

The NIGHT CAP

SAN ANTONIO AREA A A NEWS

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THE THIRD LEGACY

A bulletin from the Alcoholic Foundation in New York -- which is General Headquarters of Alcoholics Anonymous -- tells us that the proposed General Service Conference Plan is being enthusiastically endorsed by groups throughout the United States.

The plan proposes the formation of a body of State Delegates, meeting yearly, to take over direct responsibility for the guidance of A. A.'s general headquarters. To quote Bill: "The Conference was first a dream, then an idea, then a gamble. But now, I am delighted to say, it is a reality. Approximately 1400 A. A. groups have already assented to the plan and the majority have sent in their contributions for the general overhead expense!"

Pamphlets explaining the plan titled "Third Legacy of A.A." can be obtained from your group secretary. We urge that you familiarize yourself with this plan, upon which the future of A. A. depends, if you have not already done so. Space does not permit more than a sketchy approach to the subject, but it is very important to us all.

An Assembly of Texas Group Representatives will be held in Dallas on March 8th and 9th. Representatives from each participating group in the State will be present to elect State Committeemen and a Delegate to the General Service Conference, which will convene during April in New York City.

The Assembly is very fortunate in having Bill W., who will be present to clarify the plan and address an open meeting in the ballroom of the Adolphus Hotel.

Representatives from the various groups in San Antonio have been elected to attend the Assembly, and we eagerly await their reports on the outcome of this most important meeting.

The Japanese say: "A man takes a drink, then the drink takes a drink, and the next drink takes the man."

(Any resemblance to any alcoholic you may have ever known is, we feel sure, purely coincidental!)

