always wanted to make his mark among people. And by letting God run his life, God took his ego and gave him his hearts desire in God's way. And when he was gone, he was on the front page of the New York Times, famous all over the world. So it does verify what the Oxford Group people had told him.

Father Dowling, a Jesuit Priest, had first met our group in the early days in Chicago, and he came to Akron to see us. And then he went on to New York to see the others. And he said to one of the four men, "This is one of the most beautiful things that has come into the world. But I want to warn you that the devil will try to destroy it." Of course, it's true, and one of the first things that the devil could have used was having money, and

having sanatoriums as the men were planning. Much to Bob's and Bill's and Ann's surprise, I said, "No, we'll never take any money."

Another way where I saw that the devil could try to destroy us was having prominent names. The other night I heard on TV special about alcoholics, a man explaining why they are anonymous. And he showed that he didn't really know why. He just said that it wouldn't do to let people know that you were an alcoholic. That's not the reason. In fact, the surest way to stay sober is to let people know that you are an alcoholic because then you have lost something of yourself. I would say that the second way that I saw that the devil would be trying to destroy us was to have any names. Those you think that they are prominent or that they have become leaders, all fail people because no one is on top spiritually all the time. So I said, "We'll never have any names."

I feel that the whole wonderful experience of Alcoholics Anonymous came in answer to a growing great need in the world, and this was met by the combination of Bill, who was a catalyst and promoter, and Bob, with his great humility (if you spoke to him about his contribution, he'd say, "Oh, I just work here.") and Ann, who supplied a homeyness for our men in the beginning.

And I tried to give to the people something of my experience and faith. What I was most concerned with is that we always go back to faith. This brings me to the third thing that would be destructive to the early days, Bob and Bill said to me. "Henrietta, I don't think we should talk too much about religion or God." I said to them, "Well, we're not out to please the alcoholics. They have been pleasing themselves all these years. We are out to please God. And if you don't talk about what God does, and your faith, and your guidance, then you might as well be the Rotary Club or something like that. Because God is your only source of power." And finally they agreed. And they weren't afraid any more. It is my great hope that they will never be afraid to acknowledge God and what he has done for them.

The last AA dinner that I went to, over 3,000 people were there. And it was the first meeting that I went to which I was disappointed in. There were two witnesses there, a man and a woman, and you would have thought they were giving you a description of a psychiatrist's work on them. Their progress was always on the level of psychology. And I spoke to Bill afterwards and I said that there was no spirituality there or talk of what God had done in their lives. They were giving views, not news of what God had done. And Bill said, "I know, but they think there were so many people that need this and they don't want to send them away." So there again has come up this same old bugaboo - without the realization that they have lost their source of power.

This makes me think of the story of the little Scotch minister who was about to preach his first sermon, and his mother hugged him and said, "Now, Bobbie, don't forget to say a word for Jesus. Your mother always wants a word for God."

And then there is one other thought I'd always like to stress, and that is the real fact of God's guidance. People can always count on guidance, although it seems elusive at times.

## 2 Ruth Hock's Recollections (1955)

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*Honor Dealers, a promotion of Hank Parkhurst's (NY AA #2) and Bill Wilson's (AA #1) to distribute products to independent gas station owners, had opened a small office in Newark, NJ at 17 William Street. It was in that office on the sixth floor that Ruth Hock, then Hank's and Bill's secretary, was to type the dictations and hand-written pages Bill gave to her which later formed the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous. This is from a Xerox copy of a letter written by Ruth nearly 20 years later to Bill Wilson, dated November 10, 1955. Here is page 1. Across the top, in Bill's handwriting, it says: "Ruth Hock's recollections."*

November 10, 1955

Dear Bill:

As I wrote to you last week it is difficult for me to get a long period of uninterrupted time together to put down my recollections of those old A.A. days - but I have about two hours - so here goes.

Let me say first that I do not guarantee the accuracy of any dates I may use until I have the opportunity to check one thing against the other which I am willing to do if it ever proves necessary - neither do I insist that my memory is absolutely accurate - it will be easier if I can just sort of meander along for present purposes.

As I remember it you had been sober just a little over a year when I first met you. I think I went to work for Honor Dealers in about January of 1936. The job I applied for was as Secretary to sort of a distributorship for a group of service stations - naturally I had no idea what a surprise fate had in store for me and what a change it would make in my personal life, in my relations to and my opinions of my fellow man.

I walked into the Honor Dealers office in Newark, N.J. on Williams Street one Monday morning - was interviewed by Hank - and started to work immediately that morning. My immediate impression of Hank was that he had a vibrant personality - that he was capable of strong likes and dislikes - that he seemed to be possessed of inexhaustible energy - and that he liked to make quick decisions.

You arrived shortly thereafter, Bill, bringing with you an aura of quiet warm friendliness - of slow deliberate decisions - and at least I thought at the time, not much interest really in the Service Station business.

By the end of that very first day I was a very confused female for, if I remember correctly, that first afternoon you had a visitor in your office and I think it was Paul Kellogg. Anyway, the connecting door was left wide open and instead of business phrases what I heard was fragments of a discussion about drunken misery, a miserable wife, and what I thought was a very queer conclusion indeed - that being a drunk was a disease. I remember distinctly feeling that you were all rather hard hearted because at some points there was roaring laughter about various drunken incidents. Fortunately I liked you both immediately - I am not too easily frightened - and you were paying \$3.00 more per week than I had been getting - so I was willing to give it a try.

You will remember with me, I know, that in those days and for several years to come, we talked about "drunks" and not "alcoholics" and therefore I use those terms here.

The activity of Honor Dealers, as I remember it, was never of paramount importance it seemed to me after I began to know most of you original men, that it was only a means to an end - that end being to help a bunch of nameless drunks. Having come from a thrifty German family I know what I thought if you two would spend as much energy and thought and enthusiasm on Honor Dealers as you did on drunks you might get somewhere. That would be hard to prove either way and actually I've never known whether the original premise of Honor Dealers was sound.

Anyway I soon stopped caring whether Honor Dealers was successful or not and became more and more interested in each new face that came along with the alcoholic problem and caring very much whether they made the grade or not. All of you made me feel as though I were a very worthwhile person in my own right and very important to you which in turn made me want to always give my best to all of you. To me that is part of the secret of the success of A.A. - the generous giving of oneself to the needs of the other.

Well - the activities of Honor Dealers slowly but surely declined and there was more and more correspondence with drunks and more of them showing up in the office. In those days it was part of the procedure, if the prospect was willing to go along, to kneel and pray together - all of you who happened to be there. To me, drunkenness and prayer were both very private activities and I sure did consider all of you a very revolutionary lot - but such likable and interesting revolutionaries!

Hank put a good bit of thought and effort into Honor Dealers but whether his ideas had real merit or whether there was not enough prolonged effort or whether it was just a poor time for that kind of an idea I was not capable of judging then nor am I now. I only know that within about a year finances were precarious enough to move us into a tiny office in the same building and even then I was front man to explain to the superintendent why the rent wasn't paid on time and the telephone bill, etc. Payday was an indefinite affair indeed.

I am somewhat confused about the timing of the move into the small Newark office because now that I think about it I remember that the bookwork was done in the large office. Anyway, early in my association with you, Bill, you began to dictate letters to Doc Smith. You never liked to dictate to a shorthand notebook - you always dictated directly as I typed. In the amazing way these things often happen, since word of what you fellows were doing in New York and by that time Doc Smith in Akron was simply spread vocally from mouth to mouth, inquiries began to float in from amazing distances and some of these you asked me to answer in my own fashion. That is, to refer them to the closest "educated drunk." "Educated" of course in the sense that they knew something of this new possibility of an answer to alcoholism.

Somewhere during those first months I also first met Doc Smith who gave everyone a feeling of great serenity - peace with himself and God - and an abounding wish to share what he had found with others. Somewhere along in there John Henry Fitzhugh Mayo also appeared (Offhand I have no idea of the dates) with his warm sense of humor and the all abiding wish to give to other drunks what he too had found. This you all had in common to an exciting and unbelievable degree.

During that first year at least I don't think I ever attended a meeting, but through your dictation, Bill, through all I heard at the office and through the letters I was answering myself in your behalf I began to absorb an understanding of what it was all about and what you were trying to do and I became aware that the possibilities of writing a book were being discussed. Many of you thought it was an absolute necessity because even then the original idea was often distorted in the hundreds of word of mouth discussions. Its original basic simplicity was often completely confused beyond comprehension and besides it was becoming more and more impossible to fully expound the idea satisfactorily in letter after letter to various inquirers. Also, especially to the advertising type of man, the spread of the idea was going much too slowly and would become a sensation overnight if only put out in book form!! So far as I know there was never any doubt that you were the one to write it, Bill, and I know that you spent endless hours discussing its general form with everyone who would listen or offer an idea - especially with Doc Smith, Fitz and Hank.

As soon as you began to feel you had at least a majority agreement you began to arrive at the office with those yellow scratch pads sheets I came to know so well. All you generally had on those yellow sheets were a few notes to guide you on a whole chapter! My understanding was that those notes were the result of long thought on your part after hours of discussion pro and con with everyone who might be interested. That is the way I remember first seeing an outline of the twelve steps. As I look at it today the basic idea of each chapter of the book and the twelve steps is still essentially today what you scribbled on the original yellow sheets. Of course there were thousands of small changes and rewrites — constant cutting or adding or editing but there are only two major changes made that I remember, both fought out in the office when you and Hank and Fitz and I were present.

The first had to do with how much God was going to be included in the book itself and the 12 steps. Fitz was for going all the way with God, you were in the middle, Hank was for very little and I - trying to reflect the reaction of the non-alcoholic was for very little too. The result of this was the phrase "God as you understand Him," which I don't think ever had much of a negative reaction anywhere. We were unanimous that day and you got a green light everywhere you showed that typewritten copy including Doc Smith and the Akron contingent where a copy of everything was sent for O.K. or criticism. The only other major change I remember during the actual writing of the book was that originally it was directly written to the prospective alcoholic, that is — "You were wrong" — "You must" — "You should" and after a big hassle, this was changed to read — "We were wrong" — "We must" — "We should" — etc." This was quite a job because by the time this major revision was decided on most of the book had been finished in its first draft at least and each chapter as well as the 12 steps had been slanted toward "you" instead of "we" to begin with.

At this time I had still attended very few meetings but I know that the office confabs and final decisions were only made after the aforementioned hours of discussion with all who cared to take part in them with you so

that the majority opinion of all who attended meetings at that time was reflected in the final decisions. During all this time, of course, there was plenty of discussion about a name for the book and there were probably hundreds of suggestions. However, I remember very few —“One Hundred Men” - “The Empty Glass” - “The Dry Way” - “The Dry Life” - “Dry Frontiers” - “The Way Out” - This last was by far the most popular. Alcoholics Anonymous had been suggested and was used a lot among ourselves as a very amusing description of the group itself but I don't believe it was seriously considered as a name for the book. More later on this. By the time the book was mimeographed mostly for distribution in an effort to raise money to carry on and get the book published.

There was constant discussion about detail changes with seemingly little hope for unanimous agreement so it was finally decided to offer the book to Tom Uzzell for final editing. It had been agreed, for one thing, that the book, as written, was too long but nobody could agree on where and how to cut it. At that point it was still nameless because Fitz had reported that the selected name of “The Way Out” was over patented. I remember that during an appointment with Tom Uzzell, we discussed the various name possibilities and he [handwritten insert: Tom Uzzell] immediately - very firmly and very enthusiastically - stated that “Alcoholics Anonymous” was a dead wringer both from the sales point of view because it was “catchy” and because it really did describe the group to perfection. The more this name was studied from this point of view the more everybody agreed and so it was decided. Uzzell cut the book by at least a third as I remember it and in my opinion did a wonderful job on sharpening up the context without losing anything at all of what you were trying to say, Bill, and the way you said it. I really cannot remember who originally thought up the name “Alcoholics Anonymous”. [Handwritten insert which appears to read “Joe Worden” and a reference to a handwritten footnote which appears to read \*Joe Worden ...an AA member who just couldn't stay sober.” It does not look like Bill's handwriting.]

The financing of the book is quite difficult for me to remember, that is, what happened when. Originally, of course, the work was done on Honor Dealer time. In other words what salaries were paid came from honor Dealer transactions, and the paper, the pencils, the office, the typewriter, the phone, etc. belonged to Honor Dealers. Let me make it clear that the members of Honor Dealers were never cheated in any way they were always promptly served - it's only that what might have been a worthwhile idea for a group of service stations just didn't pan out.

When the income from Honor Dealers finally dwindled away completely - finances were a real problem. At this point there was universal agreement (exception Cleveland) that the book was a necessity and that what you had done on it up to that time was extremely satisfactory both in concept and execution. So the only problem was how to get enough money to finish it and get it published. You went to one of the large book publishers about an advance - and as I remember it you were offered One Thousand Dollars with a rather minute royalty on each book published. Hank, (I think) then came up with the idea of selling stock to finance the writing of the book and to publish it. Thus - Works Publishing Co. was born - and the book stock idea set up and forms printed. There was great optimism about the ease with which this stock could be sold by you and Hank and Wally von Arx who was active in this phase of the situation. That dream was not to be fulfilled because for the most part selling a share of Works Publishing Co. stock for \$25.00 was like pulling teeth. Enough stock was sold in the original enthusiastic reaction of a few to keep us going on an extremely minimum basis for a while and then sales came to a complete halt and there we were back where we started.

The paradox of this is the fact that if enough stock had been sold and the book carried through to a conclusion on this basis, the stockholders would have had a fine return indeed for their original investment. However all things happen for the best and this kind of private profit would probably have been a perpetual thorn in the A.A. side.

You then decided to approach Mr. Rockefeller and were able to do so through various contacts you had built up through the years. This resulted in the Rockefeller dinner; which in turn resulted in a minimum pledge which finally resulted in the book being carried to a conclusion and finally published by the Cornwall Press.

Unfortunately I am not very good at getting across the spirit of fun, the real enjoyment of life, the cheerful acceptance of temporary defeat, the will to keep trying, the eternal effort to keep everybody satisfied, which made these years so very worth while and so soul satisfying. In this paragraph I am describing particularly my own reactions, but I know that you will agree and so would everyone else who had any share in it. Even the altercations and disagreements of which there were many were carried on with a basic will to reach

a compromise at least - therefore a compromise was always possible and always reached amicably.

Naturally, when the book was finally rolling off the press the feeling was that our troubles were over which turned out to be far from the case. It was agreed that the book needed to be advertised and a date was finagled for a member of A. A. on "We The People". Morgan Ryan agreed to appear anonymously and did a good job with his three minutes while we all listened breathlessly on the radio. As I remember it his talk was slanted at Doctors and to back him up we had mailed out thousands of postal cards to a selected list of Doctors to reach them in time to get them to listen to the broadcast and to tell them how to get a copy of the book. We had an assembly line all ready to pack and mail the books when the orders came rolling in - and then we waited. I don't think more than four cards were returned at all and the only one that made an impression on me was the first one that came in - an order for six books - C.O.D. There was great jubilation that morning - naturally we thought we were in. We simmered down to as close to gloom as I ever remember we got in the next few days over the few replies and were really practically squashed flat when the package of six books was returned marked "no such address". I'm afraid none of us appreciated for a while the humor of whoever that joker was.

By this time we were at the Vesey Street office and that address was a compromise too. Since I lived in New Jersey I didn't want to work in New York at all - on the other hand you had always wanted to have the office near Grand Central Station - so we settled on Vesey St. For quite a while, about a year at least, there were just the two of us handling correspondence, packing books, and whatever there was to be done and all the while the financial struggle to keep the thing going at all continued. The Liberty magazine article was published and for the first time we began to find a stirred up interest in the form of [letters]. Each letter was answered individually and although the book was mentioned we tried to get across the fact that it was not necessary to purchase the book and in each case the individual was referred to whatever group or individual A.A. closest to him or her. Since at that time I imagine there were no more than 500 A.A. members, if that, scattered from coast to coast and the great majority of those in the middle west and East it was often difficult to get any closer to the individual than several hundred miles. However, we did the best we could and we soon fortunately began to be able to count several traveling salesmen among our A.A. members. Outstanding among these was "Greenberg" who often made side trips of several hundred miles to try to contact people who had written to our New York A.A. office for help.

When the Saturday Evening Post article hit the stands we really began to be flooded with mail and meanwhile the book sales had been steadily increasing from two or three a week until I think they hit an average of about 25 a week and we began to be able to meet office expenses. We then had to hire an assistant who turned out to be Lorraine [?] who was promptly christened "Sweety Pie" by you Bill and I don't think was ever called anything else by anyone connected with A.A. I would like to say that "Sweety Pie" was always cheerful and loyal and understanding beyond her years and was a real asset to those early days of the A.A. office at Vesey St. To me some of the things that stand out most were letters from individuals who were too far distant to contact any A.A. group or member but who kept writing back to us and with the help of the book were able to reach sobriety by themselves, and even to start their own groups.

To keep us humble and laughing were developments like the Southern group started via mail through (was his last name Henry?) Anyway, he wrote us flowing reports about his group and its amazing recoveries of members of his group. One of our traveling members stopped in for a visit and his letter to us was an eye opener indeed. It seems that this particular group was based on the theory that all alcoholic beverages were very bad for the alcoholic - except beer. This idea was carried out so thoroughly that beer was served at their A.A. meetings with copious readings of the A.A. book. Oh well - the beer itself soon cured that misconception.

One of the biggest things you ever did for the solid growth of A.A. in my opinion Bill was to set up a policy of non-interference in the development of individual groups. You set up a policy of suggestion not direction with which I agreed all the way and which I always followed. An individual or a group can resent and argue an order or direction but how much can you resent a suggestion which carries the intimation that possibly they might come up with a better answer if they work it out for themselves. In other words if a group wrote us a description of a problem in their midst and asked for an answer, we would usually describe what another group had done under similar circumstances or suggest possibilities and put the problem squarely back in their laps. In other words as each individual is responsible for his own sobriety - so is each group.

We learned early, too, not to make predictions about who would or would not stay sober. The most

impossible looking cases so often made the grade to confound us with the miracle while our most promising so often fell by the wayside. Do you remember the two young hopefuls we practically made bets on? I think they were Mac and Shepherd. They contacted us about the same time and [we] were specially interested because they were younger than most at that time. As I remember it Shepherd was a high betting favorite while “poor Mac was hopeless”. To our surprise Sheperd at that time had trouble almost immediately while Mac seemed to make steady progress in sobriety. Of course the whole situation blew up in our faces when one day Mr. Chipman promised to visit us at Vesey Street so that you could show him what wonderful progress A.A. was making in every way and to top off the performance you invited Mac to appear to prove that even very young men could achieve sobriety. The stage was all set and you met Mr. Chipman for lunch. Meanwhile Mac appeared at the office completely polluted for the first time in about six months. Unfortunately he was so far gone that he collapsed in a coma in the big chair in your private office. I couldn't budge him so all I could think of to do was shut the door and try to head you off. When you appeared with Mr. Chipman though you were talking a blue streak complete with gestures and I couldn't get a word in edgewise as you swept open the door to your office to reveal Mac in all his drunken glory. After the proverbial moment of stunned silence you broke into roars of laughter, and a minute later, bless his heart, Mr. Chipman joined you. Then I relaxed too and all three of us laughed until we literally wept. When Mac snapped out of this particular binge some days later he enjoyed it too.

This ability to laugh at yourselves and to accept the puncturing of your own self-importance is one of the basic steps in A.A. I believe - of course it makes every individual more likable and lovable whether alcoholic or not. What little I have been able to absorb has made life much simpler for me I know.

I'm going to quit right here Bill - if it isn't the kind of thing you want - tear it up. If there is anything I can or should add or subtract, let me know.

Always the best to you Bill

Devotedly - Ruth

### 3 The Evolution of Alcoholics Anonymous, By Jim Burwell

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*Jim Burwell was among the first members of A.A. to get sober in New York. His sobriety date is 6/16/38 and his story can be found in the Big Book on page 238 called The Vicious Cycle. Please keep in mind when reading this that his recollection of some of the specific facts around the first meeting of Bill Wilson and Dr. Bob Smith are inconsistent with more reliable versions of the same story.*

The spark of Alcoholics Anonymous was ignited about the middle of November 1934 in a kitchen on a second floor at 182 Clinton Street, Brooklyn. This was Bill Wilson's home. The occasion was the visit of a schoolboy friend of his from Vermont, Ebby Thacher. Bill was in the middle of a binge, which had started on Armistice Day. His friend Ebby had heard of Bill's trouble with alcohol. Ebby was sober and Bill said later that this was the first time he had seen him in that condition for many years, for he always thought that Ebby was a hopeless drunk. He greeted Bill on this visit with the words, I've got religion, Bill says at the time he thought poor Ebby had probably gotten sober only to become balmy on religion. While still drinking, he listened to Ebby's story about being converted some six months previously by the New York Oxford Group. He told Bill about the main idea of this group being one person helping another, and their other formulas. Bill said he listened to all this talk while he was in the process of keeping the jitters down by continuously drinking and probably smiling cynically to himself. When Ebby left a few hours later he practically dismissed the incident, but he later found that this was not the case. Within five days he found himself wheeled into his refuge, Townes Hospital on Central Park West in New York, for the third time that year. On his arrival at the hospital with his wife Lois, he was greeted and put to bed immediately by his old friend, Dr. Silkworth, the Director. (Editors Note: Incidentally, this is a great friend of the Group, who later wrote the Doctors Opinion in the AA book.)

Bill said that after he had been in bed a short while he heard the doctor talking to Lois by the door, saying that if her husband came out of this episode and did drink again, he did not honestly believe he would live six months. [This was during an earlier hospitalization.] Bill states that when he heard these words he was immediately carried back to his talk with his friend and could not dismiss the idea that although Ebby might be batty with religion, he was sober and he was happy. He kept turning this over in his mind, in a mild delirium, and came to a vague conclusion that maybe Ebby did have something in a mans helping others in order to get away from his own obsessions and problems. A few hours later when the doctor came in, he felt a tremendous elation and said, Doc, I've got it. At the same time he felt that he was on a high mountain and that a very swift wind was blowing through him, and despite the several weeks of drinking, he found he was completely relaxed and quiet. He asked Dr. Silkworth, Am I going crazy with this sudden elation I have?→ The doctors answer was, seriously, I don't know Bill, but I think you had better hold on to whatever you have.

While he was in the hospital Ebby and the other Oxford Group people visited Bill and told him of their activities, particularly in the Calvary Mission. On Bill's release, while still shaky, he visited Dr. Shoemaker at Calvary Mission and made a decision to become very active in the Missions work and to try and bring other alcoholics from Townes to the Group.

This resolution he put into effect, visiting the Mission and Townes almost daily for four or five months, and bringing some of the drunks to his home for rehabilitation. During this time he was also trying to make another comeback in his Wall Street activities, for Bill, like many others, had built up tremendous paper profits in the roaring twenties, only to go broke in the 29 crash. However, he did make a temporary comeback in the depression years of 32 and 33 as a syndicate man, only to have John Barleycorn wipe him out more completely than ever in his worst drinking year of 1934. Through hard work and a little good luck, by May 1st, 1935, he managed to become a leader of a minority group of a small corporation, and obtained quite a few proxies from others. This group sent him out to Akron, Ohio, hoping to get control of the corporation. Bill said later that if this had happened, he would probably have been financially independent for life, but when he attended the stockholders meeting he found himself snowed under by the other faction.

So around the middle of May, there he was in the Portage Hotel in Akron (Mayflower Hotel; Portage was the name of the country club at which Henrietta Sieberling put Bill up for a few days, after which he moved into Dr. Bob's home) without even return fare home and completely at the end of his rope. Bill's story goes that he found himself pacing the lobby, backwards and forwards, trying to decide whether to forget it all in the hotel

bar, when he noticed the Directory of Churches at the other end of the room. The thought struck him that if he could talk to another alcoholic he might regain his composure, for that had been effective back in New York. Although he had worked consistently with drunks for over six months he had not been able to save anyone, with the possible exception of himself. He telephoned several of the churches listed, and was finally directed to one of the Oxford Groups leaders in town, Henrietta Seiberling.

Bill tells of calling Henrietta and being so shaky that he could hardly get the coin in the slot. The first thing he asked her was, Where can I find another alcoholic to talk to?→ Henrietta's answer was, You stay right where you are until I get there, for I think I can take you to the very man you are looking for. This she did, and the man she took Bill to see was Dr. Bob Smith, who later became the co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous. When Henrietta and Bill got to Dr. Bobs they found his wife, Annie, alone. She was in a mental uproar herself because her husband had been on the loose for several days. After Bill and Henrietta had waited and chatted on the Oxford Group policies, in popped the good doctor himself, quite potted and with a potted lily in his arms for his wife's Mothers Day gift. When Bob had been bedded Annie insisted that Bill stay and try to straighten her husband out. Bill did this and his stay lengthened into months. During the next few days Bill and Bob talked for hours and decided to pool their resources to help other drunks. When Bob had been dry only a few weeks, a new hurdle arose, for Bob found it was imperative for him to go to a medical convention in Atlantic City. Bob did make the convention, but suddenly found himself drunk on the train going back to Akron. However, this turned out to be his last spree, for he dates his last drink June 15, 1935. [Note that Jim's memory of the date differs from official version of June 10.nmo]

This apparent calamity was probably one of the greatest blessings in disguise for us later members, for it did cement Bob in this new fellowship they were launching. Bill stayed on with the Smiths until the 1st of October and during that time Bob and he managed to secure two more converts to the fold. Bill then returned to New York where he continued his previous activities, with daily visits to Townes and Calvary Mission. During the latter part of October, Bill got his first real New York convert, Hank Parkhurst. Hank later became one of the genuine inspirations of Alcoholics Anonymous, for he was a red-haired, high-pressure human dynamo. Before his last trip to Townes, where Bill found him, Hank had been sales manager for Standard Oil of New Jersey. From the time of their meeting and during the latter part of 1935 it was Hank and Bill who did all the ground work, but even then they had but indifferent success until their next real convert, Paul Rudell came in about April 1936.

The next man to be pulled out of the mire, through Townes, was dear old Fitz Mayo who joined the others about November 1936. From this time on the duet became a trio, Bill, Hank and Fitz and they were the spearheads in drunk-saving for the Oxford Group in the New York area. However, they discovered in September 1937, that despite all the wet-nursing, praying and rehabilitation work done at Bills house on Clinton Street, of approximately thirty-five or forty drunks, they were the only three men to come clear in almost two years. During this period many things happened, some quite tragic, with even an alcoholic suicide in Bills home.

In September 1937 the three concluded that perhaps their technique would be better if they would do their work with drunks outside of an affiliation with a religious organization. Having arrived at this decision, the trio formally resigned from the Oxford Group and concentrated all their efforts on working with alcoholics in Townes Hospital, using Bills home as a de-fogging station. About this time the first completely alcoholic meetings were held in Bills home on Tuesday evenings and average attendance ran about fifteen, including the drunks families. Even though the trio had separated from the Oxford Group, they still retained a lot of their principles and utilized them in the discussions at these weekly meetings, but at the same time more emphasis was placed on the disease of alcoholism as a psychological sickness. At the same time they stressed spiritual regeneration and the understanding of one alcoholic for another.

A few months after the break with the Oxford Group, January 1938, I was brought into the New York fellowship from Washington by Fitz Mayo, whom I had known since boyhood. I was enticed to New York by the existence of this new group and a small job that Hank Parkhurst gave me in a little business he and Bill had gone into on the side. [Honor Dealers] When I arrived in New York I found myself thrust into this new group of three or four actively dry alcoholics, who at that time had no group name, or real creed or formula.

Within the next two or three months, things really started popping. Hank, with his promotional ideas, started to push Bill into writing a formula, the trio finally decided a book should be written on our activities and

this was in June 1938. Bill was naturally given the job of writing the book for he was the only one who had made any real conclusive study of our problem. From what I can remember, Bills only special preparation for this was confined to the reading of four very well known books, the influence of which can clearly be seen in the AA Book. Bill probably got most of his ideas from one of these books, namely James Varieties of Religious Experience. I have always felt this was because Bill himself had undergone such a violent spiritual experience. He also gained a fine basic insight of spirituality through Emmet Foxs Sermon on the Mount, and a good portion of the psychological approach of AA from Dick Peabodys Common Sense of Drinking. It is my opinion that a great deal of Bills traditions came from the fourth book. Lewis Browne's This Believing World. From this book, I believe Bill attained a remarkable perception of possible future pitfalls for groups of our kind for it clearly shows that the major failures of religions and cults in the past have been due to one of three things: Too much organization, too much politics, and too much money or power.

Bill started his actual writing of our book in the later part of June 1938 in Hank Parkhurst's office in Newark, with Hanks secretary, Ruth Hock, taking dictation. About a month later Bill had completed two chapters. Each had been brought up at the Clinton Street Tuesday night meetings. Bill would read what had been written to the group as a whole and then pull apart and suggestions added by all those present. When these two chapters were rewritten, we were all very elated because we felt we were well on our way to saving all drunks everywhere.

With these two chapters in hand, and without any introduction of any kind, Bill went to see the editors of Harpers Publishing Company. Harpers immediately caught fire and offered Bill, on the strength of this one visit, a \$1,500 advance payment to finish the book, plus regular authors royalties. Bill said later that he almost succumbed to this offer because that was big money in those days and we were all broke. When Bill returned and reported this offer, Hank said, If its worth that much for just two chapters from an unknown author, its worth easily a million to us, and the trio immediately determined that Bill would finish writing the book and our Group would do the publishing.

In August, promotion minded Hank formed our first corporation for handling this book, to be named 100 Men Corporation and he provided that two-thirds of the corporation would belong to him and Bill, the other third to be sold on shares at \$25 par to friends and members. He announced that this third should easily bring us in \$10,000, which was to see us through publication. Our idea at this time was that the book alone would save the drunks in the majority of cases, by self-education. Then it was decided that there would be some that the book alone would not do the job for, so another corporation was founded at the same time called, The Alcoholic Foundation. The Foundations function would be the disbursement of funds and the establishment of alcoholic farms all over the country. The money for this, of course, we would get after the sale of the first million books. Then we were faced with the problem of who was to go on this new foundation. At this time, August 1938, we had only four men dry over a year in New York. These were Bill, Hank, Fitz and Paul Rudell, so to these four Dr. Bob Smith of Akron was added.

During this time of promotion, corporations and other such activities, Bill continued his writing of the book, averaging about a chapter a week. These were made up in triplicates, one copy going to Akron, one to the Clinton Street meetings and the third reserved as an office copy. These chapters, as completed, would be ranked and mauled over in the two group meetings, changes were noted in the margins and returned weekly to the Newark office. About the middle of October 1938 the manuscript of the book was finished and the personal stories that appear in the AA book, in its present form, were contributed by individual members from Akron and New York. As previously mentioned, the name of the book at this time was 100 Men and the new corporation had finally raised, through forty-nine members in New York and Akron, about \$3,000.

We then submitted the book to Dr. Yussel, well-known critic of New York University!! this was about the 1st of November and he was paid \$300 to edit the book. Practically nothing was done to the personal stories of the individual members and there was less than 20% deletion from the original manuscript. When Yussel returned the book we found our 100 Men Corporation broke, the \$3,000 gone. The only concrete assets we had besides the manuscript were some blank copper plates to be used in printing. We also found our name 100 Men inadequate for we had forgotten the ladies and we already had one girl, Florence Rankin, on the ball. In one of our discussion meetings at Clinton Street other names were brought up for consideration. Most prominent of these were This Way Out, Exit, The End of the Road and several others. Finally we hit on our present name.

Nobody is too sure exactly where it came from but it is my opinion that it was suggested by one of our newer members, Joe Worden, who had at one time been considered quite a magazine promotion genius, and who had been given credit for starting the New Yorker magazine. Hank and Bill finally decided on the name "Alcoholics Anonymous" in the latter part of November 1938.

About this time we almost had a disaster in our still wobbly group but it later turned out to be a Godsend. Bill and Hank had distributed quite a few copies of the original manuscript to doctors, psychiatrists and ministers to get a last minute reaction. One of these went to Dr. Howard, Chief Psychiatrist for the State of New Jersey. He became greatly interested and enthusiastic, but was highly critical of several things in the book, for after reading it he told us there was entirely too much Oxfordism and that it was too demanding. This is where the disaster nearly overtook us, for it nearly threw Bill into a terrific mental uproar to have his baby pulled apart by an outside screwball psychiatrist, who in our opinion knew nothing about alcoholism. After days of wrangling between Bill, Hank, Fitz and myself, Bill was finally convinced that all positive and must statements should be eliminated and in their place to use the word suggest and the expression we found we had to. Another thing changed in this last rewriting was qualifying the word God with the phrase as we understand Him. (This was one of my few contributions to the book.) In the final finishing the fellowship angle was enlarged and emphasized. After many arguments and uproars, the manuscript was finally finished, complete, in December 1938. We now had one real problem no money.

It was about this time that the 100 Men Corporation was closed out and a new one started named Works Publishing Company. This name derived from a common expression, used in the group, It works!! Those that had stock or interest in the old corporation maintained the same priority in the new one. (Editors Note: Three years later the original stock subscribers returned all their shares and interest in Works Publishing Company to The Alcoholic Foundation Today no individual has any financial interest in either the Alcoholic Foundation or in Alcoholics Anonymous.)

Then a new wrinkle was devised by our master-minds we would make a couple of hundred multilith copies of the finished manuscript and these we would use as a promotion for more stock selling and at the same time to get possible endorsement of well-known people, particularly, in the fields of religion and medicine. These copies were distributed to the Works Publishing Company shareholders and possible prospective stockholders. With these multilith copies we sent out a prospectus for our corporation and a note saying that the copy could be purchased for \$3.50 and a copy of the book, if when printed, would be sent gratis to each purchaser. From this venture, we did not get one new stockholder. However, the copies did get into all sections of the country.

One created quite an amusing incident for it got into the hands of a patient in a psychopathic hospital in California. This man immediately caught fire and religion all in one fell swoop. He wrote and told us about the wonderful release he had from alcohol through our new Alcoholics Anonymous multilith. Of course all of us in New York became highly excited and wires bounced back and forth between us and our new convert regarding this miracle that happened 3,000 miles away. This man wrote the last personal history in the book while he was still in California called the Lone Endeavor. Our New York Groups were so impressed by his recovery that we passed the hat and sent for him to come East as an example. This he did, but when the boys met him at the bus station the delusion faded, for he arrived stone drunk and as far as I know, never came out of it.

The major result of the multilith was our first important endorsement outside of our group and friends. It came from Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick, pastor of the Riverside Baptist Church in New York and a nationally-known speaker and writer.

So here we were again, broke, only more so!

