



VOL. III. NO. 5, OCTOBER, 1946, P. 0. BOX 328, GRAND CENTRAL ANNEX, NEW YORK 17. YEARLY. \$2.50; COPY, 25c

*The national monthly journal of Alcoholics Anonymous, devoted to those seeking further knowledge on the problem of alcoholism, with the hope that it will help all alcoholics everywhere. Individual opinions expressed here are not, necessarily, those of A.A. as a whole.*

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## Women in A.A. Face Special Problems

**N**OW that women form an increasing membership in Alcoholics Anonymous, there seems to be a general feeling that they not only have a specialized problem, but, like the purple cow we'd rather see, they *are* one! Once every blessed so often, a woman comes in, works on the program, learns to tolerate and even to like all her fellow-men-and-women, and in general makes herself an admirable member. But for every dozen who do that, there is a basketful who become a combination nuisance, headache and problem.

Now there are plenty of men who make trouble. But somehow the trouble women cause is either so dramatized, or so disheartening, so shoddy and unnecessary that it seems far larger and more important than it actually is. At any rate, an unfortunate or harmful episode here and there is no longer an isolated experience. And while the writer of this is just one woman A.A. sticking her neck out (and very grateful, thank you, for anonymity in doing so), it is the thoughtful opinion of a number of old-timers, in groups all over the country, that it might be well to recognize the special difficulties that women present and meet them honestly. So this is a symposium, gathered from a number of groups. And letters of opinion and reaction are welcome.

### Not Blanket Indictment

Here, then, is a list of perplexities and snags. Because the resulting friction discourages newcomers, and because such matters often cause slips of members well along in sobriety, no one who seriously wants to do the best job possible with and for sick people, should postpone facing the subject. But remember, as you read, that the faults and complaints apply only to *some* women—to many, perhaps—but not to all. They are not blanket accusations of the sex.

### Female Frailties

1. The percentage of women who stay with A.A. is low. Too many of them drop out after the novelty wears off; a few months to a year and a half.

2. Many women form attachments too intense—bordering on the emotional. Best-friends, crushes, hero-worship cause strained relationships.

3. So many women want to run things. To boss, manage, supervise, regulate and change things. Twenty want to decorate; one will scrub or mend what is already around.

4. Too many women don't like women.

5. Women talk too much. Gossip is a cancer to all A.A. groups and must be constantly watched. Men gossip far too much, too. But few men use it for punishment, or revenge, or cutting someone down to size. Once the news value has been absorbed, men generally drop a topic. But women worry the same dead mouse until it's unrecognizable.

6. Women are a questionable help working with men and vice versa. In 12th Step work, the intimate confidences often lead to the pity that's akin to love, and is often mistaken for same. The protective, the maternal, the inspirational interest often lands one or both in a broadside slip—and sometimes in extra-marital experiments, which, however clothed in the glory of "honesty," are disillusioning to many others, and frequently present a troubling question to those who are actually trying to live the 12 Steps.

7. Sooner or later, a woman-on-the-make sallies into a group, on the prowl for phone numbers and dates. Oddly enough, perhaps, she does not wear a placard and is not always easily recognized. Results of her operations can cause havoc.

8. A lot of women are attention demanders.

Spotlight sisters. They want to be spoonfed, coaxed, babied, encouraged, teased, praised and personally conducted into recovery.

9. Few women can think in the abstract. Everything must be taken personally. Universal truths, to many women, are meaningless generalities. These women are impatient of philosophy, meditation and discussion. This is the kind of woman who figures "Just let's have this bargain; we'll pay so much faith down and the rest in installments." Which is a deceiving deal, for such buyers are generally the ones who have to watch the collector come and take the piano back.

10. Women's feelings get hurt too often. They rapidly and frequently are misunderstood.

11. Far too many women A.A.s cannot get along with the non-alcoholic wives of A.A. members. They feel ashamed or defiant, and they show it. Often they unwillingly forbid overtures—and then feel snubbed! Lots of A.A. women feel they attend a meeting to be *helped*—and concentrate to the point of rudeness on non-A.A. contacts. If they behave superciliously toward the non-alcoholic wives of members, they should hardly complain of being treated coolly in return.

### Jealousy Crops Up

In a great many cases it is those non-alcoholic wives whose altitude causes the general ill-will. Too often they feel superior—and show it. Some are convinced that alcoholic women are loose morally—or have been and probably will be again! These suspect all women A.A.s as potential rivals. Even when no threat of sex is present at all, a large number of these wives resent closed meetings and the intimate talks and confidences at which no non-alcoholic can be present. They feel left out, hurt, outraged and

*(Continued on Page 6)*

# EDITORIAL:

## On the 12th Step . . .

*"Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of those steps we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all of our affairs."*

The 12th Step is the climax of the other 11. Without the 12th Step, the conception formulated in the other 11 would be like faith without works and the body without the spirit.

Here is the plan put into action, and it is a two-way action. Through the 12th Step, one receives as he gives. He gives to another what he has learned and in so doing receives new strength for himself. And it is through this two-way action that A.A. grows not only larger but stronger, for it is through the 12th Step that new members are made and old members extend the length and the quality of their sobriety.

When the 12th Step operates as it is intended to it precludes the development of the stultifying results of the ordinary debtor-creditor relationship. Although the A.A. engaged on a 12th Step mission may appear to be the donor — donor of a priceless gift which has helped thousands of others — and though the distraught recipient may feel grateful either then or subsequently, there is a powerfully restraining factor in the transaction. The A.A. cannot feel smugly virtuous as bearer of this guilt when he knows that by giving it he keeps it and that 12th Step work is the way he helps to preserve his own sobriety. He is not likely to get a fatally righteous and inflated estimation of himself when he remembers that in 12th Step work one receives at least as much and usually much more than he gives. He cannot well fancy himself becoming a saint when he remembers that through 12th Step work he helps to keep himself from becoming a drunk again.

Even for the newcomer who discovers A.A. by way of some member applying the 12th Step in his behalf, there is an equalizer. He may always feel grateful, but as he learns more about A.A. he realizes the necessity of the 12th Step work to the do-er as well as the receiver and thus is relieved of any sense of imposed obligation. And he in turn can embark on 12th Step work knowing that he is doing it for himself more even than for others and certainly without the duress of paying off a debt.

By virtue of these factors, 12th Step work is both inspirational and practical, often the spark that rekindles the fires of shining hope, and at the same time a completely realistic approach to a very tough problem. Few situations arise anywhere that offer a greater challenge to one's ingenuity, resourcefulness, perseverance and the best of his brains than those which arise commonly in 12th Step work. Nor, it should be added, are there many things which man does that require more hard work than is so often needed in the completion of a 12th Step task.

In 12th Step work, one is dealing with the most exasperating, stubborn, conniving, prevaricating, baffling, unpredictable, twisted and messed-up human being at large—the drunk. Successful 12th Step work calls for practically all of the virtues and talents given man, and often, even if any A.A. had all of the virtues and all of the talents, they would not be enough.

Yet, 12th Step work also offers more drama, more comedy, suspense, thrills and excitement than one will ever, find on any movie screen. And it is real. It is life in the raw. It takes care of any idle time that may have been dragging heavily. And it has given to many an A.A. experiences that yield the greatest happiness of a lifetime.

Finally, of course, 12th Step work is certainly one of the surest, if not the surest,

*(Continued on Page 5)*

## *Rasputinism in A. A.*

The bearded monk, Rasputin, who helped to bring about the downfall of Russia's ruling house during the First World War, was advocate of an evil doctrine:

To find salvation, he taught, one must be guilty of great sin.

\* \* \*

Members of A.A. do not accept the premise, held by many persons who lack understanding of their problem, that it is sinful to drink in an uncontrolled manner. Helped by A.A. to understand that uncontrolled drinking is the most obvious symptom of the disease called alcoholism, the burden of oppressive feelings of guilt is lifted and they can gather all their strength for the task of arresting the progress of the disease.

\* \* \*

Disease can be the result of sin but it is not, of itself, sinful. Some alcoholics may have been great sinners; other alcoholics may have led exemplary lives. With alcoholics, the act of drinking has resulted in the fastening of the disease of alcoholism on themselves. Some of them may have been as little guilty of sin as are some persons who are tubercular.