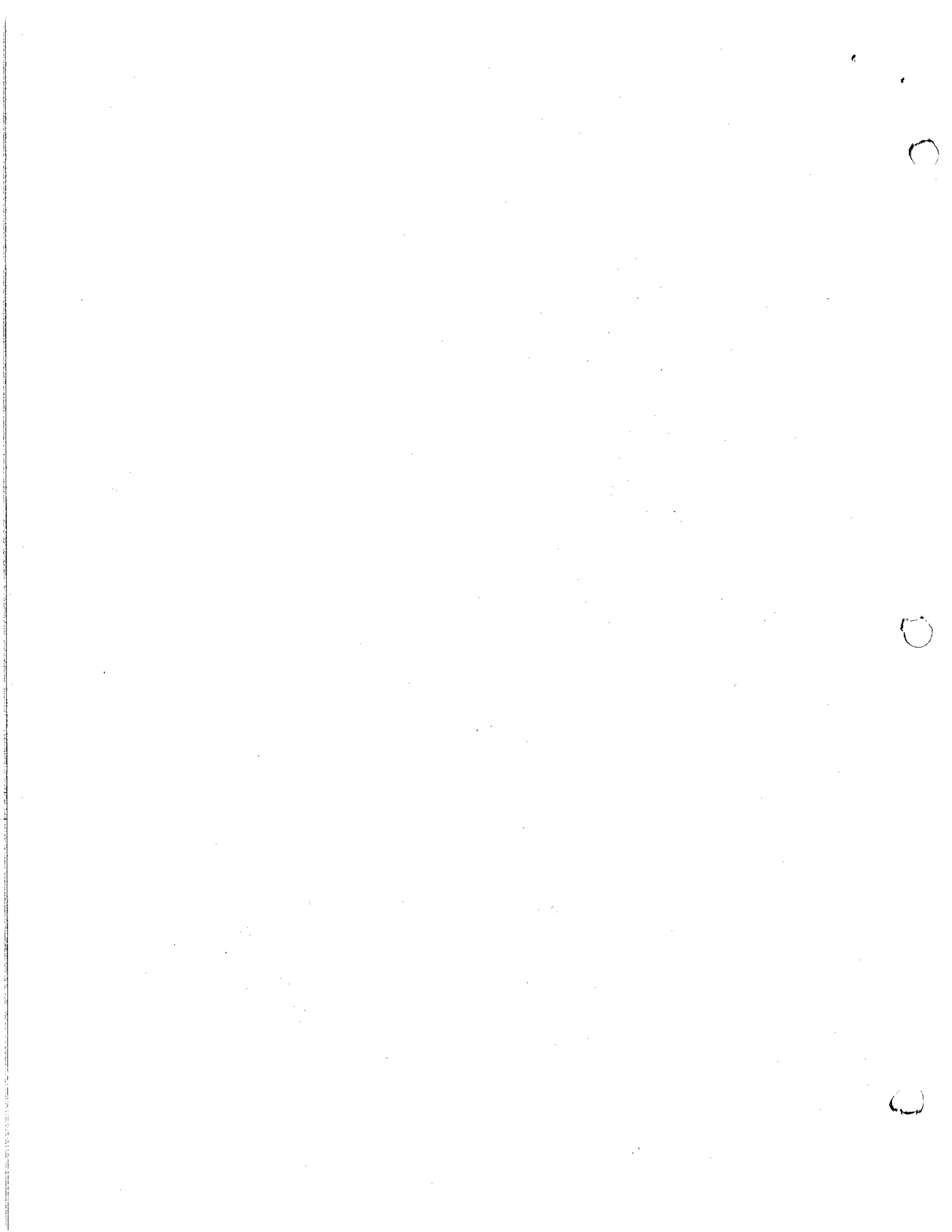
HOPE FOR ALCOHOLICS

A booklet entitled "Hope for the Alcoholic" is a report from the National Committee on Alcoholism, outlining developments in the field of alcoholism, resulting from the activities of that

committee.

Amongst the accomplishments listed during the past year is the resolution passed by the American Medical Association at its 1950 Annual Meeting defining alcoholism as a disease and medical responsibility. The report shows a great deal of activity all over the country and that much educational work is being done along this line, bringing the matter to the public's attention in the proper light.

"Hope for the alcoholic" is always of major concern to us, who know firsthand the great need of it.



THANK YOU, A. A.

One year ago I came to you because I had to. Today I come to you because I want to! I am on my way upstairs, and I turn to you to help me.

One year ago I put my hand into yours, and you guided my feet up to the First Step. It took courage to make that one as I had been at the bottom of those steps for many years.

You told me there was a Power Greater Than Myself right on that Second Step. That was a rough one, too. I had steamed full force under my own power all of my life. Looking back on where I had traveled, the pattern I had made was around and around, in circles. There must be a better way than that. You had told me to step up.

Yes, I had known from childhood that there was a God. Could I really believe it? Well, I'd try, because you said he'd help me if I'd let Him. I made my decision to turn my life over to Him. He surely couldn't louse it up any worse than I had.

You told me Step Four was a high step. I looked it over and decided I'd forget it. How could I face all those things that I drank to forget? I looked back at the hole I had climbed out of and didn't want to go back. So, I took inventory. I'm still taking it, and it hasn't been "fearless". Some day I'll

get it all, so I'll keep on trying. It wasn't quite so hard to tell my mistakes to God because I had already said he could take care of my life.

You had told me that my "friends" would help me, too. I hadn't had any friends in years. You found some for me. Real true friends, and they wanted to help.

Came Steps Six and Seven. About now my skepticism was beginning to wane. I had to really believe in God. My prayers were pretty weak, but who was I to say there was nothing to this prayer business. I had to learn to pray, so I'd ask Him to help me. Humbly I asked Him to teach me to pray. He heard me. You ask: "How do you know?" And I will answer: "Because I can pray!"

You told me to try to make amends to those I had hurt. What a wonderful feeling. This was what I had wanted to do all of my life. Life was beginning to be beautiful.

Now, I dare glance back for a look at what I was! I have been a dope addict as well as an alcoholic. The pain, terror and heartaches that accompanied all this paid for my "front seat in hell", tax included.

