

*Thanks to Barefoot Bill for posting this to the AA HistoryBuffs*

**This is the first printed draft of the Big Book, which was mailed to various individuals for their comments and also as a fund raising tool. It is unclear at what time during the writing of the Big Book "Bill's Story" became chapter one. The language in this draft is in many ways different than the final manuscript. This illustrates the process of having many individuals add their opinions to the contents.**

**[archivist's note: All pages are 8.5" by 14"; marked text (underlined) means more than one letter was typed over another, or text was crossed out with x though still readable; marked text in red accurately reflects typos in the manuscript or strange language, marked text in brown accurately reflects hard to read areas in the manuscript]**

**[handwriting: "Wilson's original story"]**

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Page 1.

1. When I was about ten years old my Father and mother  
2. agreed to disagree and I went to live with my Grandfather,  
3. and Grandmother. He was a retired farmer and lumberman. As I  
4. see him in retrospect, he was a very remarkable man After he  
5. returned from Civil War he settled in the small Vermont  
6. town where I was later to grow up. His original capital con-  
7. sisted of a small, unimproved hillside farm, as sweet and  
8. willing helpmeet, and enormous determination to succeed in  
9. whatever he attempted. He was a man of high native intelli-  
10. gence, a voracious reader, though little educated in the  
11. school sense of the word. There was plenty of financial  
12. sense in his make-up and he was a man of real vision. Under  
13. other conditions he might well have become master of an in-  
14. dustry or railroad empire.  
15. My Grandmother brought into the world three children,  
16. one of whom was my Mother. I can still seem to hear her tell-  
17. ing of the struggle of those early days. Such matters as  
18. cooking for twenty woodchoppers, looking after the diary,  
19. making most of the clothes for the family, long winter rides  
20. at twenty below zero to fetch my Grandfather home over snow-  
21. bound roads, seeing him of long before daylight that he and  
22. the choppers might have their access thawed out so that work  
23. might begin on the mountaintop at daylight- this is the thought  
24. of tradition upon which they nourished me. They finally  
25. achieved their competence and retired late in life to enjoy  
26. a well earned rest and the respect and affection of their

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27. neighbors. They were the sort of people, I see now, who  
28. really made America.  
29. But I had other ideas - much bigger and better ones  
30. so I thought. I was to be of the war generation which dis-  
31. ipated the homely virtues, the hard earned savings, the  
32. pioneering tradition, and the incredible stamina of your parents  
33. Grandfather and mine.  
34. I too was ambitious - very ambitious, but very un-  
35. disciplined. In spite of everyone's effort to correct that con-  
36. dition. I had a genius for evading, postponing or shirking  
37. those things which I did not like to do, but when thoroughly  
38. interested, everything I had was thrown into the pursuit of  
39. my objective. My will to succeed at special undertakings on  
40. which my heart were set was very great. There was a persis-  
41. tence, a patience, and a dogged obstinacy, that drove me on.  
42. My Grandfather used to love to argue with me with the object  
43. of convincing me of the impossibility of some venture or  
44. another in order to enjoy watching me 'tilt at the windmill'  
45. he had erected. One day he said to me - I have just been  
46. reading that no one in the world but an Australian can make  
47. and throw a boomerang. This spark struck tinder and every-  
48. thing and every activity was instantly laid aside until it  
49. could be demonstrated that he was mistaken. The woodbox was  
50. not filled, no school work was done, nor could I hardly be  
51. persuaded to eat or to go to bed. After a month or more of  
52. this thing a boomerang was constructed which I threw around

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53. the church steeple. On its return trip it went into trans-  
54. ports of joy because it all but decapitated my Grandfather  
55. who stood near me.  
56. I presently left the country school and fared forth  
57. into the great world I had read about in books. My first  
58. journey took me only five miles to an adjoining town where I  
59. commenced to attend a seminary well known in our section of  
60. the state. Here competition was much more severe and I was  
61. challenged on all sides to do the seemingly impossible. There  
62. was the matter of athletics and I was soon burning with the  
63. ambition to become a great baseball player. This was pretty  
64. discouraging to begin with, as I was tall for my age, quite  
65. awkward, and not very fast on my feet, but I literally worked  
66. at it while others slept or otherwise amused themselves and  
67. in my second year became captain of the team, whereupon my