\* \* \*

A.A. is not a method of overcoming the disease of alcoholism that is available only to great drunkards and great sinners. Few of us have earned a place in either category.

\* \* \*

A.A. offers hope to the person who has recognized his inability to control his drinking before the disease has worked complete havoc with his life.

\* \* \*

Too often, however, alcoholics who have not "hit bottom" may feel that they stand outside the self-constituted "circle of the elect" in any A.A. group—the drunks who smugly recount the occasions when they were tossed into the pokey or were carried into hospitals and institutions.

\* \* \*

Sometimes these alcoholics who seek help before they "hit bottom" are repelled by such boastful reminiscences. They feel that there is no place for them in A.A.—that they are unable to qualify for membership.

\* \* \*

Sometimes, as a consequence, they are lost to A.A. and are, themselves, lost.

\* \* \*

Rasputinism helped to wreck a ruling house; carried to excess, it can help to wreck any A.A. group.—*C.K., Lansing, Mich.*

# "DOWN-UNDER" A.A.'S REPORT STEADY GROWTH

## AUSTRALIAN BRANCH NOTES No. 1

### (By One of the Original Members)

The Australian branch of Alcoholics Anonymous came into being in October, 1944. Its founders (all non-alcoholics) were the Reverend Father T. V. Dunlea (parish priest of Sutherland, N.S.W.), Dr. S. J. Minogue (superintendent of the Rydalmere Mental Hospital, Sydney, N.S.W.), and Mr. A. V. McKinnon (a mental nurse in a Sydney mental hospital).

Father Dunlea is a born benevolent in his early fifties, his hand forever dipping into *his* pocket to help those in distress. Dr. Minogue belongs to the same generation as the priest, is kindly and tolerant of disposition and has made of alcoholism a life-long study. Mr. McKinnon is just on the right side of forty, and although officially a layman, his knowledge of alcoholics and of alcoholism is advanced.

Our first meeting was held in a ramshackle humpy in the depths of typical Australian bushland—dull green and with that solemn melancholy of which our poets so often write. Now, in June, 1946, we have a convalescent home at Sutherland, capable of housing 20 or 30 patients, who are in need of mental and physical rehabilitation, and have taken over a residential in Sydney where members live, pay rent and go to work; this place can accommodate 20 or so people and in it we have our meeting room, where we congregate twice weekly.

An Australian A.A. census has never been taken, but we estimate our membership at 150. It is too early to state how many have completely recovered, but probably no more than 12. Fifty-odd have shown very marked improvement, their relapses occurring less frequently as time goes on. The rest are just floundering around.

Our greatest difficulty has been to persuade many new members to carry out 12th Step work. No matter *how* much we talk, plead or point out the dreadful consequences of failure to help their fellow drunk, these lads and lasses just listen and continue to follow their policy of selfish and masterly inactivity. Then they crash. And we tell 'em why they crashed—failure to implement the 12, and particularly the 12th, Step. We help them to their feet again, get them jobs and away they go, keeping sober, buying themselves new suits and frocks, but utterly and completely ignoring the 12th and most of the other Steps, till they crash again and have to pawn their new suits and frocks to keep up their supplies of liquor. We don't know what you Americans do with these lads and

lassies, but we would like to, for they give us dreadful headaches.

Our greatest asset (apart from our founders) is one Frank Sturge Harty. He is a veteran of World War I, and now runs a radio session of the personal problems type. Frank is an untiring worker for A.A., both on the air and off it. Tall, dark and soldierly-looking, he is to be seen at almost every meeting and frequently visits our home at Sutherland. Although not himself an alcoholic, his life has been as varied and has had as many ups and downs as that of the average inebriate, which naturally helps him to understand us the better.—*Rex A.*

\* \* \*

A letter from Dr. Minogue, who is identified in the above correspondence, brings more heartening news:

"Since my last letter things have taken a decided turn for the better. The picture, 'Lost Weekend,' did us a power of good. R. wrote an article on A.A. and inebriates and this was published in our leading newspaper. I also gave an interview to another daily and the article treated the whole subject, for a daily newspaper, most sympathetically. Both these articles were sought on account of the interest created by 'Lost Weekend.' The picture has had a very mixed reception. While few have liked it, it

### *Never Call a Rose a Rose*

The Associated Press carried the following quoted dispatch relating to the sympathetic treatment received by one inebriate:

"Magistrate Oliver H. Bruce, Jr., explained to Mrs. Clifton McGettigan yesterday how a good wife should greet an inebriated husband:

"'Don't,' he said, 'give him the gimlet eye, put your hands on your hips and bark, "You're drunk." When you tell a drunk he's drunk it serves no good purpose and just makes him mad. The thing to do is give him a little bit of the glad eye and suggest, in a friendly manner, that it might be a good thing to go to bed.'

"McGettigan was convicted of the charges brought by his wife, but sentence was suspended."

To which, R.B. of Manhattan adds the comment:

"It doth appear you are a worthy judge;  
You know the law, your exposition  
Hath been most sound."

—Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice.*

has had a very good run and still continues to draw big crowds.

"However, as a result of this publicity, we have had numerous inquiries, many contacts and new members. The members we are now getting are the type we have sought since the beginning, professional men and business executives. Also, many who came are not the true inebriates, but men who realize that they are drinking too heavily and must give it up. Returned soldiers predominate, especially those with anticky shakes. The lot of these men is particularly hard. They are ignored by the repatriation and no one wants them. Last night, for example, I admitted here an officer who had been a P.O.W. in Japan for three and a half years. He has been drinking since his return nine months ago and now has lost his job and is threatened with divorce.

### New Interest Created

"We have split up our meetings, one on Tuesday night, a social evening, one on Friday night for inebriates only. As the attendance on Fridays has grown to over 30, we are on the verge of splitting up into a number of subgroups. A chemist, Fred E, is to form one at Manly (a seaside suburb about 10 miles from the city), and R. is to form one at Millers Point, the docking suburb of Sydney Harbor. It seems like a dream—R. and B. meeting in my house for months, then at R.'s place; this in turn became too small. Then the rooms in North Sydney, then to Vianny House. Now Vianny House has become too small! We did find that, as our numbers increased, the personal touch *was* lost. We now intend to revert back to the original idea of Bill and to meet more frequently in each others' homes. In this way we hope to prevent many relapses.

"A very good piece of news is that a church organization in Melbourne (capital of Victoria, the second biggest city in the Commonwealth with a population of over a million) sent over a representative to investigate A.A. He was so pleased that he is to select two alcoholics and will send them to Sydney, 600 miles from Melbourne. We will board them at Christmas House and teach them A.A. methods.

"A pleasing feature is that we feel that we have broken down some of the prejudices against us and that we are getting more cooperation, however slight it may be. Doctors ring me up more about patients and inquiries continue to come from all parts. On the 27th I am to address a meeting of the B.M.A. (corresponding to your American Medical Association) on alcoholism. This should further increase interest in A.A. amongst doctors in Australia."

# Marital Readjustments Usually Necessary

Paradoxical as it may sound, domestic bliss does not inevitably and automatically follow A.A. recovery of the alcoholic in the family whether that be the husband or the wife. In fact, occasionally the recovery leads into another problem which also requires readjustment.

The natural conclusion is that whatever domestic troubles a couple may be experiencing while the alcoholic is drinking will disappear when the drinking stops. That usually is the case, of course, but the exceptions occur frequently enough and seriously enough to warrant discussion so that they, too, may be resolved.

When domestic difficulties arise following or during the recovery of the alcoholic the cause often is the very personality change which is so greatly to be desired and so essential for the erstwhile drunk. The difficulty may arise, too, from the change that almost inevitably takes place in the relationship which has prevailed during the period of drinking.

For example, if the husband is the alcoholic the wife has had to shoulder responsibilities he normally would carry—pay the bills, run the home, care for the children, maintain those social contacts that remain with the outside,

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## Varied Uses Reported For *The Grapevine*

Reports received by *The Grapevine* indicate that an increasing number of groups are using the national A.A. periodical for discussion purposes at their meetings.