I have exchanged it for this beautiful wonderful way of life.

THANK YOU, A. A. -Marian W.

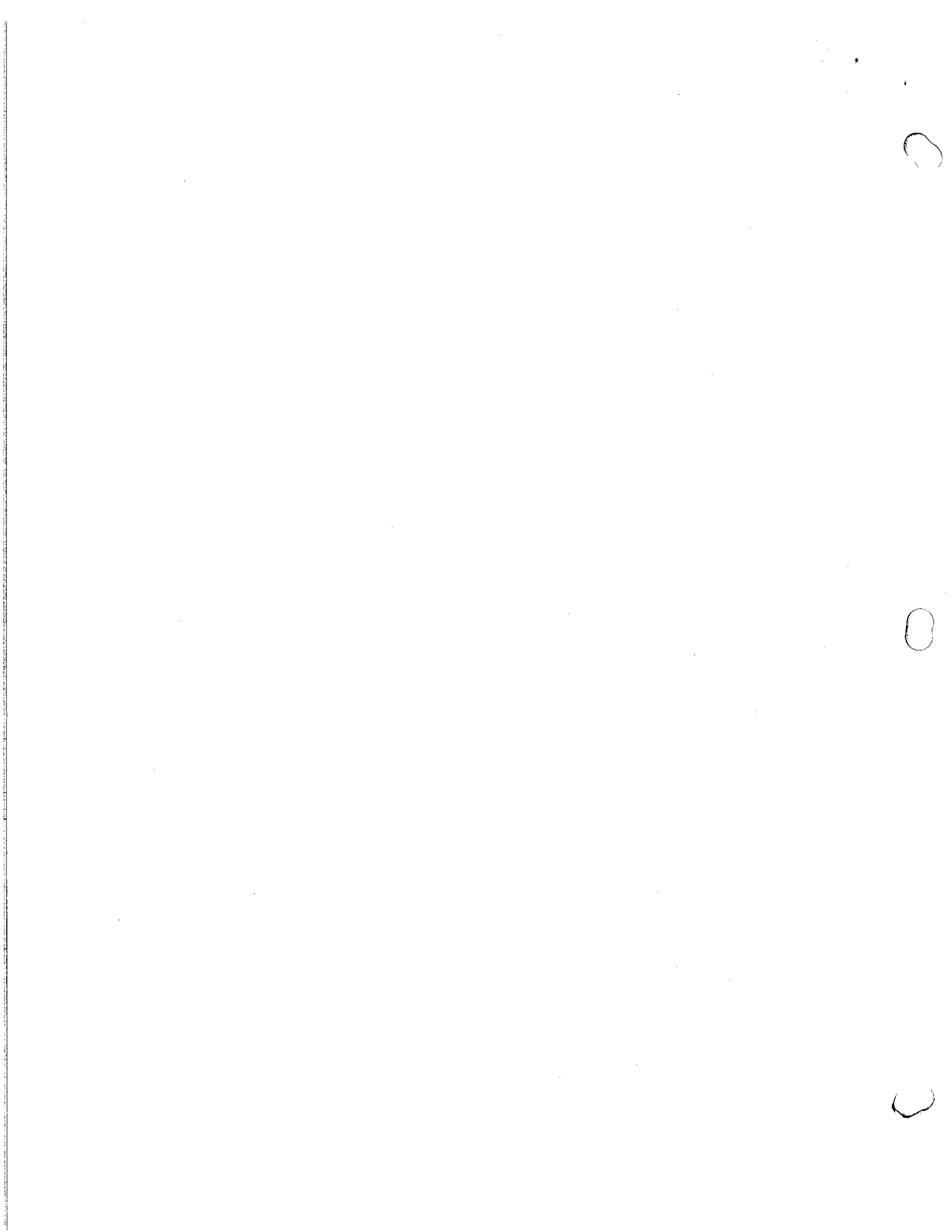
CollinsGarden

OLMOS PARK GROUP

One of the best meetings we have been privileged to attend was the February 22nd meeting of the Olmos Park Group.

