

The NIGHT CAP

VOLUME ONE

January 5, 1951

NUMBER FOUR

A PEACEFUL NEW YEAR

"I said to a man who stood at the gate of the year, 'Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown,' and he replied, 'Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the hand of God. That shall be to you better than a light and safer than a known way!'"

This year the age-old "Happy New Year" re-echoes in our hearts in a more fervent wish for a "Peaceful New Year". In a world where peace seems a scarce commodity and every material form of security is inadequate to meet the situation, where are we to turn?

We read somewhere the other day a statement to the effect that there is no likelihood of a reconstructed world without reconstructed individuals. We are so prone to shake our heads, murmur vagaries in condemnation of Washington, Communism and a number of generalities, which eliminate all personal responsibility and yet there is no getting around the fact that there is but one solution -- a world of reconstructed individuals, in which you and I have a definite responsibility.

Faith in God -- yes, we need that above all things, but does not that very faith impel us to action, the sort of action that puts to work all of the spiritual resources within us?

We all have known the experience of times when we have met



seemingly impossible situations with quiet confidence, born of being at peace within ourselves. We also have all known times when we have "brought chaos out of order" to reverse the familiar saying, by a feeling of inner unrest and insecurity.

Our A. A. program points the way to peace within. Let us realize now that this year we have the personal responsibility of making that peace within us such a reality that it will have far-reaching results in a world that needs our help -- yours and mine!

A PEACEFUL NEW YEAR TO US ALL!

H U M I L I T Y and THE ALCOHOLIC

"They that know God will be humble; they that know themselves cannot be proud." - Flavel

What is humility but an honest evaluation of ourselves as we really are. It is by means of the fourth step that we alcoholics dare for the first time to essay a tete-a-tete with our true selves. As in most cases of "love at first sight", the object of our affections suffers somewhat when subjected to closer scrutiny. It is at this point that the novice learns whether or not he is intended to live a life of sobriety and peace. It is then that he must decide to accept an honest appraisal of himself and make steps toward improvement or to lull himself by self-delusion into complacency until he can grab another drink.

There is a certain type of person to whom the mere idea of humility is an odious prospect at its best. Such groveling and self-effacement, he will tell you, is strictly for plebes -- and the birds. One thing he probably will not tell you is that he thinks he is a pretty great man. Socrates, Jesus and Abraham Lincoln were no small shakes either.

Humility is a privilege of the truly great. The shallow, the vulgar, the ignorant and the spurious cannot afford it. They must provide by means of display what they lack in substance. The inflated weskit conceals a shoddy soul; the superior manner, a spirit wracked and twisted with inferiority. It is not in haughtiness and superiority alone that pride is revealed. Its face is seen in general touchiness, officiousness and malicious gossip. The efforts we make to exalt ourselves at the cost to others of their reputation and position and our urge to run the universe are but facets of the same perverse instinct.

There is no single word in the lexicon of A. A. that has aroused more cavil and misinterpretation than the word "humility". No tenet of our credo has met with more distaste and disfavor. Upon his first brush with the word, the alcoholic will bridle. He envisions himself in sackcloth and ashes, kissing feet galore. That is the tipoff on what casual acquaintance he has had with the term. Footkissing and sackcloth have their place with the dedicated, but let's see what humility means to us who must make our way in the mart of strife and gain.

Blind indeed is the man who cannot see that there are circumstances and forces in the world over which he has absolutely no control. There are rights to which others are entitled which he must not violate. The world was not designed for the benefit of any individual person. Despite sophisms to the contrary, man has no claim to the life he has drawn from the fund of mankind. There are no statutes of limitations on the debt he owes his fellow man.

We in A. A. turn to God for the wisdom and courage to live our lives and to perform our duties in such a way as to justify our existence and to merit our status as human beings.

Humility is not abjection. Cringing servile abasement ill becomes one who has besought himself the author of creation as an ally. Paradoxical as it may seem, true humility is the handmaiden of pride -- not the empty foolish pride that is sustained and nurtured by success (real or imagined) in matters mundane, but more the self-respect that comes from the knowledge of one's relationship to the scheme of things.

THE BISHOP'S NEW YEAR'S MESSAGEA Candle In The Dark

A friend of mine has written a very helpful book of sermons under the title, "A Candle In The House." The first sermon is on the text from Psalm 18:29: "Thou, Lord, also shall light my candle: the Lord my God shall make my darkness to be light."

This seems to me a particularly good text for us to memorize and to think about as we begin a new year, especially with conditions as they are in the year 1951. I don't know anything that would appeal to more people than the assurance that whatever of darkness is in them and in the world might be turned into light!

Here, as in so many other places in the Bible, we are reminded that light comes from God. "In thy light shall we see light," said the Psalmist at another time. It is the wise man who knows where to go for light upon his problems, his decisions, his dark sorrow and his temptations. One reason we spend so much time in darkness is that we fail to go to God for light. We look to science, or modern education, or our own wisdom -- and these are but broken lights, giving a very imperfect illumination. Light is of God, and has been brought to men by the Son of God, who said: "I am the Light of the World." It will be in truth a "new" year if we discover where light comes from.