Several groups have been following the series of editorials which *The Grapevine* has been publishing each month on the 12 Steps, taking each editorial in order as a topic for discussion. Several groups, too, have been using the editorials for the instruction of newcomers on the 12 Steps.

In other groups from which reports have been received the custom is to select one article from the current issue of *The Grapevine* as a topic for each closed meeting.

By using *The Grapevine* in this way, these groups have found that they never lack for pertinent subjects stimulating to worthwhile discussion.

Several groups also are now subscribing to *The Grapevine* for each newcomer who joins the group. It is felt that *The Grapevine* helps to orient and inform the newcomer on A.A. principles and thinking. Also, if the newcomer happens to have trouble starting, slips and pulls out of the group, *The Grapevine* continues to follow him unobtrusively and has often been the means of persuading him to return.

keep up the family front and, in short, wear the trousers for both of them. If the wife is the alcoholic, then it's the husband who has had to perform most of the duties usually shared by both.

Whether it be the husband or the wife, whichever one is not the alcoholic has had to be the operator and therefore the director. Now, as the alcoholic member stops drinking and begins to recover, the situation changes. The alcoholic begins to regain his or her confidence, to emerge as an individual and a personality and to reassert himself or herself again and take over some of the family directorship.

At the same time that the one who has been carrying all the load may be delighted that it is now being lightened by again being shared, he or she may also find that the new-born independence of the other is slightly disconcerting. Although the responsibility of the previous one-sided situation was perhaps almost unbearable, it did carry with it a sense of importance—a feeling of being necessary. The new independence of the other now tends to lessen that feeling of importance and of being necessary. The helpless, dependent alcoholic is now beginning to stand upright and walk alone.

The result of this situation is that the one who has previously been the center of all activity may feel relegated to a less important position. This may be resented, even though the resentment may remain in the subconscious. In some cases, the non-alcoholic member of the family may resent it because the alcoholic does not remain as utterly dependent sober as when drinking.

So the relationship between the husband and wife undergoes change and therefore calls for a readjustment in viewpoint. Entwined in this is the change that is taking place in the personality of the alcoholic. A new person arises from the shambles of drunkenness. This new person may be similar to the one who was there before the drinking began its deteriorating action, or this may be an entirely different person. Years usually have passed since the real personality of the alcoholic was visible and in that time some change very likely would have taken place even without the alcoholic problem.

Sometimes, then, the non-alcoholic member of the family is suddenly looking at a greatly changed male, a new personality, a different person. To get to know this new person naturally calls for a readjustment. Sometimes it requires that husband and wife get to know each other all over again.

Failure to make this readjustment usually results primarily from failure to recognize that

some change is to be expected in the domestic relationship and that some change is required on the part of the non-alcoholic as well as the alcoholic. On the other hand, the alcoholic, too, needs to recognize that the non-alcoholic has been undergoing a terrific strain and may now be "letting down" after years of keeping up a front. The alcoholic needs to extend some of the same tolerance and patience which the non-alcoholic mate has been extending during the drinking period.

Fewer cases of post-drinking domestic upsets would occur if husbands and wives could realize that the need for continuing readjustment is very natural. As a matter of fact, domestic bliss is rarely something that comes automatically, with or without a drinking problem. More often it is something to be compromised for and guarded vigilantly at all times, in so-called "normal" families. So why doesn't the same hold true for us? We're almost as screwy as normal people!—T.Y., *Greenwich Village*.

Barley  
!!! CORN !!!

*(What's the funniest A.A. tale or quip you've heard? Others would like to hear it. Send it in.)*

The poor fellow lay in bed, shaking and sweating with the horrors, as he listened to the A.A. who had come to tell him how he could avoid this sort of thing in the future.

The A.A. explained that hundreds of alcoholics had been helped through A.A. to a life of sobriety and happiness. The eyes of the suffering bed patient, who seemed to have just about as bad a hangover as ever happened, lighted up momentarily. But then he shook his head sadly and said:

"That sure sounds like a wonderful thing—A.A. I just wish I were an alcoholic so I could get some of it."

\* \* \*

THE CONTROLLED DRINKER LETS IT  
GO AT A COUPLE.

THE ALCOHOLIC JUST LETS GO.

\* \* \*

Once the saying went: "There's no place like home."

Now it's just: "There's no place."

\* \* \*

And the same drunk who never wanted to go home is now complaining loudly because he can't find any home to go to.

## TRUSTEES ISSUE STATEMENT ON FUND RAISING

At a special meeting on September 10, 1946, the trustees of The Alcoholic Foundation, through their Policy Committee, issued the following statement as a press release and a bulletin to all A.A. members:

"It has come to our attention that several local and national organizations are soliciting contributions of money from the public through personal appeals and letters from which the public may infer sponsorship by Alcoholics Anonymous.

"In view of this fact, we feel that a re-statement of our policy in regard to such matters is necessary at this time.

"No individual or special group of individuals has been or will be authorized to solicit funds under the sponsorship or with the sanction of the General Headquarters of Alcoholics Anonymous or The Alcoholic Foundation.

"In view of this policy, Alcoholics Anonymous not only fails to endorse the present solicitations of funds but looks with disfavor on the unauthorized use of its name in any fund raising activity.

"ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

BY:

The Trustees of  
the Alcoholic Foundation.

"Bill and Dr. Bob have asked us to urge secretaries of all groups to make certain that each member is familiar with the tradition and policy of Alcoholics Anonymous as expressed in the trustees' statement. *Please read it to your group at one or more of its meetings;* post it on the bulletin board if practical."

### BACKS BILL ON SUBJECT OF JUDGING EACH OTHER

Let's have more articles by Bill like "Who Is A Member of Alcoholics Anonymous?" in the August issue. This article could not have been timed more perfectly for this area. No doubt this would be equally true of other groups and sections of the country. In any event it should be pasted in the hat of every member, Wolf or Red Riding Hood. It fairly breathes good horse-sensed

I particularly got a kick out of the line, "Imagine, if you can, one alcoholic judging another!" If each member would only make his own inventory and confine himself to the 12 Steps, it would make for a much more friendlier and satisfactory relationship. — H.W., Detroit.

## The Pleasures of Reading

THE FALL OF VALOR by Charles Jackson  
(Rinehart; and Company, Inc., \$2.75)

It might have been better if Charles Jackson had written this book first and *The Lost Week-End* second. That is, as far as his own career is concerned. As for the good of our country, nothing could have been more timely than *The Lost Week-End*. It stirred into life a great public awareness of the problem of alcohol. It made people everywhere ready and willing to read more and to learn more about the problem, and unquestionably made it easier for many alcoholics to seek help.

But perhaps it's unlucky for most writers to write a first novel that's a howling success. The second so often falls short of the first. This is the case here. In *The Lost Week-End* Mr. Jackson gets outside Don Birnam and looks at him dispassionately, and at the same time he *is* Don Birnam, experiencing each agony and each delusion. The whole job is a sleight-of-hand extraordinary and a piece of writing that's nobody's business. But here, in *The Fall of Valor*, one is drawn too close to the hero on the one hand, and on the other, one scarcely sees him at all. And so this book about a poor guy who goes haywire sexually at a fairly late age is an uneven piece of work; on the whole a disappointment.

John Grandin is a successful college professor. His first novel is about to be published. He is married, and has two sons. All should be rosy. But the marriage is not altogether a success. And, too, John Grandin feels a nameless apprehension. "There was nothing he had done. Nothing to feel guilty about." But guilty he is. He thinks of the word "crime". As the story unfolds, as John Grandin and his wife start their summer holiday at Woods Hole, the plot begins to give you hints of what the crime (so-called) is to be. But it is as though the author held his eyes too close to the page while writing, and that makes you, too, lean too close to the book. Thus you get a poor perspective, which, unlike *The Lost Week-End*, doesn't quite let you see the hero from inside looking out, nor yet from the outside looking in. You learn about the sexual attitudes and sensations of both Grandins and of the other couple in the book, but almost nothing about how they really tick. And thus the sensation-sexuality of the writing, and this absence of real feeling, makes you think you are swimming in a school of spawning adolescence.