Bill came to our rescue, as usual, by floating a \$2,500 loan from Dr. Towne, who already had a good slice in the original corporation. With the blank copper plates and Dr. Townes loan, Hank prevailed on the Cornwall Press, in February 1939, to make 8,000 copies for our first edition. The book was purposely made to look bulky for two reasons — to give it an air of intellectual authority and to make it look like a lot for the money. The dust jacket, with its familiar red, black, yellow and white, was designed by one of our artist members, Ray Campbell, whose story in the book is called "An Artists Concept". Although Cornwall did print these 5,000 books in April 1939, they still felt that we were quite short in our down payment and insisted that the books be kept in a bonded warehouse and withdrawn only on the payment of \$2.00 per copy. Our method of

distributing the books was to get possibly ten copies out at a time, and the members would individually buttonhole libraries, doctors and others for sales. Funds received from these purchasers were in turn used to buy additional copies, which in their turn were sold in the same way. About the only bookstores we could interest at the start was Brentano's in New York, who did gamble on a half a dozen copies. Five of the very first books were presented to Dr. Fishbein, editor of the American Medical Journal to whom Dr. Towne had lauded AA. Dr. Fishbein had promised to give us a real buildup in the Journal but when his review appeared, it merely said that AA was nothing new and had no real significance to the medical profession. So another balloon busted.

In June, Bill and Hank decided to try another promotion stunt this was to put a 2- x 3- advertisement in the New York Times Book Review. This cost us \$250 and I have often wondered where the money came from. We thought we had the real answer to publicity this time, and we all sat back and started guessing and betting among ourselves on the number of requests we would get for our million-dollar book. The estimates ranged from 2,000 to 20,000 copies, but we were due for another disappointment, as only two copies of the book were sold in spite of our seven-day free trial offer.

It was about this time that we got our first really active girl member, Marty Mann, who took the AA program while under restraint at Blythwood Sanitarium. Marty's efforts on behalf of women alcoholics in the early days were of inestimable value and today she is one of the most indefatigable workers on behalf of AA in the country.

It was also in June of this year that we made our first contact with the Rockefeller Foundation. This was arranged by Bert Taylor, one of the older members, who had known the family for years in a business way. Dr. Richardson, who had long been spiritual advisor for the Rockefeller family, became very interested and friendly, and Bill and Hank made frequent visits to him, with Hank on one side asking for financial help and Bill on the other insisting on moral support only.

Our first national publicity was arranged through one of our new members, Morgan Ryan in August 1939. This was a spot on the "We The People" radio program, which was then very popular. Again we were disappointed, for this publicity brought us only a dozen inquiries and one book sale. This was despite the fact that we sent out 10,000 post cards to doctors and ministers in the New York area announcing the broadcast. It was also in August that a real calamity befell Bill, for he and Lois were evicted from their home on Clinton Street. This had once been Lois girlhood home and was AAs first home. Little did Bill and Lois know that for the next two years they would be homeless, dependent on the hospitality of other AAs.

About this time, too, another AA Group was launched in Cleveland, Ohio. The founder was Clarence Snyder who had received his AA indoctrination with Dr. Bob in Akron. Clarence and his wife, Dorothy, obtained our first newspaper publicity, which was in the Cleveland Plain Dealer in September 1939. As a result of this publicity the Cleveland Group, within thirty days, became temporarily the largest group in the country.

Our first medical endorsement also came in September from Dr. Richard Smith, Superintendent of Rockland State Hospital in New York. His praise was the result of our work with alcoholics in the hospital there over a period of approximately six months. The first national magazine to give us a break was Liberty, in October 1939, with a two-page article labeled "Alcoholics and God". This article brought in about a thousand inquiries and sold possibly one hundred books. My guess would be that as a summary for the year 1939, we had three active groups with a total membership of less than 200 and a gross book sale for eight months of less than 500. By the end of 1939 also, AA was beginning to get some real recognition. At the end of December that year John D. Rockefeller, Jr. issued invitations to some 200 of his closest associates and friends to a dinner to be held February 8th 1940 at the Union League Club in New York. The invitations stated that the purpose of the dinner was to have these people meet a group of people on whom Rockefeller had become interested, no name announced. The dinner and the publicity were arranged by Rockefeller's personal publicity man, Ivy Lee. Sixty actually attended this dinner, some of the more prominent being Dr. Fosdick, Owen Young, Wendell Wilkie, Sorenson of the Ford interests and Dr. Foster Kennedy, President of the Psychiatric Association. Before this dinner we felt it would solve all our problems, especially the financial ones, for Ivy Lee himself estimated the personal wealth of those present to be well over two billion dollars. Fate was against us again despite glowing talks by Dr. Fosdick, Kennedy, Nelson Rockefeller and Bill, the total contributions to Alcoholics Anonymous were less than \$1,500, \$1,000 of which came from the Rockefeller Foundation. (All of these contributions were later returned in full.)

Still we learned later that we had gained a great deal more than money from this dinner, for thereafter the Rockefeller's allowed their name to be publicly used in connection with AA. It has always been my contention that this was the real turning point in the history of AA.

During the next six months practically the whole country was spotted with AA groups. Between February and June 1940 Fitz and myself started groups in Philadelphia, Washington and Baltimore. About the same time Earl Treat migrated from the Akron Group to start one in Chicago, and Arch Trowbridge also went from Akron to Detroit. It was also during these months that Larry Jewell left Cleveland and organized a group in Houston, Texas. Kay Miller, a non-alcoholic but the wife of one of the early Akron members moved into Los Angeles and started their group. In the Fall of 1940 a Jewish member named Meyerson, a traveling salesman, started AA groups in Atlanta, Georgia and Jacksonville, Florida.

The next outstanding event in Alcoholics Anonymous growth was the publication of the Saturday Evening Post article. This was mostly arranged through the efforts of two well-known Philadelphia physicians, Dr. C. Dudley Saul and Dr. A. Wiese Hammer. They had gained the interest of Judge Curtis Bok, one of the owners of the Saturday Evening Post and in the early days of Philadelphia AA, Judge Bok had been a constant visitor to the group. It was in a large part due to his interest that Jack Alexander was assigned to do a feature article on Alcoholics Anonymous in August 1940. We were later told that the editors also thought Alexander would be a good man to possibly expose this new "screwball" organization. However, Alexander did promise that he would not write his article until he had visited groups and seen AA in action. He traveled from New York and Philadelphia as far West as St. Louis and attended AA meetings. His experience with these groups made him so enthusiastic over the AA setup that the article he wrote was responsible for the largest sale of a single issue of the Post in its history. The Alcoholic Foundation office in New York reports that over 10,000 inquiries were received from this one article. Even today people coming into AA groups in various parts of the country tell us that their first knowledge of Alcoholics Anonymous was the Saturday Evening Post article by Jack Alexander.

It is my guess that in March 1941 there were less than 1,000 active AA members in the Country and the following year we added at least seven or eight thousand members.

*(Editors Note: From this point on there is little the writer can add to the all over picture of AA's progress for this can be seen more clearly through the eyes of the New York office and the original group.)*

## 4 A Profile of Jim Burwell, Agnostic and Author of “The Vicious Cycle,” by Ron Long

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“Dear Bill...[I am the]...oldest active AA member at group level. [I did] contribute materially in all three of our A.A. books, with phrases “God as you understand Him” and “Only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking,” plus my own story.

In 1939-40 period did sell more books to stores, doctors, etc. than anyone. Did help in 1940, finance (200.00 stock) to keep Vesey Street going. Carried the message to and help organize original groups in Philadelphia, Baltimore, Wilmington, and Harrisburg; plus half a dozen neighborhood and hospital groups in Philadelphia and San Diego. The Philly group was the first to contribute to New York.

Initiated the plan for Judge Bok to get us inside The Saturday Evening Post, And Bill, I am the only one of the original members that has never bucked publicly on any of your projects. Especially in 1948-49, I stumped the state for your conference. I do hope this does not sound [like I am bragging] ...but these are facts as I see them.” Letter from Jim Burwell to Bill Wilson May 15, 1965

As a former atheist, when I initially came into Alcoholics Anonymous I reacted to use of the word God with an attitude of contempt prior to investigation. Thank God I stayed sober long enough to investigate the matter. As a result, I am a recovered atheist; my sobriety date is January 5, 1983. I owe a world of gratitude to Jim Burwell, who helped pave the way for alcoholics like me.

Jim Burwell’s influence on Bill Wilson in the writing of the Big Book was described by Wilson himself in Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age. Jim militantly opposed the usage of the word “God” in consistent adherence to his agnostic philosophy. A compromise was negotiated between Wilson and Burwell with the literary employment of such terms as “power greater than ourselves.” Dr. Carl G. Jung’s influence on Bill Wilson was also a major factor, I believe, that helped pave the way for both the spiritual freedom and the therapeutic aspect of the recovery program that emerged, known since 1939 from the title of its first book, as Alcoholics Anonymous.

The rather profound influence of the first neo-Freudian psychoanalyst to break away from Sigmund Freud is well documented in AA History. Freud was a materialist; an atheist. Carl G. Jung retained his theistic philosophy and developed the original concept of the Higher Power. The Higher Power is experienced, per Jungian psychoanalysis, as the subconscious mind is freed from the repression which initially caused that side of the human personality to create a memory block defense system. Traumatic episodes, unpleasant imprints, et cetera were assigned and filed away to the subconscious realm of the mind. It was Freud who discovered the subconscious. It was Jung who found in it the key to the spiritual experience of the Higher Power. It was Bill Wilson who gave the suffering alcoholic the path to that experience, embodied in the Twelve Steps of Recovery. In a January 23, 1961 letter to Jung, Bill Wilson wrote:

“May I first introduce myself as Bill W., a co-founder of the Society of Alcoholics Anonymous. Though you have surely heard of us, I doubt if you are aware that a certain conversation you once had with one of your patients, a Mr. Roland H., back in the early 1930s, did play a critical role in the founding of our Fellowship. . . . Having exhausted other means of recovery from his alcoholism, it was about 1931 that he became your patient. I believe that he remained under your care for perhaps a year. His admiration for you was boundless, and he left you with a feeling of much confidence. . . . [Following a relapse]. . . , he again returned to your care. Then followed the conversation between you that was to become the first link in the chain of events that led to the founding of Alcoholics Anonymous. . . . you frankly told him of his hopelessness, so far as any further medical or psychiatric treatment might be concerned. This candid and humble statement of yours was beyond a doubt the first foundation stone upon which our Society has since been built.”

Jim Burwell expressed in a 1957 recording at Sacramento that his agnostic stance had mellowed out over the years. However, his early militancy was a perhaps spiritual wonder! The compromise between him and Bill Wilson established an enduring principle in Alcoholics Anonymous, that of flexibility and acceptance of differing viewpoints on spiritual matters. That vital principle paved the way for hope for all suffering alcoholics seeking sobriety and recovery from a seemingly hopeless state of body and mind. One’s religious affiliation, or lack of it; one’s philosophical preferences, or none; one atheistic, or agnostic, or atheistic, or pantheistic, or

virtually any relatively held notion or concept of a power greater than ourselves, could bare no relevance on one's membership the Fellowship of the Spirit. Thanks to Jim Burwell.

Born on March 25, 1898, Jim Burwell of Washington, D.C. later moved to the New York area. Jim began to decline on January 8, 1938 to a hard bottom. His Sobriety Date was June 15, 1938. He became acquainted with and began an association with Bill Wilson, Dr. Bob Smith, Bill Dodson, Henry (Hank) Parkhurst and a few others, who comprised a group of sober drunks that a year later would be known as Alcoholics Anonymous. Jim carried the A.A. message to the end of his life, carrying often the meetings to new places. He initiated Alcoholics Anonymous in Baltimore and Philadelphia. Later he and his wife moved to San Diego, California. He and Rosa resided at 4193 Georgia Street in San Diego.

One day his parked car, which apparently did not have the emergency brake in place and which slipped out of "park," rolled down his driveway at his home in San Diego and hit him. Jim suffered a broken hip. He never fully recovered from the injury. In his last years Jim was often in a wheelchair and constantly smoked a pipe. A.A. rooms were always filled with smoke. Jim was a small man with red hair. Jim Burwell weighed about 130 pounds. Jim and Rosa Burwell were involved in service and were elected to many AA positions many times. When not holding any elected positions, they were volunteers in any area of need. They were very active. Jim and Rosa were known as "Book People." If a line was not in the Big Book or Literature, they would not use it.

Following a long illness, he was admitted to the Veterans Administration Medical Center, La Jolla, California. He missed those meetings. However, that did not prevent him from being active. Jim started a new meeting there at the VA! The Torrey Pines Thursday Night Discussion Group of Alcoholics Anonymous still meets at 3350 La Jolla Village Drive, Room 2011. Jim Burwell died in the VA on September 8, 1974. He is buried on the grounds of Christ Episcopal Church at Owensville, Maryland. He touched the lives of many. He was apparently a human being, capable of being criticized by some and adored by others. He died sober. That is as close to perfection as we will ever achieve.

## 5 The Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous, by Bill W. (as Given at the Yale School of Alcohol Studies, June 1944)

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*This is a transcribed talk that Bill Wilson gave back in 1944. It can be found in a book called "Alcohol, Science and Society" that came out in 1945 which contains 29 lectures with discussions as given at the Yale Summer School of Alcohol.*

My first task is a joyous one; it is to voice the sincere gratitude that every member of Alcoholics Anonymous present feels tonight that we can stand in the midst of such an assembly. I know that in this assembly there are many different points of view, that we have social workers, ministers, doctors and others - people we once thought did not understand us, because we did not understand them. I think right away of one of our clergyman friends. He helped start our group in St. Louis, and when Pearl Harbor came he thought to himself, "Well this will be a hard day for the AA's." He expected to see us go off like firecrackers. Well, nothing much happened and the good man was rather joyously disappointed, you might say. But he was puzzled. And then he noticed with still more wonder that the AA's seemed rather less excited about Pearl Harbor than the normal people. In fact, quite a number of the so-called normal people seemed to be getting drunk and very distressed. So he went up to one of the AA's and said, "Tell me, how is it that you folks hold up so well under this stress, I mean this Pearl Harbor?" The A.A. looked at him, smiled, but quite seriously said, "You know, each of us has had his own private Pearl Harbor, each of us has known the utmost of humiliation, of despair, and of defeat. So why should we, who have known the resurrection, fear another Pearl Harbor?"

So you can see how grateful we are that we have found this resurrection and that so many people, not alcoholics, with so many points of view, have joined to make it a reality. I guess all of you know Marty Mann by this time. I shall always remember her story about her first A.A. meeting. She had been in a sanatorium under the care of a wonderful doctor, but how very lonely she felt! Somehow, there was a gap between that very good man and herself that could not quite be bridged. Then she went to her first A.A. meeting, wondering what she would find; and her words, when she returned to the sanatorium, in talking to her friend, another alcoholic, were: "Grenny, we are no longer alone. " So we are a people who have known loneliness, but now stand here in the midst of many friends. Now I am sure you can see how very grateful for all this we must be.

I am sure that in this course you have heard that alcoholism is a malady; that something is dead wrong with us physically; that our reaction to alcohol has changed; that something has been very wrong with us emotionally; and that our alcoholic habit has become an obsession, an obsession which can no longer reckon even with death itself. Once firmly set, one is not able to turn it aside. In other words, a sort of allergy of the body that guarantees that we shall die if we drink, an obsession of the mind that guarantees that we shall go on drinking. Such has been the alcoholics dilemma time out of mind, and it is altogether probable that even those alcoholics who did not wish to go on drinking, not more than 5 out of 100 have ever been able to stop, before A.A.

That statement always takes me back to a summer night at a drying out place in New York where I lay upstairs at the end of a long trail. My wife was downstairs talking with the doctor, asking him, "Bill wants so badly to stop this thing, doctor, why can't he? He was always considered a person of enormous persistence, even obstinacy, in those things that he wished to achieve. Why can't his will power work now? It does work even yet in other areas of life, but why not in this?" And then the doctor went on to tell her something of my childhood, showing that I had grown up a rather awkward kid, how that had thrown upon me a kind of inferiority and had inspired in me a fierce desire to show other people that I could be like them; how I had become a person who abnormally craved approval, applause. He showed her the seed, planted so early, that had created me an inferiority-driven neurotic. On the surface, to be sure, very self confident, with a certain amount of worldly success in Wall Street. But along with it this habit of getting release from myself through alcohol.

You know, as strange as it may seem to some of the clergy here who are not alcoholic, the drinking of alcohol is a sort of spiritual release. Is it not true that the great fault of all individuals is abnormal self-concern? And how well alcohol seems temporarily to expel those feelings of inferiority in us, to transport us temporarily to a better world. Yes, I was one of those people to whom drink became a necessity and then an addiction. So it

was 10 years ago this summer that the good doctor told my wife I could not go on much longer; that my habit of adjusting my neurosis with alcohol had now become an obsession; how that obsession of my mind condemned me to go on drinking, and how my physical sensitivity guaranteed that I would go crazy or die, perhaps within a year. Yes, that was my dilemma. It has been the dilemma of millions of us, and still is.

Some of you wonder, "Well, he had been instructed by a good physician, he had been told about his maladjustment, he understood himself, he knew that his increasing physical sensitivity meant that he would go out into the dark and join the endless procession. Why couldn't he stop? Why wouldn't fear hold such a man in check?"

After I left that place, fear did keep me in check for 2 or 3 months. Then came a day when I drank again. And then came a time when an old friend, a former alcoholic, called me on the phone and said that he was coming over. It was perhaps right there on that very day that the Alcoholics Anonymous commenced to take shape. I remember his coming into my kitchen, where I was half drunk. I was afraid that perhaps he had come to reform me. You know, curiously enough, we alcoholics are very sensitive on this subject of reform. I could not quite make out my friend. I could see something different about him but I could not put my finger on it. So finally I said, "Ebby, what's got into you?" And he said, "Well, I've got religion." That shocked me terribly, for I was one of those people with a dandy modern education which had taught me that self-sufficiency would be enough to carry me through life, and here was a man talking a point of view which collided with mine.

Ebby did not go on colliding with me. He knew, as a former agnostic, what my prejudices were, so he said to me, blandly enough, "Well, Bill, I don't know that I'd call it religion exactly, but call it what you may, it works." I said, "What is it? What do you mean? Tell me more about this thing?" He said, "Some people came and got hold of me. They said, "Ebby, you've tried medicine, you've tried religion, you've tried change of environment, I guess you've tried love, and none of these things has been able to cure you of your liquor. Now, here is an idea for you."

And then he went on to tell me how they explained, they said, "First of all, Ebby, why don't you make a thorough appraisal of yourself? Stop finding fault with other people. Make a thoroughgoing moral appraisal of yourself. When have you been selfish, dishonest? And, especially, where have you been intolerant? Perhaps those are the things that underlie this alcoholism. And after you have made such an appraisal of yourself, why don't you sit down and talk it out with someone in full and quit this accursed business of living alone? Put an end to this Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde situation into which you have fallen. And then, why don't you continue this policy of abating the disturbance in yourself? Why don't you take stock of all the people among your acquaintances that you have hurt - all of the people who annoy you, who disturb you. Why don't you go out to them and make amends; set things right and talk things out, and get down these strains that exist between you and them? Then, Ebby, we have still another proposal. Why don't you try the kind of giving that demands no reward? We don't mean the mere giving of money, though you once had plenty of that. No, we mean the giving of yourself to someone who is in need. Why don't you try that? Seek out someone in need and forget your own troubles by becoming interested in his." Ebby said, "Where does religion come in?" And his friends went on to say, "Ebby, it is our experience that no one can carry out such a program with enough thoroughness and enough continuity on pure self-sufficiency. One must have help. Now we are willing to help you, as individuals, but we think you ought to call upon a power greater than yourself, for your dilemma is well nigh insurmountable. So, call on God, as you understand God. Try prayer." Well, in effect, that was the explanation my friend made to me. Those of you who know a little of the A.A. are already able to see a little of the basic idea.

You see, here was my friend talking to me, one alcoholic talking to another. I could no longer say, "He doesn't understand me." Sure he understood me. We had done a lot of drinking together, and gone the route of humiliation, despair and defeat. Yes, he could understand. But now he had something. He did not shock me by calling it the resurrection, but that's what it was. He had something I did not have, and those were the terms upon which it could be obtained.

Honesty with oneself and other people, the kind of giving that demands no return, and prayer. Those were the essentials. My friend then got up and went away, but he had been very careful not to force any of his views upon me. In no sense could I have the feeling that he was moralizing with me or preaching, because I knew it was not long ago that he was no better than I. He merely said that he was leaving these ideas with me, hoping that they would help.

Even so, I was irritated, because he had struck a blow at my pet philosophy of self-sufficiency, and was talking about dependence upon some power greater than myself. "Ah yes," I thought, as I went on drinking, "yes it's this preacher stuff. Yes, I remember, up in the old home town where my grandfather raised me, how the deacon, who was so good, treated Ed MacDonald, the local drunk - as dirt under his feet; and more than that, the old son of a gun short weighted my good old grandfather in his grocery store. If that's religion, I don't want any of it." Such were my prejudices. But the whole point of this was that my friend had got onto my level. He had penetrated my prejudices, although he had not swept them all away.

I drank on but I kept turning this thing over in my mind, and finally asked myself, "Well, how much better off am I than a cancer patient." But a small percentage of those people recover, and the same is true with alcoholics, for by this time I knew quite a good deal about alcoholism. I knew that my chances were very, very slim. I knew that, in spite of all the vigilance in the world, this obsession would pursue me, even if I dried up temporarily. Yes, how much better off was I than a cancer patient? Then I began to say to myself, "Well, who are beggars to be choosers? Why should a man be talking about self-sufficiency when an obsession has condemned him to have none of it? Then I became utterly willing to do anything, to try to accept any point of view, to make any sacrifice, yes, even to try to love my enemies, if I could get rid of this obsession.

First, I went up to a hospital to ask the doctor to clear me up so I could think things through clearly. And again, came my friend, the second day that I was there. Again I was afraid, knowing that he had religion, that he was going to reform me. I cannot express the unreasonable prejudice that the alcoholics have against reform. That is one reason that it has been so hard to reach them. We should not be that way, but we are. And here was my friend, trying to do his best for me, but the first thought that flashed across my mind was, "I guess this is the day that he is going to save me. Look out! He'll bring in that high powered sweetness and light, he'll be talking about a lot of this prayer business." But Ebby was a good general, and it's a good thing for me he was.

No, he did not collide with those prejudices of mine. He just paid me a friendly visit, and he came up there quite early in the morning. I kept waiting and waiting for him to start his reform talk, but no, he didn't. So finally I had to ask for some of it myself. I said, "Ebby, tell me once more about how you dried up." And he reviewed it again for me.

Honesty with oneself, of a kind I had never had before. Complete honesty with someone else. Straightening out all my twisted relationships as best I could. Giving of myself to help someone else in need. And prayer.

When he had gone away, I fell into a very deep depression, the blackest that I had ever known. And in that desperation, I cried out, "If there is a God, will He show Himself?" Then came a sudden experience in which it seemed the room lit up. It felt as though I stood on the top of a mountain, that a great clean wind blew, that I was free. The sublime paradox of strength coming out of weakness.

So I called in the doctor and tried to tell him, as best I could, what had happened. And he said, "Yes, I have read of such experiences but I have never seen one." I said, "Well doctor, examine me, have I gone crazy?" And he did examine me and said, "No, my boy, you're not crazy. Whatever it is, you'd better hold onto it. It's so much better than what had you just a few hours ago." Well, along with thousands of other alcoholics, I have been holding on to it ever since.

But that was only the beginning. And at the time, I actually thought that it was the end, you might say, of all my troubles. I began there, out of this sudden illumination, not only to get benefits, but also to draw some serious liabilities. One of those that came immediately was one that you might call Divine Appointment. I actually thought, I had the conceit really to believe, that God had selected me, by this sudden flash of Presence, to dry up all the drunks in the world. I really believed it. I also got another liability out of the experience, and that was that it had to happen in some particular way just like mine or else it would be of no use. In other words, I conceived myself as going out, getting hold of these drunks, and producing in them just the same kind of experience that I had had. Down in New York, where they knew me pretty well in the A.A., they facetiously call these sudden experiences that we sometimes have a "W.W. hot flash." I really thought that I had been endowed with the power to go out and produce a "hot flash" just like mine in every drunk.

Well, I started off; I was inspired; I knew just how to do it, as I thought then. Well, I worked like thunder for 6 months and not one alcoholic got dried up. What were the natural reactions then? I suppose some of you here, who have worked with alcoholics, have a pretty good idea. The first reaction was one of great

self-pity; the other was a kind of martyrdom. I began to say, "Well, I suppose that this is the kind of stuff that martyrs are made of, but I will keep on at all costs." I kept on, and I kept on, until I finally got so full of self-pity and intolerance (our two greatest enemies in the A.A.) that I nearly got drunk myself. So I began to reconsider. I began to say, "Yes, I found my relief in this particular way, and glorious it was and is, for it is still the central experience of my whole life. But who am I to suppose that every other human being ought to think, act and react just as I do? Maybe we're all very much alike in a great many respects but, as individuals, we're different too."

At that juncture I was in Akron on a trip, and I got a very severe business setback. I was walking along in the corridor of the hotel, wondering how God could be so mean. After all the good I had done Him - why, I had worked here with drunks for six months and nothing had happened - and now here was a situation that was going to set me up in business and I had been thrown out of it by dishonest people. Then I began to think, "That spiritual experience - was it real?" I began to have doubts. Then I suddenly realized that I might get drunk. But I also realized that those other times when I had had self-pity, those other times when I had had resentment and intolerance, those other times when there was that feeling of insecurity, that worry as to where the next meal would come from; yes, to talk with another alcoholic even though I failed with him, was better than to do nothing. But notice how my motivation was shifting all this time. No longer was I preaching from any moral hilltop or from the vantage point of a wonderful spiritual experience. No, this time I was looking for another alcoholic, because I felt that I needed him twice as much as he needed me. And that's when I came across Dr. "Bob" S. out in Akron. That was just nine years ago this summer.

And Bob S. recovered. Then we two frantically set to work on alcoholics in Akron. Well, again came this tendency to preach, again this feeling that it has to be done in some particular way, again discouragement, so our progress was very slow. But little by little we were forced to analyze our experiences and say, "This approach didn't work very well with that fellow. Why not? Let's try to put ourselves in his shoes and stop this preaching. See how we might be approached if we were he." That began to lead us to the idea that A.A. should be no set of fixed ideas, but should be a growing thing, growing out of experience. After a while, we began to reflect: "This wonderful blessing that has come to us, from what does it get its origin?" It was a spiritual awakening growing out of painful adversity. So then we began to look the harder for our mistakes, to correct them, to capitalize upon our errors. And little by little we began to grow so that there were 5 of us at the end of that first year; at the end of the second year, 15; at the end of the third year, 40; at the end of the fourth year, 100.

During those first 4 years most of us had another bad form of intolerance. As we commenced to have a little success, I am afraid our pride got the better of us and it was our tendency to forget about our friends. We were very likely to say, "Well, those doctors didn't do anything for us, and as for these sky pilots, well, they just don't know the score." And we became snobbish and patronizing.

Then we read a book by Dr. Carrel. From that book came an argument that is now a part of our system. (How much we may agree with the book in general, I don't know, but in this respect the AA's think he had something.) Dr. Carrel wrote, in effect; the world is full of analysts. We have tons of ore in the mines and we have all kinds of building materials above ground. Here is a man specializing in this, there is a man specializing in that, and another one in something else. The modern world is full of wonderful analysts and diggers, but there are very few who deliberately synthesize, who bring together different materials, who assemble new things. We are much too shy on synthetic thinking - the kind of thinking that's willing to reach out now here and now there to see if something new cannot be evolved.

On reading that book some of us realized that was just what we had been groping toward. We had been trying to build out of our own experiences. At this point we thought, "Let's reach into other people's experiences. Let's go back to our friends the doctors, let's go back to our friends the preachers, the social workers, all those who have been concerned with us, and again review what they have got above ground and bring that into the synthesis. And let us, where we can, bring them in where they will fit." So our process of trial and error began and, at the end of 4 years, the material was cast in the form of a book known as Alcoholics Anonymous. And then our friends of the press came in and they began to say nice things about us. That was not too hard for them to do because by that time we had gotten hold of the idea of not fighting anything or anyone. We began to say, "Our only motive as an organization is to help the alcoholic. And to help him we've got to reach him. Therefore, we can't collide with his prejudices. So we aren't going to get mixed up with

controversial questions, no matter what we, as individuals, think of them. We can't get concerned with prohibition, or whether to drink or not to drink. We can't get concerned with doctrine and dogma in a religious sense. We can't get into politics, because that will arouse prejudice which might keep away alcoholics who will go off and die when they might have recovered."

We began, then, to have a good press, because after all we were just a lot of very sick people trying to help those who wanted to be helped. And I am very happy to say that in all the years since, not a syllable of ridicule, or criticism, has ever been printed about us. For this we are very grateful.

That experience led us to examine some of the obscure phrases that we sometimes see in the Bible. It could not have been presented at first, but sooner or later in his second, third, or fourth year, the A.A. will be found reading his Bible quite as often - or more - as he will a standard psychological work. And you know, there we found a phrase that began to stick in the minds of some of us. It was this:

"Resist not evil." Well, after all, what is one going to think? In this modern world, where everybody is fighting, here came someone saying, "Resist not evil." What did that mean? Did it mean anything? Was there anything in that phrase for the AA's?

Well, we began to have some cases on which we could try out that principle. I remember one case, out of which some will get a kick, and I imagine some others here may be a little shocked, but I think there is a lesson in it, at least there was for us, a lesson in tolerance. One time, after A.A. had been going for 3 or 4 years, an alcoholic was brought into our house over in Brooklyn where we were holding a meeting. He is the type that some of us now call the blockbuster variety. He often tells the story himself. His name is Jimmy. Well, Jimmy came in and he was a man who had some very, very fixed points of view. As a class, we alcoholics are the worst possible people in this respect. I had many, many fixed points of view myself, but Jimmy eclipsed us all. Jimmy came into our little group - I guess there were then 30 or 40 of us meeting - and said, "I think you've got a pretty good idea here. This idea of straightening things out with other people is fine. Going over your own defects is all right. Working with other drunks, that's swell. But I don't like this God business."

He got very emphatic about it and we thought that he would quiet down or else he would get drunk. He did neither. Time went on and Jimmy did not quiet down; he began to tell the other people in the group, "You don't need this God business. Look, I'm staying sober." Finally, he got up in the meeting at our house, the first time he was invited to speak - he had then been around for a couple of months - and he went through his usual song and dance of the desirability of being honest, straightening things out with other people, etc. Then he said, "Damn this God business." At that, people began to wince. I was deeply shocked, and we had a hurried meeting of the "elders" over in the corner. We said, "This fellow has got to be suppressed. We can't have anyone ridiculing the very idea by which we live."

We got hold of Jimmy and said, "Listen, you've got to stop this anti-God talk if you're going to be around this section." Jimmy was cocky and he said, "Is that so? Isn't it a fact that you folks have been trying to write a book called Alcoholics Anonymous, and haven't you got a typewritten introduction in that book, lying over there on that shelf, and didn't we read it here about a month ago and agree to it?" And Jimmy went over and took down the introduction to Alcoholics Anonymous and read out of it: "The only requirement for membership in Alcoholics Anonymous is an honest desire to get over drinking." Jimmy said, "Do you mean it or don't you?" He rather had us there. He said, "I've been honest. Didn't I get my wife back? Aren't I paying my bills? And I'm helping other drunks every day." There was nothing we could say. Then we began secretly to hope. Our intolerance caused us to hope that he would get drunk. Well, he confounded us; he did not get drunk, and louder and louder did he get with his anti-God talk. Then we used to console ourselves and say, "Well, after all, this is a very good practice in tolerance for us, trying to accommodate ourselves to Jimmy." But we never did really get accommodated.

One day Jimmy got a job that took him out on the road, out from under the old A.A. tent, you might say. And somewhere out on the road his purely psychological system of staying dry broke wide open, and sure enough he got drunk. In those days, when an alcoholic got drunk, all the brethren would come running, because we were still very afraid for ourselves and no one knew who might be next. So there was great concern about the brother who got drunk. But in Jimmy's case there was no concern at all. He lay in a little hotel over in Providence and he began to call up long distance. He wanted money, he wanted this, and he wanted that. After a while, Jimmy hitchhiked back to New York. He put up at the house of a friend of mine, where I was staying,

and I came in late that night. The next morning, Jimmy came walking downstairs where my friend and I were consuming our morning gallon of coffee. Jimmy looked at us and said, "Oh, have you people had any meditation or prayer this morning?"

We thought he was being very sarcastic. But no, he meant it. We could not get very much out of Jimmy about his experience, but it appeared that over in that little second-rate hotel he had nearly died from the worst seizure he had ever had, and something in him had given way. I think it is just what gave way in me. It was his prideful obstinacy. He had thought to himself, "Maybe these fellows have got something with their God-business." His hand reached out, in the darkness, and touched something on his bureau. It was a Gideon Bible. Jimmy picked it up and he read from it. I do not know just what he read, and I have always had a queer reluctance to ask him. But Jimmy has not had a drink to this day, and that was about 5 years ago.

But there were other fruits of what little tolerance and understanding we did have. Not long ago I was in Philadelphia where we have a large and strong group. I was asked to speak, and the man who asked me was Jimmy, who was chairman of the meeting. About 400 people were there. I told this story about him and added: "Supposing that we had cast Jimmy out in the dark, supposing that our intolerance of his point of view had turned him away. Not only would Jimmy be dead, but how many of us would be together here tonight so happily secure?" So we in A.A. find that we have to carry tolerance of other people's viewpoints to very great lengths. As someone well put it, "Honesty gets us sober but tolerance keeps us sober."

I would like to tell, in conclusion, one story about a man in a little southern community. You know, we used to think that perhaps A.A. was just for the big places; that in a small town the social ostracism of the alcoholic would be so great that they would be reluctant to get together as a group; that there would be so much unkind gossip that we sensitive folk just could not be brought together.

One day our central office in New York received a little letter, and it came from a narcotic addict who was just leaving the Government hospital down in Lexington. Speaking of intolerance, it is a strange fact that we alcoholics are very, very intolerant of people who take "dope," and it is just as strange that they are very intolerant of us. I remember meeting one, one day, in the corridor of a hospital. I thought he was an alcoholic, so I stopped the man and asked him for a match. He drew himself up with great hauteur and said, "Get away from me you damned alcoholic." At any rate, here was a letter from a narcotic addict who explained that once upon a time he had been an alcoholic, but for 12 years had been a drug addict. He had got hold of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* and thought the spirit of that book had got hold of him, and he wanted to go back to his own little southern town that was, Shelby, North Carolina, and start an A.A. group. We were very skeptical of the offer. The very idea of a narcotic addict starting an A.A. group, even if he had once been an alcoholic! And here he was going to try to start it in a little southern town in the midst of all this local pride and gossip.

