

December 1947

Dr. PEALE ADDRESSES 13th ANNUAL BANQUET

"Alcoholics Anonymous is not an organization. It is a movement. Moreover, it is one of the greatest movements for good of our generation," said Dr. Norman Vincent Peale, pastor of the Marble Collegiate Reformed Church of New York, and guest speaker at the 13th anniversary banquet of A.A., held in the Hotel Commodore, New York, on November 6.

The banquet was sponsored by the New York Intergroup Association of A.A. and executed by the association's banquet committee acting under the supervision of Hank G., of the Mt. Kisco, N.Y. Group.

In addition to Dr. Peale, three members of A.A. spoke. They were: Norman B. of the Forrest Hills, N.Y. Group, who acted as toastmaster; Joe C., of the Brooklyn, N.Y. and Forrest Hills, N.Y. Groups; and Lucy P., of the Bronxville, N.Y. Group.

The first speaker, Norman B., told the story of his recovery from alcoholism through the A.A. Program. He pointed out that "once an alcoholic, always an alcoholic." To prove his point, he told a personal experience.

The second speaker, Joe C., described the progress of his alcoholism to the point where he was drinking when he didn't want to. He said that although he promised after every binge that he would stop he knew in his heart that he couldn't keep his promises. After seeking help through A.A., he continued, he

realized that there was a way out.

The third speaker, Lucy P., urged women alcoholics to come into A.A. She said that women undoubtedly have a harder time "admitting that they have an alcoholic problem" but assured the audience that A.A. welcomed members of her sex at all times.

Bill W., who introduced the guest speaker, spoke briefly on the need for unity in A.A. He cautioned that "success is a heady wine" and that the time had come for all members to stick together "to preserve our unity." To emphasize his point, he read and commented on the 12 Traditions of the fellowship.

Throughout the evening, messages from other sections of the country and abroad arrived at the speakers' table. One cablegram from the Dublin, Ireland Group, read: "Best wishes for a happy birthday from your Irish brothers."

Large delegations from almost all states in the nation began to arrive in New York early in the week for the annual event. On November 5, one delegation arrived by chartered airplane.

One hundred and eighty-two out-of-town members of A.A. were entertained at the traditional A.A. luncheon on the day of the banquet.