John Grandin's strange preoccupation with young men in uniform (which verges on necrophilia) begins to grow clear when the Grandins strike up a holiday acquaintance with a very handsome young Marine captain and his bride, a former college student of Grandin's. From here on, the story contains some very beautiful writing, but is increasingly annoying. There is even less feeling, even more sensation, and more signs are put up for you in case you miss the meaning, which seems a sad and poor affair, and left me, in the end, with a feeling that I had peeked through just another keyhole.

But then the thing boils down to a sexual peccadillo, with horrible consequences for John Grandin, that seem to spring from some Methodist Right and Wrong in the author's mind. You rather get that idea that John Grandin knew in his unconscious mind that he would be punished, and that he sinned *in order* to be punished.

Since the book is emotionally sterile, the story is of necessity incomplete. For instance, there is John Grandin's wife, Ethel, and how she really *feels* about her husband. There is the whole emotional pattern between him and her. There is the psychological puzzle of John Grandin himself, and the fact that neither he nor the author ever go deeply into what or why he feels.—F.G., New York.

### EDITORIAL (Continued from Page 2)

way of keeping sober. The reason it is so effective is that it almost compels one engaging in it to keep thinking in the direction that preserves sobriety. It is, at the same time, a reminder of what has been and a warning of what could be again.

But, more even than its value as both a reminder and a warning, 12th-Step work is the practice of the basic principle of a way of life. The principle has been voiced in many different phrases — as "Do unto others . . .," and "My brother's keeper," or "Brotherhood of man," and simply, "Helping others." So, likewise, is 12th Step work helping others, keeping the brother, doing unto others as we have been done unto. And doing it without expectancy of repayment or bouquets.

# Women in A. A. Face Special Problems

(Continued from Page 1)

resentful. And were we in their shoes, might we not find it hard medicine to let our man take? Even were we good sports, we might feel self-conscious in front of these same women. How many women A.A.s stop to realize that?

Before any other consideration, let us remind ourselves again that not all women have the faults mentioned, nor has any one woman all the faults. And human nature being what it is, a number of men have these selfsame faults to a disastrous degree. But somehow, women can cause more trouble, and what is even worse, keep the memory of the unpleasantness alive longer and more acutely.

Not all groups have suffered from having women alcoholics either. But those that have, and the individuals who care (1) that women make a success of recovery, and (2) that they hurt as few people as possible doing it, have given long and careful thought to the difficulties.

## Tested and Suggested Solutions

Here are some of the gems of wisdom — and please write in any thoughts' you have on the subject:

1. Women drift away.

This seems to come from four cause?:

a) Disapproving, or resentful, impatient, or possessive relatives. No woman will remain long with any interest if she is forever having to defy, or make apologies or take sarcasm from those closest to her.

b) Reaction. When the honeymoon is over and it's a matter of settling down to steady loving work, when the swing of the pendulum goes from excitement, discovery and elation to the extreme of boredom, apathy, distaste, or disillusionment with another member, she is apt to go off the deep end.

c) Ulterior motive for entering A.A. She was not honestly seeking to get well for herself and her life, but for some purpose. Once that goal is achieved, her sobriety and her enthusiasm for A.A. evaporate.

d) She never grasped the full program. She was one of those, perhaps, who found a miracle return of health in the 1st and 12th Steps, plus group therapy. But those who brought her in never sufficiently impressed upon her that there are 11 Steps that mean work on ourselves and only one that means work with others!

Then too, women, while drinking, frequently had the thrill—wholly false, but very convincing at the time — of feeling they were cute, amusing, bright and witty, or full of energy and power. They find sobriety crashingly bleak and their ego bleaker. Since comparatively few have come in at a very young age, most women find

the reality of facing up to middle-age or advancing years just too gagging — particularly since they have wasted their capabilities, drinking away time and thought — and are so poorly equipped for maturity.

## Rooted in Subconscious

Put this down to rampant vanity if you will but it goes deeper into the subconscious than that, for men too know vanity and dread of age. Add the feminine slow poisons of the Prince Charming dreams, the Cinderella-rags-to-riches, the glamour-girlera, the stay-young-at-least-look-young campaigns that, however disavowed by the thinking woman, are as much a part of her subconscious as air is a part of water. (With exceptions, as to any rule, of course.) With A.A. she faces reality. The reconversion of the biggest war factory is a no more involved job than that!

2. Newcomers (men, too, but particularly women), should be made thoroughly conscious that they are very sick people — far sicker than they fully realize, and that their outlook and viewpoint, their tastes and their judgments are neither what they once may have been — or will be after a tested and sustained period of sobriety. A woman coming into A.A. is usually highly emotional; she has lived through a period of that peculiar kind of abysmal loneliness that only drinkers can know, and her gratitude and dependency on those who are kind and helpful are apt to be all out of bounds and mistranslated both by herself and others. All her reactions are apt to be intense (even those who reached the lethargic slow-thinking stage can form fixations) and she should guard against any strong attachments, male or female, until she has been sober long enough to have achieved some stability.

With men and women thrown together in varying degrees of recovery from a disease that is charged with emotional disturbance, the pitfalls are many. Any alcoholic has come through a long lonely time of it (generally self-inflicted, but lonely just the same), and affectionate reactions, the old, old rebound, the new return of life and zest, the happy experience of understanding, tolerance and sympathy, have been the cause of too many slips to do Alcoholics Anonymous any bit of good, and have doomed many an individual to total failure in permanent recovery. Newcomers, therefore, should be impressed that we are all sick people in some stage of recuperation.

3. A sense of humor seems to be the remedy here — plus the first active practice of a little humility.

4. This may be due to a specific cause of

treachery—or from century old rivalry. For too many generations to count, a woman's only hope of whatever luxury, care, and comfort her world offered, was through favor in a man's eyes. Since success could not always be counted on through our own wiles, there developed a neat technique in cutting our sisters from under—good!

Certainly a change of heart — or a change of viewpoint — is necessary in a sound, healthy, happy mind. Women are a good half of the population, and it behooves us, however slowly, to learn to like, to understand and to help each other; and when we have learned that, to pass on the idea as early as possible to our daughters and female associates.

It's odd and it's wonderful, that many women have learned to like women for the first time in A.A. We have, to begin with, that magical bond of common suffering that joins us in the battle for recovery. It's a suffering that pretty much strips us of the subterfuges and dodges we've practiced so long. We should nurture this basic premise and cultivate loyalty to each other, whatever each other's faults. Nothing, perhaps, will be more salutary to the whole parcel of A.A. problems than a feeling which all A.A. women should seek to establish, sustain and cement — that we stand together. Not against anybody or anything, but most certainly together. And show ourselves and the world that we can, do, and like, to work together.

## Women's Meetings

Women's groups are working out successfully in many cities, though fundamentally segregation is somewhat contrary to A.A. principles. Alcoholics are banded together in the fellowship of a basic malady and as a part of our healing we must help each other and like our fellow human being regardless of who or what he or she may be. For women to set themselves up as a special case is questionable to say the least — particularly when one of our chief weaknesses as alcoholics has been to stress the I'm different-and-nobody-understands-mesolitude of thought that leads to desolation. On these arguments, many A.A.s are against women's groups. But there are no rules and regulations in A.A., and a number of women's groups are doing remarkably well. Some women prefer them.

There are others who have managed to straddle this point by forming women's units that have weekly gatherings, meeting in private homes. They are not run as groups per se, but an hour's discussion is held on a previously selected allied topic or a point in the program, after which the main portion of the evening is given to informal talk over refreshments. Thus each

woman comes to know a number of others well enough to feel a kinship, to go to meetings with, to phone without a sense of strangeness, and to do 12th Step work with. There can develop a fine feeling week by week of confidence and understanding that is often of great aid in averting a slip.

5. So does everybody, and too often the curb is neither stressed nor practiced. A lot of newcomers earnestly resolve to refrain from gossip — only to be disillusioned by others who gleefully broadcast confidences and embroider details. A "repeater" is something like a Typhoid Mary. Any A.A. who tells intimate secrets and blabs case histories is as false to her trust as a priest or a doctor who would publish a patient's confessional outpourings. Discretion is a valuable lesson to learn; loyalty and kindness are even more so. Nothing should be told unless for the immediate and express purpose of aiding that sick person. We should privately vow never to tell anything without the knowledge of the person who gave the original confidence. If we set the aim that high, our tongues will be pretty well bridled.

