



R.M. Allan, Warden.

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F.P. Miller, Sponsor.

EDITORIAL - "TODAY AT LEAST" -

We read recently of a drinking bout that took the lives of some sixty odd people in the United States. This sad affair attracted a lot of public indignation and comment - and rightfully so. But do we ever stop to think of the untold number of deaths that occur every day of the year, and year after year, directly or indirectly from alcohol?

The people who are called "drunken bums", misfits without a name, home or loved ones - who eventually find their way to the Coroner's building and the pathologist's autopsy table - may well regard all alcoholic mixtures as "poison" alcohol. The end is to be counted as another dirty, emaciated body, with a brain that seems as though it would burst on the slightest touch. These unfortunates once knew love, happiness and prosperity. Yet now they have reached the depths of drunken degradation, sorrow and misery. They have wrecked their life, home and business. They attribute their circumstances to liquor.

Yet those same persons could have been afflicted with diabetes. Nature has not fortified all of us with the same ingredients. Like the flowers in the field, we all differ in some way or another. Environment, childhood guidance, circumstances, the loss of a loved one. We thought that liquor was the only solace - the release from worry or cares. There are ever so many causes for a person resorting to drink.

The reasons why our behaviour is such must be left to the scientist. We don't worry too much about that at present. But to those of us who recognize our condition, one might ask this question - What are we doing about it? Anything? Or are we just going to continue on to insanity? The end for the victim of alcohol is death - to the unknown, unmarked grave.

Dramatic, you may say. Perhaps, but life itself is a drama, in which we all play a part from beginning to end. To be finished either drunk or sober. But the remaining years can be happy ones, useful with a purpose, and inspirational to those we can help to gain peaceful, contented sobriety. This is the answer to our problem and it suggests a philosophy that is one of the golden rules of life - prayer and the willingness to accept a belief in a Higher Power. This, for some of us may seem rather difficult at first. But easy does it. We all, like our Mothers and Dads, will find peace of mind, happiness and confidence necessary to carry on. For in Prayer there is comfort, humility and assurance for today at least.

Editor.

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Many times I've been asked, "How does this A.A. business work?" At first I used all the scientific terms I could look up, which were plenty! But somehow, it seemed this answer was not right. So now I say, "To be very honest with you, I don't worry how it works. I have accepted a Higher Power and try honestly to follow the suggestions of A.A. and by golly, do you know it works!"

(TUMBLE)

"AM I AN ALCOHOLIC?"

Many a time I have asked myself that question and everytime I read over, "Who, Me", I come to the same conclusion, I must be an alcoholic. However, my every reason says "No".

It is true that I did a lot of desperate acts but I must say that I am now, or was then, very proud, so permit me to have the benefit of the doubt for this one.

During the last war while I was in a very good job as a Federal Inspector for the Government in one of the Quebec Plants, my Chief came to see me one night and told me how a certain kind of work should be done. As soon as his back was turned I addressed myself to the foreman of the gang whose work I was inspecting, and said, "Who does he think he is to tell me how to do my job; and did I not attend special courses before I came here?"

That afternoon as usual, I was in a tavern for three hours, and I was the most astonished man in the world when my next pay envelope was a pink one. I was too experienced for my Chief Inspector. This would call for a celebration because I was sure they could not let me go just like that...They could, and did.

When my wife was throwing away my booze in the sink, why did I resent it as a blow to my vanity? I should have followed her advice and not buy any more. That is quite alright, but suppose we have visitors. These visitors know me and know that I was bad company for their husbands. Further, when my wife pushed me aside in intimacy, pretending my breath was not nice, she had in mind that I was too drunk. I would then react and say that my wife could not do that to me and get away with it and would forward to an argument with her, such as: "OK, I am going to find a friendly soul who will understand me and I will not bother you any more". She let me go, but I did not come back; where I was, free of everything. I could do anything without being molested or reproached in any way, and I gave myself credit for that. Funny philosophy, just the reaction of a poor derelict who finds good only where it is bad.

After my downfall, broke, no job and no more friends to touch, we were, both of us, thinking of where the next bottle would come from. I made my first step in theft; I sold my first false stocks. The taxi cab was still too slow at fifty miles per hour to take me home to her (my understanding soul) with \$5000.00 and an armful of booze. In the orgy that followed we were saying, "Is not life nice to be lived?"

I was always trying to fool anyone that would listen to me. I am not an alcoholic, I could stop just like that if I wanted to...but I did not want to.

Meditating very carefully that Questionnaire, and answering very sincerely, I found that it is "YES" to more than two-thirds of the questions. What a catastrophe! Me, with all my college education, and all the good principles I was brought up to by the best of parents! Me an alcoholic! Yes, you are one; how terrible this looks to you, and if you don't behave, worse things await you. So I must put a stop to it, and I admit to myself that like so many others I am an alcoholic, so - O God, I offer myself to Thee to build me up and do with me as Thou wilt. Relieve me of the bondage of self. Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of Thy Power. Thy love and Thy way of life. May I do Thy Will, always.