68. interest began to languish, for by that time someone had told  
69. me I had no ear for music, which I have since discovered is  
70. almost true. Despite obstacles I managed to appear in a few  
71. song recitals whereupon my interest in singing disappeared  
72. and I got terribly serious about learning to play the violin.  
73. This grew into a real obsession and to the consternation of  
74. my teachers, grew in the last year and everyone else it be-  
75. came the immediate cause of my failing to graduate. This was  
76. my first great catastrophe. By this time I had become Presi-  
77. dent of the class which only made matters worse. As in every  
78. thing else I had even very good in certain courses of study

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79. which took my fancy, and with others just the opposite,  
80. indolence and indifference, being the rule, So it was that  
81. the legend of infallibility I had built up around myself  
82. collapsed.  
83. In the ensuing summer I was obliged for the first  
84. time to really address myself to the distasteful task of re-  
85. pairing my failure. Although my diploma was now in hand, it  
86. was by no means clear to my grandparents and parents what  
87. they had better next try to do with me. Because of my interest  
88. in scientific matters and the liking I had to fussing with  
89. gadgets and chemicals, it had been assumed that I was to be  
90. an engineer, and my own learnings were towards the electrical  
91. branch of the profession. So I went to Boston and took the  
92. entrance examination to one of the leading technical schools  
93. in this country. For obvious reasons I failed utterly. It  
94. was a rather heartbreaking matter for those interested in me  
95. and it gave my self-sufficiency another severe deflation.  
96. Finally an entrance was effected at an excellent  
97. military college where it was hoped I would really be disci-  
98. plined. I attended the University for almost three years  
99. and would have certainly failed to graduate or come anywhere  
100. near qualifying as an engineer, because of my laziness and  
101. weakness mathematics. Particularly Calculus, in this  
102. subject a great number of formulas have to be learned and  
103. the application practiced. I remembered that I absolutely  
104. refused to learn any of them or do any of the work whatever

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105. until the general principles underlying the subject had  
106. been made clear to me. The instructor was very patient,  
107. but finally through up his hands in disgust as I began to  
108. argue with him and to hint pretty strongly that perhaps he

109. didn't quite understand them himself. So I commenced an in-  
110. vestigation of the principles underlying Calculus in the  
111. school library and learned something of the conceptions of  
112. the great minds of Leibnitz and Newton whose genius had  
113. made possible this useful and novel mathematical device.  
114. Thus armed I mastered the first problem in the textbook and  
115. commenced a fresh controversy with my teacher, who angrily,  
116. but quite properly, gave me a zero for the course. Fortunate-  
117. ly for my future at the University, I soon enabled to  
118. leave the place gracefully, even heroically, for the  
119. United States of America had gone to war.  
120. Being students of a military academy school  
121. the student boy almost to a man bolted for the first  
122. officers training camp at Plattsburgh. Though a bit under  
123. age, I received a commission a second lieutenant and got  
124. myself assigned to the heavy artillery. Of this I was  
125. secretly ashamed, for when the excitement of the day had  
126. subsided and I lay in my bunk, I had to confess I did not  
127. want to be killed. This bothered me terribly this suspicion  
128. that I might be coward after all. I could not reconcile  
129. it with the truly exalted mood of patriotism and idealism  
130. which possessed me when I hadn't time to think. It was