We began to get letters from him and apparently he was doing all right. He was a medical doctor, by the way, and he told us modestly, as time went on, about getting a small crowd of alcoholics together and having his trials and tribulations. Mind you, we had never seen him all this time; he had just been writing. He said that his practice had come back somewhat. And so 3 years passed. We had a little pin on a map showing that there was an Alcoholics Anonymous group at Shelby, North Carolina. It happened that I was taking a trip south to visit one of our southern groups. By this time the movement had grown and I had gotten to be kind of a big shot, so I thought, and I wondered, "Should I stop off at Shelby? You know, after all, that's kind of a small group." It is a great thing that I did stop off at Shelby, as you will soon see. Down the station came a man, followed by two others. The two in back of him were alcoholics, all right, but one looked a little bit different. I saw, as he drew near, that his lips were badly mangled, and I realized that this was the drug addict, Dr. M. In the agony of his hangovers he had chewed his lips to pieces.

Yes, it was our man, and he proved to be a wonderful person. He was really modest, and that is something you seldom see in an ex-alcoholic. He introduced me to the others, and we got into his car and went over to the town of Shelby. I soon found myself sitting at a table in one of those delightful southern ancestral homes. Here was the man's mother - and his wife. They had been married about 2 years and there was a new baby. The practice had begun to come back. Still, there was very little shoptalk at that meal; and there is no such thing as an A.A. meal without shoptalk. I said, "Indeed, this fellow is a very modest man, I never saw an alcoholic like him." He spoke very little of his accomplishments for the group. And then came the meeting that night. Here, next to the barber shop in the hotel, on the most prominent corner in Shelby, was the A.A. meeting

room, with "A.A." looming big up over the door. I thought, "Well, this chap must be some persuader."

I went inside and there were 40 alcoholics and their wives and friends. We had our meeting; I talked too much as I always do, and the meeting was over. I began to reflect that this was the largest Alcoholics Anonymous in all America in proportion to the size of the town. What a wonderful accomplishment! The next morning, my telephone rang in the hotel. A man was downstairs and he said, "I'd like to come up. There are some things you ought to know about Dr. M. who got the A.A. group together in this town."

Up came this individual, and said, "You know, I too, was once an alcoholic but for 22 years I've been on dope. I used to meet our friend Dr. M. over in Lexington, and when he got out of there and came back here, I heard he'd beaten the dope game. So when I left, I started for Shelby, but on my way I got back on morphine again. He took me into his home and took me off it. Yes, I used to be a respectable citizen of this state, I helped organize a lot of banks here, but I've heard from my family only second-hand for many years. It's my guess you don't know what southern pride is, and you haven't any idea what this man faced when he came back to this town to face the music. People wouldn't speak to him for months. They'd say, "Why this fellow, the son of our leading doctor, goes away, studies medicine, comes back, and he's a drunk, and after a while, he's on the dope. The townspeople wouldn't have much to do with him when he first came, and I'm ashamed to say that the local drunks wouldn't either, because they said, we aren't going to be sobered up by a dope addict. But you see, Dr. M. himself had once been an alcoholic, so that he could get that indispensable bond of identification across. Little by little, alcoholics began to rally around him."

My visitor continued, "Well, that was the beginning. Intolerance, misunderstanding, gossip, scandal, failure, defeat, all those things faced our friend when he came into this town. And that was 3 years ago. Well, Bill, you've seen his mother, you've seen his wife, you've seen his baby, and you've seen the group. But he hasn't told you that he now has the largest medical practice in this whole town, if not in the county. And he hasn't told you that he has been made head of our local hospital. And I know you don't know this - every year in this town the citizens have a great meeting at which they cast a ballot, and last spring, at the annual casting of the ballot, the people of this town almost unanimously declared by their ballot that Dr. M. had been the town's most useful citizen during the 12 months gone by." So I thought to myself, "So you were the big shot who planned to go straight past Shelby." I looked at my visitor and said, "Indeed, What hath God wrought!"

## DISCUSSION

*Potts:* Mr. W., is it possible for someone who hasn't been drunk, or ever been an alcoholic, to do what an alcoholic has done? Have you found any possibility that laymen or preachers could begin to do such work? Is there anything in your experience that might lead to that possibility?

*Lecturer:* Yes, there is a great deal in our experience that leads to the idea that our friends of the nonalcoholic world can participate. While it's true that the core of our process is the transmission of these things from one alcoholic to another, it is a fact that very often a minister or a doctor can lay the groundwork for our approach. Then, too, there is a class of people that we alcoholics flatter by calling them "dry" alcoholics. In other words, they're neurotics of our description who don't drink, and we recognize them as more or less kindred spirits; sometimes they approach our group and are well received. On the other hand, sometimes people who, from their life experience, just couldn't get the pitch or couldn't make the identification would be regarded by some of the groups as complete outsiders. You know, one of our other faults is that of snobbishness. We AA's have become extremely snobbish, strange as that may be. But it is true that this is a synthesis and we draw upon the resources of both medicine and religion. Of course, the doctor helps us on the physical side of the treatment. He can often prepare the groundwork with the potential by pointing out that he has the symptoms of a well-nigh fatal malady. The preacher, or the friend, would do well to emphasize the idea of sickness rather than of immorality. The alcoholic knows he's a louse in most cases, even though he won't admit it, and to be told so once more by someone who never took a glass of beer seems to annoy him greatly. That is not because the other fellow is wrong; we're wrong, but we're just built that way and it's a matter of taking things as they are.

*Stoneburner:* What can ministers do to cooperate with A.A.?

*Lecturer:* Of course the approach to the alcoholic is everything. I think the preacher could do well if he does as we do. First find out all you can about the case, how the man reacts, whether he wants to get over his drinking or not. You see, it is very difficult to make any impressions upon a man who still wants to drink. At

some point in their drinking career, most alcoholics get punished enough so that they want to stop, but then it's far too late to do it alone. Sometimes, if the alcoholic can be impressed with the fact that he is a sick man, or a potentially sick man, then, in effect, you raise the bottom up to him instead of allowing him to drop down those extra hard years to reach it. I don't know any substitute for sympathy and understanding, as much as the outsider can have. No preaching, no moralizing, but the emphasis on the idea that the alcoholic is a sick man.

In other words, the minister might first say to the alcoholic, "Well, all my life I've misunderstood you people, I've taken you people to be immoral by choice and perverse and weak, but now I realize that even if there have been such factors, they really no longer count, now you're a sick man." You might win the patient by not placing yourself up on a hilltop and looking down on him, but by getting down to some level of understanding that he gets, or partially gets. Then, if you can present this thing as a fatal and progressive malady, and you can present our group as a group of people who are not seeking to do anything against his will - we merely want to help if he wants to be helped - then sometimes you've laid the groundwork.

I think the clergyman can often do a great deal with the family. You see, we alcoholics are prone to talk too much about ourselves without sufficiently considering the collateral effects. For example, any family, wife and children, who have had to live with an alcoholic 10 or 15 years, are bound to be rather neurotic and distorted themselves. They just can't help it. After all, when you expect the old gent to come home on a shutter every night, it's wearing. Children get a very distorted point of view; so does the wife. Well, if they constantly hear it emphasized that this fellow is a terrible sinner, that he's a rotter, that he's in disgrace, and all that sort of thing, you're not improving the condition of the family at all because, as they become persuaded of it, they get highly intolerant of the alcoholic and that merely generates more intolerance in him. Therefore, the gulf that must be bridged is widened, and that is why moralizing pushes people, who might have something to offer, further away from the alcoholic. You may say that it shouldn't be so, but it's one of those things that is so.

*Robinson:* Would local A.A. groups be interested in preventing the development of alcoholics by giving cooperation to local option movements or other programs to that end?

*Lecturer:* I don't think so. That may be a very hard thing to explain. I'm sure that many people who are in the reform movement are very, very much disappointed with AA's because they don't seem to want to cooperate. Now I make haste to say right away that on this question of reform, this question of prohibition or moderation or what have you, there are just as many points of view among the AA's and their families as there are among the next thousand people who walk by this place. Therefore, no A.A. group can very well say, "We have a particular view about prohibition, or this or that degree of prohibition, or about any educational program that involves controversial issues." You see we AA's are of particular and unique use to other alcoholics, therefore we have to be very careful about anything that is going to get between them and us. In other words, we can't do anything that is going to arouse prejudice. For example, if I were to make the statement here that I believe in prohibition, or that I don't believe in prohibition, and either of those points of view were quoted publicly, I would inevitably arouse prejudice. If I said, "Well I don't believe in prohibition and that's my personal view," then a great many good people who do believe in prohibition would get annoyed; they might go out and say to the alcoholic's wife, "Well, I don't like that crowd of AA's because they don't believe in prohibition and look what liquor has done to your husband." So she doesn't suggest A.A. to her husband and he eventually dies because we have been foolish enough to arouse prejudice in somebody's mind.

Likewise, if we said, "Well, we believe in prohibition," and that were quoted, every alcoholic, almost without exception, reading that in the newspapers, would say, "Why, that's a bunch of reformers! And none of that for me." He shouldn't react that way, but he does. Since ours is a life and death job, you can understand why, as a group, we are very careful not to express any opinions on controversial questions. As a group we have no opinion on any kind of controversy regardless of the merit of either side, because if we show such an interest, as a group, then we cut down our own peculiar usefulness.

It isn't that there aren't bonds of sympathy between us and a great many points of view. It isn't that individuals among us don't have points of view. But I wouldn't for the world, in a place like this, express my personal views about any controversial question lest my opinion be imputed publicly to the group, to A.A. Then we would be thrown into a controversy that could only prejudice our efforts and not help anybody very much. It isn't a lack of understanding or lack of sympathy; it's a matter of policy about which we have to be unusually careful.

*Question:* How many drug addicts are there in the A.A. and in the organization similar to A.A., which operates among drug addicts?

*Lecturer:* We have quite a number of drug addicts who were once alcoholics. So far, I don't know of any case of pure drug addiction that we have been able to approach. In other words, we can no more approach a simon-pure addict than the outsider can usually approach us. We are in exactly the same position with them that the doctor and the clergyman have been in respect to the alcoholic. We just don't talk that fellow's language. He always looks at us and says, "Well, those alcoholics are the scum of the earth and besides, what do they know about addiction?" Now, however, since we have a good number of addicts who were once alcoholics, those addicts in their turn are making an effort, here and there, to transfer the thing over to the straight addict. In that way we hope the bridge is going to be crossed. There may be a case here and there that has been helped. But in all, I suppose, there may be around 50 cases of real morphine addiction in former alcoholics who have been helped by A.A. Of course we have a great many barbital users, but we don't consider those people particularly difficult if they really want to do something about it, and particularly if it's associated with liquor. They seem to get out of it after a while. But where you have morphine, or some of those derivatives, then it gets very tough. Then you have to have a "dope" talk to a "dope," and I hope that we can find, some day, a bridge to the addict.

*Rogers:* How many members do you have in A.A.? How many A.A. groups are there?

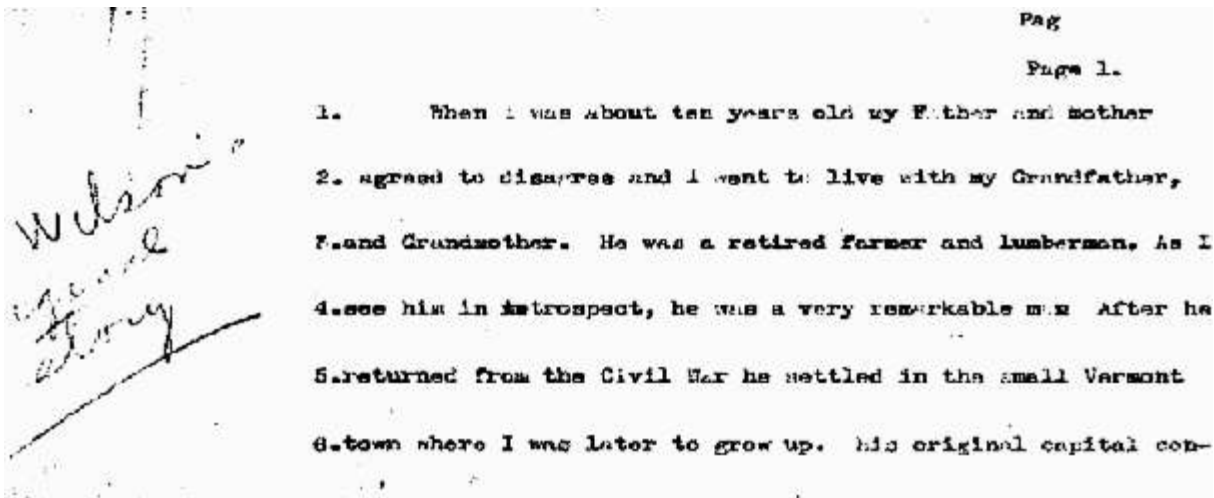
*Lecturer:* I might have made that point, although, I suppose that the A.A. 's here would have advertised it from the housetops. We have, I think, about 15,000 members, and A.A. groups are in about 367 places. A.A. is showing a capacity to spread by way of literature and correspondence even outside of the United States. We have a very successful group now in Honolulu and until recently they had had no contacts with us except by mail.

*Question:* If an alcoholic comes to an A.A. meeting under the influence of alcohol, how do you treat him or handle him during the meeting itself?

*Lecturer:* Groups will usually run amuck on that sort of question. At first we are likely to say that we're going to be supermen and save every drunk in town. The fact is that a great many of them just don't want to stop. They come, but they interfere very greatly with the meeting. Then, being still rather intolerant, the group will swing way over in the other direction and say, "No drunks around these meetings." We get forcible with them and put them out of the meeting, saying, "You're welcome here if your sober." But the general rule in most places is that if a person comes for the first or second time and can sit quietly in the meeting, without creating an uproar, nobody bothers him. On the other hand, if he's a chronic "slipper" and interferes with the meetings, we lead him out gently, or maybe not so gently, on the theory that one man cannot be permitted to hold up the recovery of others. The theory is "the greatest good for the greatest number."

## 6 Bill Wilson's Original Story

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### Handwriting: Wilson's Original Story

*Note: All pages are 8.5" by 14"; ~~marked text~~ means more than one letter was typed over another, or text was crossed out with x though still readable; typos in the manuscript or strange language are left as is; some areas that were hard to read are replicated as best as possible.*

Page

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  
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  
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 boys ~~hav~~  
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  
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  
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 phtce 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 herrelatives 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-  
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 Algernon'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. ploitation 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 ~~the~~ 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.  
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 infallibility  
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  
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 ever 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  
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 too 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 ~~am~~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 off 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 people's 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 ~~f~~ 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 cocksureness,  
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-inlaw 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, lest 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 devoteeof Bacchus. Current  
709. rumor had it that he had been committedto 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 ~~atco~~  
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 ~~tr~~ human beings I had ~~trutele~~  
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 then 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. 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 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 amoeba, 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 and  
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. rythm, 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 practised  
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 perfered

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 hypocritical, 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 strengthened  
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 he 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 life's 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 was  
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 was  
1009. 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 to 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 people's  
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.

(Resentments, self pity, fear, pride.)

1033. my friend pointed out that resentment, self-pity, fear, in-  
1034. feriority, pride and egotism, were ~~things~~ attitudes which  
1035. distorted one's perspective ~~and~~ 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 ~~clean~~. 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 an other 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 w 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 t road at last.  
1071. 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 perfered  
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 judgement 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 a s fast had  
1098. to be at all times present. This principle of making ammends  
1099. was to be continued in the future for only by keeping myself free  
2100. of bad relationships with others could I expect to receive the  
1101. Power and direction so indispensible to my new and larger useful-  
1102. ness . This sort of discipline would hilp 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. espically 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 simptom  
 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 affeated , my thinking and action  
 1135. was woefully distorted thru infection frim the mire of  
 1136. self pity, resentment, fear and remorse in which I now  
 1137. wallowed . The motive behing 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 ~~intirely~~ 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 axdrastic  
 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 wilfulness , 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 life. 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 ~~havoc~~  
1178. havoc than those confessedly immoral and ~~trucked~~ 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]*

## 7 Bill Wilson (from Time Magazine)

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*“From the Rubble of a Wasted Life, He Overcame Alcoholism and Founded the 12-step Program That Has Helped Millions of Others Do the Same, By Susan Cheever. Susan Cheever, a novelist and memoirist, is the author of “Note Found in a Bottle: My Life as a Drinker”*

Second Lieut. Bill Wilson didn't think twice when the first butler he had ever seen offered him a drink. The 22-year-old soldier didn't think about how alcohol had destroyed his family. He didn't think about the Yankee temperance movement of his childhood or his loving fiancée Lois Burnham or his emerging talent for leadership. He didn't think about anything at all. “I had found the elixir of life,” he wrote. Wilson's last drink, 17 years later, when alcohol had destroyed his health and his career, precipitated an epiphany that would change his life and the lives of millions of other alcoholics. Incarcerated for the fourth time at Manhattan's Towns Hospital in 1934, Wilson had a spiritual awakening—a flash of white light, a liberating awareness of God—that led to the founding of Alcoholics Anonymous and Wilson's revolutionary 12-step program, the successful remedy for alcoholism. The 12 steps have also generated successful programs for eating disorders, gambling, narcotics, debting, sex addiction and people affected by others' addictions. Aldous Huxley called him “the greatest social architect of our century.”

William Griffith Wilson grew up in a quarry town in Vermont. When he was 10, his hard-drinking father headed for Canada, and his mother moved to Boston, leaving the sickly child with her parents. As a soldier, and then as a businessman, Wilson drank to alleviate his depressions and to celebrate his Wall Street success. Married in 1918, he and Lois toured the country on a motorcycle and appeared to be a prosperous, promising young couple. By 1933, however, they were living on charity in her parents' house on Clinton Street in Brooklyn, N.Y. Wilson had become an unemployable drunk who disdained religion and even panhandled for cash.

Inspired by a friend who had stopped drinking, Wilson went to meetings of the Oxford Group, an evangelical society founded in Britain by Pennsylvania Frank Buchman. And as Wilson underwent a barbiturate-and-belladonna cure called “purge and puke,” which was state-of-the-art alcoholism treatment at the time, his brain spun with phrases from Oxford Group meetings, Carl Jung and William James' “Varieties of Religious Experience,” which he read in the hospital. Five sober months later, Wilson went to Akron, Ohio, on business. The deal fell through, and he wanted a drink. He stood in the lobby of the Mayflower Hotel, entranced by the sounds of the bar across the hall. Suddenly he became convinced that by helping another alcoholic, he could save himself.

Through a series of desperate telephone calls, he found Dr. Robert Smith, a skeptical drunk whose family persuaded him to give Wilson 15 minutes. Their meeting lasted for hours. A month later, Dr. Bob had his last drink, and that date, June 10, 1935, is the official birth date of A.A., which is based on the idea that only an alcoholic can help another alcoholic. “Because of our kinship in suffering,” Bill wrote, “our channels of contact have always been charged with the language of the heart.”

The Burnham house on Clinton Street became a haven for drunks. “My name is Bill W., and I'm an alcoholic,” he told assorted houseguests and visitors at meetings. To spread the word, he began writing down his principles for sobriety. Each chapter was read by the Clinton Street group and sent to Smith in Akron for more editing. The book had a dozen provisional titles, among them “The Way Out” and “The Empty Glass.” Edited to 400 pages, it was finally called “Alcoholics Anonymous,” and this became the group's name.

But the book, although well reviewed, wasn't selling. Wilson tried unsuccessfully to make a living as a wire-rope salesman. A.A. had about a hundred members, but many were still drinking. Meanwhile, in 1939, the bank foreclosed on the Clinton Street house, and the couple began years of homelessness, living as guests in borrowed rooms and at one point staying in temporary quarters above the A.A. clubhouse on 24th Street in Manhattan. In 1940 John D. Rockefeller Jr. held an A.A. dinner and was impressed enough to create a trust to provide Wilson with \$30 a week—but no more. The tycoon felt that money would corrupt the group's spirit. Then, in March 1941, The Saturday Evening Post published an article on A.A., and suddenly thousands of letters and requests poured in. Attendance at meetings doubled and tripled. Wilson had reached his audience. In “Twelve Traditions,” Wilson set down the suggested bylaws of Alcoholics Anonymous. In them, he created an

enduring blueprint for an organization with a maximum of individual freedom and no accumulation of power or money. Public anonymity ensured humility. No contributions were required; no member could contribute more than \$1,000.

Today more than 2 million A.A. members in 150 countries hold meetings in church basements, hospital conference rooms and school gyms, following Wilson's informal structure. Members identify themselves as alcoholics and share their stories; there are no rules or entry requirements, and many members use only first names.

Wilson believed the key to sobriety was a change of heart. The suggested 12 steps include an admission of powerlessness, a moral inventory, a restitution for harm done, a call to service and a surrender to some personal God. In A.A., God can be anything from a radiator to a patriarch. Influenced by A.A., the American Medical Association has redefined alcoholism as a chronic disease, not a failure of willpower.

As Alcoholics Anonymous grew, Wilson became its principal symbol. He helped create a governing structure for the program, the General Service Board, and turned over his power. "I have become a pupil of the A.A. movement rather than the teacher," he wrote. A smoker into his 70s, he died of pneumonia and emphysema in Miami, where he went for treatment in 1971. To the end, he clung to the principles and the power of anonymity. He was always Bill W., refusing to take money for counseling and leadership. He turned down many honors, including a degree from Yale. And he declined this magazine's offer to put him on the cover—even with his back turned.

## 8 “Alcoholics and God,” Liberty Magazine, by Morris Marker. September 30, 1939

*This article is mentioned in “AA Comes of Age” several times. Bill evades the fact that this piece helped much in keeping AA afloat in late 1939-1941, that it helped to sell “several” hundred books, and finally brought in an income whereby they could start paying Ruth.*

*Is There Hope for Habitual Drunkards? A Cure That Borders on the Miraculous-and it Works!*

For twenty-five or thirty cents we buy a glass of fluid which is pleasant to the taste, and which contains within its small measure a store of warmth and good-fellowship and stimulation, of release from momentary cares and anxieties. That would be a drink of whisky, of course-whisky, which is one of Nature’s most generous gifts to man, and at the same time one of his most elusive problems. It is a problem because, like many of his greatest benefits, man does not quite know how to control it. Many experiments have been made, the most spectacular being the queer nightmare of prohibition, which left such deep scars upon the morals and the manners of our nation. Millions of dollars have been spent by philanthropists and crusaders to spread the doctrine of temperance. In our time the most responsible of the distillers are urging us to use their wares sensibly, without excess.

But to a certain limited number of our countrymen neither prohibition nor wise admonishments have any meaning, because they are helpless when it comes to obeying them. I speak of the true alcoholics, and before going any further I had best explain what that term means.

For a medical definition of the term, I quote an eminent doctor who, has spent twenty-five years treating such people in a highly regarded private hospital: “We believe . . . that the action of alcohol in chronic alcoholics is a manifestation of an allergy-that the phenomenon of craving is limited to this class and never occurs in the average temperate drinker. These allergic types can never safely use alcohol in any form at all.”

They are, he goes on, touched with physical and mental quirks which prevent them from controlling their own actions. They suffer from what some doctors call a “compulsion neurosis.” They know liquor is bad for them but periodically, they are driven by a violent and totally uncontrollable desire for a drink. And after that first drink, the deluge.’

Now these people are genuinely sick. The liquor habit with them is not a vice. It is a specific illness of body and mind, and should be treated as such.

By far the most successful cure is that used by the hospital whose head doctor I have quoted. There is nothing secret about it. It has the endorsement of the medical profession. It is, fundamentally, a process of dehydration: of removing harmful toxins from all parts of the body faster than Nature could accomplish it. Within five or six days-two weeks at the maximum- the patient’s body is utterly free from alcoholic poisons. Which means that the physical craving is completely cured, because the body cries out for alcohol only when alcohol is already there. The patient has no feeling of revulsion toward whisky. He simply is not interested in it. He has recovered. But wait. How permanent is his recovery?

Our doctor says this: “ Though the aggregate of full recoveries through physical and psychiatric effort its considerable, we doctors must admit that we have made little impression upon the problem as a whole. For there are many types which do not respond to the psychological approach.

“I do not believe that true alcoholism is entirely a matter of individual mental control. I have had many men who had, for example, worked for a period of months on some business deal which was to be settled on a certain date.... For reasons they could not afterward explain, they took a drink a day or two prior to the date . . . and the important engagement was not even kept. These men were not drinking to escape. They were drinking to overcome a craving beyond their mental control.

“The classification of alcoholics is most difficult. There are, of course,” the psychopaths who are emotionally unstable.... They are overremorseful and make many resolutions -but never a decision.

“There is the type who is unwilling to admit that he cannot take a drink just like the rest of the boys. He does tricks with his drinking- changing his brand, or drinking only after meals or changing his companions.

None of this helps him strengthen his control and be like other people. Then there are types entirely normal in every respect except in the effect which alcohol has upon them . . .

“All these, and many others, have one symptom in common: They cannot start drinking without developing the phenomenon of craving.... The only relief we have to suggest is complete abstinence from alcohol “ But are these unfortunate people really capable, mentall, of abstaining completely? Their bodies may be cured of craving. Can their minds be cured? Can they be rid of the deadly “compulsion neurosis”?

Among physicians the general opinion seems to be that chronic alcoholics are doomed. . .

But wait!

Within the last four years, evidence has appeared which has startled hard-boiled medical men by proving that the compulsion neurosis can be entirely eliminated. Perhaps you are one of those cynical people who will turn away when I say that the root of this new discovery is religion. But be patient for a moment. About three years ago a man appeared at the hospital in New York of which our doctor is head physician. It was his third “cure.” Since his first visit he had lost his job, his friends, his health, and his self-respect. He was now living on the earnings of his wife.

He had tried every method he could find to cure his disease: had read all the great philosophers and psychologists. He had tried religion but he simply could not accept it. It would not seem real and personal to him.

He went through the cure as usual and came out of it in very low spirits. He was lying in bed, emptied of vitality and thought, when suddenly, a strange and totally unexpected thrill went through his body and mind. He called out for the doctor. When the doctor came in, the man looked up at him and grinned.

“Well, doc,” he said, “my troubles are all over. I’ve got religion.”

“Why, you’re the last man . . .”

“Sure, I know all that. But I’ve got it. And I know I’m cured of this drinking business for good.” He talked with great intensity for a while and then said, “ Listen, doc. I’ve got to see some other patient- one that is about to be dismissed.”

The doctor demurred. It all sounded a trifle fanatical. But finally he consented. And thus was born the movement which is now flourishing with almost sensational success as Alcoholics Anonymous.”

Here is how it works: Every member of the group-which is to say every person who has been saved-is under obligation to carry on the work, to save other men. That, indeed, is a fundamental part of his own mental cure. He gains strength and confidence by active work with other victims.

He finds his subject among acquaintances, at a “cure” institution or perhaps by making inquiry of a preacher, a priest, or a doctor. He begins his talk with his new acquaintance by telling him the true nature of his disease and how remote are his chances for permanent cure.

When he has convinced the man that he is a true alcoholic and must never drink again, he continues:

“You had better admit that this thing is beyond your own control. You’ve tried to solve it by yourself, and you have failed. All right. Why not put the whole thing into the hands of Somebody Else?”

Even though the man might be an atheist or agnostic, he will almost always admit that there is some sort of force operating in the world-some cosmic power weaving a design. And his new friend will say:

“I don’t care what you call this Somebody Else. We call it God. But whatever you want to call it, you had better put yourself into its hands. Just admit you’re licked, and say, `Here I am, Somebody Else. Take care of this thing for me.’” The new subject will generally consent to attend one of the weekly meetings of the movement.

He will find twenty-five or thirty ex-drunks gathered in somebody’s home for a pleasant evening. There are no sermons. The talk is gay or serious as the mood strikes. The new candidate cannot avoid saying to himself, “These birds are ex-drunks. And look at them! They must have something. It sounds kind of screwy, but whatever it is I wish to heaven I could get it too.”

One or another of the members keeps working on him from day to day. And presently the miracle-But let me give you an example: I sat down in a quiet room with Mr. B., a stockily built man of fifty with a rather stern, intelligent face.

“I’ll tell you what happened a year ago.” He said. “I was completely washed up. Financially I was all right, because my money is in a trust fund. But I was a drunken bum of the worst sort. My family was almost

crazy with my incessant sprees.”

“I took the cure in New York.” (At the hospital we have mentioned.) “When I came out of it, the doctor suggested I go to one of these meetings the boys were holding. I just laughed. My father was an atheist and had taught me to be one. But the doctor kept saying it wouldn’t do me any harm, and I went.”

“I sat around listening to the jabber. It didn’t register with me at all. I went home. But the next week I found myself drawn to the meeting. And again they worked on me while I shook my head. I said, ‘It seems O.K. with you, boys, but I don’t even know your language. Count me out.’”

“Somebody said the Lord’s Prayer, and the meeting broke up. I walked three blocks to the subway station. Just as I was about to go down the stairs—bang!” He snapped fingers hard. “It happened! I don’t like that word miracle, but that’s all I can call it. The lights in the street seemed to flare up. My feet seemed to leave the pavement. A kind of shiver went over me, and I burst out crying.

“I went back to the house where we had met, and rang the bell, and Bill let me in. We talked until two o’clock in the morning. I haven’t touched a drop since, and I’ve set four other fellows on the same road.

The doctor, a nonreligious man himself, was at first utterly astonished at the results that began to appear among his patients. But then he put his knowledge of psychiatry and psychology to work.

These men were experiencing a psychic change. Their so-called “compulsion neurosis” was being altered—transferred from liquor to something else. Their psychological necessity to drink was being changed to a psychological necessity to rescue their fellow victims from the plight that made themselves so miserable. It is not a new idea. It is a powerful and effective working out of an old idea. We all know that the alcoholic has an urge to share his troubles. Psychoanalysts use this urge. They say to the alcoholic, in basic terms: “You can’t lick this problem yourself. Give me the problem—transfer the whole thing to me and let me take the whole responsibility.” But the psychoanalyst, being of human clay, is not often a big enough man for that job. The patient simply cannot generate enough confidence in him. But the patient can have enough confidence in God—once he has gone through the mystical experience of recognizing God. And upon that principle the Alcoholic Foundation rests.

The medical profession, in general, accepts the principle as sound.

“Alcoholics Anonymous” have consolidated their activities in an organization called the Alcoholic Foundation. It is a nonprofit-making enterprise. Nobody connected with it is paid a penny. It is not a crusading movement. It condemns neither liquor nor the liquor industry. Its whole concern is with the rescue of allergic alcoholics, the small proportion of the population who must be cured or perish. It preaches no particular religion and has no dogma, no rules. Every man conceives God according to his own lights.

Groups have grown up in other cities. The affairs of the Foundation are managed by three members of the movement and four prominent business and professional men, not alcoholics, who volunteered their services.

The Foundation has lately published a book, called Alcoholics Anonymous. And if alcoholism is a problem in your family or among your friends, I heartily recommend that you get hold of a copy. It may very well help you to guide a sick man—an allergic alcoholic—on the way to health and contentment.

## 9 *Cleveland Plain Dealer* Articles about Alcoholics Anonymous (1939)

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**“Alcoholics Anonymous Makes its Stand Here (Part I),” by Elrick B. Davis.**

*Much has been written about Alcoholics Anonymous, an organization doing major work in reclaiming the habitual drinker. This is the first of a series describing the work the group is doing in Cleveland.*

*Success.* By now it is a rare Clevelander who does not know, or know of, at least one man or woman of high talent whose drinking had become a public scandal, and who suddenly has straightened out “over night,” as the saying goes—the liquor habit licked. Men who have lost \$15,000 a year jobs have them back again. Drunks who have taken every “cure” available to the most lavish purse, only to take them over again with equally spectacular lack of success, suddenly have become total abstainers, apparently without anything to account for their reform. Yet something must account for the seeming miracle. Something does. Alcoholics Anonymous has reached the town.

*Fellowship.* Every Thursday evening at the home of some ex-drunk in Cleveland, 40 or 50 former hopeless rummies meet for a social evening during which they buck each other up. Nearly every Saturday evening they and their families have a party — just as gay as any other party held that evening despite the fact that there is nothing alcoholic to drink. From time to time they have a picnic, where everyone has a roaring good time without the aid of even one bottle of beer. Yet these are men and women who, until recently, had scarcely been sober a day for years, and members of their families who all that time had been emotionally distraught, social and economic victims of another’s addiction.

These ex-rummies, as they call themselves, suddenly salvaged from the most socially noisome of fates, are the members of the Cleveland Fellowship of an informal society called “Alcoholics Anonymous.” Who they are cannot be told, because the name means exactly what it says. But any incurable alcoholic who really wants to be cured will find the members of the Cleveland chapter eager to help.

The society maintains a “blind” address: The Alcoholic Foundation, Box 657, Church Street Annex Postoffice, New York City. Inquiries made there are forwarded to a Cleveland banker, who is head of the local Fellowship, or to a former big league ball player who is recruiting officer of the Akron Fellowship, which meets Wednesday evenings in a mansion loaned for the purpose by a non-alcoholic supporter of the movement.

*Cured.* The basic point about Alcoholics Anonymous is that it is a fellowship of “cured” alcoholics. And that both old-line medicine and modern psychiatry had agreed on the one point that no alcoholic could be cured. Repeat the astounding fact:  
These are cured.

They have cured each other.

They have done it by adopting, with each other’s aid, what they call “a spiritual way of life.”

“Incurable” alcoholism is not a moral vice. It is a disease. No dipsomaniac drinks because he wants to. He drinks because he can’t help drinking.

He will drink when he had rather die than take a drink. That is why so many alcoholics die as suicides. He will get drunk on the way home from the hospital or sanitarium that has just discharged him as “cured.” He will get drunk at the wake of a friend who died of drink. He will swear off for a year, and suddenly find himself half-seas over, well into another “bust.” He will get drunk at the gates of an insane asylum where he has just visited an old friend, hopeless victim of “wet brain.”

*Prayer.* These are the alcoholics that “Alcoholics Anonymous” cures. Cure is impossible until the victim is convinced that nothing that he or a “cure” hospital can do, can help. He must know that his disease is fatal. He must be convinced that he is hopelessly sick of body, and of mind — and of soul. He must be eager to accept help from any source — even God.

Alcoholics Anonymous has a simple explanation for an alcoholic’s physical disease. It was provided them by the head of one of New York City’s oldest and most famous “cure” sanitariums. The alcoholic is allergic to alcohol. One drink sets up a poisonous craving that only more of the poison can assuage. That is why

after the first drink the alcoholic cannot stop.

They have a psychiatric theory equally simple and convincing. Only an alcoholic can understand another alcoholic's mental processes and state. And they have an equally simple, if unorthodox, conception of God.