We are also reminded that every person is a potential light-spreader. I am a candle! A candle can give a great deal of light and it is always a lovely light. During the war when cities were blacked out to prevent the danger of air-raids, it was discovered that a mere candle could be seen from far up in the air if it was burning in an exposed place. I cannot clear up all darkness, but I can illuminate one corner of the world if my candle is lighted by God, i. e. if I have a glowing faith in Him and a love for humanity.

There is a great deal of darkness in the world about us as we begin a new year, but God has given us a light for ourselves and a light to share with others. We can at least reduce the amount of darkness!

-Everett H. Jones

THE AUXILIARY SPEAKS:

On the threshold of this New Year, we feel keenly the necessity of being highly equipped to meet whatever the future may have of marvel or surprise. At this time we must look clearly at our responsibilities, our obligations, and our opportunities.

It might be well to borrow a thought from the Jewish Faith. "Rosh Hashana" is the anniversary of God's creation of the Universe. Unlike our "New Year", Rosh Hashana is not greeted by a joyous and noisy celebration, but with earnest self-judgment and quiet contemplation of the spirit.

The Jewish seers have always emphasized righteousness for the sake of the individual's own happiness on earth rather than as a means of securing a place in heaven after death. They perceive the need of man to re-examine and improve his character at regular intervals, both in the cause of his inner peace and the good of society as a whole.

This is the time for us to dedicate our hearts, our hands and our lives all over again to the finest and most perfect assimilation of everything good and true and beautiful which we can possibly reach.

May the mistakes and sins of yesterday lie buried in the forgotten caverns of our past and may the unknown months and days ahead find us all a little nearer our goal and farther along our path.

-Kathleen D.

The NIGHT CAP gratefully acknowledges the following note from Berta T. of Club 12:

"As December Chairman of the Auxiliary of Club 12, I want to thank you for the wonderful words of praise and encouragement given us in the last issue of the NIGHT CAP. To feel wanted and needed is very necessary to the peace and happiness of the families of A. A. members.

Any service we may render is a very small payment on the great debt of gratitude we feel for A. A.

Best wishes to the NIGHT CAP for a very successful year. -Berta T.

P E R S O N A L S

Marian W. reports that the Collins Gardens Group has acquired some new members, of whom they are mighty proud.

Dorothy and Doc W. of Club 12 are receiving congrats. It's a boy and they're the proud grandparents. In the same status (only it's a girl) are Irene and Dan M. of the Sahara.

Another blessed event -- a boy for the Benny Vs -- about 3 weeks ago.

Mrs. Julius C. was hostess at a Christmas dinner party for members of the Earl Group and their guests. They say a heartfelt "thank you" for the many A. A. greetings received, which were read at the dinner.

The Christmas parties at the Sahara and Club 12 were huge successes. The Christmas **Spirit** abounded in such great measure that no "spirits" were necessary.

"Doc" reports that his records show an attendance of over 3,000 at Auditorium meetings during 1950.

XMAS PARTY AT STATE

One of the best Christmas parties anywhere was the one held at the State Hospital. About 50 guests, composed of alcoholic patients and various A.A. members in the city enjoyed the occasion.

There was dancing to the music of a five piece orchestra, and the Christmas motif was carried out generally in the other features of the party.

Superintendent of the Hospital, Dr. Anderson, as well as Drs. Starnes and Carr were also guests.

Dorothy H. wishes to express gratitude to the various groups whose support made the party possible.

DIRECTORY OF SAN ANTONIO A.A. ACTIVITIES

General meetings, open to the public, are held every Tuesday night at eight o'clock in the West Wing of the Municipal Auditorium. These meetings are under the sponsorship of the S.A. Central Committee of A. A.

The Suburban and State Hospital groups meet at 8:00 P. M. on Mondays.

The Alamo Heights and Collins Gardens groups meet at 8:00 P. M. on Wednesdays.

The Olmos Park and Earl groups meet every Thursday night at 8:00 P.M.

Downtown group meetings are held in the Sahara Club rooms on Thursday and Friday nights with a beginners class at 4:00 P. M. Sunday. The Downtown Group Auxiliary meets every Friday night.

Group 12 meetings are held in their club rooms on Friday. Discussion groups on Wednesday nights. Group 12 Auxiliary meets every Friday night.

Further information regarding any San Antonio A. A. meetings can be obtained by calling "Doc", the Central Office secretary at F-2523.

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS include the following:

6 years ...	Paul P.
3 years ...	John B., Paul B., Dick L. Forrest E.; James McI.
2 years ...	Ted A., Ruby B. Dorothea C.; Herb W.

The Central Office has had visitors too numerous to mention during Dec. Some of them came from far-away-places, and we are indeed grateful for their interest in having contacted us while in S. A.