It was one of those gatherings where speakers and listeners alike tried to give their very best. Our new members are very important to us, and we all hoped that something we said or thought or did might give them that grasp of the Program which they are seeking.

This spirit, plus the gracious hospitality of Elizabeth and Guy H., gave us that rare feeling of having renewed our faith in the life we are trying to live, as well as to pass on to others like us.



THE BISHOP'S MESSAGEFROM SUNSET TO DAWN

Clement of Alexandria, one of the great leaders of the early Christian Church, said: "Christianity changes all our sunsets into dawns."

It is significant that the Easter message is associated with the dawn. It was at dawn, "very early in the morning", that the eager but despondent women and disciples came to the tomb of the Lord whom they believed death had destroyed. It was in the dawn they discovered death "is swallowed up in victory!" "He is not here, for He is risen, as he said". (St. Matt. 28:6)

The spirit of Easter is the spirit of the dawn. It is the rising of a new hope and joy out of the gloom and darkness of night. It is the spirit of a new beginning -- a new life rising out of apparently final death, a new victory out of seeming defeat, a new hope out of temporary despair.

Men need this message of the dawn, for they are constantly facing sunsets in life. There is the sunset of death when one near and dear is no longer within sight or reach. There is the sunset of a great disappointment when a cherished dream fails to be realized. There is the sunset of a personal defeat or frustration when life closes in and the future has no meaning or appeal. Thank God for a power that can change these sunsets into dawns!

The world needs the good news of the dawn, for today men's hearts are confused and filled with fear as they look out upon the scene around them. The victory in World War II instead of settling world unrest has apparently created new and greater forms of unrest. The U. N. O. which was to assure a new era of peace faces grave danger of destruction even as it comes into being. The atomic bomb which was hailed as a great achievement of science has filled us with terrible forebodings about the

(continued in next column)

AUXILIARY ATOMSMAN SHORTAGE!

Being the husband of a member of A. A., I write this as an appeal to other male non-alcoholics to join your nearest A. A. group auxiliary and to take an active part in its endeavors.

I assume that there is an acute shortage of male auxiliary members in other groups, as there is in the one with which I am affiliated. "Men, as of now we males are greatly outnumbered. So, let's muster our strength and sort of even off this auxiliary membership."

If it's personal pride that's holding you back, just tuck that little old bit of "pride" way down deep in your back pocket, and then forget it. We must be ever mindful that our spouses "swallowed" theirs when they took that first action to contact A. A. for assistance in their desire to stop drinking.

I sincerely believe that you, the same as I, are reaping many benefits since the "little woman" joined up and is striving so earnestly to maintain her sobriety. True, she has the assistance of her loyal A. A. friends, but that isn't enough. She needs you, too!