### **“Alcoholics Anonymous Makes its Stand Here (Part II),” by Elrick B. Davis.**

*In a previous installment, Mr. Davis outlined the plan of Alcoholics Anonymous, an organization of former drinkers who have found a solution to liquor in association for mutual aid. This is the second of a series.*

*Religion.* There is no blinking the fact that Alcoholics Anonymous, the amazing society of ex-drunks who have cured each other of an incurable disease, is religious. Its members have cured each other frankly with the help of God. Every cured member of the Cleveland Fellowship of the society, like every cured member of the other chapters now established in Akron, New York, and elsewhere in the country, is cured with the admission that he submitted his plight wholeheartedly to a Power Greater than Himself.

He has admitted his conviction that science cannot cure him, that he cannot control his pathological craving for alcohol himself, and that he cannot be cured by the prayers, threats, or pleas of his family, employers, or friends. His cure is a religious experience. He had to have God's aid. He had to submit to a spiritual housecleaning.

Alcoholics Anonymous is a completely informal society, wholly latitudinarian in every respect but one. It prescribes a simple spiritual discipline, which must be followed rigidly every day. The discipline is fully explained in a book published by the society.

*Discipline.* That is what makes the notion of the cure hard for the usual alcoholic to take, at first glance, no matter how complete his despair. He wants to join no cult. He has lost faith, if he ever had it, in the power of religion to help him. But each of the cures accomplished by Alcoholics Anonymous is a spiritual awakening. The ex-drunk has adopted what the society calls “a spiritual way of life.”

How, then, does Alcoholics Anonymous differ from the other great religious movements which have changed social history in America? Wherein does the yielding to God that saves a member of this society from his fatal disease, differ from that which brought the Great Awakening that Jonathan Edwards preached, or the New Light revival of a century ago, or the flowering of Christian Science, or the campmeeting evangelism of the old Kentucky-Ohio frontier, or the Oxford Group successes nowadays?

Every member of Alcoholics Anonymous may define God to suit himself. God to him may be the Christian God defined by the Thomism of the Roman Catholic Church. Or the stern Father of the Calvinist. Or the Great Manitou of the American Indian. Or the Implicit Good assumed in the logical morality of Confucius. Or Allah, or Buddha, or the Jehovah of the Jews. Or Christ the Scientist. Or no more than the Kindly Spirit implicitly assumed in the “atheism” of a Col. Robert Ingersoll.

*Aid.* If the alcoholic who comes to the fellowship for help believes in God, in the specific way of any religion or sect, the job of cure is easier. But if all that the pathological drunk can do is to say, with honesty, in his heart: “Supreme Something, I am done for without more-than-human help,” that is enough for Alcoholics Anonymous to work on. The noble prayers, the great literatures, and the time-proved disciplines of the established religions are a great help. But as far as the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous is concerned, a pathological drunk can call God “It” if he wants to, and is willing to accept Its aid. If he'll do that, he can be cured.

Poll of “incurable” alcoholics who now, cured, are members of the Cleveland Fellowship of the society, shows that this has made literally life-saving religious experience possible to men and women who, otherwise, could not have accepted spiritual help. Poll shows also that collectively their religious experience has covered every variety known to religious psychology. Some have had an experience as blindingly bright as that which struck down Saul on the road to Damascus. Some are not even yet intellectually convinced except to the degree that they see that living their lives on a spiritual basis has cured them of a fatal disease. Drunk for years because they couldn't help it, now it never occurs to them to want a drink. Whatever accounts for that, they are willing to call “God.”

Some find more help in formal religion than do others. A good many of the Akron chapter find help in the practices of the Oxford Group. The Cleveland chapter includes a number of Catholics and several Jews, and at least one man to whom "God" is "Nature." Some practice family devotions. Some simply cogitate about "It" in the silence of their minds. But that the Great Healer cured them with only the help of their fellow ex-drunks, they all admit.

### **"Alcoholics Anonymous Makes its Stand Here (Part III)," by Elrick B. Davis**

*In two previous articles, Mr. Davis told of Alcoholics Anonymous, an organization of former drinkers, banded to overcome their craving for liquor and to help others to forego the habit. This is the third of a series.*

*Help.* The ex-drunks cured of their medically incurable alcoholism by membership in Alcoholic Anonymous, know that the way to keep themselves from backsliding is to find another pathological alcoholic to help. Or to start a new man toward cure. That is the way that the Akron chapter of the society, and from that, the Cleveland fellowship was begun.

One of the earliest of the cured rummies had talked a New York securities house into taking a chance that he was really through with liquor. He was commissioned to do a stock promotion chore in Akron. If he should succeed, his economic troubles also would be cured. Years of alcoholism had left him bankrupt as well as a physical and social wreck before Alcoholics Anonymous had saved him.

His Akron project failed. Here he was on a Saturday afternoon in a strange hotel in a town where he did not know a soul, business hopes blasted, and with scarcely money enough to get him back to New York with a report that would leave him without the last job he knew of for him in the world. If ever disappointment deserved drowning, that seemed the time. A bunch of happy folk were being gay at the bar.

At the other end of the lobby the Akron church directory was framed in glass. He looked up the name of a clergyman. The cleric told him of a woman who was worried about a physician who was a nightly solitary drunk. The doctor had been trying to break himself of alcoholism for twenty years. He had tried all of the dodges: Never anything but light wines or beer; never a drink alone; never a drink before his work was done; a certain few number of drinks and then stop; never drink in a strange place; never drink in a familiar place; never mix the drinks; always mix the drinks; never drink before eating; drink only while eating; drink and then eat heavily to stop the craving and all of the rest.

Every alcoholic knows all of the dodges. Every alcoholic has tried them all. That is why an uncured alcoholic thinks someone must have been following him around to learn his private self-invented devices, when a member of Alcoholics Anonymous talks to him. Time comes when any alcoholic has tried them all, and found that none of them work.

*Support.* The doctor had just taken his first evening drink when the rubber baron's wife telephoned to ask him to come to her house to meet a friend from New York. He dared not, his wife would not, offend her by refusing. He agreed to go on his wife's promise that they would leave after 15 minutes. His evening jitters were pretty bad.

He met the New Yorker at 5 o'clock. They talked until 11:15. After that he stayed "dry" for three weeks. Then he went to a convention in Atlantic City. That was a bender. The cured New Yorker was at his bedside when he came to. That was June 10, 1935. The doctor hasn't had a drink since. Every Akron and Cleveland cure by Alcoholics Anonymous is a result.

The point the society illustrates by that bit of history is that only an alcoholic can talk turkey to an alcoholic. The doctor knew all of the "medicine" of his disease. He knew all of the psychiatry. One of his patients had "taken the cure" 72 times. Now he is cured, by fellowship in Alcoholics Anonymous. Orthodox science left the physician licked. He also knew all of the excuses, as well as the dodges, and the deep and fatal shame that makes a true alcoholic sure at last that he can't win. Alcoholic death or the bughouse will get him in time.

The cured member of Alcoholics Anonymous likes to catch a prospective member when he is at the bottom of the depths. When he wakes up of a morning with his first clear thought regret that he is not dead before he hears where he has been and what he has done. When he whispers to himself: "Am I crazy?" and the

only answer he can think of is: "Yes." Even when the bright-eyed green snakes are crawling up his arms.

Then the pathological drinker is willing to talk. Even eager to talk to someone who really understands, from experience, what he means when he says: "I can't understand myself."

#### **"Alcoholics Anonymous Makes Its Stand Here (Part IV)," by Elrick B. Davis**

*In three previous articles, Mr. Davis has told of Alcoholics Anonymous, an organization of former drinkers banded to break the liquor habit and to save others from over drinking. This is the fourth of a series.*

*Understanding.* What gets the pathological drinker who finally has reached such state that he is willing to listen to a cured rummy member of Alcoholics Anonymous, is that the retrieved alcoholic not only understands what only another alcoholic can understand, but a great deal that the unreformed drunk thinks no one else could know because he has never told anyone, and his difficulties or escapades must be private to his own history.

Fact is the history of all alcoholics is the same; some have been addicts longer than others, and some have painted brighter red patches around the town ù that is all. What they have heard in the "cure" hospitals they have frequented, or from the psychoanalysts they have consulted, or the physicians who have tapered them off one bender or another at home, has convinced them that alcoholism is a disease. But they are sure (a) that their version of the disease differs from everyone else's and (b) that in them it hasn't reached the incurable stage anyway.

Head of the "cure" told them: "If you ever take another drink, you'll be back." Psychoanalyst said "Psychologically, you have never been weaned. Your subconscious is still trying to get even with your mother for some forgotten slight." Family or hotel physician said "If you don't quite drinking, you'll die."

*Reproof.* Lawyers, ministers, business partners and employers, parents and wives, also are professionally dedicated to listening to confidences and accepting confessions without undue complaint. But the clergyman may say: "Your drinking is a sin." And partner or employer: "You'll have to quit this monkey business or get out." And wife or parent: "This drinking is breaking my heart." And everyone: "Why don't you exercise some will power and straighten up and be a man."

"But," the alcoholic whispers in his heart. "No one but I can know that I must drink to kill suffering too great to stand."

He presents his excuses to the retrieved alcoholic who has come to talk. Can't sleep without liquor. Worry. Business troubles. Debt. Alimentary pains. Overwork. Nerves too high strung. Grief. Disappointment. Deep dark phobic fears. Fatigue. Family difficulties. Loneliness.

The catalog has got no farther than that when the member of Alcoholics Anonymous begins rattling off an additional list.

"Hogwash," he says. "Don't try those alibis on me. I have used them all myself."

*Understanding.* And then he tells his own alcoholic history, certainly as bad, perhaps far worse than the uncured rummy's. They match experiences. Before he knows it the prospect for cure has told his new friend things he had never admitted even to himself. A rough and ready psychiatry, that, but it works, as the cured members of the Cleveland Chapter of Alcoholics Anonymous all are restored to society to testify. And that is the reason for the fellowship's weekly gatherings. They are testimonial meetings. The members meet to find new victims to cure, and to buck each other up. For years their social and emotional life has all been elbow-bending. Now they provide each other a richer society to replace the old. Hence, the fellowship's family parties and picnics.

Never for a moment do they forget that a practicing alcoholic is a very sick person. Never for a moment can they forget that even medical men who know the nature of the disease are apt to feel that failure to recover is a proof of moral perversity in the patient. If a man is dying of cancer, no one says: "Why doesn't he exercise some will power and kill that cancer off." If he is coughing his lungs out with tuberculosis, no one says: "Buck up and quit coughing; be a man." They may say to the first: "Submit to surgery before it is too late;" to the second: "Take a cure before you are dead."

*Religion.* Retrieved alcoholics talk in that fashion to their uncured fellows. They say: "You are a very sick man. Physically sick ù you have an allergy to alcohol. We can put you in a hospital that will sweat that

poison out. Mentally sick. We know how to cure that. And spiritually sick.

“To cure your spiritual illness you will have to admit God. Name your own God, or define Him to suit yourself. But if you are really willing to ‘do anything’ to get well, and if it is really true and we know it is that you drink when you don’t want to and that you don’t know why you get drunk, you’ll have to quit lying to yourself and adopt a spiritual way of life. Are you ready to accept help?”

And the miracle is that, for alcoholics brought to agreement by pure desperation, so simple a scheme works.

Cleveland alone has 50 alcoholics, all former notorious drunks, now members of Alcoholics Anonymous to prove it. None is a fanatic prohibitionist. None has a quarrel with liquor legitimately used by people physically, nervously, and spiritually equipped to use it. They simply know that alcoholics can’t drink and live, and that their “incurable” disease has been conquered.

### **“Alcoholics Anonymous Makes Its Stand Here (Part V),” by Elrick B. Davis**

*In previous installments, Mr. Davis has told of Alcoholics Anonymous, an informal society of drinking men who have joined together to beat the liquor habit. This is the last of five articles.*

*No Graft.* It is hard for the skeptical to believe that no one yet has found a way to muscle into Alcoholics Anonymous, the informal society of ex-drunks that exists only to cure each other, and make a money-making scheme of it. Or that someone will not. The complete informality of the society seems to be what has saved it from that. Members pay no dues. The society has no paid staff. Parties are “Dutch.” Meetings are held at the homes of members who have houses large enough for such gatherings, or in homes of persons who may not be alcoholics but are sympathetic with the movement.

Usually a drunk needs hospitalization at the time that he is caught to cure. He is required to pay for that himself. Doubtless he hasn’t the money. But probably his family has. Or his employer will advance the money to save him, against his future pay. Or cured members of the society will help him arrange credit, if he has a glimmer of credit left. Or old friends will help.

At the moment members of the Cleveland Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous are searching the slum lodging houses to find a man, once eminent in the city’s professional life. A medical friend of his better days called them in to find him. This friend will pay the hospital bill necessary to return this victim of an “incurable” craving for drink to physical health, if the society will take him on.

The society has published a book, called “Alcoholics Anonymous,” which it sells at \$3.50. It may be ordered from an anonymous address, Works Publishing Co., Box 657, Church Street Annex Postoffice, New York City; or bought from the Cleveland Fellowship of the society. There is no money profit for anyone in that book.

It recites the history of the society and lays down its principles in its first half. Last half is case histories of representative cures out of the first hundred alcoholics cured by membership in the society. It was written and compiled by the New York member who brought the society to Ohio. He raised the money on his personal credit to have the book published. He would like to see those creditors repaid. It is a 400-page book, for which any regular publisher would charge the same price. Copies bought from local Fellowships net the local chapters a dollar each.

The Rev. Dr. Dilworth Lupton, pastor of the First Unitarian Church of Cleveland, found in a religious journal an enthusiastic review of the book by the Rev. Harry Emerson Fosdick, and sent it to the president of the local Fellowship. It has been similarly noted in some medical journals.

*The Foundation.* To handle the money that comes in for the book, and occasional gifts from persons interested in helping ex-drunks to cure other “incurable” drunks, the Alcoholics Foundation has been established, with a board of seven directors.

Three of these are members of Alcoholics Anonymous. Four are not alcoholics, but New Yorkers of standing interested in humane movements. Two of them happen also to be associated with the Rockefeller Foundation, but that does not associate the two foundations in any way.

First problem of the Cleveland Fellowship was to find a hospital willing to take a drunk in and give him

the medical attention first necessary to any cure. Two reasons made that hard. Hospitals do not like to have alcoholics as patients; they are nuisances. And the society requires that as soon as a drunk has been medicated into such shape that he can see visitors, members of the society must be permitted to see him at any time. That has been arranged. The local society would like to have a kitty of \$100 to post with the hospital as evidence of good faith. But if it gets it, it will only be from voluntary contributions of members.

Meantime the members, having financed their own cures, spend enormous amounts of time and not a little money in helping new members. Psychiatrists say that if an alcoholic is to be cured, he needs a hobby. His old hobby had been only alcohol. Hobby of Alcoholics Anonymous is curing each other. Telephone calls, postage and stationery, gasoline bills, mount up for each individual. And hospitality to new members. A rule of the society is that each member's latch string is always out to any other member who needs talk or quiet, which may include a bed or a meal, at any time.

## 10 Mr. X & Alcoholics Anonymous

*This was a sermon preached on November 26, 1939 by Dilworth Lupton at the First Unitarian Church (Universalist - Unitarian), Euclid at East 82nd Street, Cleveland, Ohio. Mr. X was Clarence H. Snyder. This was turned into one of the first pamphlets concerning A.A. and was used by A.A. members in Cleveland in the late 1930's and early 1940's.*

My friend, Mr. X, is a young man with a family. For five years, to use his own words, Mr. X did not “draw a sober breath.” His over-patient wife was about to sue him for divorce. Now for over two years, he has not had a single drink. He maintains that his “cure” is due to the efforts of a group of “ex-drunks” (their own term) who call themselves Alcoholics Anonymous. I have had several opportunities to meet members of Alcoholics Anonymous. Not long ago I accepted an invitation from Mr. X to attend one of their meetings, held in a private home. They are simple affairs: First a brief prayer, then four or five give public testimony to their experiences, refreshments are served, and there is general fellowship. They call themselves religious, but I find no sign of excessive piety, sensationalism, or fanaticism. Furthermore they have a sense of humor, somewhat of a rarity in religious circles. They are not trying to make other people or the country into “dries.” They merely say, “We are the type that can’t take it, and we have found a way of leaving it alone.”

In my own home recently nine members of this group submitted themselves to questions for four hours from a prominent physician and a psychiatrist. Both were impressed by the trim appearance, sincerity, manliness of the ex-victims, and by the seeming efficacy of their methods. As the physician said to me privately, “These boys have got something!” Thank God someone is throwing light on the problem of the chronic alcoholic, a problem that has perplexed men for centuries. There may be a million victims in the United States. Chronic alcoholism is not a vice but a disease. Its victims know that the habit is exceedingly harmful - as one of them graphically expressed it to me, “I was staring into a pine box” - but they are driven toward drink by an uncontrollable desire, by what psychologists call a compulsive psychosis. Complete abstinence appears the only way out, but except in rare cases that has been impossible of attainment. Religion, psychiatry, and medicine have been tried, but with only sporadic success. The members of Alcoholics Anonymous, however, appear to have found an answer, for they claim that at least fifty per cent of those they interest have stopped drinking completely.

From conversations with my friend, Mr. X, and with members of the Cleveland group, I am convinced that this success comes through the application of four religious principles that are as old as the Ten Commandments.

1. The principle of spiritual dependence Mr. X, who had been drinking excessively for years, found that he couldn’t summon enough will power to stop even for a single day. Finally in desperation he consented to a week of hospital treatment. During this time he received frequent visits from members of Alcoholics Anonymous. They told him that he must stop trying to use his will and trust in a Power greater than himself. Such trust had saved them from the abyss and could save him. Believe or perish! Mr. X chose to believe. Within a few days he lost all desire for alcohol. Trust in God seems to be the heart of the whole movement. Religion must be more than a mere set of beliefs; it must be a profound inner experience, faith in a Presence to which one may go for strength in time of weakness.

This fact is made quite clear in the book ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, which gives the philosophy behind the movement and also the testimony of thirty of those who have benefited. Although written by laymen it contains more psychological and religious common-sense than one often reads in volumes by religious professionals. The book is free from cant, from archaic phraseology. It gives with skill and intelligence an inside view of the alcohol problem and the technique through which these men have found their freedom. I will let “Bill,” one of the contributors to ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, describe his own experience. He had been drinking in his kitchen - there was enough gin in the house to carry him through that night and the next day. An old friend came to see him. They had often been drunk together, but now he refused to drink! He had “got religion.” He talked for hours...it all seemed impossible, and yet there he was, sober.

But let me quote from the book: God had done for him what he could not do for himself. His human will had failed. Doctors had pronounced him incurable. Society was about to lock him up. Like myself, he had

admitted complete defeat. Then he had, in effect, been raised from the dead, suddenly taken from the scrap heap to a level of life better than the best he had ever known! Had this power originated in him? Obviously it had not. There had been no more power in him than there was in me at that moment, and this was none at all. That floored me. It began to look as though religious people were right after all. Here was something at work in a human heart which had done the impossible. My ideas about miracles were drastically revised right then. Never mind the musty past; here sat a miracle directly across the kitchen table. He shouted great tidings )Alcoholics Anonymous, p. 11).

How hard is it for us moderns to concede - much less express it as our deep conviction - that our inner lives ultimately are dependent upon a power-not-ourselves. Such an attitude seems weak and cowardly. But we go even farther; we suspect that faith in a spiritual Presence outside ourselves is absurd. Why absurd? Our bodies are dependent ultimately upon the physical cosmos, upon air and sunlight, and upon this strange planet that bears us up. Why is it absurd then, to think of our spiritual selves - our souls, psyches, call them what you will - as being dependent upon a spiritual cosmos? Is it not absurd, rather to conceive that the material side of us is part of a material universe, but that our nature is isolated, alone, independent? Is not such an attitude a kind of megalomania? At any rate these ex-alcoholics declare that only when they recognized their spiritual dependence was their obsession broken.

2. The principle of universality In our great museums one usually finds paintings covering several ages of art, often brought together from widely separated localities - the primitive, medieval and modern periods; products of French, American, English, and Dutch masters; treasures from China, Japan, and India. Yet as one looks at these productions he instinctively feels that a universal beauty runs through them all. Beauty knows no particular age or school. Beauty is never exclusive and provincial; it is inclusive and universal. So, too, in the field of religion. We are beginning to recognize the substantial unity of all religious faiths. Back of all religions is religion itself. Religion appears in differing types, but they are all expressions of one great impulse to live nobly and to adore the highest. This universality of religion is recognized by the Alcoholics Anonymous.

Their meetings are attended by Catholics, Protestants, Jews, near-agnostics, and near-atheists. There is the utmost tolerance. It seems of no concern to the group with what religious bodies non-church-going members eventually identify themselves; indeed there is no pressure to join any church whatever. What particularly impresses me is the fact that each individual can conceive of the Power-not-himself in whatever terms he pleases. "Bill" - the writer already quoted in ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS - makes this tolerance clear when he further narrates his conversation with his ex-alcoholic friend: My friend suggested what then seemed a novel idea.

He said, 'Why don't you choose your own conception of God?' That statement hit me hard. It melted the icy intellectual mountain in whose shadow I had lived and shivered many years. I stood in the sunlight at last. It was only a matter of being willing to believe in a power greater than myself. Nothing more was required of me to make my beginning. I saw that growth could start from that point. Upon a foundation of complete willingness I might build what I saw in my friend. Would I have it? Of course I would!\* \*Alcoholics Anonymous (New York, AAWS, Inc., 1976), p. 12 Perhaps these laymen in Alcoholics Anonymous are laying foundations for a new universal movement in religion. Surely the conventional conceptions of religion have been too narrow. Religion, itself, is far bigger and broader than we thought. It is something we can no more capture through rigid dogmas than we can squeeze all the sunshine in the world through one window.

3. The principle of mutual aid Consider again the case of Mr. X. When he was being hospitalized eighteen laymen visitors called on him within the brief space of five days. These men were willing to give their valuable time in trying to help a man they had never seen before. To Mr. X they related their own dramatic experiences in being saved from slavery to alcohol, and offered their assistance. Upon leaving the hospital Mr. X began attending the weekly meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous. (editor's note- these were actually meetings of the Oxford Group as Alcoholics Anonymous was not officially named in 1938) Before long he was following the example of the men who had so generously given him of their help. From what I know of the practices of these members of Alcoholics Anonymous, I feel quite confident that Mr. X this very day is using virtually every hour of his spare time to assist other victims in getting on their feet.

As he said to me recently, "Only an alcoholic can help an alcoholic. If a victim of chronic alcoholism goes to a doctor, psychiatrist, or a minister, he feels the listener cannot possibly understand what it means to be

afflicted with a compulsion psychosis. But when he talks with an ex-alcoholic, who has probably been in a worse fix than himself and has found the way out, he immediately gains a confidence in himself that he hasn't had in years. He says to himself in substance, 'If this fellow has been saved from disaster I can be too.' The weekly meetings of the Alcoholics Anonymous operate on this same principal of mutual aid. The ex-victims bolster up each other's morale through comradeship. Like ship-wrecked sailors on a raft headed for the shore, the bond that holds them together is the same that they have escaped from a common peril.

Upon each newcomer is impressed the necessity of helping other alcoholics obtain the freedom he has attained. They believe they gain strength from expenditure - not expenditure of money, of which most of them have but little, but of themselves. Said one of them to me, "What I have is no good unless I give it away." There are no dues, no fees, just the sheer pleasure and, in this case, moral profit, that comes from helping the other fellow. This mutual aid acts as a sort of endless chain. Mr. A, Mr. B, and Mr. C help Mr. X out of the frightful mess he is in; then Mr. X turns around and helps Mr. Y and Mr. Z. These in turn help other victims. As "Bill" writes in ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS: My wife and I abandoned ourselves with enthusiasm to the idea of helping other alcoholics to a solution of their problems. It was fortunate, for my old business associates remained skeptical for a year and a half, during which I found little work. I was not too well at the time, and was plagued by waves of self-pity and resentment. This sometimes nearly drove me back to drink. I soon found that when all other measures failed, work with another alcoholic would save the day. Many times I have gone to my old hospital in despair. On talking to a man there, I would be amazingly uplifted and set on my feet. It is a design for living that works in rough going (Alcoholics Anonymous, p. 15).

4. The principle of transformation During the last half century many able psychologists have turned the searchlight of their investigations on "religious experience." It seems quite clear from these studies that religion consists not primarily in the intellectual acceptance of certain beliefs. It involves even more the transformation of human character. Such transformations have taken place not only in the lives of saints and religious leaders, but in the souls of multitudes of common folk as well. It is a scientific fact that through religious faith people are sometimes suddenly, and sometimes gradually aroused to a new set of interests, are raised from lower to higher levels of existence. Life and its duties take on new meaning, and selfishness (half-conscious often) is displaced by the conscious desire to help other people. If any human being needs such a transformation, it is the chronic alcoholic. He may not be at the point where he is willing to admit that, but his family and friends are! Alcoholism is a sickness, to be sure, but it is unlike any other malady in certain fundamental aspects. Compare for example, the case of the alcoholic with that of a tubercular patient. Everybody is sorry for the "T.B." and wants to help.

He is surrounded by friendliness and love. But in all likelihood, the alcoholic has made a perfect hell of his home and has destroyed his friendships one by one. He has drawn to himself not compassion and love, but misunderstanding, resentment, and hate. There seems to be every evidence that the Alcoholics Anonymous group has been amazingly successful in bringing about religious transformation. Note how a doctor describes the effect of this technique on one of his patients: He had lost everything worth while in his life and was only living, one might say, to drink. He frankly admitted and believed that for him there was no hope. Following the elimination of alcohol, there was found to be no permanent brain injury. He accepted the plan outlined in this book (ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS). One year later he called to see me, and I experienced a very strange sensation. I knew this man by name, and partly recognized his features, but there all resemblance ended. From a trembling, despairing, nervous wreck, had emerged a man brimming over with self-reliance and contentment. I talked with him for some time, but was not able to bring myself to feel that I had known him before. To me he was a stranger, and so he left me. More than three years have now passed with no return to alcohol (Alcoholics Anonymous,, p. xxix).

Every member of this movement declares that since he has come to believe in a Power-greater-than-himself a revolutionary change has taken place in his life; even his acquaintances note a marked change. He has radically altered his attitudes and outlooks, his habits of thought. In the face of despair and impending collapse, he has gained a new sense of direction, new power. I have seen these things with my own eyes. They are convincing, dramatic, moving.

One final word to the members of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Go back to your synagogues and churches; they need you and you need them.

Preserve your principle of Universality, your faith that all religion is one.

Never allow yourselves to be absorbed by any single church or sect.

Keep your movement what you call it now, a "layman's outfit."

Avoid over-organization for religious organizations always tend to follow the letter rather than the spirit, finally crushing the spirit.

Remember that early Christianity was promoted not by highly involved organization, but by the contagion of souls fired with enthusiasm for their cause.

And keep your sense of humor! So far you do not seem afflicted with the curse of over-seriousness.

To doctors and psychiatrists I would say; Be skeptical, investigate this movement with an open mind. If you become convinced of their sincerity and the efficacy of their methods, give these men your approval and open support. ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS ought to have a wide reading by the general public. For one thing the public ought to learn first hand that the chronic alcoholic is suffering not from a vice, but from a disease; that it is impossible for him to "drink like a gentleman." Moderation for him is out of the question. For him there is no such thing as the single drink. It is one taste, and then the deluge.

Certainly every victim of alcoholism and every friend of victims ought to buy or borrow and read this book, then seek to get in touch with some member of the movement.

# 11 Herbert Spencer: 18th Century Philosopher

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British philosopher and sociologist, Herbert Spencer was a major figure in the intellectual life of the Victorian era. He was one of the principal proponents of evolutionary theory in the mid nineteenth century, and his reputation at the time rivaled that of Charles Darwin. Spencer was initially best known for developing and applying evolutionary theory to philosophy, psychology and the study of society - what he called his "synthetic philosophy" (see his *A System of Synthetic Philosophy*, 1862-93). Today, however, he is usually remembered in philosophical circles for his political thought, primarily for his defense of natural rights and for criticisms of utilitarian positivism, and his views have been invoked by 'libertarian' thinkers such as Robert Nozick.

Spencer was born in Derby, England on 27 April 1820, the eldest of nine children, but the only one to survive infancy. He was the product of an undisciplined, largely informal education. His father, George, was a school teacher, but an unconventional man, and Spencer's family were Methodist 'Dissenters,' with Quaker sympathies. From an early age, Herbert was strongly influenced by the individualism and the anti-establishment and anti-clerical views of his father, and the Benthamite radical views of his uncle Thomas. Indeed, Spencer's early years showed a good deal of resistance to authority and independence. A person of eclectic interests, Spencer eventually trained as a civil engineer for railways but, in his early 20s, turned to journalism and political writing. He was initially an advocate of many of the causes of philosophic radicalism and some of his ideas (e.g., the definition of 'good' and 'bad' in terms of their pleasurable or painful consequences, and his adoption of a version of the 'greatest happiness principle') show similarities to utilitarianism.

From 1848 to 1853, Spencer worked as a writer and subeditor for *The Economist* financial weekly and, as a result, came into contact with a number of political controversialists such as George Henry Lewes, Thomas Carlyle, Lewes' future lover George Eliot (Mary Ann Evans [1819-1880]) - with whom Spencer had himself had a lengthy (though purely intellectual) association - and T.H. Huxley (1825-1895). Despite the diversity of opinions to which he was exposed, Spencer's unquestioning confidence in his own views was coupled with a stubbornness and a refusal to read authors with whom he disagreed. In his early writings, Spencer defended a number of radical causes - particularly on land nationalization, the extent to which economics should reflect a policy of *laissez-faire*, and the place and role of women in society - though he came to abandon most of these causes later in his life.

In 1851 Spencer's first book, *Social Statics, or the Conditions Essential to Human Happiness* appeared. ('Social statics' - the term was borrowed from Auguste Comte - deals with the conditions of social order, and was preliminary to a study of human progress and evolution - i.e., 'social dynamics.')

In this work, Spencer presents an account of the development of human freedom and a defense of individual liberties, based on a (Lamarckian-style) evolutionary theory. Upon the death of his uncle Thomas, in 1853, Spencer received a small inheritance which allowed him to devote himself to writing without depending on regular employment. In 1855, Spencer published his second book, *The Principles of Psychology*. As in *Social Statics*, Spencer saw Bentham and Mill as major targets, though in the present work he focussed on criticisms of the latter's associationism. (Spencer later revised this work, and Mill came to respect some of Spencer's arguments.) *The Principles of Psychology* was much less successful than *Social Statics*, however, and about this time Spencer began to experience serious (predominantly mental) health problems that affected him for the rest of his life. This led him to seek privacy, and he increasingly avoided appearing in public.

Although he found that, because of his ill health, he could write for only a few hours each day, he embarked upon a lengthy project - the nine-volume *A System of Synthetic Philosophy* (1862- 93) - which provided a systematic account of his views in biology, sociology, ethics and politics. This 'synthetic philosophy' brought together a wide range of data from the various natural and social sciences and organized it according to the basic principles of his evolutionary theory. Spencer's *Synthetic Philosophy* was initially available only through private subscription, but he was also a contributor to the leading intellectual magazines and newspapers of his day. His fame grew with his publications, and he counted among his admirers both radical thinkers and prominent scientists, including John Stuart Mill and the physicist, John Tyndall. In the 1860s and 1870s, for example, the influence of Spencer's evolutionary theory was on a par with that of Charles Darwin.

In 1883 Spencer was elected a corresponding member of philosophical section of the French academy

of moral and political sciences. His work was also particularly influential in the United States, where his book, *The Study of Sociology*, was at the center of a controversy (1879-80) at Yale University between a professor, William Graham Sumner, and the University's president, Noah Porter. Spencer's influence extended into the upper echelons of American society and it has been claimed that, in 1896, "three justices of the Supreme Court were avowed 'Spencerians'." His reputation was at its peak in the 1870s and early 1880s, and he was nominated for the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1902. Spencer, however, declined most of the honors he was given.

Spencer's health significantly deteriorated in the last two decades of his life, and he died in relative seclusion, following a long illness, on December 8, 1903. Within his lifetime, some one million copies of his books had been sold, his work had been translated into French, German, Spanish, Italian, and Russian, and his ideas were popular in a number of other countries such as Poland (e.g., through the work of the positivist, Wladyslaw Kozlowski). Nevertheless, by the end of his life, his political views were no longer as popular as they had once been, and the dominant currents in liberalism allowed for a more interventionist state.

**Method.** Spencer's method is, broadly speaking, scientific and empirical, and it was influenced significantly by the positivism of Auguste Comte. Because of the empirical character of scientific knowledge and because of his conviction that that which is known - biological life - is in a process of evolution, Spencer held that knowledge is subject to change. Thus, Spencer writes, "In science the important thing is to modify and change one's ideas as science advances." As scientific knowledge was primarily empirical, however, that which was not 'perceivable' and could not be empirically tested could not be known. (This emphasis on the knowable as perceivable led critics to charge that Spencer fails to distinguish perceiving and conceiving.) Nevertheless, Spencer was not a skeptic.

Spencer's method was also synthetic. The purpose of each science or field of investigation was to accumulate data and to derive from these phenomena the basic principles or laws or 'forces' which gave rise to them. To the extent that such principles conformed to the results of inquiries or experiments in the other sciences, one could have explanations that were of a high degree of certainty. Thus, Spencer was at pains to show how the evidence and conclusions of each of the sciences is relevant to, and materially affected by, the conclusions of the others.

**Human Nature.** In the first volume of *A System of Synthetic Philosophy*, entitled *First Principles* (1862), Spencer argued that all phenomena could be explained in terms of a lengthy process of evolution in things. This 'principle of continuity' was that homogeneous organisms are unstable, that organisms develop from simple to more complex and heterogeneous forms, and that such evolution constituted a norm of progress. This account of evolution provided a complete and 'predetermined' structure for the kind of variation noted by Darwin - and Darwin's respect for Spencer was significant. But while Spencer held that progress was a necessity, it was 'necessary' only overall, and there is no teleological element in his account of this process. In fact, it was Spencer, and not Darwin, who coined the phrase "survival of the fittest," though Darwin came to employ the expression in later editions of the *Origin of Species*. (That this view was both ambiguous - for it was not clear whether one had in mind the 'fittest' individual or species - and far from universal was something that both figures, however, failed to address.)

Spencer's understanding of evolution included the Lamarckian theory of the inheritance of acquired characteristics and emphasized the direct influence of external agencies on the organism's development. He denied (as Darwin had argued) that evolution was based on the characteristics and development of the organism itself and on a simple principle of natural selection. Spencer held that he had evidence for this evolutionary account from the study of biology (see *Principles of Biology*, 2 vols. [1864-7]). He argued that there is a gradual specialization in things - beginning with biological organisms - towards self-sufficiency and individuation.