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131. very very damaging to my pride, though most of this damage  
132. was repaired later on when I got under fire and discovered  
133. I was just like other people, scared to death, but willing  
134. to face the music.  
135. After graduating from an army artillery school,  
136. I was sent to a post which was situated near a famous old  
137. town on the New England coast ones famous for its deepxsea  
138. whaling, trading and Yankee seagoing tradition. Here I made  
139. two decisions. The first one, and the best, to marry. Th  
140. second decision was most emphatically the worst I ever mad took up with  
took up with  
141. I made the acquaintance of John Barleycorn and decided that  
142. I liked it him.  
143. My wife to be  
144. Here I set out upon two paths and little did I realize  
145. how much they were diverge. In short I got married  
146. and at about the same time, took my first drink and decided  
147. that I liked it. But for undying loyalty of my wife  
148. and her faith through the years, I should not be alive today.  
149. She was a city bred person and represented a background and

150. way of life for which I had secretly longed. Her family  
151. spent long summers in our little town. All of them were  
152. highly regarded by the natives. This was most complimentary  
153. for among the countrymen there existed strong and often un-  
154. reasonable prejudices against city folks. For the most  
155. part, I felt differently. Most city people I knew had money,  
156. assurance, and what then seemed to me great sophistication.

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157. and Most of them had family trees. There were servants,  
158. fine houses, gay dinners, and all of the other things with  
159. which I was wont to associate power and distinction. All  
160. of them, quite unconsciously I am sure, could make me feel  
161. very inadequate and ill at ease. I began to feel woefully  
162. lacking in the matter of poise and polish and worldly know-  
163. ledge. Though very proud of the traditions of my own people,  
164. I sometimes indulged in the envious wish that I had been  
165. born under other circumstances and with some of these advan-  
166. tages. Since then immemorial I suppose the country boyshav  
167. thought and felt as I did have thought and felt as I did.  
168. These feelings of inferiority are I suspect responsible for  
169. the enormous determination many of them have felt to go out  
170. to the cities in quest of what seemed to them like true  
171. success. Though seldom revealed, these were the sentiments  
172. that drove me on from this point.  
173. The war fever ran high in the city near my  
174. post and I soon discovered that young officers were in  
175. great demand at the dinner tables of the first citizens of  
176. the place. Social differences were layed aside and every-  
177. thing was done to make us feel comfortable, happy, and heroic.  
178. A great many things conspired to make me feel that I was im-  
179. portant. I discovered that I had a somewhat unusual power  
180. over men on the drill field and in the barracks. I was about  
181. to fight to save the world for democracy. People whose  
182. station In life I had envied were receiving me as an equal.

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183. My marriage with a girl who represented all of the best  
184. things the city had to offer, was close at hand, and last,  
185. but not least, I had discovered John Barleycorn, Love, ad-  
186. venture, war, applause of the crowd, moments sublime and  
187. hilarious with intervals hilarious - I was a part of life  
188. at last, and very happy.  
189. The warnings of my people, the contempt  
190. which I had felt for those who drank, were put aside with

191. surprising alacrity as I discovered what the Bronx cocktail  
192. could really do for a fellow. My imagination soared - my  
193. tongue loosened at last - wonderful vistas opened on all  
194. sides, but best of all my self consciousness - my gaucheries  
195. and my ineptitudes disappeared into thin air. I seemed to  
196. the life of the party. To the dismay of my bride I used to  
197. get pretty drunk when I tried to compete with more ex-  
198. perenced drinkers, but I argued, what did it matter, for  
199. so did everyone else at sometime before daylight. Then  
200. came the day of parting, of a fond leave taking of my brave

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201. wife. Amid that strange atmosphere which was the mixture  
202. of sadness, high purpose, the feeling of elation that pre-  
203. cedes an adventure of the first magnitude. Thus many of us  
204. sailed for 'over there' and none of us knew if we should re-  
205. turn. For a time, loneliness possessed me, but my new  
206. friend Barleycorn always took care of that. I had, I thought  
207. discovered a missing link in the chain of things that make  
208. life worth while.