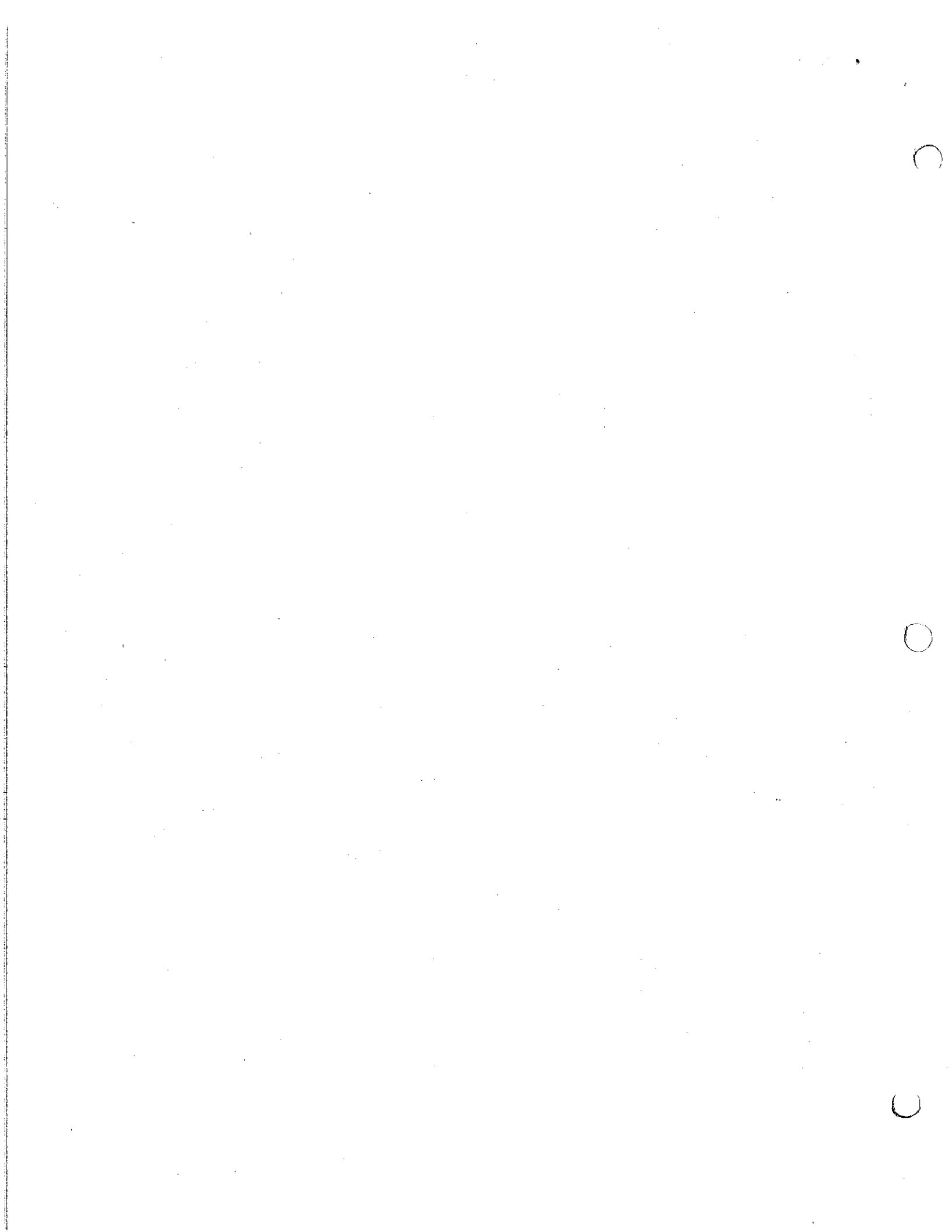
Come on in and join us! Won't you?
Ralph W.

THE BISHOP'S MESSAGE (cont'd.)

future. There is much in the scene to suggest the setting of the sun of man's hopes and dreams.

But again we can thank God for a power that changes the sunset into dawn. Victor Hugo is right when he says, "The word which the finger of God has written upon the brow of every man is Hope." It is Hope which is not mere sentiment but is based upon the truth about God and his World. God has made clear the terms and conditions under which the dawn will come. My Easter prayer for you is that you may experience the full joy of having all your sunsets changed into dawns!

-Evellett H. Jones



P E R S O N A L S

The Collins Gardens Group celebrated its first anniversary with a chili supper on Wednesday, February 28th.

Among those attending the Dallas Conference on March 8th and 9th will be: Doc B., Orlo Q., Kate R., Dorothy H., Cliff H. and Fred F.

Mary G. of the Sahara A.A.A. is back at the Club after a long illness.

Visitors this month included Lee and Marian D. from Flint, Michigan.

Rubye B. of the Sahara is a brand new grandmother -- a boy.