Because human nature can be said to improve and change, then, scientific - including moral and political - views that rested on the assumption of a stable human nature (such as that presupposed by many utilitarians) had to be rejected. 'Human nature' was simply "the aggregate of men's instincts and sentiments" which, over time, would become adapted to social existence. Spencer still recognized the importance of understanding individuals in terms of the 'whole' of which they were 'parts,' but these parts were mutually dependent, not subordinate to the organism as a whole. They had an identity and value on which the whole depended - unlike, Spencer thought, that portrayed by Hobbes. For Spencer, then, human life was not only on a continuum with, but was also the culmination of, a lengthy process of evolution. Even though he allowed that

there was a parallel development of mind and body, without reducing the former to the latter, he was opposed to dualism and his account of mind and of the functioning of the central nervous system and the brain was mechanistic.

Although what characterized the development of organisms was the 'tendency to individuation' (Social Statics [1851], p. 436), this was coupled with a natural inclination in beings to pursue whatever would preserve their lives. When one examines human beings, this natural inclination was reflected in the characteristic of rational self-interest. Indeed, this tendency to pursue one's individual interests is such that, in primitive societies, at least, Spencer believed that a prime motivating factor in human beings coming together was the threat of violence and war. Paradoxically, perhaps, Spencer held an 'organic' view of society. Starting with the characteristics of individual entities, one could deduce, using laws of nature, what would promote or provide life and human happiness. He believed that social life was an extension of the life of a natural body, and that social 'organisms' reflected the same (Lamarckian) evolutionary principles or laws as biological entities did. The existence of such 'laws,' then, provides a basis for moral science and for determining how individuals ought to act and what would constitute human happiness.

Religion. As a result of his view that knowledge about phenomena required empirical demonstration, Spencer held that we cannot know the nature of reality in itself and that there was, therefore, something that was fundamentally "unknowable." (This included the complete knowledge of the nature of space, time, force, motion, and substance.) Since, Spencer claimed, we cannot know anything non-empirical, we cannot know whether there is a God or what its character might be. Though Spencer was a severe critic of religion and religious doctrine and practice - these being the appropriate objects of empirical investigation and assessment - his general position on religion was agnostic. Theism, he argued, cannot be adopted because there is no means to acquire knowledge of the divine, and there would be no way of testing it. But while we cannot know whether religious beliefs are true, neither can we know that (fundamental) religious beliefs are false.

Moral Philosophy. Spencer saw human life on a continuum with, but also as the culmination of, a lengthy process of evolution, and he held that human society reflects the same evolutionary principles as biological organisms do in their development. Society - and social institutions such as the economy - can, he believed, function without external control, just as the digestive system or a lower organism does (though, in arguing this, Spencer failed to see the fundamental differences between 'higher' and 'lower' levels of social organization). For Spencer, all natural and social development reflected 'the universality of law'. Beginning with the 'laws of life', the conditions of social existence, and the recognition of life as a fundamental value, moral science can deduce what kinds of laws promote life and produce happiness. Spencer's ethics and political philosophy, then, depends on a theory of 'natural law,' and it is because of this that, he maintained, evolutionary theory could provide a basis for a comprehensive political and even philosophical theory.

Given the variations in temperament and character among individuals, Spencer recognized that there were differences in what happiness specifically consists in (Social Statics [1851], p. 5). In general, however, 'happiness' is the surplus of pleasure over pain, and 'the good' is what contributes to the life and development of the organism, or - what is much the same - what provides this surplus of pleasure over pain. Happiness, therefore, reflects the complete adaptation of an individual organism to its environment - or, in other words, 'happiness' is that which an individual human being naturally seeks. For human beings to flourish and develop, Spencer held that there must be as few artificial restrictions as possible, and it is primarily freedom that he, contra Bentham, saw as promoting human happiness. While progress was an inevitable characteristic of evolution, it was something to be achieved only through the free exercise of human faculties (see Social Statics).

Society, however, is (by definition, for Spencer) an aggregate of individuals, and change in society could take place only once the individual members of that society had changed and developed (The Study of Sociology, pp. 366-367). Individuals are, therefore, 'primary,' individual development was 'egoistic,' and associations with others largely instrumental and contractual. Still, Spencer thought that human beings exhibited a natural sympathy and concern for one another; there is a common character and there are common interests among human beings that they eventually come to recognize as necessary not only for general, but for individual development. (This reflects, to an extent, Spencer's organicism.) Nevertheless, Spencer held that 'altruism' and compassion beyond the family unit were sentiments that came to exist only recently in human beings. Spencer maintained that there was a natural mechanism - an 'innate moral sense' - in human beings by

which they come to arrive at certain moral intuitions and from which laws of conduct might be deduced (The Principles of Ethics, I [1892], p. 26).

Thus one might say that Spencer held a kind of 'moral sense theory' (Social Statics, pp. 23, 19). (Later in his life, Spencer described these 'principles' of moral sense and of sympathy as the 'accumulated effects of instinctual or inherited experiences.')

Such a mechanism of moral feeling was, Spencer believed, a manifestation of his general idea of the 'persistence of force.' As this persistence of force was a principle of nature, and could not be created artificially, Spencer held that no state or government could promote moral feeling any more than it could promote the existence of physical force. But while Spencer insisted that freedom was the power to do what one desired, he also held that what one desired and willed was wholly determined by "an infinitude of previous experiences" (The Principles of Psychology, pp. 500-502.) Spencer saw this analysis of ethics as culminating in an 'Absolute Ethics,' the standard for which was the production of pure pleasure - and he held that the application of this standard would produce, so far as possible, the greatest amount of pleasure over pain in the long run.

Spencer's views here were rejected by Mill and Hartley. Their principal objection was that Spencer's account of natural 'desires' was inadequate because it failed to provide any reason why one ought to have the feelings or preferences one did. There is, however, more to Spencer's ethics than this. As individuals become increasingly aware of their individuality, they also become aware of the individuality of others and, thereby, of the law of equal freedom. This 'first principle' is that 'Every man has freedom to do all that he wills, provided he infringes not the equal freedom of any other man' (Social Statics, p. 103). One's 'moral sense,' then, led to the recognition of the existence of individual rights, and one can identify strains of a rights-based ethic in Spencer's writings.

Spencer's views clearly reflect a fundamentally 'egoist' ethic, but he held that rational egoists would, in the pursuit of their own self interest, not conflict with one another. Still, to care for someone who has no direct relation to oneself - such as supporting the un- and under employed - is, therefore, not only not in one's self interest, but encourages laziness and works against evolution. In this sense, at least, social inequity was explained, if not justified, by evolutionary principles.

Political Philosophy. Despite his egoism and individualism, Spencer held that life in community was important. Because the relation of parts to one another was one of mutual dependency, and because of the priority of the individual 'part' to the collective, society could not do or be anything other than the sum of its units. This view is evident, not only in his first significant major contribution to political philosophy, Social Statics, but in his later essays - some of which appear in later editions of The Man versus the State.

As noted earlier, Spencer held an 'organic' view of society. Nevertheless, as also noted above, he argued that the natural growth of an organism required 'liberty' - which enabled him (philosophically) to justify individualism and to defend the existence of individual human rights. Because of his commitment to the 'law of equal freedom' and his view that law and the state would of necessity interfere with it, he insisted on an extensive policy of laissez faire. For Spencer, 'liberty' "is to be measured, not by the nature of the government machinery he lives under [...] but by the relative paucity of the restraints it imposes on him" (The Man versus the State [1940], p. 19); the genuine liberal seeks to repeal those laws that coerce and restrict individuals from doing as they see fit.

Spencer followed earlier liberalism, then, in maintaining that law is a restriction of liberty and that the restriction of liberty, in itself, is evil and justified only where it is necessary to the preservation of liberty. The only function of government was to be the policing and protection of individual rights. Spencer maintained that education, religion, the economy, and care for the sick or indigent were not to be undertaken by the state.

Law and public authority have as their general purpose, therefore, the administration of justice (equated with freedom and the protection of rights). These issues became the focus of Spencer's later work in political philosophy and, particularly, in The Man versus the State. Here, Spencer contrasts early, classical liberalism with the liberalism of the 19th century, arguing that it was the latter, and not the former, that was a "new Toryism" - the enemy of individual progress and liberty. It is here as well that Spencer develops an argument for the claim that individuals have rights, based on a 'law of life'. (Interestingly, Spencer acknowledges that rights are not inherently moral, but become so only by one's recognition that for them to be binding on others the rights of others must be binding on oneself - this is, in other words, a consequence of the 'law of equal

freedom.’) He concluded that everyone had basic rights to liberty ‘in virtue of their constitutions’ as human beings (Social Statics, p. 77), and that such rights were essential to social progress. (These rights included rights to life, liberty, property, free speech, equal rights of women, universal suffrage, and the right ‘to ignore the state’ - though Spencer reversed himself on some of these rights in his later writings.)

Thus, the industrious - those of character, but with no commitment to existing structures except those which promoted such industry (and, therefore, not religion or patriotic institutions) - would thrive. Nevertheless, all industrious individuals, Spencer believed, would end up being in fundamental agreement. Not surprisingly, then, Spencer maintained that the arguments of the early utilitarians on the justification of law and authority and on the origin of rights were fallacious. He also rejected utilitarianism and its model of distributive justice because he held that it rested on an egalitarianism that ignored desert and, more fundamentally, biological need and efficiency. Spencer further maintained that the utilitarian account of the law and the state was also inconsistent - that it tacitly assumed the existence of claims or rights that have both moral and legal weight independently of the positive law.

And, finally, Spencer argues as well against parliamentary, representative government, seeing it as exhibiting a virtual “divine right” - i.e., claiming that “the majority in an assembly has power that has no bounds.” Spencer maintained that government action requires not only individual consent, but that the model for political association should be that of a “joint stock company”, where the ‘directors’ can never act for a certain good except on the explicit wishes of its ‘shareholders’. When parliaments attempt to do more than protect the rights of their citizens by, for example, ‘imposing’ a conception of the good - be it only on a minority - Spencer suggested that they are no different from tyrannies.

Assessment. Spencer has been frequently accused of inconsistency; one finds variations in his conclusions concerning land nationalization and reform, the rights of children and the extension of suffrage to women, and the role of government. Moreover, in recent studies of Spencer’s theory of social justice, there is some debate whether justice is based primarily on desert or on entitlement, whether the ‘law of equal freedom’ is a moral imperative or a descriptive natural law, and whether the law of equal freedom is grounded on rights, utility, or, ultimately, on ‘moral sense’. Nevertheless, Spencer’s work has frequently been seen as a model for later ‘libertarian’ thinkers, such as Robert Nozick, and he continues to be read - and is often invoked - by ‘libertarians’ on issues concerning the function of government and the fundamental character of individual rights.

## 12 A Collection of Twenty-five Reviews Book Reviews of Alcoholics Anonymous

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### **New York Times, June 25, 1939. Alcoholic Experience, by Percy Hutchison**

Lest this title should arouse the risibles in any reader 1st me state that the general thesis of “Alcoholics Anonymous” is more soundly based psychologically than any other treatment of the subject I have ever come upon. And it is a subject not to be neglected, for, irrespective of whether we live under repeal or prohibition, there will be alcohol addicts, precisely as there are drug addicts. It is useless to argue that under one legal condition or another the number will be less or more. When populations are to be reckoned in the million, fractions cease to count. Under prohibition alcohol will be manufactured and bootlegged, as it was during our late “noble experiment,” precisely as narcotics are today smuggled and bootlegged. It is, consequently, the individual only who has to be considered, not the problem of supply and dissemination.

Alcoholics Anonymous is unlike any other book ever before published. No reviewer can say how many have contributed to its pages. But the list of writers should include addicts and doctors, psychiatrists and clergymen. Yet it is not a book of personal experience, except in a limited sense, any more than it is a book of rules and precepts. Whether the author of any given chapter can be physician or addict, the argument comes hack to a single fundamental; and that is that the patient is unable to master the situation solely through what is termed “will power,” or volition. One contributor, who thought he had “got by” on a diet of milk, one day said to himself that he could safely add a little whiskey to his lacteal nourishment. He did. And then a little more, and then a little more. In the end, he was back to the Sanitarium. His “will” was operating one-hundred Per cent; Yet

there was a fallacy somewhere. It is to root out this fallacy and supplant it that this book has been compiled. The present reviewer, since this is no ordinary publication, believes it only fair that he should state that at one time he advanced fairly deeply into the field of psychology and he is free to state that the entire superstructure of "Alcoholics Anonymous" is based on a psychology of volition that he himself once advanced but which was never universally acceded to. And that is what we glibly call "will," and usefully so in general practice, should for scientific accuracy be reduced to more elemental terms. And, such an effort made, what results?

Just this. That volition, "will power," tracked to its source, is the automatic and irrefutable working of a dominating idea. Consider Napoleon, the man of indomitable will. What does it, in this final psychological analysis, come down to? It comes down to the fact that so exclusively did Napoleon's mind contain the idea that he was the man of destiny that there was no room for any other idea, so that every act, every "willed" action, was the unconscious result of, flowed from, that idea. Here, then, is the key to "Alcoholics Anonymous," the great and indisputable lesson this extraordinary book would convey. The alcoholic addict, and why not change, should it seem we have become too intense, to "the drug addict," cannot, by any effort of what he calls his "will," insure himself against taking his "first dose." We saw how the chap with his whiskey in milk missed out. There is one way for our authors, and but one way. The utter suffusion of the mind by an idea which shall exclude any idea of alcohol or of drugs. Better, let us say the usurpation of the entire ideational tract by this idea. The idea itself may be, perhaps, fairly trivial. Such as: I do not like alcoholic drinks. In fact, my stomach revolts at their mention. Those who appear to dominate these pages apparently would not subscribe to so simple a formula as I have proposed. But my point is that it might be sufficient; and I base this on the book itself, provided only that their thesis flood, so to speak, the entire ideational tract. Yet would that be possible? Or possible for long?

That is the question. And, as a matter of fact, those several authors give it short shrift. I have advanced it solely to exhibit the stark psychological trail on which we have walked. The thesis of the book is, as we read it aright, that his all-embracing and all-commanding idea must be religious. Yet here again should the reader pause, for the writers are talking of what William James called "Varieties of Religious Experience" rather than matters of individual faith. There is no suggestion advanced in the book that an addict should embrace one faith rather than another. He may fall back upon an "absolute," or "A Power which makes for righteousness" if he chooses. The point of the book is that he is unlikely to win through unless he floods his mind with the idea of a force outside himself. So doing, his individual problem resolves into thin air. In last analysis, it is the resigning word: Not my will, but Thine, he done, said in the full knowledge of the fact that the decision will be against further addiction. Most readers will pass this book by. Yet of such a majority many might not be amiss in turning its pages. There but for the grace of God, goes \_\_\_\_\_. A few will reach for it furtively. It is a strange book. The argument, as we have said, has a deep psychological foundation.

**Journal-lancet, Vol.46, July, 1939. A New Approach to Psychotherapy in Chronic Alcoholism, By W.D. Silkworth, M.D. New York, New York**

The beginning and subsequent development of a new approach to the problem of permanent recovery for the chronic alcoholic has already produced remarkable results and promises much for the future this statement is based upon four years of close observation. As this development is one which has sprung up among alcoholic patients themselves and has been largely conceived and promoted by them, it is felt that this new treatment can be reported freely and objectively.

The central idea is that of a fellowship of ex-alcoholic men and women banded together for mutual help. Each member feels duty bound to assist alcoholic newcomers to get upon their feet. These in turn work with still others, in an endless chain. Hence there is a large growth possibility. In one locality, for example, the fellowship had but three members in September, 1935, eighteen months later the three had succeeded with seven more. These ten have since expanded to ninety.

It is much more than a sense of duty, however, which provides the requisite driving power and harmony so necessary for success. One powerful factor is that of self-preservation. These ex-alcoholics frequently find that unless they spend time helping others to health they cannot stay sober themselves. Strenuous, almost sacrificial work for other sufferers is often imperative in the early days of their recovery. This effort proceeds entirely on a good will basis. It is an avocation. There are no fees or dues of any kind, nor do these people

organize in the ordinary sense of the word.

These ex-alcoholic men and women number about one hundred and fifty. One group is scattered along the Atlantic seaboard with New York as a center. Another, and somewhat larger body, is located in the Middle West. Many walks of life are represented, though business and professional types predominate. The unselfishness, the extremes to which these men and women go to help each other, the spirit of democracy, tolerance and sanity which prevails, are astonishing to those who know something of the alcoholic personality. But these observations do not adequately explain why so many gravely involved people are able to remain sober and face life again.

The principle answer is each ex-alcoholic has had, and is able to maintain, a vital spiritual or "religious" experience. This so-called "experience" is accompanied, by marked changes in personality. There is always, in a successful case, a radical change in outlook, attitude and habits of thought, which sometimes occur with amazing rapidity, and in nearly all cases these changes are evident within a few months, often less.

That the chronic alcoholic has sometimes recovered by religious means is a fact centuries old. But these recoveries have been sporadic, insufficient in numbers or impressiveness to make headway with the alcoholic problem as a whole.

The conscious search of these ex-alcoholics for the right answer has enabled them to find an approach which has been effectual in something like half of all the cases upon which it has been tried. This is a truly remarkable record when it is remembered that most of them were undoubtedly beyond the reach of other remedial measures.

The essential features of this new approach, without psychological embellishment are:

1. The ex-alcoholics capitalize upon a fact which they have so well demonstrated, namely: that one alcoholic can secure the confidence of another in a way and to a degree almost impossible of attainment by a non-alcoholic outsider.

2. After having fully identified themselves with their "prospect" by a recital of symptoms, behaviour, anecdotes, etc., these men allow the patient to draw the inference that if he is seriously alcoholic, there may be no hope for him save a spiritual experience. They cite their own cases and quote medical opinion to prove their point. If the patient insists he is not alcoholic to that degree, they recommend he try to stay sober in his own way. Usually, however, the patient agrees at once. If he does not, a few more painful relapses often convince him.

3. Once the patient agrees that he is powerless, he finds himself in a serious dilemma. He sees clearly that he must have a spiritual experience or be destroyed by alcohol.

4. This dilemma brings about a crisis in the patient's life. He finds himself in a position which, he believes, cannot be untangled by human means. He has been placed in this position by another alcoholic who has recovered through a spiritual experience. This peculiar ability, which an alcoholic who has recovered exercises upon one who has not recovered, is the main secret of the unprecedented success which these men and women are having. They can penetrate and carry conviction where the physician or the clergyman cannot. Under these conditions, the patient turns to religion with an entire willingness and readily accepts, without reservation, a simple religious proposal. He is then able to acquire much more than a set of religious beliefs; he undergoes the profound mental and emotional change common to religious "experience" (See William James' Varieties of Religious Experience). Then too, the patient's hope is renewed and his imagination is fired by the idea of membership in a group of ex-alcoholics where he will be enabled to save the lives and homes of those who have suffered as he has suffered.

5. The fellowship is entirely indifferent concerning the individual manner of spiritual approach so long as the patient is willing to turn his life and his problems over to the care and direction of his Creator. The patient may picture the Deity in any way he likes. No effort whatever is made to convert him to some particular faith or creed. Many creeds are represented among the group and the greatest harmony prevails. It is emphasized that the fellowship is non-sectarian and that the patient is entirely free to follow his own inclination. Not a trace of aggressive evangelism is exhibited.

6. If the patient indicates a willingness to go on, a suggestion is made that he do certain things which are obviously good psychology, good morals and good religion, regardless of creed.

- That he make a moral appraisal of himself, and confidentially discuss his findings with a competent

person whom he trusts.

- That he try to adjust bad personal relationships, setting right, so far as possible, such wrongs as he may have done in the past.
- That he recommit himself daily, or hourly if need be, to God's care and direction, asking for strength.
- That, if possible, he attend weekly meetings of the fellowship and actively lend a hand with alcoholic newcomers.

This is the procedure in brief. The manner of presentation may vary considerably, depending upon the individual approached, but the essential ingredients of the process are always much the same. When presented by an ex-alcoholic, the power of this approach is remarkable.

For a full appreciation one must have known these patients before and after their change.

Considering the presence of the religious factor, one might expect to find unhealthy emotionalism and prejudice. This is not the case however, on the contrary, there is an instant readiness to discard old methods for new ones which produce better results. For instance, it was early found that usually the weakest approach to an alcoholic is directly through his family or friends, especially if the patient is drinking heavily at the time. The ex-alcoholics frequently insist, therefore, that a physician first take the patient in hand, placing him in a hospital whenever possible. If proper hospitalization and medical care is not carried out, this patient faces the danger of delirium tremens, "wet brain" or other complications. After a few days' stay, during which time the patient has been thoroughly detoxicated, the physician brings up the question of permanent sobriety and, if the patient is interested, tactfully introduces a member of the ex-alcoholics group. By this time the prospect has self-control, can think straight, and the approach to him can be made casually, with no intervention by family or friends. More than half of this fellowship have been so treated. The group is unanimous in its belief that hospitalization is desirable, even imperative, in most cases.

What has happened to these men and women? For years, physicians have pursued methods which bear same similarity to those outlined above. An effort is being made to procure a frank discussion with the patient, leading to self-understanding. It is indicated that he must make the necessary re-adjustment to his environment. His cooperation and confidence must be secured. The objectives are to bring about extraversion and to provide someone to whom the alcoholic can transfer his dilemma.

In a large number of cases, this alcoholic group is now attaining these very objectives because their simple but powerful devices appear to cut deeper than do other methods of treatment because of the following reasons:

- Because of their alcoholic experiences and successful recoveries they secure a high degree of confidence from the prospects.
- Because of this initial confidence, identical experience, and the fact that the discussion is pitched on moral and religious grounds, the patient tells his story and makes his self-appraisal with extreme thoroughness and honesty. He stops living alone and finds himself within reach of a fellowship with whom he can discuss his problems as they arise.
- Because of the ex-alcoholic brotherhood, the patient, too, is able to save other alcoholics from destruction. At one and the same time, the patient acquires an ideal, a hobby, a strenuous avocation, and a social life which he enjoys among other ex-alcoholics and their families. These factors make powerfully for his extraversion.
- Because of objects aplenty in whom to vest his confidence, the patient can turn to the individuals to whom he first gave his confidence, the ex-alcoholic group as a whole, or the Deity. It is paramount to note that the religious factor is all important even from the beginning. Newcomers have been unable to stay sober when they have tried the program minus the Deity.

The mental attitude of the people toward alcohol is interesting. Most of them report that they are seldom tempted to drink. If tempted, their defense against the first drink is emphatic and adequate.

To quote from one of their number, once a serious case at this hospital, but who has had no relapse since his "experience" four and one-half years ago: "Soon after I had my experience, I realized I had the answer to my problem. For about three years prior to December 1934 I had been taking two and sometimes three bottles of gin a day. Even in my brief periods of sobriety, my mind was much on liquor, especially if my thoughts turned toward home, where I had bottles hidden on every floor of the house. Soon after leaving the hospital, I

commenced to work with other alcoholics. With reference to them, I thought much about alcohol, even to the point of carrying a bottle in my pocket to help them through the severe hangovers. But from the first moment of my experience, the thought of taking a drink myself hardly ever occurred. I had the feeling of being in a position of neutrality. I was not fighting to stay on the water wagon. The problem was removed; it simply ceased to exist for me.

This new state of mind came about in my case at once and automatically. About six weeks after leaving the hospital my wife asked me to fetch a small utensil which stood on a shelf in our kitchen. As I fumbled for it, my hand grasped a bottle, still partly full. With a start of surprise and gratitude, it flashed upon my that not once during the past weeks had the thought of liquor being in my home occurred to me. Considering the extent to which alcohol had dominated my thinking, I call this no less than a miracle. During the past year's years of sobriety I have seriously considered drinking only a few times. On each occasion, my reaction was one of fear, followed by the reassurance which came with my new found ability to think the matter through, to work with another alcoholic, or to enter upon a brief period of prayer and meditation. I now have a defense against alcoholism which is positive so long as I keep myself spiritually fit and active, which I am only too glad to do." Another interesting example of reaction to temptation comes from a former patient, now sober three and one-half years. Like most of these people, he was beyond the reach of psychiatric methods. He relates the following incident:

"Though sober now for several years, I am still bothered by periods of deep depression and resentment. I live on a farm, and weeks sometimes pass in which I have no contact with the ex-alcoholic group. During one of my spells I became violently angry over a trifling domestic matter. I deliberately decided to get drunk, going so far as to stock my guest house with food, thinking to lock myself in when I had returned from town with a case of liquor. I got in my car and started down the drive, still furious. As I reached the gate I stopped the car, suddenly feeling unable to carry out my plan. I said to myself, at least I have to be honest with my wife. I returned to the house and announced I was on my way to town to get drunk. She looked at me calmly, never saying a word. The absurdity of the whole thing burst upon me and I laughed and so the matter passed. Yes, I now have a defense that works. Prior to my spiritual experience I would never have reacted that way."

The testimony of the membership as a whole sums up to this: For the most part, these men and women are now indifferent to alcohol, but when the thought of taking a drink does come, they react sanely and vigorously.

This alcoholic fellowship hopes to extend its work to all parts of the country and to make its methods and answers known to every alcoholic who wishes to recover as a first step, they have prepared a book called *Alcoholics Anonymous*\*. A large volume of 400 pages, it sets forth their methods and experience exhaustively, and with much clarity and force. The first half of the book is a text aimed to show an alcoholic the attitude he ought to take and precisely the steps he may follow to effect his own recovery. He then finds full directions for approaching and working with other alcoholics. Two chapters are devoted to working with family relations and one to employers for the guidance of those who surround the sick man. There is a powerful chapter addressed to the agnostic, as the majority of the present members were of that description. Of particular interest to the physician is the chapter on alcoholism dealing mostly with its mental phenomena, as these men see it.

By contacting personally those who are getting results from the book, these ex-alcoholics expect to establish new centers. Experience has shown that as soon as any community contains three or four active members, growth is inevitable, for the good reason that each member feels he must work with other alcoholics or perhaps perish himself.

Will the movement spread? Will all of these recoveries be permanent? No one can say. Yet, we at this hospital, from our observation of many cases, are willing to record our present opinion as a strong "Yes" to both questions.

### **Book Review: Alcoholics Anonymous. By Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick**

This extraordinary book deserves the careful attention of anyone interested in the problem of alcoholism. Whether as victims, friends of victims, physicians, clergymen, psychiatrists or social workers there are many such, and this book will give them, as no other treatise known to this reviewer will, an inside view of the problem which the alcoholic faces. Gothic cathedral windows are not the only things which can be truly seen

only from within. Alcoholism is another. All outside views are clouded and unsure. Only one who has been an alcoholic and who has escaped the thralldom can interpret the experience.

This book represents the pooled experience of one hundred men and women who have been victims of alcoholism — many of them declared hopeless by the experts — and who have won their freedom and recovered their sanity and self-control. Their stories are detailed and circumstantial, packed with human interest. In America today the disease of alcoholism is increasing. Liquor has been an easy escape from depression. As an English officer in India, reprovved for his excessive drinking, lifting his glass and said, “this is the swiftest road out of India,” so many Americans have been using hard liquor as a means of flight from their troubles until to their dismay they discover that, free to begin, they are not free to stop. One hundred men and women in this volume, report their experience of enslavement and then of liberation.

The book is not in the least sensational. It is notable for its sanity, restraint, and freedom from over-emphasis and fanaticism. It is a sober, careful, tolerant, sympathetic treatment of the alcoholic’s problem and of the successful techniques by which its co-authors have won their freedom. The group sponsoring the book began with two or three ex-alcoholics, who discovered one another through a kindred experience. From this personal kinship a movement started, ex-alcoholic working for alcoholic without fanfare or advertisement, and the movement has spread from one city to another. This book presents the practical experience of this group and describes the methods they employ.

The core of their whole procedure is religious. They are convinced that for the hopeless alcoholic there is only one way out - the expulsion of his obsession by a Power Greater Than Himself. Let it be said at once that there is nothing partisan or sectarian about this religious experience. Agnostics and atheists, along with Catholics, Jews and Protestants, tell their story of discovering the Power Greater Than Themselves. “WHO ARE YOU TO SAY THAT THERE IS NO GOD,” one atheist in this group heard a voice say when, hospitalized for alcoholism, he faced the utter hopelessness of his condition. Nowhere is the tolerance and open-mindedness of the book more evident than in its treatment of this central matter on which the cure of all these men and women has depended.

They are not partisans of and particular form of organized religion, although they strongly recommend that some religious fellowship be found by their participants. By religion they mean an experience which they personally know and which has saved them from their slavery, when psychiatry and medicine had failed. They agree that each man must have his own way of conceiving God, but of God Himself they are utterly sure, and their stories of victory in consequence are a notable addition to William James’ “Varieties of Religious Experience.”

Although the book has the accent of reality and is written with unusual intelligence and skill, humour and modesty mitigating what could easily have been a strident and harrowing tale. - Harry Emerson Fosdick

### **The Christian Science Monitor, Boston, August 17, 1939. Breaking the Drink Habit**

In view of the extent of liquor consumption in the United States since the repeal of national Prohibition, a book recently published on the subject of liquor addiction and its remedy seems designed for a wide usefulness. This volume is entitled “Alcoholics Anonymous,” issued by the Works Publishing Company in New York and contributed to by authors with experience in the overcoming of the drink habit.

The thesis of this book, as summarized by one reviewer, is that will power is not enough to enable the patient to break the hold of alcoholism, that he is more likely to win through if he suffuses his consciousness completely with some commanding idea which excludes the thought of alcohol or stimulants, and that for the surest prospect of success this overwhelming interest should be religion - “the idea of a force outside of himself.”

It has indeed been proved true in case after case that something more than individual will power - or “won’t” power - is necessary in order to heal what at least one special sanitarium recognizes in its advertizing as “a disease “What indeed could be more effective than an absorbing conviction that, in the words of David, “God is my strength and power and he maketh my way perfect.” fortunately thousands are finding this knowledge a sure and gratifying defense.

### **Journal of the American Osteopathic Association, September 1939**

Over one hundred men and women who have recovered from a seemingly hopeless state of mind and body have contributed to this book. The stories of these individuals in their struggles physically and mentally to overcome alcoholic addiction are gripping. A physician writes in the introduction that the action of alcohol in chronic alcoholism is a manifestation of allergy. Therefore, hospitalization and proper treatment is often necessary to free the patient from his craving for liquor. When the mind is clear he is a candidate for psychological measures. This book deals principally with such measures as exemplified in the stories of alcoholics.

### **New England Journal of Medicine, Vol. 221(15), October 12, 1939**

The psychological aspect of alcoholism taxes the entire skill and intuition of the therapist, and the authors of this book claim that in the long run the ex-alcoholic patient who is properly trained in psychological method is an extremely effective person to bring about the cure of the neurotic alcoholic individual.

The first part of the book discusses methods, with particular stress on twelve steps in the recovery program. This program includes the general principles of psychotherapy found in such books as those by Durfee and Peabody. There is, however, an essentially new note, namely, that the alcoholic individual should be helped to admit to God, to himself and to another human being (preferably an ex-alcoholic patient) the exact nature of his personality deficit. Some will perhaps shy from the emphasis on God and religion until it is realized that the alcoholic patient is asked in this relation to believe sincerely in a power greater than himself. He then sees that his life is really unmanageable without this power.

The second part contains the stories of twenty-nine individuals who were cured by the method of working out their character problems in relation to God, themselves and another human being. All these individuals were "convinced by an ex-alcoholic therapist" Those who at some time must deal with the problem of alcoholism are urged to read this stimulating account

The authors have presented their case well, in fact, in such good style that it may be of considerable influence when read by alcoholic patients.

### **Journal of the American Medical Association, Vol. 113(16), October 14, 1939**

The seriousness of the psychiatric and social problem represented by addiction to alcohol is generally underestimated by those not immediately familiar with the tragedies in the families of victims or the resistance addicts offer to any effective treatment. Many psychiatrists regard addiction to alcohol as having a more pessimistic prognosis than schizophrenia. For many years the public was beguiled into believing that short courses of enforced abstinence and catharsis in "institutes" and "rest homes" would do the trick, and now that the failure of such temporizing has become common knowledge, a considerable number of other forms of quack treatment have sprung up. The book under review is a curious combination of organizing propaganda and religious exhortation. It is in no sense a scientific book, although it is introduced by a letter from a physician who claims to know some of the anonymous contributors who have been "cured" of addiction to alcohol and have joined together in an organization which would save other addicts by a kind of religious conversion. The book contains instructions as to how to intrigue the alcoholic addict into the acceptance of divine guidance in place of alcohol in terms strongly reminiscent of Dale Carnegie and the adherents of the Buchman ("Oxford") movement. The one valid thing in the book is the recognition of the seriousness of addiction to alcohol. Other than this, the book has no scientific merit or interest.

### **Illinois Medical Journal, January 20, 1940**

TO THE EDITOR: Of great interest to the medical profession is the new approach to a cure for chronic alcoholism developed by alcoholics themselves.

Every physician has been confronted with the problem of the incurable alcoholic. He who although sobered and apparently sane as a result of medical aid suffers the usual and expected relapse and returns to the physician or to the sanitarium for another round of treatment. In his remorse he solemnly rejects alcohol in any form. He then endures a short period of sobriety and again returns to drunkenness.

Alcoholics are the last to admit their ability to "drink like gentlemen," and therefore are prone to devise ways and means, or systems for indulgence, which although inaugurated with sincere intent at the time seem

never to serve their purpose. They act only as the forerunners to bigger and better sprees.

The chronic alcoholic seldom can be cured until he reaches a point at which he admits his inability to cope with his problem and has in addition a sincere desire to achieve complete and lasting sobriety.

The chronic alcoholic resents the efforts made by his relatives and friends to help him. He feels they do not understand him nor his problem. But when he talks to people who themselves have been drunkards he realizes that these people do understand for they have had the same personal experiences.

### **Christian Herald, August 1940**

WITNESS: There s a book on alcohol you should read. It is published by The Alcoholic Foundation of New York (P.O. Box 658, Church Street Annex, New York). It's title: "Alcoholics Anonymous "The unnamed alcoholics write their own stories, and those stories are dynamite.

Two-thirds of them, they claim, have laid the foundation for permanent recovery. "More than half of us have had no relapse at all (after treatment) despite the fact that we have often been pronounced incurable "How were they cured? The method is simple: first of all they admitted they were powerless to overcome alcohol by themselves; second, they came to believe that "a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity;" third, they made a decision to "turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him"

There is more to the cure, but that's the heart of it. There may be some confirmed drinkers who will sneer at the method and the procedures, but they can't laugh off the fact that it has worked where other methods and procedures have failed.

### **Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease, Vol. 42(3), September 1940**

As a youth we attended many "experience" meetings more as an onlooker than as a participant. We never could work ourselves up into a lather and burst forth in soapy bubbly phrases about our intimate states of feeling. That was our own business rather than something to brag about to the neighbours. Neither then nor now do we lean to the autobiographical, save occasionally by allusion to point a moral or adorn a tale, as the ancient adage put it.