6. Those who are sincere in 12th Step work are not apt to approach it with the remotest sense of flirtation, Lord knows. But sex consciousness is not to be denied by those even a fraction more than eunuchs, and if we pray "Lead us not into temptation," it should follow that we do not lead ourselves into it. St. Paul's admonition that we "avoid the appearance of evil" can save much misunderstanding and many false conclusions.

Certainly a woman new to A.A. should be advised to tread lightly — and never singly — with male members. She should be encouraged to work with a man, or get help from a man member only when another A.A. is present, male or female.

This practice of having another A.A. along is a quickly acquired resolution with many women anyway. (Except of course on visits to hospitals or other public places where help or witnesses if needed can be easily summoned).

7. For every lady "tramp" who comes into a group there are several times her number in wolves and would-be wolves. Unencouraged she'll drift rapidly out — or buckle down and do a job. Who are we to judge? We should refrain from judgment and give everyone a full exposure to our ideals. But being open-minded and tolerant does *not* mean to condone anything verging on loose morals.

The rest of the difficulties stated in this article are due to the particular struggle women have in understanding and acquiring the two foundations of A.A. — humility and honesty. We are born with organs that involve suffering and sacrifice. We find that this inheritance evokes in our fellow man the highest and the lowest of in-



"I can understand about the Ship - but how did YOU get in there?"

stincts. Is it any wonder, that our emotional values, supercharged alternately with fear and desire, are apt to be unstable? Add to that the traditional conditioning of centuries of chattel status — of servitude, of the menial . . .

Recently in the world's history women have emerged as individuals with rights. Few as yet have been fully aware that with rights and privileges go responsibilities and obligations. But when women irk you, keep remembering how very, very recently were they permitted an education, allowed even to sing in a choir, be accepted in a college, or be permitted to own and dispose in their own names.

Until yesterday then, a woman's only way to whatever standing she achieved was chiefly through enticement, cajolery, defiance, subterfuge, the weapon of the deadly tongue, and pandering to man's basest instincts. Honesty comes hard? Humility comes hard? It's small wonder.

On the other hand there are innumerable women of our day (many are in A.A.) whose honesty and innate perfectionism became so

ruthless and so intolerant that it led them into drinking. They perhaps more than anyone else have to pick themselves up out of the deepest disillusionment. And they, far more than men, are the ones apt to be most impatient and critical of their slower sisters whose minds and moral standards have had no training for the new so-called freedom.

When we were in favor, in the past, when we pleased, we were praised and flattered and treated tenderly. We instinctively expect such treatment now for whatever we do. Of course our feelings get hurt easily; we are oversensitive — we are cruelly aware of our secret inferiority, and many of us are acutely conscious of our inadequacy to handle freedom.

So let's be patient and understanding, we women, of ourselves and of each other. And let men remember, when baffled, that women are working out of an inheritance of abject slavery.

The real problems aren't so different in the main from those of men. Men perhaps have

(Continued on Page 10)

## VINO VIGNETTES: The System Still Works!

He was not a bad little guy. A little screwy perhaps when there were women around, but at heart not a bad little guy. The first time I saw him he was getting plastered in a clubroom in Philadelphia. He was seated over in a corner drinking; a highball.

There were a lot of people milling around and gabbing and I didn't notice him at first. It was early in the evening and the room was cool. On a large center table stood an opened fruit jar of whiskey. A fat guy in a sports coat and tan pants was pouring drinks out of it for two women. Most of the people in the room were quiet and fairly orderly.

One of the women had an unopened bottle of ginger ale in her hand. She handed it to the fat guy who started beating the top of the bottle on the table trying to get the top off. Having no luck with the table, the fat guy tried to bite the top off. It wouldn't budge. I started over with a bottle-opener when the little guy in the corner said: "Bring it over here, Charlie, I gotta system."

Charlie walked over with the bottle. The two women strolled over and joined him. I noticed that the little guy's legs were crossed and that he didn't bother to get up. He took the bottle from Charlie, appeared to be measuring his leg with it and took aim. Suddenly, he crashed the neck of the bottle against his leg! Off came the metal top.

One of the women gasped; the other let out a kind of yelp. Ginger ale splashed all over the floor. Charlie laughed, look the bottle over to the table and began mixing drinks. The little guy turned to the startled women and said:

"I always open bottles on my leg."

One of the women, still surprised, said:

"What the hell IS this? Are you nuts? You could have cut yourself to pieces on that bottle. Gad, but you gave me a fright!"

"Forget it," the little guy said, "I didn't feel it. Wanna see something"?

He pulled up his pant leg and displayed a wooden leg!

As I say, that evening was the first time I had ever seen the little guy. He was sort of plastered but it didn't worry him any. He seemed to have a glass in his hand all the time.

I was not drinking. In fact, I wouldn't have been at the joint at all if I hadn't been waiting for a guy. Since I had stopped drinking, this kind of party didn't interest me at all.

The evening wore on and my party didn't show up. I was getting fed up with just waiting around. By now the little guy with the wooden leg was out cold. He was slumped over in the big chair, his leg dangling. After a few minutes I left. I couldn't help thinking as I

worked out how much my point of view had changed since I had come into A.A.

About six weeks later I ran into the little guy on the street. He looked terrible. His hands were shaking and he had all the miseries of a hangover. I spoke to him and he stopped but he didn't recognize me. However, he came along with me to a bar where I bought him a couple of double shots. Momentarily, he seemed to rally and said:

"I remember you. You're the guy who doesn't drink. Maybe you've got something there. Look at me. It was the afternoon you met me that I got started on this twister."

"Oh, you'll be all right," I said, "I stopped drinking because I got tired. I got terribly tired of taking the same beating you're going through now."

"I know," he said, "I am about ready to quit myself. the trouble is that I don't know HOW to quit. For the past week I've tried. How do you do it?"

That's really about all there is to the story. When I saw that he really wanted it, I told him my story and what I knew about A.A. Of all the guys I know he seemed to want to stop drinking most. He told me that he knew he was a "crazy" drinker; that he was getting a damn sight more pain out of it than pleasure. This little guy was RIPE.

That day he fooled around with a few more drinks and started to make an honest effort to get sober. Later, I took him to a meeting. So far, he has been all right. It wasn't easy but the little guy had a lot of guts. He's doing pretty well now.

The other day I ran into him at the club. He was breaking a bottle over his wooden leg. Coca Cola, that is.—*J. T., Manhattan.*

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### *12th Annual Banquet To Be Held Nov. 7th At Commodore Hotel*

The Grand Ballroom of the Commodore Hotel will again be the scene of the annual dinner of Alcoholics Anonymous on Nov. 7th, when the 12th anniversary will be observed.

Last year nearly 1,500 attended the dinner, and it is reported that most of the tickets for this year's event have already been sold.

The day's program will include a reception at 4 p.m., the banquet at 6, and the program at 8 p.m. A number of representatives from out-of-town groups are expected to attend.

## THE CLIP SHEET

Baltimore, Md., *Sun*: "The Baltimore chapter of Alcoholics Anonymous has a wealth of acting talent, but there is one role for which none of its 70 members can qualify—that of a drunk.

" 'Certainly the weakest spot in the whole cast is the man playing the part of a dipsomaniac,' says Charles Hughes, script writer and director of a radio serial which the local chapter will present. . . .

"Mr. Hughes said two casting experts were highly satisfied with the talent that appeared for tryouts but, for some reason, no one seemed to be able to properly act the part of a drunkard!"

\* \* \*

Springfield, Mass., *News*: "Decrying treatment of acute alcoholism in this area, and throughout the state, as inadequate and cruel, a member of Alcoholics Anonymous today called on legislators to study the situation and do something "humane" about the men and women who are suffering from what he terms a "disease" and not criminal tendencies.

"The spokesman pointed out that there is a definite increase of women alcoholics throughout the state and that the increase is marked in this area.

" 'These people are suffering from a disease and are treated the same as people appearing in court for assault and battery or rape,' he declared . . .

