

June 1947

One In A Million In All London

Strange and wonderful stories have been told of the things that happen to A.A.s throughout the world. Usually, they involve curious coincidences, odd events, out-of-the ordinary experiences. From London comes another which may be classified as coincidence, luck or something more remarkable.

An A.A. who has had indifferent success with the program for five years, arrived in Paris on a business trip, accompanied by his wife. The temptations of the city were great; his faith was small. Soon he was drunk.

The man disappeared for three days. The wife, accustomed to the drinking pattern of her husband, assumed that he could not make the boat train for London as planned. She decided not to take the train but to wait at her hotel in Paris.

However, on the day planned for the trip to London, the man awakened on the boat train. Rumpled, shaky and unshaven, he pulled himself out of a seat to see the fast moving country-side in the window. A hurried examination disclosed that (1) he had no money and (2) no passport. His watch was missing.

Alone In London

On arrival in England, he convinced the authorities of his ability to obtain his

passport by airmail and was admitted to the country. Eventually he arrived at a large hotel in London.

After rearranging his clothing as best he could, he took a seat in the lounge to ponder his desperate situation. He had no personal friends in London. He was broke. All of his valuables were missing. He was tired and nervous and, by God, he needed a drink.

Glancing at the large clock in the hotel, the man found he was so foggy he couldn't read it, and neither did he know the date. He saw a well dressed Englishman seated on a divan and asked him for the time. A conversation developed. When he told the Englishman his story, the latter said:

"It must be more than a coincidence. Do you realize that there are only five AAs in the city of London and that I am one of them? Somehow we have met here."

The rest of the story is commonplace. The English A.A. took the man in tow, provided refreshment and friendship. He insisted that the man come to stay with him at his house in London.

Later, when the man was joined by his wife, all three attended the first A.A. meeting ever held in England - a meeting that had been arranged by another American who was visiting England and who had brought the five AAs in London

together for the first time.

Consider the odds against the meeting of this American A.A. and his British benefactor! There were only five A.A.s in the entire city of London.

A few weeks later, the man and his wife were walking along the banks of a river in England. He turned to her and said:

"I have been thinking about my friend in London. I believe I know now what the spiritual part of the program means."