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209. Then we were in dear old England, soon to cross  
210. the channel to the great unknown. I stood in Winchester  
211. Cathedral the day before crossing hand in hand with head  
212. bowed, for something had touched me then I had never felt  
213. before. I had been wondering, in a rare moment of sober  
214. reflection, what sense there could be to killing and  
215. carnage of which I was soon to become an enthusiastic part.  
216. Where could the Deity be - could there be such a thing -  
217. Where now was the God of the preachers, the thought of which  
218. used to make me so uncomfortable when they talked about him.  
219. Here I stood on the abyss edge of the abyss into which  
220. thousands were falling that very day. A feeling of despair  
221. settled down on me - where was He - why did he not come-  
222. and suddenly in that moment of darkness, He was there. I  
223. felt an all enveloping, comforting, powerful presence.  
224. Tears stood in my eyes, and as I looked about, I saw on the  
225. faces of others nearby, that they too had glimpsed the great  
226. reality. Much moved, I walked out into the Cathedral yard,  
227. where I read the following inscription on a tombstone. 'Here  
228. lies a Hampshire Grenadier, Who caught his death drinking  
229. small good beer - A good soldier is ne'er forgot, whether

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230. he dieth by musket or by pot.' The squadron of bombers

231. swept overhead in the bright sunlight, and I cried to myself  
232. 'Here's to adventure' and the feeling of being in the great  
233. presence disappeared, never to return for many years.  
234. --

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235. I was twenty two, and a grised veteran of foreign wars.  
236. I felt a tremendous assurance about my future, for was not  
237. I the only officer of my regiment save one, who had re-  
238. ceived a token of appreciation from the men. This quality  
239. of leadership, I fancyed, would soon place me at the head  
240. of some great commercial organization which I would manage  
241. with the same constant skill that the pipe organist does  
242. his stops and keys.  
243. The triumphant home coming was short lived. The  
244. best that could be done was to secure a bookkeeping job in  
245. the insurance department of the one of the large railroads.  
246. I proved to be a wretched and rebellious bookkeeper and could  
247. not stand criticism, nor was I much reconciled to my salary,  
248. which was only half the pay I had received in the army. When  
249. I started to work the railroads were under control of the  
250. government. As soon as they were returned my road was re-  
251. turned to its stockholders, I was promptly let out because I  
252. could not compete with the other clerks in my office. I was  
253. so angry and humiliated at this reverse that I nearly became  
254. a socialist to register my defiance of the powers that be,  
255. which was going pretty far for a Vermonter.  
256. To my mortification, my wife went out and got a  
257. position which brought in much more than mine had. Being ab-  
258. surdly sensitive, I imagined that herrelatives an my newly  
259. made city acquaintances were snickering a bit at my predica-  
260. ment.

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261. Unwillingly, I had to admit, that I was not  
262. really trained to hold even a mediocre position. Though  
263. I said little, the old driving, obstinate determination to  
264. show my mettle asserted itself. Somehow, I would show these  
265. scoffers. To complete my engineering seemed out of the ques-  
of  
266. tion, partly because/my distaste for mathematics, My only  
267. other assets were my war experiences and a huge amount of  
268. ill-assorted reading. The study of law suggested itself, and  
269. I commenced a three year night course with enthusiasm. Mean-

270. while, employment showed up and I became a criminal investi-  
271. gator for a Surety Company, earning almost as much money as  
272. my wife, who spiritedly backed the new undertaking. My day-  
273. time employment took me about Wall Street and little by  
274. little, I became interested in what I saw going on there.  
275. I began to wonder why a few seemed to be rich and famous  
276. while the rank and file apparently lost money. I began to  
277. study economics and business.  
278. Somewhat to the dismay of our friends, we moved  
279. to very modest quarters where we could save money. When we  
280. had accumulated \$1,000.00, most of it was placed in utility  
281. stocks, which were then cheap and unpopular. In a small way,  
282. I began to be successful in speculation. I was intrigued by  
283. the romance of business, industrial and financial leaders be-  
284. came my heroes. I read every scrap of financial history I  
285. could lay hold of. Here I thought was the road to power.  
286. Like the boomerang, episode, I could think of nothing else.