Albert L.

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APPRECIATION - OUR GUEST SPEAKER, MR. GIBBONS -

The members of this group wish to express their sincere thanks to a very eloquent speaker who is well qualified to address any group of men or women, particularly Alcoholics. Having graduated from Queens University in Psychology, and attended the famous Yale School, where the study of alcoholism plays a major role, his association with A.A. groups has been liberal. His appreciation of the tremendous possibilities offered to men and women was well demonstrated during our question period, which was trying, even to a psychologist. Mr. Gibbons can certainly rest assured that his talk was very much enjoyed. It was both informative and uplifting. Again we say thank you and look forward to a return visit soon.

"THE DRUNK" -

In a stupor he sits in a dusty old shack  
 Among empty bottles and filth,  
 His clothes are all dirty and ragged and torn,  
 And there is'nt much left of his health.  
 He thinks as he pulls that last cork,  
 Or maybe opens a can,  
 Or probably shakes a concoction of rub,  
 That he is'nt much use as a man.  
 Maybe he dreams of the happiness lost,  
 Of time he can never reclaim;  
 Probably a wife and some kids somewhere,  
 That to him now are only a name.  
 He thinks of the time he has wasted in booze  
 Opportunity thrown away,  
 He dreams of his past, his youth and his love  
 And decides that he'll quit it today.  
 He's heard of A.A. in a vague sort of a way,  
 Decides that he'll give it a try;  
 Some of his friends have proven it works,  
 And for many months now have been dry.  
 So he gave it a try and he really went dry  
 Surprising himself and his friends,  
 And that very day that he joined the A.A.  
 He started to make his amends.  
 Now he's back with his wife and a new way of life,  
 His children are happy and gay,  
 And he owes his success and complete happiness,  
 To his God, the Twelve Steps, and A.A.

"The Old Plumber".

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"A PRISON DRINK - RESENTMENT" -

Figuratively speaking, our own Government offered us in A.A., a drink, and we accepted. It was not a material drink, its true, merely a suggestion. The A.A. literature we had read was merely read and not absorbed. Our sense of reasoning certainly had not improved. This was very effectively demonstrated to ourselves and others when the Grading System was initiated for the first time in Canadian Penal Institutions. This was our temptation and we were tempted. The acid test of months of openly declaring we had resolved to avoid all those little emotional upsets that are so destructive to our good intentions, particularly we alcoholics. Why didn't I get a top grading?

Actually it was only our egotistical selves, our pride that had been given a jolt. The only way we knew how to accept this jolt was in true keeping with alcoholic reasoning: jealousy, hate and resentment that our resolutions had failed. We condemned the other fellow and were openly critical of the other fellow's good luck. Like all new endeavours of such a nature, difficulties arise and faults must be ironed out. However, we could not wait for this to happen; we must sit in the corner and pout. The old resentment sure took hold of our control and emotions and the result was that we faced our problem in true alcoholic fashion.

However, we should not condemn ourselves too much, for after years of crooked thinking and our peculiar attitude towards life, a complete about-face was not to be expected. Proof was given but it takes time and perseverance plus good intentions to change our reasoning and personality. It was further established that complete honesty with ourselves to practice what we preached, and above all sincerity, was apparently lacking. So the little acid test should prove a boon to those of us in A.A.

Here, incidentally, is why the question, "Why A.A. in Prison"? is almost unconsciously answered. We have facilities here, our Group, our Sponsor, and our inability to acquire liquor too easily. This is all to the good and we certainly have the time to reflect upon our emotional reaction and find a way to analyse our faults. Our response to the temptation proved a point.

(TUMBLE)

"A PRISON DRINK - RESENTMENT" - (Cont'd)

Had we the opportunity to indulge without hesitation, thought, or care for the results, we certainly would have been well on the road to goodness knows where. I am satisfied with my reaction - fellows, it was't good, for I failed completely when the crucial moment came. The material drink was not necessary; the mental acceptance of it is what we have to avoid. Old man resentment can be our slip, and the solid foundation for a future life of contented sobriety can only be gained by complete honesty with ourselves. To truly place ourselves and have faith in the Higher Power, we must remember to let sane reasoning replace our lop-sided emotions. Pause first for a moment in what we are doing and repeat our A.A. Prayer - "GOD GRANT ME THE SERENITY TO ACCEPT THOSE THINGS I CANNOT CHANGE, COURAGE TO CHANGE THOSE WE CAN, AND WISDOM TO KNOW THE DIFFERENCE".

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Members do not arrest alcoholism or gain recovery by merely agreeing with the principles of A.A. philosophies...They recover only if they live them.

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