This big book, i.e. big in words, is a rambling sort of camp meeting confession of experiences, told in the form of biographies of various alcoholics who had been to a certain institution and have provisionally recovered, chiefly under the influence of the "big brothers get together spirit." Of the inner meaning of alcoholism there is hardly a word. It is all on the surface material.

Inasmuch as the alcoholic, speaking generally, lives a wish-fulfilling infantile regression to the omnipotent delusional state, perhaps he is best handled for the time being at least by regressive mass psychological methods, in which, as is realized, religious fervors belong, hence the religious trend of the book . Billy Sunday and similar orators had their successes but we think the methods of Forel and of Bleuler infinitely superior.

### **The News-letter: American Association Op Psychiatric Social Workers, Fall, 1940**

This review covers the book, a discussion with the authors, and attendance at the meetings of the New York City group of Alcoholics Anonymous. Contact with this group increases one s respect for their work. To the layman, the book is very clear. To the professional person it is as first a bit misleading in that the spiritual aspect gives the impression that this is another revival movement. The book is simply and clearly written. It gives a vivid picture of the emotional predicament of the person suffering from serious alcoholism. It presents the disorder as a disease; a fatal disease in the social and physical sense. People who have benefitted from the treatment tell their story in simple, compelling language. There are excellent descriptions of what happens to the family of an alcoholic. There is a sincerity and enthusiasm about the writing of this work that commands attention.

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS seems to have succeeded in cases where the physician, the clergyman, the psychiatrist, or the social worker have failed. The method works only with the patient who really wants to get well; who is willing to face the truth about himself - his prejudices, his infantilism, his evasions. It effects its most phenomenal results with the patient who has gone so far that unless he does something drastic he will either become insane, kill himself in drink, or commit suicide. The patient must be willing to admit that he has failed, that he has no power over his drinking, that the "wet-nursing" of his family only makes him worse, that he must do this thing alone. In this frame of mind he selects someone to listen to his story but for the first time

in his life he is being really honest with himself and admitting that he is responsible for the mess he has made of his life. When he must prove that he is willing to face reality by trying to patch up some of the antagonisms he has created around him. Then he is ready for some deeper reorganization of patterns. It is a sink or swim psychology; there is no pampering by the group and no protection. The group accepts the new-comer as an adult who really wants to get well; they will show him how but they won't do it for him. Having admitted he has no power over his drinking, he must be willing to allow a higher power to help him. This is no ready made spiritual formula; it is not a church religion. It is a spiritual experience that somehow even extreme atheists seem to have been able to achieve. (One can watch the process of this change at the meetings of the group). The last step in the cure, the part that keeps the patient from slipping back into drink, is that he devotes himself to helping other alcoholics. The movement is kept alive by this type of work.

It is more impressive to the professional person to watch the technique in action than to read the book. The New York City group is made up of intelligent people, many college graduates, many professional people. There is no holier-than-thou spirit prevailing, there is good fellowship, gaiety, fun, and a real desire to stay sober.

The work is organized under an Alcoholic Foundation, which prevents an alcoholic from obtaining a salary for doing the work. One or two of the group tried using the approach on a fee basis, but the spiritual aspect which keeps these people sober seemed to have died when the patient tried earning money this way; these few people found themselves drinking again and so returned to the volunteer relationship.

This new resource is developing groups all over the country. Social workers will find them of great help with the extreme cases of alcoholism. The book describes the method in detail - it is a layman's approach, a layman's book. It needs no explanation for the patient and should certainly be read by every alcoholic.

Lee R Stainer, New York City

### **Church School Magazine, December 1940**

Here is an impressive story of the achievement of more than one hundred men in gaining freedom from alcoholism. Evidence in this volume seems to indicate that medicine and psychiatry are powerless to cure many cases of alcoholism: heretofore there was no end in sight except death or insanity. But here is factual evidence that the worst alcoholic can gain mastery over this temptation if he admits that he is powerless and turns himself completely over to God. This spiritual technique demands genuine humility, sincere efforts to make amends for all wrongs done, continued fellowship with God through prayer and meditation, and efforts to help other alcoholics who are ready to relinquish the belief that they can resist alcohol through their own will power. The experience of these men seems to offer real hope that an effective technique has been discovered for conquering an enemy that has baffled doctors, psychiatrists, pastors and thousands of distressed families.

### **Social Progress, March 1941**

Here is an unusual book. It is the dramatic recital of the experience of more than a hundred men and women in their fight against alcoholism, their victory, and their desire and determination to pass on to others the secret of their release. The group who have contributed to this book began with two or three alcoholics whose similar experiences drew them together. "To show other alcoholics precisely how we have recovered from a seemingly hopeless state of mind and body," says the introduction, "is the main purpose of this book."

Let it be said at the outset that there is nothing sensational in these stories, although they are filled with the drama of conflict, failure and final release. These writers believe that there is but one cure for the alcoholic. That is the realization of his own inability to cope with his repeated failures and the recognition of the reality of that Power greater than himself, whom we call God, to drive out his obsession. The head of one of the nation's great hospitals for the treatment of alcoholism and drug addiction contributes a statement to the introductory pages declaring that here is the working out of the principles of a sound "moral psychology."

The discussion of these principles is free of emotionalism. It is neither sectarian nor partisan, for men and women of all religions and of none, have contributed to the book "In our personal stories," says one writer, "you will find wide variation in the way in which each teller approaches and conceives of the Power greater than himself. One proposition, however, these men and women are strikingly agreed. Every one of them has gained access to, and believes in, a power greater than himself. This power has in each case accomplished the

miraculous, the humanly impossible.”

The movement has grown and spread without formal organization and groups are widely scattered over the country. Its members, mostly business and professional folk, go about their usual work, their avocation being to help others through their friendship and moral concern to find release.

For ministers, social workers, psychiatrists, and all others who are concerned with the rescue of those sick in mind and body, from the possession of the liquor habit, this book is a source of suggestion and inspiration.

**Mental Hygiene, Vol. 25(2), April 1941. Alcoholics Anonymous: New York: Works Publishing Company, 1939. 400pp.; Twelve Against Alcohol: By Herbert Ludwig Nossen, M.D, New York: Harrison-Hilton Books, 1940. 246pp.**

These two books are similar in that both present in great detail case histories of patients who are suffering from alcoholism. In this way many old established facts about alcoholism are brought again to our attention, such as the individual's early resort to alcohol as a means of solving his problems or temporizing his major adjustments in life, and the tragic and dramatic way in which the alcoholic drags down his entire family with him, to say nothing of the other social and economic repercussions. Reading these case histories, one becomes more than ever convinced that the excessive drinking of alcohol is one of the relatively minor phases of the individual's whole problem, particularly when one considers the faulty psychosexual adjustments and general immaturity and infantile characteristic of the alcoholic

For the successful treatment of a person who has become addicted to alcohol, there must of necessity be a revolutionary change in the patient's personality. The achievement of more adult attitudes and the marked turning away from older selfish, infantile patterns of behaviour must involve an emotional upheaval. We are all aware that this inner emotional change is more necessary than a merely intellectual appreciation of one's difficulty, or what is called intellectual insight.

It will be interesting to see how the religious program set forth by Alcoholics Anonymous will work. It is not entirely new; it has been tried before.

James H Wall, The New York Hospital, Westchester Division, White Plains, New York.

### **World Call, June 1941**

One of the most significant redemptive movements of our time is expressed in a large book of testimonies called Alcoholics Anonymous. It is written with the enthusiastic flair of discovery though its main thesis is as old as the history of Christian redemption.

Alcoholism is a disease. Physicians and psychiatrists have been working on it for years. It is a disease with an increasing prevalence. Many practicing physicians write it off as incurable. The present movement began with an individual who had been given up by the practitioners as hopeless. He was converted to religion and began to work out the practical effects of his conversion by trying to help other alcoholics. This method was found amazingly successful and has some of the professional physicians mystified. These alcoholics find that they need spiritual support and that their own cures are best secured by helping others with like affliction. They are forming an informal group of the saved. It is a movement worth encouraging.

### **Some Facts about the Big Book: The A.A. Grapevine, July 1955**

The new edition has 612 pages, as against 400 pages in the old. In terms of cost it is the best non-fiction buy in the country. No other commercial publisher in America could match the book, in size and format alone, at its retail price.

The first edition runs to 100,000 words, the edition just off the press is 168,869.

The old edition contained 29 stories, about 1,800 words each, the new edition has 37 — 24 of them brand new — and all of them running to twice the length (or about 3,300 words) of the earlier work. The new stories are more detailed and more explicit, more revealing, and of more useful contrast and variety.

The geographical spread, in the new book, is far greater: 15 cities, 10 states, two foreign countries.

The vocational range is immense: buyer, industrial executive, surgeon, banker, writer, educator, soldier, insurance agent, advertising executive, furniture dealer, stock farmer, beautician, charwoman, truck driver,

insurance investigator, salesman, real estate agent, promoter, accountant, sculptor, journalist, upholsterer, organizational executive, patent expert, lawyer, doctor, and housewife. The most numerous in this list is the housewife — with six stories.

There are 110,000 words of absolutely new material, yet the practical, therapeutical, and expository first 175 pages of the original work are here intact. These pages have already gone into the American legend as the “greatest redemptive force of the twentieth century.” And these pages will remain there, through the full history of man’s pursuit of maturity.

### **Best Sellers, Vol. 15: 96, August 15, 1955**

This book is a revision of the first edition originally published in 1939 which has gone through 300,000 copies. Not only does it tell the appalling story of alcoholism, but it also serves to give a deep insight into the philosophy and functioning of A.A.

Five chapters devoted to the relationship of the alcoholic to his wife and family contain many instances of marital and domestic difficulties, their meaning and methods of handling them. Spouses and families that have been spared the presence of an alcoholic can never fully appreciate what it means to have a family member a victim. These chapters dispel many of the misconceptions and false notions of how the alcoholic should be treated, and they offer many sound suggestions in this area.

The second part of the book contains thirty-seven case histories of alcoholics. Twelve of these relate to pioneers of A. A.; twelve tell about people who stopped drinking in time. The remainder are inspirational in nature.

At the present time A.A. numbers more than 150,000 members. In view of its short history, less than twenty years, this is a phenomenal growth. Since we have over 800,000 problem drinkers in the U.S. it is immediately obvious that hospitalization is impossible even if it were feasible. Because of this fact, efforts like A.A. take on a practical urgency. As the book well indicates, A.A. does not seek to supplant the psychiatrist or medical man. However, the group experiences of A.A. has evidently been sufficiently strong to help chronic alcoholics take the steps necessary for their rehabilitation.

This book is a welcome addition to the literature on alcoholism. It has value for the alcoholic who is seeking help, his family and friends and even the persons professionally concerned with his treatment and recovery.

### **Saturday Review, Vol. 38, August 27, 1955. “The Big Book” Bible for Alcoholics**

There was a time when the organization known as Alcoholics Anonymous, which has become one of the greatest boons to the drunkards of the world, had a membership which was a little lopsided. On its rolls the Bowery was better represented than Park Avenue, a fact deplored by the organization’s leaders. So, recognizing that the rich can become just as alcoholic as the poor, the organization decided to do something about it. Acting on its long-held tenet that only a sober ex-drunk can cure a down-and-out drunk, the A.A. leaders looked around for an ex-drunk with glamour and the ability to speak the Park Avenue language. They found it in an ex-drunk countess. The result: Park Avenue became as well represented as the Bowery on the rolls of A.A.

Now, in the past few years, another change has taken place in the membership of A.A. — a change which has proved even more important than that accomplished by the countess, but which was comparatively unnoticed by the public-at-large until last month. At that time A.A. held its bone-dry twentieth-anniversary convention and, in conjunction with the ceremonies, issued a revised, second edition of an oversized, ocean-blue volume which is familiarly known to all A.A. members as “The Big Book.” The new edition, like its predecessors, is jacketed in a reversible dust cover, one side of which is blank, which allows it to be read in trains and buses without attracting the eyes of the curious. But, unlike its predecessor, the new edition is not intended solely for alcoholics of the last-gasp variety. Right in the middle of it lies a whole section devoted to drinkers who have not yet lost their businesses or broken up their homes or, as most of A.A.’s original members seem to have done, landed in jail. Says ex-A. A. president Bill W. (who still keeps his last name anonymous, though he has now stepped down from his executive position): “Now we’re getting cases whose drinking has merely become a menacing nuisance, and we’re glad for them”

In the same way that A.A. discovered that the Park Avenue set could not be reach’ by the Bowery set it

soon learned that potential alcoholics of the “menacing nuisance” variety cannot be reached by a membership composed largely of ex-last-gasp drunks. The solution: A.A. members made an effort to get a few representative “menacing nuisances” into the fold and, having accomplished this goal, found that its roll call of these “nuisances” soon began to increase by leaps and bounds. In the new edition of “The Big Book” appear twelve well authenticated self-confessions by former “menacing nuisances.” The section is subtitled “They Stopped in Time” and it will, A.A. leaders hope, bring even more “menacing nuisances” into the organization. “Half the people coming into A.A. today are in this group,” Bill W. says, “and the membership of this new class immediately identify with each other. Otherwise we couldn’t keep them”

Who exactly are these “menacing nuisances?” For A.A.’s purposes they are that segment of drinkers who are potential alcoholics. According to Bill W., there are certain well-defined symptoms by which they can be distinguished from other drinkers, e.g.:

A persistent lack of control over your drinking even when you want to control it and when it is necessary that you do control it.

An underlying maladjustment from which the excessive drinking usually stems.

Like all A.A.’s, the new members find themselves in one of the most cleverly constructed organizations of modern times. It accepts no money from outsiders, so that even if you wanted to leave a bequest to A.A. the money would be refused. It also insists on the public anonymity of its members. (Last year Bill W. turned down an honorary degree of Doctor of Laws at Yale because it would have brought him a personal type of glory frowned on by A.A.) Yet these two rules alone have been credited with bringing the organization more really worthwhile publicity (i.e., the kind of publicity that reaches alcoholics who need A.A.) than could have been achieved by any other public-relations policy. (Good A.A.’s, for example, disapprove of such authors as Lillian Roth, who has publicly broken the shell of her A.A. anonymity to write such a best-seller as “I’ll Cry Tomorrow.” Says one A.A. spokesman privately in this connection: “We have many members who have pulled themselves up by their own resources.”)

By equal cleverness, A.A., which has baffled psychiatrists and religionists, has at the same time been approved by both psychiatrists and religionists. There was a time when the Catholic Church, for example, did not see eye to eye with A.A., believing that its religion was enough to cure any alcoholic. Then A.A. pointed out to the Church that many of its own priests, far from being able to pull themselves up by their religion, had joined A.A. to be cured. As a result the Catholic stigma was removed from A.A. Yet the basis of A.A. itself, which once was closely associated with the Oxford Moral Rearmament Group, is a highly individualized religion that has been made palatable for even the most adamant atheist. Organized, as what Bill W. describes as “everything from a benign anarchy to a democracy to a republic,” the organization is one in which no member can be compelled to contribute anything to it or to believe in any particular dogma “If you believe,” says Bill, “that the hen came before the egg or that the egg came before the hen you have enough religion to join A.A.” Even the most scientific alcoholic, he says, has to admit that by the time he gets around to A.A. he can’t help himself. Therefore, he has to admit that there’s a higher power than himself and, says Bill, “We put teeth into this belief by telling him that God in effect is saying, ‘I hope you boys behave’ but John Barleycorn is saying ‘You damn well better behave, because if you don’t.’”

By such methods A.A. leaders estimate that they have now corralled 150,000 to 200,000 former alcoholics into their organization, although accurate membership figures are hard to come by, partly because all members of A.A. are allowed to make their own decisions on how closely they will work with the organization and partly because there are thousands of A.A.’s who, being isolated from cities where A.A. groups are able to meet, must in their own words “stay sober” solely by means of “The Big Book.” and by means of A.A.’s monthly magazine, *The Grapevine*. Sales figures of the first edition of the book alone reached a mammoth 300,000 copies — a figure which has helped convince A.A. leaders that their membership extends far beyond their records. They know, for example, that by means of their tried-and-true methods the French membership has jumped a great deal from a time when the only A.A.’s in France were American alcoholics in Paris. They also know that A.A. has transcended many international boundaries which are normally not transcended: for example, A.A.’s meet together from both North and South Ireland, crossing the boundary line to do so. One boundary still to be got across, however: the Iron Curtain. But in time even this boundary as well as others may disappear for, as A.A. leaders say, they have a built-in self-perpetuating system: in order to stay cured every

alcoholic has to spend some time helping another drunk to be cured or otherwise he may very well sink back into drunkenness himself.

Today for those alcoholics and potential alcoholics who would like to join A.A. but who are remote from all A.A. groups the new and revised edition of "The Big Book" is now available for \$4.50 a copy. (To groups the price is \$4.00) If you cannot find it in your local bookstore the book can be ordered from Box 459, Grand Central Terminal Annex, New York City. Nobody - not even A.A. leaders - can speculate what the demand for this book will be. Only one thing is certain: that is that this edition will do better saleswise than did the original edition when it was first published in 1939. In that year A.A. publishing Inc., was left with 5,000 copies of a book which nobody seemed to want and for which the unpaid printer's bills were so alarming that A.A. headquarters was actually visited by a deputy sheriff bearing a dispossess notice. Fortunately for everybody, however, the old Liberty Magazine published an article on the struggling organization and shortly thereafter John D. Rockefeller, Jr., sponsored a dinner for the organization. From that moment on A.A. was a success and so was "The Big Book."

### **Mental Hygiene, Vol. 41(1), January 1957**

This is the second and greatly enlarged edition of a book first published in 1939. Three hundred thousand copies of the first edition have been sold.

The second edition presents identical material for the first 164 pages. The second part, made up of personal records, has now been enlarged so that it contains 37 histories. These are divided into three sections. The first contains the history of 13 pioneers of Alcoholics Anonymous. Part Two, labeled "They Stopped in Time," contains 12 more histories. Except for additional introductory material and the changes in the case histories, the book is identical with the first edition.

For those unfamiliar with the first edition, the book starts out with an introduction, followed by historical material and a discussion of the aims of Alcoholics Anonymous. There is a good deal of detail about the program of recovery, and enumeration of the now well-known 12 points which express the fundamental beliefs of Alcoholics Anonymous. There are special chapters for wives, for families and for employers. The last chapter, titled "A Vision For You," is an appeal to the alcoholic to make use of Alcoholics Anonymous and adopt its procedures.

The book presents the philosophy of Alcoholics Anonymous, a philosophy which has had quite unexpected success, since the reviewer doubts that any of those who witnessed the beginning of Alcoholics Anonymous had any concept of what it would achieve.

The personal stories of the 37 alcoholics can be recommended as reading to anyone who wants to get the first-hand history of alcoholics who have managed to overcome the habit.

The whole book presents the viewpoint of Alcoholics Anonymous, which can be considered as one approach, and one of the most successful, in dealing with the problem of the alcoholic. Reading the book may make it comprehensible to the reader why this program works with some persons and not others. It is a limited approach which takes in only certain aspects. It frankly admits its own inability to deal with certain types cases. It does, however, show a remarkable record of recovery for quite a large group, and on this basis has clearly won an important status in any plan in dealing with the alcoholic.

This book should be required reading for anyone who wishes to understand or deal with the problem of the alcoholic. Viewed as an approach which has been developed by a special group of alcoholics, it makes very interesting reading and gives a much better understanding of many of these cases.

Karl M Bowman, M.D., San Francisco.

### **Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol, Vol. 20 (1), March 1959**

The book Alcoholics Anonymous can be reviewed only by a nonmember of A.A., for any evaluation of the "Bible" of this fellowship by a member must be obvious. But perhaps even a non-A.A. cannot hope to compose an objective evaluation of a work of this sort. To treat it as literature would be pointless. It does not claim to be a moral tract or a scholarly treatise or a scientific exposition. It is, in fact, a book that for many alcoholics has the function of supplementary holy writ.

When I first heard about A.A. more than two decades ago, the original Alcoholics Anonymous book had

not yet been published. The story was that a few alcoholics had gotten together and formed a club or society to help one another overcome their problems of drunkenness. Later it became known that they had written a book describing their method, and they believed they had found the golden key, the solution to the problem of alcoholism. It sounded like another crackpot scheme, like so many other "cures" for alcoholism, many with "books" to explain them, it was bound to fail in wide application. Years after, when the movement persisted, it was unavoidable to read the book. It became possible to recognize that here was an exception. Indeed, it was not impossible not to recognize that this book was a phenomenon, that in spite of the disadvantages of collective authorship it spoke from and to the heart and carried something rare in literature: a positive therapeutic potential.

The meaning of "therapeutic potential" as used here is admittedly vague. All one can say is that the book gives the impression of a piece of literature capable of promoting healing in some people who are psychically distressed. It was a work seeming fit to be classified in some such needed category as "bibliotherapeutic." Any wonder at the persistence of A.A. could be laid aside, and it was possible to contemplate that the group which produced this work and lived by its implications could actually help alcoholics.

The book had its faults, being a decidedly human product. And fortunately its composers were sufficiently immodest to take the credit for its contents, though anonymously, without imputing any of it to supernatural inspiration. Thereby they made it possible in the course of time to act upon the obvious fact that portions of it were dated and growing more so, and that other parts could be improved by taking into account the knowledge and experience accumulated in some twenty years. The leaders of A.A. deserve to be congratulated for the courage to secularize the fellowship's bible by judicious revision. They have a better book now. They have done no harm — that is, they have not taken out any of the original feel of sincerity and capacity to start a process of healing. Instead, by their revision they have insured that it will continue for another period to be as useful as up to now in helping many alcoholics get started on the road to recovery.

The book *Alcoholics Anonymous* is not just for alcoholics. Every non-alcoholic who wishes to gain insight about alcoholics and alcoholism should read it.

The newer book, *Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age* is a valuable companion volume. Not in the same class and not intended for the same purpose, it will be vastly useful to those who want information on the history and development of the fellowship and as a picture of its organization and principles.

### **The A.A. Grapevine, July 1955. For Man's Pursuit of Maturity - The New Big Book**

This book is so full of wisdom; each of its stories is so dead on the target, that *Alcoholics Anonymous* should be left on the alcoholic's night-table for continuous reference, for active and unexpected support, for the comfort of sudden insight, the re-inforcement of forgotten incidents, the reminder of chagrin, of hysteria, wreckage, betrayal, and loneliness that can be described only as outer-spatial.

We were all these, many of us for years, and these re-visits in their multitude on the one hand and their merciful objectivity on the other - now that we are calmly passing the cage instead of whimpering on its floor - are the most moving and powerful paragraphs of our past that we can encounter in the days of our sobriety. This is an album of our individual past, in all its grotesquerie, its homicidal ebullience, its sophomoric idiocy, its abuse and obscenity, its marathon emptiness of talk, its gulping fantasy. It is a good thing for us to traverse this rutted acreage once more; this pitted pot-hole promenade. It's an important refresher course in our unbroken need - not for glimpses of what we were and where we went - but for hard cold steady-eyed explorations of it; deliberate returns to it; continuous meditations upon it.

Reading the new book, as with reading the old, is part of our life and of our continuing education in continuing self-discovery. We can't stay sober without thinking about being sober; thinking actively and purposefully about it. The editorial selection of new material is especially commendable. Here, indeed, is a tour-de-force of today's miracle, one bravura story after another, all familiar yet all unendingly new, each one providing its special and deeply personal increment to the full treasure of what is without any doubt the richest story in print of human salvage out of the jaws of human degradation and spiritual catastrophe; of last-minute rescue at the edge of insanity, of total recovery from total insanity.

The fascination of the dilemma of obsession in the known and acknowledged presence of abhorrence

seizes the reader's imagination all over again. And it seizes his remembrance too, for all the known antidotes come back in these pages to straighten our sights, refortify our nerve, and reemphasize the importance of one of A.A.'s basics: the constant thought of others. It's a joy and a sudden challenge too, to re-encounter the blunt question: "Why don't you choose your own conception of God?"

Who can quarrel with propositions so basically sporting as this? What arrested alcoholic can hold back a slight shudder when he reads this once more:

"If you want to test yourself, go to a bar and do a little controlled drinking. Drink, then stop"

It is stabilizing and reassuring to go over, in careful but compassionate prose, the description of the mental states that precede a relapse; to be reimpressed with the sameness of the distortion that afflicts the alcoholic and the insane; to behold once again the great resource for rationalizing that both share. It is good for us all to be warned again: that there is no safety in a long sobriety; that patterns of susceptibility are as set as blood types; that the disease is progressive, whether we're drinking or not drinking.

The meditations on the problem of agnosticism become more illuminating as the years pass; acquire more meaning and a greater sympathy with the pragmatic challenges which the serious agnostic puts up to the face of Faith. If the sincere agnostic — and there are millions — can find a safe sobriety while denying the existence of God, surely he cannot read these pages in Alcoholics Anonymous without feeling a sudden dispersion of the pressures of his own life; a lessening of his built-in prejudices; a falling away of antagonisms. "We've stopped fighting anybody or anything. We have to" "Who are you to say there is no God?"

Newcomers to A.A (there are 6,000 groups of us now) can have a disturbing time - old-timers an amusing one - in going over the list of methods we alcoholics use (or used to use) to prove we weren't alcoholics. Do you remember them? Beer only? Never more than two drinks' (or three or four?) Never to drink alone? To drink only at home? To drink only at parties and never at home? Never to drink in the morning? Never to keep liquor in the house? Switching from Scotch to Brandy? (a gruesome lateral ,as this reviewer can testify) Taking a trip? Agreeing to resign if caught drunk? More exercise? Changing towns? Going to health farms? Committing ourselves to the loony-roost.

We had fun playing this game, didn't we? With no defense against the first drink, with our power of choice lost for all time. The book's explanation as to how so many alcoholics can go on and on for long periods of time - even for pears - though drinking hard, is as simple as it is penetrating: the will, unable to combat liquor, can remain strong in other respects.

As A.A. gets older, it is also getting younger and younger. For those just coming in, or thinking about sampling what it is that we have, the diagram for sensible living is laid down in these pages, the testimony of those whose eloquent first-person narratives of the unbelievable wreckage they have survived is here given; the strange but visible phenomenon of our interdependence - as alcoholics - for our continued serenity; the promise of a safe return to it after the occasional departure: this is our diagram.

If, when drinking, we "extreme examples of self-will run riot," when not drinking we're pretty useful and fairly good company. We derive our strength from each other, in the group. And from a higher power by whatever name. Where it comes from, none of us entirely knows. But how to find it is told, in rich detail by many who have been all the way there and have come all the way back, in the new edition of Alcoholics Anonymous.

### **Book Review: Third Edition of Big Book Is Now in Print. The A.A. Grapevine, August 1976**

The third edition of Alcoholics Anonymous providentially came off the press just as the last printing of the second edition had been exhausted. The new big book had been years in preparation, going through the same careful process that keeps all A.A. literature as close as possible to an expression of the Fellowship's group conscience

That phrase "new Big Book" may sound startling. We have all heard A.A. talks that recall a newcomer's alcoholic arrogance with the words "At first I wanted to rewrite the Big Book." Upon opening a copy of the third edition, the warp reader will be relieved to find that the Big Book has not been rewritten. The basic text (pp. 1-164) is unaltered, so is the section of personal stories headed "Pioneers of A A" In the section headed "They Stopped in Time" and "They Lost Nearly All," 17 stories have been retained from the second edition, and 13 new stories have been added, to reflect present-day membership more accurately.

In 1939, when the book Alcoholics Anonymous was first published, it gave its name to a hitherto “nameless bunch of alcoholics,” then numbering about only 100. More than 300,000 copies of that edition were eventually printed, playing a powerful role in A.A.’s growth to a membership of about 130,000 by 1955, when the second edition was produced. Successive printings brought the combined distribution of these two editions to a total of 1,450,000 by the spring of this year, when the third appeared. Its cover is a lighter shade of blue; the title is printed in a more modern type face that emphasizes the initials “A.A.” - meaningless before 1939, but now meaning life itself to over 1,000,000 alcoholics.

### **Employee Assistance Quarterly, Vol. 1(1), Fall 1985**

If there is a published review of Alcoholics Anonymous, maybe better known as the Big Book, the editorial staff of the Quarterly has not been able to locate it. To compensate for its absence from the literature, we approached three outstanding professionals in the field of addictive behaviours and posed this task: review the Big Book. Addressing the task are Albert Ellis, Ph. D., internationally renowned psychologist and founder of Rational-Emotive Therapy; Alan Marlatt, Ph.D, Director of Addictive Behaviours Research Center at the University of Washington; and Abraham Twerski, M.D., Medical Director of Gateway Rehabilitation Center (near Pittsburgh) and author of “Kindness Can Be Dangerous to the Alcoholic”

Each reviewer was asked to organize his review of the Big Book around the following questions:

- In light of current professional views of alcoholism, is the Big Book still appropriate in understanding the nature of the alcoholism and/or other addictive behaviours?
- Does the Big Book provide an adequate explanation of alcoholism recovery?
- Is the therapeutic approach to alcoholism, as depicted in this text, consistent with contemporary efforts to treating addictive behaviours like alcoholism?
- Does this text adequately reflect how Alcoholics Anonymous and other self-help groups currently practice?
- In your opinion, does the Big Book represent an effective therapeutic model for alcoholism and/or other addictive behaviours?

Dr. Ellis’ review, which was extrapolated from his other paper, “Why Alcoholics Anonymous Is Probably Doing Itself and Alcoholics More Harm Than Good By Its Insistence on a Higher Power,” chose only to address the last question regarding the Big Book as an effective therapeutic model for alcoholism/addictive behaviours. He did so in a rational and logical manner. Dr. Marlatt, in his paper entitled “Is Reliance Upon a Higher Power Incompatible With Learning Skills?” arranged a general but scholarly response to all of the questions. In an effort of resolution, he drew parallels between social scientific and Alcoholics Anonymous approaches to understanding alcoholism and recovery Dr. Twerski complied with all the questions through his prescription, “Go to the Patient, Not to a Book.” In his review he clarified the purpose of the Big Book; “...it does not seek to treat nor teach by its contents...it is a description of a program that is effective.”

### **Why Alcoholics Anonymous Is Probably Doing Itself and Alcoholics More Harm than Good by its Insistence on a Higher Power, Albert Ellis, Ph.D., Executive Director, Institute for Rational-Emotive Therapy, New York, New York**

Alcoholics Anonymous is a complex and profound book that has probably helped millions of addicts. It includes so many good — and so many questionable - points that I find it impossible to review it in the 500 words I have been allowed. Nor can I possibly answer the five important questions the Associate Editor has asked of reviewers. Let me focus, therefore, on the last of his questions: “In your opinion, does the Big Book represent an effective therapeutic model for alcoholism and/or other addictive behaviours?” As a psychotherapist for more than 40 years and as the founder of the most popular form of cognitive- behaviour therapy, rational-emotive therapy (RET), I shall - all too briefly! - review the 12 steps outlined in Chapter 5 of Alcoholics Anonymous in regard to their therapeutic effectiveness.

The seven therapeutic steps in A.A. that seem very useful to many alcoholics are steps 1,4,5,8,9,10, and 12. These urge them to admit their addictive and self-destructive ways, make amends to those they have harmed, acquire a philosophic awakening, and carry their message to other alcoholics. The five A.A steps that are of dubious value and that may easily do more harm than good in keeping people away from Alcoholics

Anonymous and in preventing their sobriety are steps 2,3,6,7 and 11. These urge alcoholics to believe in, rely on, and humbly pray to a Higher Power who will remove their shortcomings and give them the will to stop drinking.

Steps 2,3,6,7 and 11 are potentially unhelpful and dangerous for many reasons — which I expound in detail in an article I am writing, “Why Alcoholics Anonymous Is Probably Doing Itself and Alcoholics More Harm Than Good By Its Insistence on a Higher Power.” Let me (very briefly!) summarize some of the points I am making in this article:

1. Obviously, not everyone needs a Higher Power to stop drinking, since millions have done so while remaining agnostics and atheists.

2. Believing in a Higher Power is an indirect, and I would say hypocritical, way of believing in your own power to stop drinking. For you clearly choose to believe in this power and you choose to assume that it exists and will help you.

3. There is no convincing evidence against the existence of a Supreme Being who personally audits and obeys human supplication.

4. For every person turned-on to A.A. by its insistence on belief in a Higher Power probably two or three are turned-off and will not join or remain a member.

5. Belief in a Higher Power or God may easily lead to devout belief in Absolute Truth and other forms of dogma that (a) are often serious emotional disturbances in their own right and that (b) leads to dictatorship, terrorism, war, and enormous social harm.

6. By calling on God to remove your defects of character, you falsely tell yourself that you do not have the ability to do so yourself and you imply that you are basically an incompetent who is unable to work on and correct your own low frustration tolerance. Since God presumably only helps those who help themselves, this is essentially a lie - and a lie that strongly contradicts A.A.’s fine therapeutic stand for honesty.

7. To pray for knowledge of God’s will is again hypocrisy. For who decides that there is a God, that He or She has a will, and that this deity will give you “Godly” knowledge and power. Patently, you do. So “God’s will” is largely your choice and your invention. Which, if you want to be truly honest, and fight the rationalizing that often goes with addiction, you had better fully admit!

8. Although you may well have a philosophic awakening as a result of taking A.A.’s 12 steps, calling this (in step 12) a “spiritual” awakening is unscientific and antitherapeutic. “Spiritual” is a vague word that means anything from intellectual and philosophical to incorporeal, sacred, and ecclesiastical. Many people who have had a profound philosophical and intellectual awakening and have thereby quit drinking have been distinctly agnostic, atheistic, and not at all “spiritual.”

In sum, Alcoholics Anonymous or the Big Book has some excellent views and directions - and again, has unquestionably helped millions of alcoholics to stop drinking. But for the above reasons (and many more I could add) it also contains some questionable and often iatrogenic ideas. I fervently (but prayerfully and unspiritually!) hope that these will be revised before the fourth edition appears. A.A. is too good an organization to bow to the will of anyone - including any hypothetical Higher Power.

### **Is Reliance upon a Higher Power Incompatible with Learning Self- Management Skills? G. Alan Marlatt, Ph. D., Director, Addictive Behaviours Research Center, University of Washington**

Psychologists are often critical of A.A. As a psychologist trained in the behavioral tradition, I was taught to view alcoholism not as a physical disease but as an acquired behavioral disorder, a vicious habit cycle, locked in by layers of conditioning based on years of reinforcement, both positive (the high of the buzz) and negative (the relief from withdrawal). We were taught that alcoholics were made, not born, and that anyone is susceptible to developing a drinking problem, not just those with a genetic predisposition or “allergic reaction” to alcohol. In short, we believed in science and the experimental method of discovering the truth about alcoholism. As budding scientists and research-oriented clinicians, we rejected out of hand any approach that smacked of religion or any other nonscientific values.