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287. How little did I see that I was fashioning a weapon that  
288. would one day return and cut me to ribbons.  
289. As so many of my heroes commenced as lawyers,  
290. I persisted in the course, thinking it would prove useful.  
291. I also read many success books and did a lot of things that  
292. Horatio Algiers's boy heroes were supposed to have done.  
293. Characteristically enough I nearly failed my  
294. law course as I appeared at one of the final examinations  
295. too drunk to think or write. My drinking had not become  
296. continuous at this time, though occasional embarrassing in-  
297. cidents might have suggested that it was getting real hold.  
298. Neither my wife or I had much time for social engagements  
299. and in any event we soon became unpopular as I always got  
300. tight and boasted disagreeably of my plans and my future.  
301. She was becoming very much concerned and fre-  
302. quently we had long talks about the matter. I waived her ob-  
303. jections aside by pointing out that red blooded men almost  
304. always drank and that men of genius frequently conceived  
305. their vast projects while pleasantly intoxicated, adding for  
306. good measure, that the best and most majestic constructions of  
307. philosophical thought were probably so derived.  
308. By the time my law studies were finished,  
309. I was quite sure I did not want to become a lawyer. I know  
310. that somehow I was going to be a part of that then alluring  
311. maelstrom which people call Wall Street. How to get into  
312. business there was the question. When I proposed going out

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313. on the road to investigate properties, my broker friends  
314. laughed at me. They did not need such a service and pointed  
315. out that I had no experience. I reasoned that I was partly qualified  
316. /as an engineer and as a lawyer, and that practically speaking  
317. I had acquired very valuable experience as a criminal investi-  
318. gator. I felt certain that these assets could not be capita-  
319. lized. I was sure that people lost money in securities be-  
320. cause they did not know enough about managements, properties,  
321. markets, and ideas at work in a given situation.  
322. Since no one would hire me and remembering that  
323. we now had a few thousand dollars, my wife and I conceived  
324. the hare-brained scheme of going out and doing some of this  
325. work at our own expense, so we each gave up our employment  
326. and set off in a motorcycle and side car, which was loaded  
327. down with a tent, blankets, change of clothes and three  
328. huge volumes of a well known financial reference service.  
329. Some of our friends thought a lunacy commission should be ap-  
330. pointed and I sometimes think they were right. Our first ex-  
331. ploitation was fantastic. Among other things, we owned two shares  
332. of General Electric, then selling at about \$300.00 a share.  
333. Everyone thought it was too high, but I stoutly maintained  
334. that it would someday sell for five or ten times that figure.  
335. So what could be more logical than to proceed to the main of-  
336. fice of the company in New York and investigate it. Naive  
337. wasn't it? The plan was to interview the officials and get  
338. employment there if possible. We drew seventy five dollars

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339. from our savings as working capital, vowing never to draw  
340. another cent. We arrived at Schenectady, I did talk with  
341. some of the people of the company and became wildly en-  
342. thusiastic over GE. My attention was drawn to the radio end  
343. of the business and by a strange piece of luck, I learned  
344. much of what the company thought about its future. I was  
345. then able to put a fairly intelligent projection of the  
346. coming radio boom on paper, which I sent to one of my brokers  
347. in town. To replenish our working capital, my wife and I  
348. worked on a farm nearby for two months, she in the kitchen,  
349. and I in the haystack. It was the last honest manual work  
350. that I did for many years.  
351. The cement industry then caught my fancy and we  
352. soon found ourselves looking at a property in the Lehigh  
353. district of Eastern Pennsylvania. An unusual speculative

354. situation existed which I went to New York and described to  
355. one of my broker friend . This time I drew blood in the  
356. shape of an option on hundred shares of stock which  
357. promptly commenced to soar. Securing a few hundred dollars  
358. advance on this deal, we were freed of the necessity of work,  
359. and during the coming year following year, we travelled all  
360. over the southeast part of the United States, taking in power  
361. projects, an aluminum plant, the Florida boom, the Birmingham  
362. steel district, Muscle Shoals, and what not. By this time  
363. my friends in New York thought it would pay them to really  
364. hire me. At last I had a job in Wall Street. Moreover, I

