

The NIGHT CAP

SAN ANTONIO AREA A A NEWS

VOLUME ONE

May 5, 1951

NUMBER EIGHT

PLATEAUS OF COMPLACENCY

To me, and the same thing seems to be true of many other AAs with whom I have talked, have come periods in my sobriety (or maybe just "dryness") when I was pretty well pleased with myself and my way of life. I was right on the beam!

I had been dry for -- however long it had been. I gave generously within my means. I always made 12th Step calls when they came to me. I always spoke at meetings when called on. In fact, I was surprised to find out how well I thought of myself. I was complacent!

I looked up the word in the dictionary and found these definitions: "Self-pleasure, self-satisfaction, gratified, satisfied." That was a sobering thought. If true, I had arrived. I had reached my zenith.

Since nothing in nature is static, there was nowhere to go but down. I saw that my moral inventory had not been so searching and fearless as it should have been. I had merely been tiptoeing over the egg shells of my own vanity while staying dry.

What should I do, or how should I think, to bring myself into proper perspective with life and living. I considered the solar system, which is only a part of the universe. In this, the earth is in size about as a grain of sand would be to the earth. Even if I could become the greatest one on earth, I would still be pretty "small potatoes".

Defeated by that comparison, came the thought: "I am still better than,

smarter than, a great many people -- well -- most people."

That idea was deflated by the thought: "How would you like to live in a world peopled by exact replicas of yourself, my fine fellow?"

The thought was really devastating. Every bluff was called; every lie, detected. All the papier-mache front was blasted, and the boasting and tall tales were falling of their own weight.

Reduced to the pitiful little "I" without any make-up, I began to realize what God must see when he looked in my direction.

I remembered a parable concerning two men -- A Pharisee and a Publican, who went up to the temple to pray.

The Pharisee prayed to himself and let the Lord listen in. "I thank thee that I am not as other men are", he said. He made out a case for himself just about as I had. He was extremely complacent.

The Publican stood far off and would not even lift up his eyes unto heaven, but smote his breast and said: "God, be merciful to me, a sinner". He had true humility. The parable has it that one prayer was heard; the other was not.

My complacency had now been pretty well shattered, toppled over by a lever of honesty resting on a fulcrum of truth.

- Orlo Q.