Despite my scientific training, my intuition (perhaps based on early experiences with several alcoholics in my own family) told me that alcoholism was more of a psychological “dis-ease” of the spirit than a physical disease of the body. I found some statements in the Big Book that seem to echo this philosophy e.g., “Therefore,

the main problem of the alcoholic centers in his mind, rather than his body” (p.23), and Dr Bob’s reputed claim that alcoholism “was more of a moral or spiritual illness than it was a physical one” (p.219). In addition, I cannot help but be impressed with the amazing success of A.A. over the past 50 years of its existence. If alcoholism is really a disease of the spirit (for which alcohol is no real solution), then it makes sense that the religious fellowship of A.A. provides fulfillment of the alcoholic’s underlying craving for union with a Higher Power. Especially if it keeps its members sober, which A.A. often does.

But what about those who fail to maintain abstinence, those who relapse? As the poet and writer John Berryman so aptly points out in his alcoholic autobiography, *Recovery* (N.Y., Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1973), acceptance of the first step in A.A. is not always an easy task. For those fortunate individuals who experience a classical religious conversion experience similar to those described in the Big Book (e.g., p.56 “In a few seconds he was overwhelmed by a conviction of the presence of God. It poured over and through him with the certainty and majesty of a great tide at flood”), all is well and they seem to be protected from further temptation by the protective umbrella of the Higher Power. As the Big Book states, “The alcoholic at certain times has no effective mental defense against the first drink. Except in a few cases, neither he nor any other human being can provide such a defense. His defense must come from a Higher Power” (p.43). Does this mean that those who return to drink have been abandoned by God? Does a slip mean a fall from grace or a moral sin in the eyes of God or the alcoholic? What factors precipitate a relapse?

Here the Big Book and scientific data seem to agree. According to the Big Book, “The greatest enemy of us alcoholics are resentment, jealousy, envy, frustration, and fear” (p.145). Anger and resentment are frequently described throughout the Big Book as psychological precipitants of the first drink. In our own research on determinants of relapse, we found that the negative emotions such as frustration and anger, along with interpersonal conflict and social pressure, represent high-risk situations that are associated with 75% of the initial relapse episodes reported by alcoholics. Frequently, these initial steps are preceded by certain psychological “early warning signals” such as rationalization excuses and unrealistic expectancies about the effects of alcohol as a means of coping with stress or transforming unpleasant mood states. To the extent that people can be trained to recognize and act upon these warning signals and learn to cope more effectively with high-risk situations for relapse, they may be able to prevent or minimize the severity of their relapses. Forewarned is forearmed, as the saying goes. These methods, along with research supporting the effectiveness of these procedures in the treatment of alcoholism, are described in a forthcoming book by Marlatt and Gordon (*Relapse Prevention*, N.Y.: Guilford Press, 1985).

There may be a way of resolving the apparent dilemma between relinquishing personal control to a Higher Power vs learning self-management skills in the prevention of relapse. For those who experience a profound religious conversion experience, no coping skills other than a reliance on a Higher Power may be necessary. In Appendix II of the Big Book it is stated, however, that such religious “transformations, though frequent, are by no means the rule.” Most of our experiences are what the psychologist William James calls the ‘educational variety’ because they develop slowly over a period of time” (p.569). It is for these latter individuals that coping skills for relapse prevention are particularly helpful. I would encourage A.A. members to share their “survival skills” with new members or with those who are experiencing setbacks. In this way, the “higher power” of group support and shared coping experiences can be made available to all members. As it says in the Big Book (p.135), “First Things First”

### **Go to the Patient Not the Book, Abraham J. Twerski, M.D., Medical Director, Gateway Rehabilitation Center**

In 1527, Paracelsus assembled his medical students at the University of Basel, gathered the authoritative medical textbooks, and threw them into a huge bonfire. “You wish to learn medicine? Go see your patients,” he said.

Whereas one cannot totally dismiss the written word, there is truth in Paracelsus’ directive. Furthermore, advances in modern medicine occur at so rapid a pace that most texts are partially obsolete by the time they are published.

The continuing relevance of the Big Book to today’s alcoholic is precisely due to the fact that it does not seek to treat nor teach by its contents. Rather, it is a description of a program that is effective, and provides

testimonials of people whom the program has helped. In other words, this is a book that says “Go to the patients, both the suffering and the recovering. They will help you, not a book; not even this book.”

From the vantage point of a psychiatrist with 20 years of experience and involvement with 32,000 patients afflicted by alcohol and/or chemical dependence, I have found this to be true. The Big Book works because it advocates the program, and it is the program that works. Searching for the secret of A.A.’s effectiveness is akin to saying “it works in practice, but how does it hold up in theory.” The famous 5th chapter is appropriately titled “How It Works,” not “Why It Works.”

The Big Book approaches alcoholism phenomenologically, and thus remains valid, genetic and neurophysiologic findings notwithstanding. The quasirational insanity of alcoholic thinking described in the personal accounts is as applicable today as a half-century ago, as are the endless manipulations with which the modern alcoholic can identify.

Many psychiatrists and psychologists consider all cases of alcoholism to be symptomatic of an underlying disorder. The Big Book seems to consider all alcoholism as primary. Given the consensus in the field that the ratio of primary to secondary alcoholism is 4:1, the Big Book’s approach has greater likelihood of success in an unselected population.

The effectiveness of the 12-step program in other addictions, especially narcotics, gambling, and food, indicates that the Big Book’s value extends far beyond ethanol. This is because the 12-steps are a protocol for personality, for growth, and for self-realization, a process of value to even the non-alcoholic or non-addicted individual. Thus, even if science will someday discover a physiologic solution to the destructive effects of alcohol, the personality enhancing value of the Big Book will continue.

Within the firm guidelines of its 12 traditions, Alcoholics Anonymous has evolved and adapted to cultural changes. Nor does the Big Book advocate a rigidity that would stultify recovery. The Big Book and A.A. remain as effective today as the day they came into being, and are likely to remain unfettered by the continuing passage of time.

### **Perceptual and Motor Skills, Vol. 69,258. 1989. Readability of Alcoholics Anonymous: How Accessible Is the “Big Book?” Kenneth, R. Mills, Iowa State University**

The book Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A. World Services, 1976), popularly referred to as the “Big Book,” presents the A.A. 12-step plan of recovery from addiction through several autobiographical case histories. This book is often used as the central element of bibliotherapy in drug and alcohol treatment programs. For this to be an effective component of treatment, however, it must be comprehensible by the client. Readability becomes an especially salient issue for treatment programs in which a significant number of patients manifest borderline literacy. A review of the literature yielded no previous studies of the readability of any edition of the “Big Book.” The purpose of this study was to determine the readability and difficulty level of the most current edition of this widely used component of addiction treatment.

A readability formula developed by Flesch (1974) was used. The Flesch formula involves a weighted combination of average sentence length and number of syllables per 100 words to arrive at a reading ease (RE) score, which may be converted to reading difficulty by grade level. Thirty page numbers were randomly generated by computer. A 100-word sample, beginning with the second paragraph, was taken from each selected page; however, paragraphs of editorial, italicized, or introductory content were not included. Average sentence and total syllable count were determined for each of the 30 samples. A Flesch reading ease score was then calculated.

RE scores range from 0 to 100, with reading difficulty diminishing as scores increase. The resultant RE score for Alcoholics Anonymous was 70.60, which rests at the division between the categories of “standard difficulty” and “fairly easy.” The grade level corresponding to this RE score is 7.1, so an individual who reads at the level of the average beginning seventh grader would be expected to be able to read this material adequately.

These results indicate the “Big Book” to be a readable text. Care should be exercised, however, in the prescription of any bibliotherapy to assure that the reading assignment is within the capability of the client. While the material in this text appears to be within the reading proficiency of most clients, it would be an inappropriate assignment for those individuals who read at levels significantly below seventh grade. For such clients, use of audio tapes of the text could be considered.

**The Authoritative Guide to Self-help Books, Santrock, J.W., Minnett, A.M., Campbell, B.D.**

In the national survey, this was the highest rated of the three books published by Alcoholics Anonymous World Services. Revised twice since the first edition was published in 1939, the book is the basic text for Alcoholics Anonymous self-help groups. These groups are open and free to anyone, nonalcoholics as well as alcoholics. The average period of sobriety for A.A. members (who call themselves A.A.'s) is 52 months; 29% stay sober for more than 5 years. Members range from teens to the elderly. Increasing numbers of young people have joined A.A. in recent years. About twice as many men as women belong. The number of A.A. members addicted to substances other than alcohol has increased to an estimated 38% overall. The principles of Alcoholics Anonymous have been revised and adapted by a number of self-help groups such as Narcotics Anonymous, Gamblers Anonymous, and Al-Anon (for people with a variety of addictions and their families).

Called the "Big Book" by A.A.'s, Alcoholics Anonymous is divided into two basic parts. The first part describes the Alcoholics Anonymous recovery program, which relies heavily on confession, group support, and spiritual commitment to God to help individuals cope with alcoholism. Extensive personal testimonies of A.A. members from different walks of life make up the latter two-thirds of the book. Successive editions of the book have expanded the case histories to describe examples of alcoholics from a variety of backgrounds in hope that alcoholics who read the book can identify with at least one of them. The chapter long stories record the experiences of pioneers of A.A. (such as Dr Bob, a co-founder of A.A.), individuals who stopped in time (such as a housewife who drank at home, hiding her bottles in dresser drawers, but recovered through A.A.), and people who nearly lost all (such as a middle-aged man who began drinking heavily in college and didn't beat the addiction until he joined and stayed with A.A.). Brief appendices include the Twelve A.A. Steps and Traditions and several testimonials to A.A. by ministers and physicians. The book also explains how to join A.A. and attend meetings.

Alcoholics Anonymous was given a 4-star recommended rating by the mental health experts in the national survey. A.A. has helped millions of individuals throughout the world to cope effectively with their addiction to alcohol. The positive and supportive atmosphere created by recovering alcoholics at A.A. meetings - which are held daily — make a difference in helping many people to become sober.

A.A., however, is not without its critics. A.A. works for many but not all alcoholics. Some agnostic or atheistic alcoholics have difficulty relating to A.A.'s strong spiritual emphasis, although A.A. welcomes these individuals to join its groups. Three self-help groups that have sprung up in recent years as alternatives to Alcoholics Anonymous are Rational Recovery (RR), Secular Organization for Sobriety (SOS), and Women for Sobriety (WFS). Put off by A.A.'s religious emphasis, the new groups leave God out of their battle with the bottle and rely more on willpower than on higher power. While A.A. calls drinking a disease and urges members to accept their helplessness against it, the newer groups emphasize the importance of taking personal responsibility for recovery.

Several of the mental health professionals in the survey said that A.A. is too "cultish" and that an adequate research base to support the success of A.A. over other treatments has not been established. Another mental health expert commented that in most cases A.A. is not a replacement for therapy but can be useful when it precedes or is combined with therapy. Such qualifications of the A.A. approach by some mental health professionals in the national survey meant a 4-star recommended rating for Alcoholics Anonymous rather than a 5-star, Strongly Recommended rating.

# 13 Early Alcoholism Treatment: The Emmanuel Movement and Richard Peabody

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*By Katherine McCarthy, Ph.D., Journal of Studies on Alcohol, Vol.45, No.1, 1984.*

Alcoholics and those who treat them have been of necessity present oriented. The day-to-day effort of maintaining or promoting abstinence in living people leaves little attention for reflection on the history of treatment. This history can, however, offer much needed perspective on the problems and limitations of treatments; it permits us to learn from both the success and failure of earlier work and philosophies.

This article will outline the history of what is usually called the "Peabody Method" of recovery from alcoholism. Its best known practitioner, Richard Peabody, began treating alcoholics individually in the early 1920s; his followers continued until the 1950s. As with the later Alcoholics Anonymous program, its roots were in Protestant religious thought rather than in medicine. Its later practitioners imitated the psychiatric model of professional practice, but their ideas stemmed from pre-Freudian, characteristically American Progressive thought.

Peabody's book *The Common Sense of Drinking*, first published in Boston in 1931 was widely read and influenced several medical and lay practitioners. The basic strategy did not originate with Peabody, however, he refined and "professionalized" ideas that he had learned in the Emmanuel Movement from Dr. Elwood Worcester and Courtenay Baylor.

The Emmanuel Movement began in Boston in 1906 in the Emmanuel (Episcopal) Church. The movement's founder, Dr. Elwood Worcester, practiced a method of healing for assorted forms of "nervousness" including alcoholism and other addictions. Worcester and his assistant, Dr. Samuel McComb, operated a free clinic supported by the church for about 23 years. The movement was widely reported in the press, and Worcester and McComb became well known for their success with alcoholics as well as other types of patients.

In 1913, Courtenay Baylor began to work for the Emmanuel church as a specialist in alcoholism; he was probably the first paid alcoholism therapist in this country. Originally an insurance agent he had come to Worcester in 1911 for help with his drinking problem. After a period of sobriety he retired from the business world to become a paid "friendly visitor" in the church's Social Services Department. He remained at the Church until Worcester's retirement in 1929, after which the two practiced together at the Craigie Foundation of Boston. Worcester died in 1940. In 1945, by now an old man, Baylor resumed his old job at the Emmanuel Church. By all accounts he died sober. Baylor described his treatment technique in the book *Remaking a Man* (1919) as did Anderson: in his book titled "The Other Side of the Bottle" (1950).

Baylor's most famous patient was Richard Peabody, son of a well known Boston family, who came to the Emmanuel church for help with his alcoholism in about 1922. Peabody survived his World War I service unscathed, but after several years of heavy drinking found that his life was falling apart. He had lost his share of the family fortune in shipping at a time when everyone else was becoming rich from the war. In 1921 his wife (later known as Caresse Crosby) obtained a divorce; she had become so afraid of him that she would not stay alone with him and had appealed to her uncle, J.P. Morgan for financial and moral support. Peabody suffered from acute depression and was hospitalized more than once.

Despite his family's wealth and prestige, Peabody was not prepared for a career and supporting a family. He had graduated from Groton preparatory school (where his uncle, Rev. Endicott Peabody, was headmaster) but never finished Harvard. When he married in 1915, his wife's family was already worried about his drinking. Peabody quickly escaped from family life by signing up for military service at the Mexican border. Soon after, he left again for the war in France, having barely seen his two children. Military life was apparently a preoccupation with the men in his family; Mrs. Crosby described his parents' home as having a "family atmosphere of eau de cologne and tiptoe discipline. The household ticked on a training schedule." Major and Mrs. Peabody lived a "militaristic" existence, "a strange, muted life, uneventful and unjoyful;" everything was highly polished with "implements of war laid out like precious objets d'art." According to Mrs. Crosby, Mrs. Peabody spent most of her life in nightclothes. Peabody was an only child "who had never been allowed to play or cry, for both these exercises disturbed his parents," quite a different picture from the "overindulged,

pampered childhood” that Peabody later insisted was the primary cause of alcoholism.

Peabody attended the Emmanuel Church’s clinic and weekly health classes in the winter of 1921-1922 and by 1924 was listed in one of its publications as a volunteer assistant in the Social Service Department (Emmanuel Church, Department of Community Services, 1924). Sometime during the 1920s he established his own office on Newbury Street in Boston. During this period he “effected some remarkable cures” and became known to some as “Dr. Peabody”; patients came to him from considerable distances. It is likely that Baylor referred patients to him from the church, since there were probably more applicants than Baylor himself could handle. A few years earlier Baylor had observed in a Church report that alcoholics were coming for treatment from as far as Santa Barbara, Denver, Mobile, Washington and Philadelphia, “while New York is a suburb from which we have many commuters.” By 1933, Peabody was practicing in New York at 24 Gramercy Park.

In the 1930s Peabody was publishing articles in both the medical and lay literature on his method: The New England Journal of Medicine (1930), Mental Hygiene (1930), The American Mercury (1931) and American Magazine (1931). His book, The Common Sense of Drinking (1931) was republished in 1935 as an Atlantic Monthly Press book. By the late 1930s, several physicians interested in the new “scientific approach” to alcoholism were using his technique, including Norman Jolliffe at Bellevue Hospital in New York, Merrill Moore at Boston City Hospital and Edward Strecker at the Institute of Pennsylvania Hospital in Philadelphia. In 1944, the Yale Center of Alcohol Studies opened the first free clinic exclusively for the treatment of alcoholism; the Yale plan Clinics in New Haven and Hartford offered individual and group treatment under the direction of a Peabody therapist, Raymond G. McCarthy.

Before his death in 1936, Peabody had trained several, of his sober patients to become lay therapists like himself, including Samuel Crocker, James Bellamy, Francis T. Chambers Jr., William W. Wister and Wilson McKay. Wister’s experience of treatment with Peabody is described in detail in a book by Bishop titled The Glass Crutch, with an epilogue by Wister himself. Strecker and Chambers also published a book detailing their version of the method.

Peabody and his coworkers apparently did not share Baylor’s personal success at remaining sober. A common opinion is that Peabody died intoxicated, although the evidence is not conclusive. Samuel Crocker, who had once shared an office with Peabody, told Faye R. that he was intoxicated at the time of his death. The personal copy of Peabody’s book belonging to Bill Wilson (one of the founders of A.A.) now in the A.A. Archives, contains the following inscription; “Dr. Peabody was as far as is known the first authority to state, “once an alcoholic, always an alcoholic,” and he proved it by returning to drinking and by dying of alcoholism - proving to us that the condition is incurable.” This copy was originally owned by Rosa Burwell of Philadelphia. Some early A.A. members share the opinion that Peabody died intoxicated. The published sources contradict each other. Wister quoted Peabody’s second wife to the effect that he died of pneumonia. The editors of Scribner’s magazine, which published an article of his posthumously, claimed that he died of a heart attack. Mrs. Crosby did not say.

Wister’s authorized biography reports that he became drunk in 1941 after seven years of sobriety, and although he became sober again, he did not resume therapeutic work. Faye R., who knew Baylor, Crocker and McKay also resumed drinking. Faye R. was at different times a patient of Baylor, Crocker and McKay. She has been abstinent in A.A. for 40 years. Her summary of the Peabody therapists is: “They had many wonderful ideas but they just didn’t have the magic of A.A.”

Marty Mann described the Peabody Method as being primarily for the well-educated or the well-to-do, a description that also characterized patients of Freudian analysis of the time. William Wister’s family, was as well known in Philadelphia as Peabody’s was in Boston; Francis Chambers belonged to Philadelphia’s most exclusive men’s clubs. Faye R. reported that Baylor, Crocker and McKay were also from well-to-do Boston families.

Few but the well-to-do could afford Peabody’s fees. Wister was broke and in debt when he appeared on Peabody’s doorstep in 1934, so the therapist offered to reduce his fixed fee of \$20 per hour to \$10. Peabody told Faye R. that his fee was \$10 per session for seven visits per week; she went to Crocker instead, then newly established in practice, for \$5 per session. According to Faye R., Baylor scorned such exorbitant rates even when he was himself in difficult financial straits.

It appears that the considerable majority of patients of the Peabody practitioners were men, although

Baylor and Peabody occasionally referred to “men and women” as potential patients. Peabody’s method, however, was clearly geared to the needs and interests of men, and Baylor’s was much less so, as will be described below. The age distribution of Peabody’s patients is not known. Peabody once remarked to Faye R., then had known of to do so. Peabody himself was probably only a year or two older than that when he stopped drinking. Probably the great majority of the alcoholic patients of those practitioners were white, since their race was not mentioned. Worcester did point with pride to the success of his church’s self-help tuberculosis program with blacks, but did not refer to them among the clinic patients.

Peabody made important philosophical changes in and added some psychiatric terminology to the treatment method although it had as its original model quite a different conception of the relationships among body, mind and spirit than those used by Peabody’s contemporaries. Worcester and McComb based their claims as healers on their qualifications as clergymen; coincidentally, both had doctorates in psychology. The later practitioners, however, had serious problems of establishing professional identification; Peabody and his followers therefore made serious compromises in their work in the hope - ultimately unfulfilled -that they could be accepted as mini-psychiatrists. The Emmanuel Church clergy began their work at a time when almost no one had heard of Freud, a time when the whole notion of psychotherapy and “functional” nervous disorders was still very new and open to various eclectic treatments. Worcester and McComb were severely criticized by both physicians and fellow clergy for daring to invade medical territory, but in 1906 the medical profession had neither the organization nor the public acceptance to force them out of the field. By the 1930s, however, this had changed considerably. In 1940 Wister was actually threatened with arrest for practicing medicine without a license. In trying so hard to imitate the prestigious intellectual ideas of the 1930s, Peabody and his followers essentially gutted their method of the vital substance that had made Worcester and Baylor so successful in earlier decades.

In 1935 a new rival to Peabody was quietly being born in Akron, Ohio. By 1942, A.A. had grown enough in size and popular reputation to be a viable alternative to the Peabody Method in some urban areas. As with the patients of the earlier method, A.A. was initially composed primarily of the well-to-do and well educated. Because it was free and nonprofessional, however, it quickly spread to a much wider group. Additionally, A.A. in its basic concepts of healing and suffering, was much more similar to the Emmanuel Movement than to the professional therapists. Organizationally, it was quite different from both, but Elwood Worcester would certainly have recognized its basic beliefs as very harmonious with his own. Faye R. reported that, near the end of his career, Baylor attended an A.A. meeting and loved it: he enthusiastically recommended it to her. Bill Wilson and his wife Lois (later to become the founder of ‘Al-Anon) both read *The Common Sense of Drinking* in the early days of his sobriety and were very interested in it. However, only a few phrases and helpful hints from it were incorporated into the A.A. program. The Emmanuel Church like thousands of other American churches -now houses a large A.A. meeting: it meets on Wednesdays in the old parish house, the same place where Worcester and McComb gave Wednesday night classes for up to a thousand “nervous sufferers.”

#### THE EMMANUEL APPROACH

Worcester and McComb were not alcoholics. Their therapeutic method was originally designed to treat the condition then called “neurasthenia,” a term covering an assortment of neurotic symptoms, psychosomatic problems, phobias, extreme worry, anxiety, addiction and other problems then considered non-organic. In a follow up study of clinic patients during part of 1906-1907, Cabot reported that only 12% were alcoholics. In the Emmanuel Church 1909 Yearbook, McComb described a cured patient -a young, well educated, “refined” woman who had been irritable, self-conscious, preoccupied with morbid thoughts and uninterested in life; “It is mainly, through not exclusively for sufferers of which this young woman is the type that our health conference has been inaugurated.” The considerable majority of the nonalcoholic patients were women. Worcester and McComb reported three rules for accepting alcoholic patients: (1) They must come voluntarily from their own desire to stop drinking, not solely because of pressure from others. (2) They must be willing to accept the goal of total abstinence, for “the attempt to convert a drunkard into a moderate drinkerà..cannot be done once in a thousand times.” (3)

They must be dry during the first interview and pledge to be abstinent for one week. The brief pledge

apparently had some value: "In the course of many years experience very few patients have broken this promise."

Worcester believed that all diseases had physical, mental and spiritual components - some problems might be primarily physical, such as a broken leg, but the patient's attitudes could still promote or retard healing. Many problems were more obviously related to a person's mental state. A case of deafness, for example, might be purely organic and should be treated first by a physician, but some cases were also of psychological origin and could be relieved by psychotherapy. Many of Worcester's patients had primarily moral problems or habits that required a new way of life: addictions, anxiety, or excessive fear or worry. The realms of the body, mind and spirit interacted in a delicate balance in each person; an improvement in one area might lead to improvements in another. Severe pain from an intractable physical ailment could be relieved by changes in attitude; the physical craving for alcohol or morphine could be eliminated by a more spiritual way of life. All nervous sufferers could be helped by redirecting their attention away from themselves to a life of service to others. Exercise, proper breathing and natural sleep would ultimately promote a proper spiritual balance.

The concept of the unity of body, mind and spirit that Baylor inherited from Worcester was probably unique in American thinking of the time. Worcester acquired his ideas from the German psychologist, Gustav Fechner, with whom he had studied at the University of Leipzig. Fechner was renowned for his early work in experimental psychology, but his lifelong philosophical interest was in developing a true *Geistwissenschaft*, or a science that would include both the material and the spiritual worlds. He believed that the relationships between these two realms could be understood through mathematical formulas that would explain both without reducing either to the terms of the other. Worcester explicated Fechner's ideas and claimed that he was unable to disentangle Fechner's ideas from his own commented: "The modern temperament finds the union of the mystical and the scientific difficult to understand. Yet Fechner's mystical grasp upon the unity of life and the world lives on, and in each generation finds a welcome from a few."

Worcester and McComb were best known for their use of suggestion and autosuggestion. They employed hypnosis with a small number of alcoholics to keep them sober long enough to receive treatment, but in most cases they merely put the patient in a state of relaxation. With the patient seated in a comfortable chair in a dim and quiet room, the therapist would give directions for systematically relaxing each limb and slowing down racing thoughts. Baylor would ask the patient to imagine that he was sailing in a small boat toward an island, at first quickly, then more slowly until the person ended up lying comfortably on a sunny shore.

Worcester believed that a person's subconscious mind was more amenable to outside influence while he was in this relaxed condition. He could then suggest to an alcoholic, for example, that the desire to drink would soon pass, that he would soon sleep better and that he could begin to make progress in his life. Worcester believed that in this way powerful healing forces of the subconscious mind (a term that he intentionally retained after Freud's "unconscious" became popular) could be brought into play to support a person's conscious desire to recover. Worcester saw the subconscious mind as an essentially positive force: it was the source of enormous strength, creativity, inherited memory and communication with the spiritual realm. It was, in short, the spirit of the soul. Consistent with his view of the unity of the soul and body, he saw the subconscious as the regulator of elementary physical processes, including the heartbeat, circulation, respiration and time keeping; thus positive suggestions directed to it could affect physical health.

For Worcester, the redirection of attention was a very basic element of therapy. Nervous sufferers and alcoholics became morbidly preoccupied with their destructive habits and sufferings; the therapeutic effort was to redirect that attention toward higher goals - the development of a spiritual life and service to others. Misdirected attention, produced often by physical pain or bad habits, caused much avoidable suffering; "A large part of the sorrow, 'failure, sickness and discouragement of' life comes from this one source, the anticipation of evil. If we could disregard all pain and misfortune but the actual, we should deliver ourselves from about eight tenths of the sorrow of this life." (This is the same principle as A.A.'s injunction "don't project" - or assume a future possibility to be present fact.)

Attention could be redirected at first by a therapist through suggestion while the patient was in the relaxed state but the patient must be taught to practice autosuggestion until new mental habits were learned. The latter technique made the healing power of the subconscious available in daily life; it consisted of "holding a given thought in the mental focus, to the exclusion of all other thoughts." The patient learned autosuggestion

and other techniques (proper breathing, hints on obtaining restful sleep, etc.) not only in individual treatment sessions but in the Wednesday night classes in which the clergy and others lectured on such topics as habit, anger, worry and fear.

The theological basis of Worcester's belief in redirected attention rested on the Biblical "resist not evil" which he interpreted to mean that constructive psychological change could be promoted more effectively by building up a person's strengths than by directly attacking the problem or bad habit itself. For example, Baylor reported successfully treating a woman with a phobia about open spaces by engaging her in a deep conversation about her work while walking with her, for the first time in many years, through Boston Public Gardens. He had already done the ground work, however, with many sessions of relaxation and suggestion and by gradually weaning her away from sleeping medications.

The Emmanuel clinic used prayer as an essential vehicle for acquiring the power of attention, just as some holistic healing strategies today often employ meditation for related purposes. Worcester's theory went well beyond that of simple meditation, however; for him, the therapeutic dynamic was that "surrender implied in sincere prayer is always followed by the consciousness of peace and inner freedom." The mechanism here, as with attention, is paradoxical: "Only by surrender to the All Holy and All Powerful are, the potentialities of the self realized." What follows is a process of conversion; "Whereas the sinful tendency about which (the patient) was in the main concerned is robbed of its attractive quality and the thought of it finds no entrance to his imagination." New sources of energy from the subconscious are thereby tapped. These paradoxes had long been familiar to religious thinkers, but they were not described in the psychiatric literature until the 1940s with Tiebout's analyses of the therapeutic mechanisms of A.A.

Worcester also saw the benefit of group support and the service that afflicted could render each other, an idea that A.A. developed to a much greater extent years later. The Emmanuel Movement prescribed not only individual therapy, lectures and reading, but provided social hours after the weekly classes at which the patients were expected to talk to each other their growth and progress. Following the principle of redirected attention, however they were not supposed to dwell on their ailments. The Church also ran a well staffed Social Service Department that provided "friendly visitors" to call on patients and provide moral support, assist in finding jobs and occasional financial help. Some staff members, such as Baylor, were paid former patients: others were volunteers.

The "guiding principle" of the Social Service Department, according to the Emmanuel Church 1909 Yearbook, was to turn the thoughts of each sufferer from himself to others. In all troubles of mental origin, one of the most successful curative agencies has been to get one person to help another suffering from exactly from his own trouble. How can we ask another to make efforts which we will not make ourselves? In this way moral strength is passed on from one to another."

An important off-shoot of this arrangement was 'the Church sponsored club for alcoholics. Founded in 1910 by' a nonalcoholic parishioner, Ernest Jacoby, the club held meetings in the church basement on Saturdays and its space was used for socializing on most other nights. Nonalcoholic's also attended and the club's relationship to alcoholism was disguised' in Church reports, but the evidence is that its purpose was to help newly abstinent patients reinforce each other's abstinence. Its motto was "A club for men to help themselves by helping others." There were no membership fees. The only requirement for membership was "an expressed desire to lead an honorable life and a willingness to aid other men less fortunate." Worcester' added one other requirement; "They should not come to the Church drunk." A follow-up committee sought out those who failed to appear for meetings. A system resembling A.A. sponsorship was created, called "special brothers," in which each member was expected to look out for another. Saturday night meetings included food, entertainment and lectures on topics of current interest. "The broadest religious tolerance was observed, and many faiths were represented." In the 1910 Church report, 20 persons were listed by name as officers and members of the club. No women's names were included.

By 1912, the club announced that it had "already accomplished results beyond our farthest hopes." The club had grown, and most of its original members were still attending. It was arranging for a better system of record keeping and was soliciting contributions for a new clubhouse; one was reported from a little girl who gave a benefit fair. The club moved out of the' Church in about 1914; nothing is known of it after that time except for Greene's report that it maintained good relations with the Emmanuel Church, which continued to

send it new members.

The ideas of self-help and mutual support as alcoholism treatment were not original to the Emmanuel Movement. The best known historical antecedent was the Washingtonian Movement of the 1840s, a large group of abstinent alcoholics and nonalcoholic temperance advocates who achieved brief but spectacular success at “reforming” drunkards. Some recent authors have noted that other temperance groups in the following decades also employed the group-support principle. According to Levine, “In the latter half of the 19th century the Sons of Temperance, the Good Templars, and a host of smaller fraternal groups, functioned in much the same manner that A.A. does today. They provided addicts who joined their organizations with encouragement, friendship and a social life free from alcohol. They went to inebriates in time of need, and in some cases offered financial support as well.” It is difficult to determine at this distance whether the founders of the Jacoby Club were familiar with the earlier organizational forms. The major difference in the Emmanuel Church work was that it rejected temperance preaching as a means to attract or help alcoholics.

Although Worcester was himself a supporter of the idea of temperance, he had an approach to the problem of the moral status of alcoholism different from that of his temperance predecessors or scientific successors. Worcester had no doubt that alcoholism was both a disease and a moral problem. Addiction involved habit, for him clearly a moral category, yet he unhesitatingly ranked alcoholism along with tuberculosis, cancer and syphilis as the four major diseases of his time. To Worcester, the question of will was irrelevant to alcoholism and neurasthenia; both were diseases of the whole person in body, mind and spirit, not merely problems of the faculty of will. According to Levine, “In 19th and 20th century versions, addiction is seen as a sort of disease of the will, an inability to prevent oneself from drinking.” For temperance advocates, this meant that moral exhortation addressed to the will would be sufficient to keep a person from drinking. Other historians have described the remedy for alcoholism espoused by the late nineteenth-century Reform Clubs and the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union as “gospel temperance” -a moral suasionist attempt to spark a spiritual rebirth in alcoholics and to get them to keep a pledge of total abstinence. The task as the Union Signal put it, was analogous to “Peter preaching to the gentiles.” This same view characterized the mission approach of the Salvation Army and other turn-of-the-century mission efforts.

By comparison, Worcester’s approach ‘was more modern in totally rejecting moral suasion, as a healing strategy. Worcester believed that sermons were for normal people: “Something more than exhortation, argument, or persuasion is’ necessary... They may provoke opposition on the patient’s part or they may even be dangerous.” Something more was needed because more than one aspect of the personality was involved; like A.A., Worcester felt that the individual’s entire life was affected and that an appeal solely to the strengthening of the will would thus be inadequate. He saw evil as a more basic, pervasive condition in’ the individual’s life than did most of his contemporaries, such as the mind-cure practitioners and those with various scientific approaches, including the most recent. For Worcester, recovery must come from surrender to both an external force (as in conversion) and to the, healing capacities within the subconscious.

According to Clinebell, one secret of the Emmanuel Movement’s success lay in this effort to reduce an alcoholic’s guilt rather than to increase it as did the other strategies of the time: “Emmanuel therapy apparently was frequently able to convey this experience. When guilt is reduced, the energies previously employed in the guilt and self-punishment process, are freed and made available for therapeutic Ends. The alcoholic’s inferiority is reduced... by (his) becoming aware of his ‘higher and diviner self’ which is his real self.” Like others of the Progressive Era, Worcester had great faith that the human race was improving and that an enlightened science could help reduce human suffering. He did not believe that his method was, antagonistic to medicine or that it was a “mind-cure”; on the contrary, he believed his method to be more scientific than that of contemporary physicians who could understand only the body, without any theoretical comprehension of the importance of mind and soul. He believed that clergy and physicians working’ together could accomplish far more than either alone. Worcester and McComb firmly believed in the essential goodness of human nature, even of the unconscious mind; for them the ideal life was a balance of natural inner forces, not a constant struggle with instincts and impulses. For Worcester, feeling in itself was never a problem; even painful emotions such as fear had their useful functions. Kurtz (Not-God, A History of Alcoholics Anonymous) noted that Bill Wilson also had a basic acceptance of human instincts, which for him only became a problem when alcohol, permitted them to “run riot.”

In defense of the reality of his patients' nervous sufferings, Worcester 'once stated that he would rather break both thighs than undergo the pain that some of them experienced. Worcester and McComb never hesitated to speak of fear, faith, hope and the spirit; Peabody would not even mention the word "suffering." His book was, of course, an offer of hope and help to alcoholics, but Peabody could not bring himself to name the feelings.