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365. had the use of twenty thousand dollars of their money.  
366. For some years the fates tossed horseshoes and golden bricks  
367. into my lap and I made much more money than was good for me.  
368. It was too easy.

take

369. By this time drinking had gotten to be a very  
370. important and exhilarating place in my life. What was a  
371. few hundred dollars when you considered it in terms of ex-  
372. citement and important talk in the gilded palaces of jazz up-  
373. town. My natural conservativeness was swept away and I began  
374. to play for heavy stakes. Another legend of infallibility  
375. commenced to grow up around me and I began to have what is  
376. called in Wall Street a following which amounted to many  
377. paper millions of dollars. I had arrived, so let the scoffers  
378. scoff and be damned, but of course, they didn't, and I made  
379. a host of fair weather friends. I began to reach for more  
380. power attempting to force myself onto the directorates of  
381. corporations in which I controlled blocks of stock.

382. By this time, my drinking hsd assumed  
383. serious proportions. The remonstrances of my associates ter-  
384. minated in a bitter row, and I became a lone wolf. Though I  
385. managed to avoid serious scrapes and partly out of loyalty,  
386. extreme drunkenness, I had not become involved with the fair  
it

387. sex, there were many unhappy scenes in my apartment, which  
388. was a large one, as I had hired two, and had gotten the real  
389. estate people to knock out the walls between them.

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390. In the spring of 1929 caught the golf fever. This  
391. illness was about the worst yet. I had thought golf was  
392. pretty tepid sport, but I noticed some of my pretty

393. important friends thought it was a real game and it  
394. presented an excuse for drinking by day as well as by  
395. night. Moreover some one had casually said, they didn't think  
396. I would ver play a good game. This was a spark in a  
397. powder magazine, so my wife and I were instantly off to the  
398. country she to watch while I caught up with Walter Hagen.  
399. Then too it was a fine chance to flaunt my money around  
400. the old home town. And to carom lightly around the exclusive  
401. course, whose selct city membership had inspired so much  
402. awe in me as a boy. So Wall Street was lightly tossed  
403. aside while I acquired drank vast quantities of gin and  
404. acquired the impeccable coat of tan, one sees on the faces  
405. of the well to do. The local banker watched me with an  
406. amused skepticism as I whirled good fat checks in and out  
407. of his bank.  
408. IN October 1929 the whirling movement in my bank  
409. account ceased abruptly, and I commenced to whirl myself.  
410. Then I felt like Stephen Leacock's horseman, it seemed as rapidly  
411. though I were galloping/in all directions at once, for the  
412. great panic was on. First to Montreal, then to New York, to  
413. rally my following in stocks sorely needing support. A few  
414. bold spirits rushed into the breach, but it was of no use. I  
415. shed my own wings as the moth who gets to near to the candle  
416. flame. After one of those days of shrieking inferno on the  
417. stock exchange floor with no information available, I lurched  
418. from  
418. drunkenly anthe hotel bar to an adjoining brokerage office  
419. there at about 8 oclock in the evening I feverishly searched  
420. a huge pile of ticker tape and tore of about an inch of it.  
421. It bore the inscription P.F.K.32.. The stock had opened at  
422. 52 that morning. I had controlled over one hundred thousand  
423. shares of it, and had a sizable block myself. I knew that I  
424. was finished, and so were a lot of my friends.  
425. I went back into the bar and after a few  
426. drinks, my composure returned. People were beginning to jump  
427. from every story of that great Tower of Babel. That was high  
428.