" 'The time has come when we should remember that burning people at the stake was a rather poor method of ridding the communities of witches in days gone by. Punishment is not what these people need, but kind, sympathetic cure and treatment.' "

\* \* \*

Dayton, Ohio, *News*: "City approval Tuesday was given a request of the Dayton chapter of Alcoholics Anonymous to aid in the treatment of a man sentenced to the workhouse for a three-year term as an habitual drunkard.

"The approval came from the city parole board after a member of A.A. outlined his plan to help restore the man to the position of a useful citizen.

"The man will be permitted to attend the regular meetings of the organization but will be confined to the workhouse at other times during his sentence."

\* \* \*

Philadelphia, Pa., *Tap and Tavern*: "Using former addicts who were cured of the disease of alcoholism through the help of the Alcoholics Anonymous organization as participants, WIP is presenting a new series of broadcasts titled,

*(Continued on Page 10)*

# Mail Call for All A.A.s at Home or Abroad

Letters to this department are invited on any subject pertinent to A.A. Due to space limitations you are asked to hold your letters to a maximum of 350 words.

Only initials will be published unless the writer authorizes use of his first name as identification for A.A. friends.

The A.A. Grapevine will not divulge the full name of any writer but will forward A.A. communications addressed to the writers of letters published here.—The Editors

## The Race for Life

*From Linda Vista, Calif.*

Below me on the track I see a line of men, knees bent, hands on the ground, toes dug in, strained and tense, waiting for the starting gun, the crack of which will launch them on a grueling grinding competitive race for the finish line, where there can be only one winner. If any falter and fall, if any slip or hesitate, he is lost because no one will pause to help him back in the race. To those left it means there is one less in the race to stay.

Then I see another group of men and women, too, lined up again at the starting line; this is at a beginners' meeting of A.A. They are shaky, weak, fearful and sick, waiting to hear the starter's gun in A.A. that will launch them on the race for the A.A. program of life. But from the starting point in the A.A. race to the finish, all is different from the other race. Here there are willing, understanding hands that continually reach down and back to try and put back into the race those who falter, slip, and slide, because this is not a race of competition but is like no other race in the world. It is a race where all can win who sincerely desire to cross the finish line of sobriety.

Those in the lead stop and help the weak and sick because they realize that it is only in helping others stay in the race that they themselves can hope to cross that line wherein we can find peace, quiet and serenity. Those in the lead or who came in earlier know that it is the push from the bottom or starling line that keeps them on top, and they know that it is only by keeping new faces at the starling line that they can hope to retain what they themselves have. This is not a race wherein we can ever say we have completely won and are the victors. We never win, but continue to grow only as we are willing to try and give away what we have. Those at the starting line are our foundation and if we neglect the foundation of our structure or building, it will collapse and fall, and we will slide back into the dismal abyss from which we came.

The track never gets crowded or overpacked,

so dig in and give a starter's voice at the meetings to launch someone else on the pathway of life that has only happiness as the reward at the end of the race.—*J.F.H.*

P.S. As a suggestion to the members or anyone interested in the relative or non-alcoholic, we have found here in Southern California that the formation of non-alcoholic groups, and there are several, has been a big help. They have their own 12 Steps, written by and for non-alcoholics, hold and conduct their own meetings the same as we do. They have open meetings at least once a week where the A.A.s, the public and non-A.A.s get together and get acquainted. The non-A.A. needs the Program as much as we do.

I know that it is through the help and understanding of my wife that I own a large share of my sobriety today.—*J.F.H.*

## Let's Not Oversell

*From Indianapolis*

The way some A.A. members go about the business of recruiting prospects, they come pretty close to sounding like combination reformer-evangelists. In their defense, one should say that it is only their great enthusiasm for the wonderful thing they have discovered that leads them to excesses in trying to spread A.A.

But, because of the damage this kind of behavior can cause to A.A. as a whole and to the very individuals being "recruited" I think we should be reminded every now and then that A.A. is not something you sell. It's not a patent medicine or a new kind of insurance or anything else that calls for salesmanship. A.A. is a way of life which one must first of all want himself before he has any chance of getting it. You can't sell it to him; he has to earn it. You can't wrap it up in a package and hand it to him. That isn't the way you get A.A.

What's worst of all is that usually the prospect runs the other way, sooner or later, when worked on by the salesman type.—*Bill T.*

## We're Not Original

*From Detroit, Mich.*

One danger which I think we all need to be reminded of frequently is that of smugness, and I detect signs of it all too often in the attitude of quite a few members regarding the possibility that anyone ever got sober any other way than through A.A.

Since I have been guilty of the same kind of narrow conceit, I think I may call it to the attention of others.

The fact is, of course, that some people have

attained sobriety through a great variety of other ways. I have known several heavy drinkers who have just stopped. It might be argued that they couldn't have been alcoholics because no one who is really an alcoholic can just stop. Maybe so, yet these people I know—three, to be exact—had all of the symptoms of alcoholism.

Other people have quit drinking through the influence of their churches, some with the aid of psychiatrists and still others as the result of great shocks.

For me, A.A. was the only way. I had tried everything else. My gratefulness to A.A. is lasting. Yet, I hope I will always be able to practice the tolerance that A.A. prescribes, sufficiently to admit that other things might help other people. I hope I will never disparage psychiatry or religion or something else simply because none of these things helped me.

It seems to me that if anyone really lives the A.A. philosophy he will always be glad when some drunk sobers up even if it does not happen to be through A.A. I feel fortunate that A.A. was my method for the reason that A.A. has so much more to offer than just quitting the drink. In A.A. that's only the beginning, not the end.—*J.T.B.*

## Resentments

*From Chicago, Ill.*

A member of several months standing came to me recently, as his sponsor, and said he was getting along fine except that "many things bothered him daily" which kept him upset mentally.

Asked for specific cases, he gave the following: 1. A fellow-employee was two-faced. He resented him. 2. Another employe was a cheap-skate; he always borrowed the member's paper as soon as the latter purchased it. He resented this. 3. A seat-hog on the street car upset the member so much that it took hours for him to get over it, if he did not actually get in an argument with the seat-hog.

I did the member some good and did myself more good by analyzing these specific resentments and suggesting what to do about them.

I told him that, in each of the specific cases, there were two things that could be done by the member—one of these things was BAD for the member—the other was GOOD for him.

I agreed that the two-faced person was not the type of friend anyone would pick out, but as long as we can not change such a person, we (as A.A.s) should do the thing that is good for US. Ignore the person's failings.

It is not our prerogative to challenge a  
(Continued on Page 12) .

## A. A. Digest — Excerpts from Group Publications

A.A. *Tribune*, Des Moines, Iowa: "The third anniversary of A.A. in Des Moines is coming up October 26 and 27, and it looks like a lot of fun."

\* \* \*

*The Rope Yarn* (A.A. Seamen's Club), New York City: "The Seamen's Club is the only group made up of a profession and it's the first time in maritime history that the seamen ever stuck together to stay sober. . . ."

"The failure of a great many members to grasp the 12 Steps can be traced to the fact that they have never taken the 1st. . . . Their wishbone is where their backbone should be."

\* \* \*

*Camel Club Chronicle*, Marshalltown, Iowa: ". . . Most of us came into A.A. primarily with a selfish motive based on fear. On that single motive alone one can go 'dry' and perhaps stay 'dry' indefinitely, but unless we accept the whole program without reservations and work unceasingly at it we merely become 'dry alcoholics' and our last state is worse than before, or at least our friends and acquaintances may be inclined to think so. When we were drinking, and not too far gone, we did have our periods of amiability. . . ."

"So if we go 'dry' on the 1st Step only, and ignore the spiritual angle—neglect to make a moral inventory—neglect to ask the 'Power greater than ourselves' to remove all our defects of character—these defects and obsessions will remain to plague us and our associates, and we will be unable to obtain even the dreadful oblivion afforded by the bottle. We shall be living a life of continuous fear, and where there is fear there is neither love nor peace of mind."

\* \* \*

*Central Bulletin*, Cleveland, Ohio: "Partial digest of a typical days business at Cleveland Downtown District Office. . . ."

