

June 1969

EDITORIAL:

The Shape of Things to Come

In the book Alcoholics Anonymous there is a chapter called "A Vision for You". Wandering through it recently, my eye was caught by this startling paragraph written a short five years ago. *"Someday we hope that every alcoholic who journeys will find a Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous at his destination. To some extent this is already true. Some of us are salesmen and go about. Little clusters of twos and threes and fives of us have sprung up in other communities through contact with our two large centers—"* Rubbing my eyes I looked again. A lump came into my throat. "Only five years," I thought. "Then but two large centers—little clusters of twos and threes — travelers who hoped one day to find us at every destination."

Could it be that only yesterday this was just a hope—those little clusters of twos and threes, those little beacons so anxiously watched as they flickered, but never went out.

And today—hundreds of centers shedding their warm illumination upon the lives of thousands, lighting the dark shoals where the stranded and hopeless lie breaking up—those fingers of light already stretching to our beach heads in other lands.

Now comes another lighted lamp—this little newspaper called *"The Grapevine"*.. May its rays of hope and ex-perience ever fall upon the current of our A.A. life and one day illumine every dark corner of this alcoholic world.

The aspirations of its editors, contributors and readers could well be voiced in the last words of *"A Vision for You"*. *"Abandon yourself to God as you understand God. Admit your faults to Him and your fellows. Clear away the wreckage of your past. Give freely of what you find, and join us. We shall be with you, in the Fellowship of The Spirit, and you will surely meet some of us as you trudge the Road of Happy Destiny. May God bless you and keep you—until then."*

Bill

*A facsimile reproduction of Bill W.'s
first Grapevine editorial. Vol. 1, No. 1, June, 1944*

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. . . and twenty-five years later. Vol. 26, No. 1

THIS is the *three-hundredth* issue of the AA Grapevine. Without a single publication failure, the GV has been rolling off the presses twelve times a year for each of the past twenty-five years.

Remembering that the early Grapevine was staffed entirely by volunteers, that even now they serve in a considerable majority, that many AA members have freely contributed their valuable professional skills, year in and year out — well, we must all agree that this record of devotion is something for our greatest inspiration.

I recall an article I wrote years ago for the July 1945 Grapevine, commemorating its first anniversary. On rereading that piece, I found much interest in statements expressing the hope that we AAs might be able to develop certain "traditional principles," principles that could help us to live and work together.

In this period, our growing Society was having plenty of trouble. The crucial tests of whether AA could survive and expand were very much with us. Would the forces for disunity, then so rampant, do us in after all?

Providentially, AA's Twelve Traditions were already in embryo, and some of them had actually begun to emerge. In the last few paragraphs of my 1945 piece there were, for example, allusions to "paid workers," "self-support," "no endorsement of commercial undertakings," etc. Then followed a strong recommendation for the discussion of anonymity, leadership, public relations, money in AA, and the like. The article closed on the theme that the Grapevine should try to become a "true voice" of AA.

It was not very long afterward that the Grapevine did actually publish AA's Twelve Traditions, and the magazine then continued to be a principal forum for the years of discussion that followed. Among the many GV accomplishments, this was a service of incalculable value to our entire Fellowship — then, and ever since.

As we visualize that early time against the world scene of AA today, let us remember to give thanks for those twenty-five years in which the Grapevine and its people did so much to make AA what it now is. A "true voice" indeed!

Bill