C O M I N G E V E N T S

The Sahara Club wishes to extend a cordial invitation to all the groups of the city to an open meeting to be held at the Sahara on Friday night, March 9th, at 8:00 P. M.

At that time, the main speaker will be Rev. Paul H. Osborne of St. Paul's Episcopal Church.

S T A T E C O M M I T T E E A P P O I N T E D

Of interest to us all is the following from the S. A. Express of 2/27/51:

"Governor Allan Shivers Tuesday set up a 30 member statewide committee to deal with problems of alcoholism. The committee includes representatives of business and industry, educators, churchmen and physicians.

"The committee's only assigned subject for study is the responsibility of the state and its subdivisions in the treatment of alcoholism. Further scope of the committee's activities will be determined by its members."

"Our" Bishop Jones was the San Antonio appointee to this Committee.

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, Collins Gardens and Highland Park 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.

M A R C H B I R T H D A Y S

9 years	Hollis N.
6 years	Grace D.
3 years	Frank B., Joem.
2 years	Abe G., Doc W. Jack L. and Walter P.

Did you hear the story of the new new auxiliary member who, upon hearing the announcement about The Nightcap, timidly approached a fellow A. A. A. with a question as to whether it was some kind of drink for A. A.s?
(It is a bitter cup some deadline days!)

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AFTER FIVE YEARS

Having been requested by the editor of The Nightcap to write one typewritten page on the occasion of my fifth consecutive year of sobriety, attained by following the program of Alcoholics Anonymous, and after many torn pages and fresh starts, I present the following:

Desperation drove me to approach A. A. for help in overcoming my drinking problem. I had tried my own will-power and most of the other ordinary things that the average drinker with a problem tries, but to no avail. Then, on my first visit to A. A., the thought that I suffered from a disease was given me for the first time. A disease recognized as such by medical science, which thus far failed to discover a medical cure.

Being otherwise sane, I thought if alcoholism is a disease, which kills and maims as surely as any other of the major diseases, I'd better really try for whatever cure has worked for others. A. A. has the answer for those who have a sincere desire to quit drinking and a belief in a power greater than themselves.

I first had to be convinced that I was an alcoholic, which was not easy, for like the average drinker, I didn't realize how utterly powerless I was over alcohol. After being convinced that I really was an alcoholic, I was taught that one only tried to quit drinking for 24 hours. Surely, I thought, I can go 24 hours without taking a drink; I'll try to do so.

Later, I learned to ask a Power Greater Than Myself to help me. That Power has helped me each day, merely for the asking. I learned to pray. I ask that Power (God as I understand Him), each morning on awakening to help me through the day I am about to face, without the desire for alcohol. If the desire presents itself during the day,

I call on that Power and have never failed to be helped. On arriving at my bedside at night in a sober condition, I always remember to thank Him for the help.

All this sounds rather simple, doesn't it? Well, in retrospect, it is simple. But, it wasn't that simple in the beginning when all the bodily reactions (or was it my mind?) began to take place. My system screamed for the alcohol which was being denied it. Suicide presented itself as a possible solution. Dreams of being under the influence of alcohol that were so realistic that I would wake up and remain drunk for minutes thereafter. Periods of depression in which I would be nervous and extremely anti-social.

Sometimes I would experience very real aches and pains that were totally imaginary.

These are only a few of the vicissitudes through which I have

arrived at this day, in which recurrences of the above described trials seldom occur, for which I never forget to thank God as I understand Him.

But, prayer has prevailed, and I have now come to the realization that I only have to resist taking the first drink in order to remain an almost-normal person. But, I always remember that I am still powerless over alcohol, that one drink will lead me back into that capricious state of mind from which there may not be another recovery.

- Arthur C.

Never does a man portray his own character more vividly than in his manner of portraying another.

- Richter

For a beautiful, never-to-be-forgotten talk, we would like to say "thank you" to Rev. W. Earl Waldrop of Central Christian Church, who spoke at the Auditorium the last Tuesday in February!