Worcester was writing primarily for and working for women, although he never publicly acknowledged this. In 1908, he earned the equivalent of a year's salary writing five enormously successful articles - including one on alcoholism in women-for the Ladies Home Journal. Peabody was writing self-consciously for men. His examples of schools, clubs and recreational activities were exclusively those of upper-class men. He worried about the "manly complex" that might drive a man back to drink; he urged his readers to remember that "it is the manly thing to do to give up drinking because the weakling cannot do it." His ambivalence about stereotypically female feelings and expressiveness runs through his work and accounts for many of the ways in which his methods diverged from those of Worcester and Baylor.

#### COURTENAY BAYLOR

Courtenay Baylor must have been a remarkable man. Constance Worcester and Faye R. spoke of him with great personal affection, even many years later. Peabody dedicated his book to him; Anderson described him: "He had a 'soothing' beautiful voice that lulled you but at the same time gave 'you confidence. It was a voice you could, trust."

On Baylor's effectiveness, he commented: "If I had been one of those skeptics, who say it is not the therapy but the therapist that gets results, he would have been a shining example; for he was one of the most illuminating and persuasive personalities I have ever met. However, the results of his work for four decades of practice and the success of the people whom he had trained give solid proof that in this case the value lay in the therapy as well as the man." Baylor did not confine his work to alcoholism; his book (*Remaking a Man*) was intended to help various types of nervous sufferers, including the shell-shock victims with whom he began working in 1917.

Baylor did not see alcoholics as being fundamentally different from other people. Every person who drinks, however moderately, "has a 'true alcoholic neurosis' to the extent that he drinks," since he makes up excuses for drinking and will not stop without a struggle. Like Worcester, he was willing to blame alcohol for alcoholism rather than finding the fault in the individual's early history. He believed that all neurosis took the form of alternating periods of rationalization and excuses. Therefore, the treatment for alcoholism was not significantly different from the treatment for other forms of nervous suffering.

Baylor fully accepted the Emmanuel Church's model of social service and mutual helpfulness for his own work; he did not foster professional distance between himself and his patients. According to Constance Worcester, he did not discuss the fact that he was an alcoholic with outsiders, but, unlike Peabody, he was direct about this with his patients. He required mutual confidentiality as a condition of his work: "Before we get through, I shall have to reveal as much about myself as you do about yourself." He insisted that the patient take increasing responsibility for the work. At the beginning of treatment the patient was informed that: "You will act in a double capacity: you are to be patient and physician at the same time." The patient and instructor "are to study out together certain fundamental psychological laws, the knowledge of which will enable them to get to the bottom of that trouble." Baylor's goal with a patient was "to so help him to help himself that his reconstruction will be permanent." Faye R. reported that his methods were much less formal than those of Crocker and McKay.

According to Baylor, all neuroses, including alcoholism, resulted from mental and physical "tenseness." He believed that "the taking of the tabooed drink was 'the physical expression of a certain temporary but recurrent mental condition which appeared to be a combination of wrong impulses and a wholly false, though plausible, philosophy. The cause of this mental state was a condition of the brain "akin to physical tension" during which it "never senses things as they really are." For example, the person believes that his troubles are entirely the fault of other people or circumstances, and does not realize the extent to which his own depression, fear or irritability color his perceptions and may actually change the attitude of others toward him. This leads to more practical problems and to greater tenseness, which will be expressed in further drinking or neurotic behavior: "literally a circle of wrong impulses and false philosophy - each a cause and a result of the other."

The solution, therefore, was first to promote physical and mental relaxation, and then to examine in a calm frame of mind those “false, though plausible” attitudes. Ultimately, the patient should learn permanent relaxation by practicing the techniques that he has learned. Anderson described this state as “a combination of ‘suppleness, vitality, strength and force -a certain definite intentional, elasticity.” Baylor called it peace of mind and stated: “Peace of mind will do wonders.”

Baylor believed that his failures resulted from his inability to gain a patient’s attention; some remnant of spiritual capacity must be present in order for him to break the “vicious circle of neurasthenia” - or the patients endless brooding attention to his troubles. “I fail to get this attention either because the patient has an innate lack of desire to change his life and ideas and no spiritual element out of which to build such a desire, or because he has an actual mental defect, or because his illness is so deep-seated and his spiritual side so buried that the stimulus dynamic enough to reach and arouse him or the time and personal attention necessary to get through to him have been lacking.”

Baylor’s strategy was to supply the person with a “new point of attention, a new philosophy of life, and a new courage with which to face life.” The complex interaction of ‘body, mind and spirit can be seen here: “attention” was for Worcester and Baylor both a spiritual and a mental concept, with both cause and effect in the physical realm. To attend to good rather than to resist evil, and also to develop a new sense that life is worthwhile would not only promote spiritual growth but actually keep some patients alive.

One way to redirect a patient’s attention was to provide a new time focus. The new interest and new point of view should be “so big and so different that they occupy the present moment fully and make all of life seem worthwhile.” One strategy that he used for adjusting the patient’s time sense to a normal pace was to speed up or slow down his own thinking during a therapeutic session to match that of the patient; he would then take the lead in adjusting the speed of the patient’s thoughts to a more normal level.

Baylor made no direct reference to the “subconscious” but it is clear that he regarded it as a vital spiritual force in redirecting a patient’s attention. Interviews with patients were “one hundred per cent suggestion, direct or indirect.” There is nothing “weird” or “uncanny” about this, he explained; it is as natural as the fact that a salesman’s cheerfulness has a positive effect on a customer. (Those who believe that the theory of suggestion is dead might take another look at modern advertising.) The reeducational work itself, however, is logical and rational; it proceeds through discussion of the patient’s past to “analysis and explanation and definite instruction.” Baylor described the results to be anticipated by the patient as the awakening of a new part of the mind or spirit: “Because you have recognized a new function, or another sense perhaps, you will have a hope that you can handle life instead of having life handle you.” Success with the method would lead to new confidence, efficiency and happiness; but happiness, he believed, could not be directly sought.

Applying Worcester’s principle of “resist not evil,” Baylor did not address phobias directly but worked to eliminate the background reasons for fears in general; otherwise the phobia might recur in altered form. Relaxation would make an alcoholic able to cope with “tense” periods of his life before they actually leads him to a drink. (The actual practice of A.A. meetings resembles this “resist not evil” principle, without using that language; the bulk of a recovering alcoholic’s effort is to establish a foundation of “sober thinking” rather to confront the alcohol itself directly. A.A. teaches its members to avoid the recurring periods of “alcoholic thinking” or “dry drunks” that resemble Baylor’s “tenseness.”

After a few years of experience, Baylor began to realize that a longer course of treatment was necessary for alcoholics than what Worcester had provided. Worcester had seen most alcoholics several times a week for a few weeks or months. A newspaper (“Preacher-Healer tells of his cures”) reported the case of a woman addicted to alcohol, chloral and morphine who had been “cured” by Worcester in seven visits. There was a form of follow-up, however; she was thereafter required to write him a letter whenever she felt like taking a drink or a drug. Baylor did not mention follow-up to treatment, although Faye R. reported that he and the Peabody therapists were always willingly available by telephone.

In the Annual Report of the “Men’s Department” Emmanuel Church 1916 Yearbook), Baylor announced: “We have come to feel that it is unwise to attempt to accomplish the work in a few interviews, and an agreement is made with those who come that they will abide by our instructions for a year, This means that they see us frequently at first. Periods between visits are then lengthened, a course of rearing is taken up and various exercises are carried through.” A typical interview lasted a half-hour. He described the long-term

difficulties as follows:

“Getting the man to stop drinking is only the first step in a very long march. All the negative traits induced by alcohol must be eliminated and the positive traits put in their places. Irritability, self-pity, fear, worry, criticism of friends, bitter hatred of enemies, lack of concentration, lack, of initiative and action, all these must be worked out of the character. The entire mental process must be changed, a new sense must be grown, one that can recognize the soul; when this is accomplished we have the man himself cured from alcoholism.”

According to some sources, Baylor was “more worldly” than Worcester and paid more attention to practical problems, including the effects of alcohol on the family. Worcester had enlisted the cooperation of the family in accepting the goal of sobriety for both the patient and themselves. Baylor went much further in discussing the specific problems that family members developed as a result of living with an alcoholic in the practical, mental and spiritual areas. Much of Baylor’s time was spent working with relatives; he recognized the difficulty that they experienced in accepting an alcoholic who had changed greatly by becoming sober. He compared the difficulty of this task to a “delicate surgical operation.” He also worked directly with employers to try to change negative attitudes. Faye R. reported that he later developed a considerable practice in divorce counseling. His Social Services Department of ten provided material assistance to families of alcoholics, whether or not the alcoholic was in treatment.

Baylor did not consider himself a scientist. He felt that his work was “more than a science; it is also an art.” In the introduction to *Remaking a Man*, he apologized for the lack of technical terminology. Peabody, however, took quite a different tack. In the introduction to his book he explained that he had simplified his “somewhat technical vocabulary” so that the average layman can read it without reference to a dictionary.” Neither man had a college degree. Each brought vital experience to the problem of alcoholism, but they chose to use it in quite different ways.

Baylor had none of Peabody’s professional pretensions, yet his claim to competence was broader: he believed that he could understand and influence not only the mind, but the body and spirit as well. The originators of the Emmanuel Method did not consider their work to be subordinate to that of medical professionals; the Rector of Emmanuel Church initially hired physicians to do routine diagnostic work, then took over the task of healing when they had failed.

We know somewhat more about Worcester and Baylor’s therapeutic success. In 1908, Dr. Richard C. Cabot of the Harvard Medical School published a report on the outcome of 178 cases of all types, including alcoholism, seen by Worcester and McComb in a six-month period of 1907. Of 22 alcoholics, 11 were listed as “much improved” or “slightly improved”; seven had unknown outcomes. These rather vague terms do not reflect the fact that Worcester, during the early months of this period, was using a technique that he later reported to Peabody was a total failure - trying to teach his patients to “drink like gentlemen.” Exactly when his approach changed is not clear.

Clinebell concluded: “It’ seems possible that the Emmanuel Movement enjoyed a relatively high degree of success in providing at least temporary sobriety,” based on, Worcester’s long-term reputation and his own statements. Baylor reported in 1919 that, of about 100 cases that he had seen personally in the previously seven years, about two-thirds had been successful. His annual reports from 1913 to 1916 also refer to significant numbers of “successful cases” each year. We do not know how long the patients of either Worcester or Baylor were able to maintain their abstinence, but Worcester referred to several who had “stood like rocks in their place for years.”

In the early years of the Emmanuel Movement there was almost no interest within the medical profession in “spirit”, or feeling as healing resources. The great majority of psychiatrists and neurologists were concerned exclusively With somatic explanations for mental and emotional problems; they believed that all such problems would ultimately be explained by reference to “lesions” of the nervous system. As Grob has noted, late-nineteenth—century and early-twentieth-century psychiatrists, “having rejected as subjective and unscientific such affective sentiments as humanity, love and compassion....found their own supposedly objective and scientific approach to be barren.”

Part of the great, influence of Freud on American thinking was of course his recognition of the role of feelings in various types of illnesses, both psychosomatic and purely psychological ones. For Freud, feelings and their conflicts were usually problematic and the cause of endless human difficulties. For Worcester,

however, the awakening of new spiritual feeling was essential to the cure of many troubles; positive feelings in themselves constituted a cure.. Freud, and his followers also cultivated a dry and austere language, quite the opposite of the sentimentality of the clergy. By the post-World War I years, the kind of language of feeling that Worcester and McComb had used seemed insufficiently “professional” for physicians; in fact, it was rarely used as a form of public statement outside the churches.

The differences in the two approaches to alcoholism were summed up by Freud himself in comments he made to a reporter when visiting this country in 1909. When asked his opinion of the fact that Worcester and others “claimed to have cured hundreds of cases of alcoholism and its consequences by hypnotism, Freud replied, “The suggestive technique does not concern itself with the origin, extent, and significance of the symptoms of the disease, but simply applied a plaster-suggestion-which it expects to be strong enough to prevent the expression of the diseased idea. The analytical therapy on the contrary. . . concerns itself with the origin and progress of the symptoms of the disease.” (Hale, *Freud and the Americans: The Beginning of Psychoanalysis in the United States*. 1971) According to Hale, “he implied that hypnotism also was a morally doubtful kind of trickery that resembled ‘the dances of pills of feather-decorated, painted medicine men.’ He criticized the clergy and others who practiced without medical degrees: “When I think that there are many physicians who have been studying methods of psychotherapy for decades and, who yet practice it only with the greatest caution, this undertaking of a few men without medical, or with a very superficial medical training, seems to me at the very least of questionable good.” He implied that such people might affect the reputation of his own method: “I can easily understand that this combination of church and psychotherapy appeals to the public; for the public has always had a certain weakness for everything that savors of mysteries and the mysterious, and these it probably suspects behind psychotherapy, which, in reality has nothing, absolutely nothing, mysterious about it.” Hale concluded: “Admitting that he knew little about the Emmanuel Movement, he promptly condemned it.”

Granted that the question was somewhat inaccurate (Worcester rarely used hypnotism), Freud’s response still shows not only his ignorance of addiction but his lack of interest in the actual relief of suffering. Rieff (*Freud: The Mind of the Moralist*) noted: “Clearly no one so unsentimental as Freud can be accused of loving humanity, at least not in the ways encouraged by our religions and their political derivatives,....He was interested in problems, not patients, in the mechanisms of civilization not in programs of mental health.

As Hale described it, “Freud at once constructed a counter-image that became in turn an important psychoanalytic stereotype- psychoanalysis was austere and difficult, requiring extraordinary expertise but promising radical cure.”

#### RICHARD PEABODY

Such was the narrow model of professional practice available to Peabody as a therapist of the 1920s. He did not attempt to imitate the particular techniques of a psychiatrist, but he systematically eliminated from his terminology and concepts anything that hinted of the church and “feather-decorated, painted medicine men.” The acknowledgments in his book include Baylor and six physicians, but he did not mention the Emmanuel Church. Like the psychoanalysts, Peabody kept an extreme professional distance from his patients; Wister reported that all he had ever learned about Peabody personally was that “Peabody had learned much in Boston from, two noted psychiatrists and that he had married twice.” Wister also noted that he spoke objectively, as though he were discussing the proper treatment for a broken leg and that he never discussed the moral aspects of alcoholism.”

Since Peabody had no credentials and chose not to use his own experience as the basis for his claim to be a teacher, he was in a difficult position to justify his fees. The nearly total lack of interest of the medical profession in working with alcoholics should have given him a wide field in which to work, but the only formal reason he could give patients for coming to him for treatment was that it might speed up recovery. He quoted a patient approvingly: “I went to Peabody on the same theory that I would have gone to an instructor of mathematics had I found it necessary to learn calculus. Probably I could learn calculus by myself out of books, but it would take me a great deal longer than if I went to a competent teacher.”

Peabody promised in his book to avoid “moralizing”; his was strictly a “scientific approach.” By 1931, moralizing about alcohol was certainly out of favor, within his social class at least. The excesses of some of the

Prohibition advocates and the difficulties of enforcing Prohibition had embarrassed most advocates of such laws into silence. It was becoming fashionable now to blame the drinker, not the social institution of drinking, for alcoholism. Peabody wrote an article on "Why Prohibition Has Failed," in which he claimed, in effect, that drinking is a normal human activity (for men, at least) and should not be tampered with by mere moralizers.

Peabody went a step beyond the anti-Prohibition logic. It was one thing to claim that ordinary drinkers should not have to feel guilty for their indulgence, yet quite another to imply that alcoholics themselves have no problem with guilt or shame about their addiction. Nowhere did Peabody recognize the fact that alcoholics do feel much guilt and remorse about the trouble that they have caused themselves and others. Peabody provided no mechanism by which forgiveness and acceptance could be attained, either in a religious sense or through a group of similarly afflicted individuals.

The men of the Jacoby Club bonded together "to lead a more honorable life," but Peabody did not use even such indirect references to guilt or self-esteem. Since neither morality nor feeling was an acceptable topic of discussion for Peabody, the only justification he could give for the effort to become sober was, in effect, "efficiency." A man must be impressed with the fact that he is, undergoing treatment for his own personal good and because he believes it to be the expedient thing to do."

The major practical drawback to excessive drinking cited specifically by Peabody was its "supreme stupidity." His explanation was designed to appeal to the patient's respect for 'his own masculinity: "Just as all normal boys are anxious not to be considered incompetent in athletics, so to be thought stupid is the last thing that a full-grown man with any pretense to normality wishes. Even in prisons drunkards are held in low repute by criminals because they are where they are as a result of inferior intelligence rather than a distorted moral point of view."

It seems curious now that Peabody did not attempt to resolve the moralizing problem by calling alcoholism a disease or an illness. The disease concept was certainly, available to him-the Emmanuel Movement had used it freely, and it had been current in some circles of temperance workers and physicians since the late nineteenth century. Diseases, however, are ordinarily understood to have some connection with the body and Peabody's basic philosophical orientation seemed derived from the mind-cure movement, including Christian Science, which essentially denied the significance of the body and was interested only in the mind as a means for controlling an individual's life. Many of Peabody's therapeutic suggestions resemble a secularized version of the writings on mind-cure and self-help dating from the 1890s. His work was thus a strange amalgam of these ideas and the quite different philosophical and psychological ideas of Worcester and McComb.

Worcester had begun his clinic work partly in response to the apparent healing successes of Christian Science. He viewed their theology and that of New Thought as shallow and materialistic, however, and little resemblance existed between his tripartite view of the person and the idea in mind-cure that pure thought can be used to eliminate disease and to produce increased efficiency and business success. Christian Science denied the reality of bodily suffering altogether and of course had no use for the medical profession. Mary Baker Eddy did not believe in the existence of the unconscious, and other mind-cure writers "far from teaching an open-door policy toward the subconscious. . . taught absolute denomination over it."

According to Meyer ( *The Positive Thinkers. Religion as Pop Psychology from Mary Baker Eddy to Oral Roberts* ) the central tenet of mind-cure was that "God was Mind...The crucial aim in this characterization was that it should guarantee a self-enclosed and coherent existence...Mind was above all the realm in which people might feel that life came finally under control." Christian Science, and later mind-cure expressed no interest in human service (a fact commented on quite sarcastically by both Mark Twain and Elwood Worcester), which might account for Peabody's lack of interest in it.

Peabody continued to use several important ideas he had learned from Baylor: surrender, relaxation, suggestion and catharsis. His development and reformulation of some of these -particularly surrender and, suggestion- was much more specific to and useful for an alcoholic's particular situation than the formulations of Worcester and Baylor.

Peabody was very clear about the new priorities for a reordered life: "The first step to sobriety is surrender to the fact that the alcoholic cannot drink again without bringing disastrous results" and "this surrender is the absolute starting point. The conviction of its supreme importance is an absolute necessity. With surrender, halfway measures are of no avail." This was undoubtedly the source of Bill Wilson's better known

phrase: "Half measures avail us nothing." Peabody noted that an "intellectual surrender by no means settles the question," but he did not discuss the emotional aspect of such surrender. He did detail some of the obstacles to it, included "distorted 'pride' and the conviction that drinking is "smart" or "manly."

The patient, must also have a conviction that he needs help. Peabody sometimes made a prospective patient convince him of the fact that he was truly an alcoholic. He would not accept a patient unless "he can say that he would like to be shown how to reconstruct his mental. processes so that in due time he will no longer want to drink."

Peabody used the same relaxation technique employed by Worcester and Baylor, although he was somewhat defensive about it: "I appreciate that this relaxation-suggestion phase of the treatment may sound like hocus-pocus to those who have never tried it." He justified relaxation in part on the grounds of efficiency - on the grounds that a person could accomplish more work in a day with less effort if the exercise were done daily. They could also be used as mental training to avoid "displays of temper, baseless apprehensions, shyness, and other unpleasant moods, not by trying to support them, but by finding out why they exist and anticipating occasions which might create them." The regular practice of relaxation would prevent the "accumulation of emotional tension." He devoted only one page to the physical aspects of the treatment, including exercise.

Suggestion had wider uses, Peabody defined its most useful form for alcoholics as "driving home platitudes as if they were profundities over and over again." ( It is very likely not a coincidence that this is the basic organizational principle of A.A. meetings ) The therapist supplied these suggestions during relaxation sessions and the patient was to repeat them nightly at bedtime. Peabody also assigned readings and the daily copying out of simple statements that he supplied one at a time as the patient was ready.

Like his predecessors, Peabody appreciated the significance of catharsis, although none of the three used that term. They all provided an opportunity for a patient to discuss his drinking history and earlier life experiences. Peabody saw this as a more formal task of analysis (in a somewhat Freudian sense) than did the others; it was not merely an emotional purging for the patient, but an opportunity for the therapist to point out the causes of the individual's drinking. Peabody's ideas about the causes of alcoholism will be discussed further below.

Unlike Worcester and Baylor, Peabody did not regard the unconscious as necessarily helpful. It was the repository of excuses, denial and: other obstacles to permanent abstinence, as well as the ever dangerous emotions it was the mental scrap heap to which the desire to drink must ultimately be relegated. The unconscious also needed to be "taught," and the method of teaching it was through thought control. "The most important element in the work (is) the control and direction of the thoughts toward the ultimate logical goal." All negative thoughts must be stopped and positive ones substituted; "When at length the mind is diverted, the unconscious, which is supposed to retain all memories, must be left with a true picture of the whole situation and the individual's intellectual attitude toward it."

The most distinctive aspect of Peabody's method was his plan for time control. He described it: Before going to bed the patient should write down on a piece of paper the different hours of the following day, beginning with the time of arising. Then, so far as can be determined beforehand, he should fill in these hours with what he plans to do. Throughout the day notations should be made if exceptions have occurred in the original plans, and it should be indicated whether these exceptions have been due to legitimate or rationalized excuses.... Small as well as larger activities that are taken up should not be dropped until completed unless they are in a sense unknown quantities, entered upon for the purposes of investigation only. Several pages of instructions follow. Peabody emphasized that the spirit in which the time plan is followed was more important than accuracy. Its functions were to (1) give the patient something concrete to do to change his condition, (2) provide the patient with "training in executing his own commands" and (3) prevent idleness. Regarding this last point he quoted Stekel: "Earthly happiness.. is primarily dependent upon our relationship to time." Following this regimen might well have helped the patient to develop a new sense of responsibility, since he had to be accountable to his therapist for his actions every day. Peabody, however, did not discuss responsibility.

Faye R. recalled that her therapists told her to break down the schedule into 30-minute units. Marty Mann reported that one Peabody patient whom she knew carried time cards with him in his shirt pocket so that he would never be far from his schedule.

In his discussions of time and impulse control, Peabody appeared less like the psychiatrist and more like

the industrial engineer perfecting his efficiency and productivity. He is also the military officer planning in advance so that his troops would not mutiny while he slept. He compared the time exercises to "close order drill"; discipline, not character, was his security. "In battle it has been proved over and over again that large hordes of individually brave but untrained men can accomplish little when opposed by a smaller but disciplined military group -so with the alcoholic and his temptation. He cannot expect consistently to conquer his enemy in every drawing room and country club porch if he has made no advance preparation."

Peabody apparently expected the self to remain deeply divided; balance of any sort must have seemed unattainable to him because he recommended that constant vigilance be exercised against endlessly threatening feelings. Wister reported that Peabody had told him: "I want you to begin thinking of yourself as two selves. There's your intellectual self and your emotional self. This intellectual self is a good self, the logical self. Its your best self...Now there's the other self, the emotional self. It's always there and it is right that it should always be there. But it is the side that wants to drink...But thought control will shrink it down so that it becomes much smaller than the good 'self. You must reconcile both selves. But you must permit the intellectual side to dominate."

Peabody, the factory manager, again noted: "Every phase of this therapy is governed by a time element. You will eventually learn to master your emotions and you will sit, intellectually, in the driver's seat. For a time, however, you will have to direct your mental processes by hand. Later they will operate automatically." (This statement is exactly the opposite of A.A.'s recommendation: "Get out of the driver's seat.") Nowhere did Peabody speak of patients acquiring new feelings, desires or interests Other than "hobbies"- his limited aim was that they be free of one destructive desire. Alcoholics must "train their minds so that they no longer wish to drink." Clearly, Peabody "resisted evil" as strongly as he could.

It is difficult to imagine that efficiency, expediency and time management could provide sufficient inspiration to transform active alcoholism into a lifetime of sobriety. It was a far cry from Worcester's promise of reawakened spiritual powers or Baylor's hope for "recognition of the soul;" A life of mere efficiency and the systematic suppression of feelings, organized in hours or half-hours, certainly resembles Crosby's description of the atmosphere in which Peabody grew up: a "strange muted life, uneventful and unjoyful". and a "tiptoe discipline (which) ticked on a train-like schedule." Such an arrangement might achieve freedom from alcohol, but it is much less clear what that freedom was for.

For Peabody, indulgence of feeling and lack of discipline were the causes, of alcoholism. He discounted heredity as causative, claiming instead that improper family circumstances lead to a "nervous condition," which "in turn induces alcoholism." He described his typical patient as a first or only son, suffering from a fear of maternal domination: he was "pampered and overprotected" as a child and drank to resolve his conflicts about achieving manhood. The patient "had unconsciously to choose between becoming a timid mother's darling, completely surrendering his own personality, or putting up an exaggerated opposition. Of the two he unquestionably chose the wiser course." The typical mother "was "domineering and prudish" and the typical father was shy, with periods of despondency. Ultimately, the parents were responsible for the child's alcoholism. "The resulting character, is the fault of the parents, though in the use of the word "fault" we do not wish to conjure up an ethical concept so much as one of ignorance and lack of self-control."

Later writers on this topic were not as delicate about the use of the "ethical concept." Much of Bishop's fictionalized biography of Wister is an essay on his mother's faults, on how she caused and encouraged his alcoholism. Strecker and Chambers were much more pointed in their insistence that mothers be blamed for the sins of their sons. Peabody did not single out mothers in particular. In a series of writings employing Peabody's ideas, Strecker and Chambers's denunciation of women and their insistence that men control women became increasingly shrill. In the book *Their Mother's Sons*, the psychiatrist Strecker reached new depths in denouncing mothers for virtually every faulty male act of the World War II era, much like Philip Wylie's better known *Generation of Vipers*. None of these writers informed us what the cause of alcoholism in women might be.

Although Peabody's method was widely practiced for about two decades, little is known of its overall therapeutic success, and an accurate guess is impossible at this date. Marty Mann concluded that Peabody and his therapists "accomplished a heroic work during the 1930's, when little else was being done for alcoholics" and that the method "was effective with a considerable number" of patients. It is known that a few remained abstinent and professionally active in the field of alcoholism. Others who failed at the Peabody method were

known to have joined A.A. in its early years, but it is impossible to determine how many remained quietly sober without joining A.A. or professional groups. The fact that several of the Peabody method's major practitioners - apparently including the founder - were not able to maintain their sobriety, however, does not bode well for other patients with whom contact was lost.

## CONCLUSIONS

The major significance of Peabody's work was probably not its long term therapeutic success but the hope that it gave, both to the researchers in the early scientific study of alcoholism and to early A.A. members, that alcoholism was a treatable condition and a worthy topic for further research and investigation. In their review of the treatment literature, Bowman and Jellinek concluded, "In this country, Peabody has probably exerted more influence than anyone else on the psychotherapy of alcohol addiction." The writings of Peabody and of Strecker and Chambers reached a far wider audience than Baylor's book ever had. By the 1930s, the Emmanuel Movement had almost been forgotten. Even if the physicians and other professionals of the late 1930s and early 1940s had known of Worcester and Baylor's work, they undoubtedly would have rejected it as too religious for their own use. A.A. methods could not be used directly by professional therapists, since these methods depended on a group of recovering alcoholics. The tone and style of Peabody's writing was undoubtedly far more agreeable to professional practitioners by the end of Prohibition. The Peabody model was actively used in the Yale Plan Clinics, which employed both individual therapy and the class method of teaching similar to what Worcester had originally used. These class sessions were published verbatim in several issues of the Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol and were very likely influential in the practice of other early clinics.

The difference between Worcester's and Peabody's work is in part accounted for by the spirit of the times when they developed their work. Elwood Worcester was 50 years old when World War I began; Richard Peabody was 20. Although Worcester incorporated some psychoanalytic concepts in his later work, he never altered his conviction that human nature was basically good and that the "subconscious" was a useful ally of consciousness. For Peabody, who had fought at Chateau-Thierry, those assumptions had become untenable. More congenial to his generation were the ideas of Freud, for whom the mind was an endless battleground of life and death instincts that could be kept in check only by the eternally vigilant forces of civilization. Peabody's understanding of human life was thus more modern than Worcester's. For the younger man, life was an endless struggle, not so much between conscious and unconscious forces, but between sober reason on the one hand and feeling (equated with intoxication) on the other. A tone of postwar despair and depression permeated his work. Writing in 1919, Baylor used relatively little of Worcester's inspirational religious language, although he retained his basically spiritual view of the recovery process. Writing in 1930, Peabody had abandoned the spiritual language and concepts altogether.

Curiously, the postwar pessimism did not similarly affect Bill Wilson, who was Peabody's close contemporary and who also fought in World War I. Wilson's writings retained the language of another turn-of-the-century Protestant source, the Oxford Groups, through which he had initially stopped drinking. Many people, including new A.A. members and professionals, have reacted to his language in *Alcoholics Anonymous*, the primary A.A. sourcebook, as anachronistic and overly sentimental. It is essentially the same kind of style that was popular in Worcester's time, with the same indomitable optimism and confidence in the efficacy of spiritual ideas. It contrasts sharply with today's professional therapeutic language.

It is hard for us now to accept Worcester's optimism about the human race or his conviction that our inner impulses are always beneficent ones. There are still no more than a few of us, as Murphy (*Historical Introduction to 'Modern Psychology'*) noted, who can understand his vision of the unity of the mystical and material worlds; our culture has trained us for so long to keep them rigidly separated. Worcester also could not give us an explanation of suffering. Like A.A., he had only a theory of progress and improvement not a theory of evil.

It is probably unfortunate from the long-term point of view of treatment that the "scientific" interest in alcoholism that developed in the 1930s could find professionally acceptable only the rather limited approach of Peabody. The *International Bibliography of Studies on Alcohol* (Keller) does not even list the writings of Worcester and Baylor. Apparently, its definition of "science" was not broad enough even to include, the Emmanuel Movement, at least in the English speaking world. Perhaps, if we had adopted the broader concept of

a Geisteswissenschaft as Worcester and perhaps also Freud - understood it, we would not be embroiled in such continuing problems with understanding the proper scope of the terms "science" and "disease."

Indirectly, one can conclude that the Emmanuel approach probably deserved its reputation for greater therapeutic success, since it used several of the major strategies that were later proved successful in related form by A.A. From the point of view of recovery, far more has been accomplished in the past 50 years by those who appreciated Worcester's paradox - that the unmanageability of life may be turned around by relaxing, control, not by ever more frenzied efforts to regain it.

## 14 The Emmanuel Clinic

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*By Rev. Francis W. McPeck, "The Role of Religious Bodies in the Treatment of Inebriety in the United States." Alcohol, Science and Society, 1945.*

Illustrative of a later development in the use of religious elements in the treatment of inebriety is the work of the Rev. Dr. Elwood Worcester and Samuel McComb, together with that of the physician, Isador H. Coriat, at Emmanuel Church in Boston. Begun shortly after the turn of the century, the so-called Emmanuel Movement had a lively impact on the thinking of churchmen and church workers in this country.

The center of the work was the clinic operated under the auspices of the church. The philosophy was that both medicine and religion have essential places in the treatment of any disease, but most particularly in the treatment of the functional illnesses. In the first book published by these three men, *Religion and Medicine*, they strive to inform the public on what they are attempting:

"We believe in the power of the mind over the body, and we also believe in medicine, in good habits, and in a wholesome, well regulated life. In the treatment of functional nervous disorders, we make free use of moral and physical agencies, but we do not believe in overtaxing these valuable aids by expecting the mind to attain results which can be effected more easily through physical instrumentality's."

Scientific procedures were employed in diagnosis and case records were kept. The use of specialists was frequent. When physical medicine was indicated, it was given, but it was accompanied by skilled religious counseling. The then current knowledge and opinions on the nature of the unconscious mind were freely drawn upon by specialists. Suggestion and autosuggestion were frankly employed.

In connection with inebriety, many of the viewpoints expressed by these workers have been subsequently rejected. They accepted the theory of reproductive germ damage; they held that children of drunkards suffer to an almost incredible extent from various forms of mental and nervous diseases; that these children will inherit enfeebled or defective physical constitutions because of their parents constant tipping, and so on. The only differential diagnosis was between the chronic alcoholic and the dipsomaniac, by which they distinguished between the steady drinker and the periodic. The principal form of treatment, when abstinence was agreed to, was hypnosis and suggestion. All this was in 1908. By 1931, Worcester and McComb, again writing jointly, their book this time called *Body, Mind and Spirit*, had seen, and had liberally used, many advances in the field of medical psychology. The older doctrines of Charcot and Coue had given way before those of Freud, and much was taken from the latter. But the firm belief in the instrumentality of religion remained unshaken, and the equally firm belief that religion and medicine must go hand in hand:

"From the beginning we have associated ourselves with competent medical men and surgeons. Indeed, had such cooperation been refused, I should not have dreamed of assuming responsibility for the sick in mind and body. For many years most of our patients have been sent to us by physicians, and in all cases which involved more than the need of moral and spiritual advice we have left no stone unturned to procure the best diagnosis and medical care obtainable."

In dealing with the inebriate, three conditions were laid down. The alcoholic must wish to stop of his own volition and not simply because his wife or someone else requires him to submit to treatment. Only those who seriously propose total abstinence for the rest of their lives are accepted for treatment. And no discussions are held with persons who are in a state of intoxication.

The treatment process, after these conditions have been satisfied, is partially in the field of therapeutic analysis of the patients problems, the use of suggestion, and sometimes hypnosis. Suggestion is used only when the patient has been relaxed and is in condition to respond to it. Specifically, something like this is said:

"You have determined to break this habit, and you have already gone. . . days without a drink. The desire is fading out of your mind, and the habit is losing its power over you. You need not be afraid that you will suffer, for you will not suffer at all. In a short time liquor in any form will have no attraction for you. It will be associated in your mind with weakness and sorrow and sickness and failure..."

The patient is built up physically by the use of nourishing food, exercise, outdoor living, and so on. There is a search for new occupations and interests. "On the whole, our successes have been far more frequent than our failures," the authors report.

Out of the Emmanuel Movement has grown a very definite interest in the alcoholic. Mr. Courtenay Baylor, whose name is familiar to students of the treatment of inebriety, was long associated with Drs. Worcester and McComb. Those who wish to know more about his views and methods may read Dwight Anderson's article "The place of the lay therapist in the treatment of alcoholic." The principle elements in the treatment of alcoholics are catharsis, surrender, and relaxation -and these are carried out or induced through the use of religion.