"A director of veteran personnel called and asked for literature to be given to veterans who *should* be interested. . . . A member called for an attorney. . . . Member's wife called—a message to her husband who will be in office today. . . . Call for information about A.A. office hours and general information. . . . Call from an interested third party who wanted information on A.A. groups in Pittsburgh. . . . Call from a member re hospitalizing new patient. . . . Call from man interested in A.A. for himself. . . . Call from a new member who wanted some help in hospitalizing a patient. . . . Personal call from home. . . . Call from a member leaving his name and phone, and is available for call during the day. . . . Call regarding office hours and if there was a charge for A.A. . . . Call from a member

re hospital routine. . . . Call from a member regarding a legal problem. . . . Member called seeking employment for another member. . . . Call from a family friend regarding A.A. . . . Call regarding hospitalizing former member. . . . Call re member who is in hospital. . . . Call for out-of-town speaker tomorrow night. . . . Wrong number. . . . Call from man seeking help for himself. . . . Call requesting location of a particular meeting. . . . Call from a man attempting to locate his sponsor. . . . A drunken woman who had been unable to make program work. . . . A woman reporting fine treatment she received in one of the hospitalizing agencies. . . . Call from woman seeking help for her brother. . . . Member reported he had found employment. . . . Take name off list. . . . Wrong number. . . . Call re woman ready to go to hospital. . . . Member called wanting address of Miami, Fla., group. . . . Mother called seeking help for daughter. . . . Call from an A.A. in Detroit, seeking office location. . . . Call from a member of Boston A.A., visiting Cleveland, asking information of meeting places and where the office is located. . . ."

\* \* \*

*New Life*, Youngstown, Ohio: "Some people can drink just as well sittin' down as they can standin' up. But most cannot stand up so well after they have been drinkin' sittin' down as they can sit after drinkin' standin' up. . . . SHOT—that which, if some people have more than one they are half."

\* \* \*

*Dubuque Alanews*, Dubuque, Iowa: "Last week a letter was turned over to the C.R. group in which a Minnesota (St. Cloud) woman stated she had heard about A.A. while listening to a WMT broadcast sponsored by Alcoholics Anonymous. We will quote the letter, as well as we can, from memory.

"Dear Sir: I heard over the radio that you have some stuff that will cure a drunk. A member of my family is a drunk, so please send me a package of A.A. and send it C.O.D. If you want me to send cash or money order let me know. Sincerely, Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_."

### Women A.A.s (Continued from Page 7)

other basic defects, some harder, others easier to recognize, admit, and discipline. Except that we can be dangerous to each other, thank the Lord who made it so. Let's not kid ourselves. And let's not make a point of it. But let us recognize it—honestly and humbly.

It's true that circumstances alter cases. But not much.—*Grace O., Manhattan.*

## THE CLIP SHEET

(Continued from Page 8)

Alcoholics Anonymous, which does not pull any punches in recounting the autobiographical confessions of the people on the program.

"Slotted late Tuesday evenings (10:15 to 10:30 p.m.), in order to reach only an adult audience, the series does not campaign against social drinking, but its members from all strata of life (bankers, truck drivers, accountants, attorneys, actors, middle-class business people and often high-school and college-aged boys and girls) recount their own case histories on how they acquired the disease and the climactic point at which they turned onto the road to recovery through the help of A.A.

"A.A., which is working in close cooperation with the country's leading medical and psychiatric authorities, is receiving strong popular reception from listeners and is mailing a series of booklets of informative literature on request."

\* \* \*

A UP story carrying a Utica, N. Y., date line tells of a wealthy Alder Creek resident, who was held for grand jury action on a second degree manslaughter charge in the fatal shooting of a Utica lawyer who had been a member of A.A. The deceased went to the Alder Creek resident's home at the request of the latter's wife who sought to have her husband quit drinking.

Stories such as this one appear frequently in the papers; frequently, too, alcoholism is not mentioned as the major factor involved.

\* \* \*

Stamford, Conn., *Advocate*: "Over 100 years ago, the Connecticut Medical Society suggested a law for the treatment of alcoholism as a disease, and one warranting intensive study and understanding. Last year—after 116 years, pretty much the same ideas were incorporated in a bill passed by the Legislature. Its salient point is that it omits all mention of punishment as a means of controlling the problem."

\* \* \*

Vancouver, B. C., *Sun*: "Arrests and convictions for drunkenness in the City of Vancouver, if present trends continue to the end of this year, will be three times what they were in 1943.

"Actual figures, which were obtained from the Records Department of the city police station, are as follows:

Year	Arrests	Convictions
1943	2184	1831
1944	3219	2731
1945	3975	3087
1946 (6mos.)	2870	2358"

# A. A.'s Country-Wide News Circuit

A.A. activities in Central New York gained spirited impetus with the recent inauguration of a plan for speakers of one group to handle the meeting of another group and continuing the exchange of speakers until the circle of neighboring groups has been completed. . . . The Syracuse Central Group, which has been lucky enough to find larger headquarters—in the Onondaga Hotel—reports that the Eastwood branch is fast outgrowing its infancy, and that in Fulton they're continuing to roll 'em in.

\* \* \*

From all over the country comes word that growing groups are unable to find quarters large enough to accommodate their expanded membership. As of November 29th, the Manhattan clubhouse at 405 West 41st Street (New York City) will be no more. The building has been sold. In the meantime, the various groups, including Manhattan, which made the clubhouse their gathering center, are scrambling around, individually, looking for space for a social center, space to hold meetings, both large and small, space of any kind to be used for A.A. work. This compulsory relinquishment of the spacious 41st Street clubhouse may result in the establishment of many more small groups throughout New York City than exist at present, with each group having its own headquarters—as has long been the case in the other big cities. Manhattan alone has been an exception to this rule.

\* \* \*

In Charlotte, N. C., where the group has been unable to find any permanent clubroom space at all, and where the various meetings are held in different places, the problem has been partially solved by a member of the judiciary. Judge Reed of the Domestic Court has generously given over his courtroom at the Mecklenburg County Court House for two meetings a week. . . . The Charlotte branch, which had its inception in 1942 and reports "92% happy and sober," was well represented at a big meeting in Greenville, S. C. Other members came from groups in Rock Hill, Anderson, Spartanburg, and Inman, S. C.; and from Shelby (the original group of the Carolinas), and Asheville, N. C. Bennettsville is a recent South Carolina group to get going; others reporting increasing numbers in the two states are Andrews, Charleston, Greensboro, Greenville and Hendersonville. The two-man Elizabeth City, N. C., Group visits religiously the meetings at Norfolk, Va.

\* \* \*

October finds the Dallas membership confident that local activity is on the eve of its

greatest progress. They (the lucky minority) cite, as an example, that club facilities are more

## 70 New Groups In Two Months!

New groups registering with The Central Office from July 9 to September 9 were:

ALABAMA—Piedmont and Safford.

ARIZONA—Flagstaff.

CALIFORNIA—San Francisco (Midtown-Marina and Sunset), Tulare, and Bellflower.

CONNECTICUT—Farmington Valley.

ILLINOIS—Waukegan and Jacksonville.

GEORGIA—Augusta and Columbus.

INDIANA—Muncie, Terre Haute and Dunkirk.

IOWA—Pocahontas, Muscatine and New Hampton.

KANSAS—Spearville.

KENTUCKY—Outwood, Owensboro, and Shelbyville.

MARYLAND—Easton and Georgetown.

MASSACHUSETTS—Salem.

MICHIGAN—Detroit (Men's Group), Jackson (South Michigan), Owosso, Pentwater and South Lyon.

MINNESOTA—Chisholm.

MISSOURI—Neosho.

MONTANA—Missoula.

NEVADA—Henderson.

NEW JERSEY—New Brunswick.

NEW HAMPSHIRE—Manchester.

NEWMEXICO—Las Cruces.

NEW YORK—Addison-Corning, New York City (London Terrace), Saranac Lake, Syracuse (Eastwood), Amityville, Middletown and Park Slope (Brooklyn).

NORTH CAROLINA—Greensboro, Greenville and Statesville.

OHIO—Alliance, Cleveland (Addison Road and The Outward Group), Dayton (Veterans Administration Center), and Marion.

OKLAHOMA—Ponca City.

PENNSYLVANIA—Monroe City, Wilkes-Barre, and Titusville.

RHODE ISLAND—Providence.

SOUTH CAROLINA—Sumter.

SOUTH DAKOTA—Deadwood.

TEXAS—Dallas (Suburban), El Paso (No. 2), and Uvalde.

VIRGINIA—Winchester.

WEST VIRGINIA—Beckley, Clarksburg, Princeton, Wheeling (Out the Pike) and Williamson.

WASHINGTON—Yakima.

WISCONSIN—Beloit.

CANADA—Hamilton, Ontario (Women's).

adequate than ever!—and that meeting attendance is snowballing. Workmen have completed removal of the three-year-old downtown chapter to the second story of a building which has been sub-leased for two years—2,700 square feet of space. The total membership of this group, combined with a suburban group which is quartered in a formerly fashionable residence whose decorations were executed by members themselves, totals over 200. The two groups cooperate in weekly open meetings. Nacogdoches and Amarillo branches are forging forward, too.

\* \* \*

Average attendance of four California groups comes to exactly 1,000: Los Angeles, 400; Pasadena, 200; Glendale-Burbank, 250; Long Beach, 150. . . . The Pasadena Group, one of the first to spring up soon after A.A. was first introduced to Southern California, in 1945, had an attendance of 86 in August, 1945. One year later the count was well over 200. . . . City and county police courts, judges and prosecutors are cooperating with A.A. in Pasadena—which group has been mainly responsible for the organization of branches this past year in Pomona, Arcadia, Whittier and Oxnard.

\* \* \*

Since division of the Vancouver, B. C., A.A.s into five autonomous groups, held together by a central steering committee, each group has gone ahead steadily and membership continues to increase. . . . A visit to the Kerrisdale Group by two newspaper men resulted in a highly readable column about A.A. in a Vancouver newspaper, and a radio broadcast over the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's network from Winnipeg. . . . "With drunkenness records in Vancouver police court showing a 300% gain over 1943, A.A.'s work gains added significance in the community," writes the Vancouver reporter on group activities.

\* \* \*

Among the festivities planned for the October 26-27 celebration of the *third anniversary* of the Des Moines, Iowa, Group are a "chuck wagon" breakfast—all the chuck you can eat, you bring the wagon; a ladies' luncheon; an afternoon "bull session," and a banquet at which 600-750 are expected, with floor show—and no speeches! . . . The non-alcoholic wives of the Tulsa, Oklahoma, chapter hold regular meetings.

\* \* \*

Two more groups, New Orleans and Houston, have participated in CBS's "Quiz of Two Cities" program. New Orleans came off the winner. . . . A.A.s from New Orleans addressed the

Hammond, La., Group; attending were members from chapters which derived from the original New Orleans Group: Hammond, Covington, and Houma, La.; Tylertown and Gulfport, Miss. Quite a few veterans are coming into the New Orleans chapter, direct from the Veterans Hospital—where the medical staff is 100% for A.A.

\* \* \*

The South Bronx Group, 222 Alexander Avenue, New York 51, reports that it is perhaps the only group in the metropolitan area which holds regular meetings on Saturday nights. Countless visitors, in consequence, from other groups in and around New York City come to these (former binge-night) sessions. The meetings have been splendidly written up by *The Bronx Home News*. . . . One of the growingest little groups is in Wooster, Ohio. They have between 25 and 30 members and often exchange meetings with the Ashland Group.

\* \* \*

From Northern California comes word that there has been "considerable opposition to the A.A. program in Reno, Nevada." But since some of the Sacramento and Roseville members—18 in all—went to Reno and held an opening meet, it is felt that the Reno populace now has a better understanding of the aims of A.A. . . . At a Greenwich Village Group (New York City) meeting last month a brand new woman member told of suddenly coming to—out in Reno. What in heaven's name was she doing there getting a divorce? She got out just in time. Her case was to have been heard the following day. She hopped a plane going East—back to her husband and children and A.A. . . . The 20-30 Club of North Sacramento invited an A.A. to speak at one of its dinners. After the formal talk was over he answered questions peppered at him from the 55 diners. . . . The Ladies

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Group of San Diego enjoyed its *first anniversary* as a separate group, with the men attending their shindig en masse, proud of the success of the women A.A.s. . . . To the University of California's Institute on Alcohol Studies, held for one week during late summer, came a large crowd from Los Angeles's social, political, religious and scientific world.

\* \* \*

The 15 members in Pocohontas, Iowa, have to date had about nine meetings; all hands staying dry. . . . The New Castle, Ohio, Group held a combined meeting with the Alliance A.A.s. . . . Youngstown, Ohio, reports that over 350 new A.A. contacts were made during the first six months that their central office was in existence. Of that number 210 have expressed a desire to avail themselves of A.A.

\* \* \*

The two widely separated Louisville, Ky.. Groups are now able to hold a joint meeting in clubrooms belonging to another organization, in a downtown office building; these rooms are also used as a much-needed social center for local and visiting membership. . . . From the Pacific Northwest: The Portland, Oregon, Group is making sure, steady progress. . . . The boys and girls of Cleveland's Minstrel Show have been busy doing benefit performances. Among these was one for an orphan asylum, and another for a charity hospital. These members willingly put on their show for various worthy causes. . . . Two days after contact with A.A. in Clarksburg, West Virginia, a drunk arrived via taxi at the A.A. ward in Cleveland's Charity Hospital. The taxi bill was \$75!

### Mail Call (Continued from Page 9)

"cheapskate" so the thing to do, of the two alternatives, is the thing that is good for US. My friend told me since that the last time this person asked to look at his paper he gave him the paper, with a smile. He did the thing that was good for HIM and it cost him 4c. to avoid a resentment which had been throwing him for months. He gave him the paper with a smile and placed a big period after the act. He did what was good for HIM, closed the incident and actually felt good about it.

My reaction to the seat-hog has always been identical to that of my fellow member. I was ready to make something out of it. It seemed natural to put a thoughtless, selfish person in his place. I had never tried what I suggested to my friend—to go to the other end of the car if necessary and stand up for the trip, but I have tried it since. I had appointed myself a Dr. Anthony for my friend and had suggested remedies that had never occurred to me be-

fore. I had never practiced them myself, but I now do, with surprising results.

As a result of this reliance of my fellow-member on me, I worked out a maxim which has done wonders for him and has done more for me.

When confronted with a situation which promises to result in a resentment, there are TWO things that can be done. One is GOOD for me; the other is BAD for me. I am interested in myself and will therefore do the thing that is good for ME. I have to look out for MYSELF, not the other fellow.—*J.O'C.*

### Retreat from Alcohol

From Minneapolis, Minn.

We, who have undertaken to follow the road of sobriety, find that after a period of time there comes a gradual change in our physical and mental makeup.

There is a sense of relative unbelief. We begin to sense and to feel the change. We become alive to the small niceties of life, which in the past would not have been considered. We have a feeling of genuine fellowship with everyone with whom we come in contact. Life, living, materially and mentally has changed completely. All this, without the so-called beneficent influence of alcohol.

The full realization of all this bursts upon us. We have put our trust in the One Person who could make it possible. We are living twenty-four hours, each "24" seemingly falling into the pattern for which it was destined.

With this thought in mind, we must not be allowed to slip into a state of overconfidence, our complexes must not come again to the fore, we must keep our trust in Him; He must be our constant mentor and guide. A sense of mental and spiritual humility must be constantly kept in mind.

Humility in this sense does not mean an abject physical humility, like a whipped dog with his tail dragging, but a feeling of thankfulness for all that has happened to make for us a better scheme of living as was intended in the beginning.

In summation then, we have entered a new phase of our pattern of living, forgetting the past, living for our fellows, God and ourselves in the present. The future, as He wills it, will take care of itself.—*W.R.J.*

### Paducah Twosome

From Paducah, Ky.

Did you ever hear of a two-man A.A. Group? Well, of course we aren't officially a group and we aren't very old (eight weeks) but watch us grow! The other man and I found each other through *The Grapevine*. Now we meet regularly. At present we call ourselves "the Paducah Twosome."—*H.C. & B.L.*