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429. that I was not so weak. I realized that I had been care-  
430. less, especially with other peoples money. I had not paid  
431. attention to business and I deserved to be hurt. After a few  
432. some more whiskey, my confidence returned again, and with it  
433. an almost terrifying determination to somehow capitalize this  
434. mess and pay everybody off. I reflected that it was just

435. another worthwhile lesson and that there were a lot of  
436. reasons why people lost money in Wall Street that I had not  
437. thought of before.  
438. My wife took it all like the great person she is.  
439. I think she rather welcomed it the situation thinking it  
440. might bring me to my senses. Next morning, I woke early,  
441. shaking badly from excitement and a terrific hangover. A  
442. half bottle of Gin quickly took care of that momentary weak-  
as  
443. ness and I soon as business places were open I called a  
444. friend in Montreal and said -"Well Dick, they have nailed my  
445. hide to the barn door" - said he "The hell they have, come  
we  
446. on up". That is all he said and up W went.  
447. I shall never forget the kindness and generosity  
448. of this friend. Moreover I must still have carried one  
449. horseshoe with me, for by the spring of 1930, we were living  
450. in our accustomed style and I had a very comfortable credit  
451. balance on the very security in which I had taken the  
452. heaviest licking, with plenty of champagne and sound  
453. canadian whiskey, I began to feel like Napoleon returning  
454. Melba. Infallible again. No St Helena for me. Accustomed  
455. as they were to the ravages of fire water in Canada in those  
456. days, I soon began to outdistance most of my countrymen both  
457. as a serious and a frivolous drinker.  
458. Then the depression bore down in earnest.and  
459. I, having become worse than useless, had to be reluctantly  
459. Though I had become manager of one of the departments of my  
460. friend's business, my drinking and nonchalant cocksureness,  
461. had rendered me worse than useless, so he reluctantly let me  
462. go. We were stony broke again, and even our furniture  
463. looked like it was gone, for I could not even pay next months  
464. rent on our swank apartment.  
465. We wonder to this day how we ever got out of  
466. Montreal. But we did, and then I had to eat humble pie. We

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467. went to live with my Father and Mother-in-law where we  
468. happily found never failing help and sympathy. I got a  
469. job at what seemed to be a mere pittance of one hundred  
470. dollars a week, but a brawl with a taxi driver , who got  
471. very badly hurt, put an end to that . Mercifully, no one  
472. knew it, but I was not to have steady employment for five  
473. years, nor was I to draw a sober breath if I could help it.  
474. Great was my humiliation when my poor wife was

475. obliged to go to work in a department store, coming home ex-  
476. hausted night after night to find me drunk again. I became  
477. a hanger-on at brokerage shops, but was less and less wel-  
478. come as my drinking increased. Even then opportunities to  
479. make money pursued me, but I passed up the best of them by  
480. getting drunk at exactly the wrong time. Liquor had ceased  
481. to be a luxury; It had become a necessity. What few  
482. dollars I did make were devoted to keeping my credit good at  
483. the bars. To keep out of the hands of the police and for  
484. reasons of economy, I began to buy bathtub gin, usually two  
485. bottles a day, and sometimes three if I did a real workman-  
486. like job. This went on endlessly and I presently began to  
487. awake real early in the morning shaking violently. Nothing  
488. would seem to stop it but a water tumbler full of raw liquor.  
489. If I could steal out of the house and get five or six  
490. glasses of beer, I could sometimes eat a little breakfast.  
491. Curiously enough I still thought I could control the situation  
the  
492. and there were periods of sobriety which would revive a flag-  
493. ging hope of my wife and her parents. But as time wore on  
494. matters got worse. My mother-in-law died and my wife's health  
495. became poor, as did that of my Father-in-law. The house in  
496. which we lived was taken over by the mortgage holder. Still  
497. I persisted and still I fancied that fortune would again shine  
498. upon me. As late 1932 I engaged the confidence of a man  
499. who had friends with money. In the spring and summer of that  
500. year we raised one hundred thousand dollars to buy securities  
501. at what proved to be an all time low point in the New York  
502. stock exchange. I was to participate generously in the  
503. profits, and sensed that a great opportunity was at hand. So  
504. ????

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505. prodigious bender a few days before the deal was to be  
506. closed.  
507. In a measure this did bring me to senses.  
508. Many times before I had promised my wife that I had stopped  
509. forever. I had written her sweet notes and had inscribed  
510. the fly leaves of all the bibles in the house with to that  
511. effect. Not that the bible meant so much, but after all  
512. it was the book you put your hand on when you were sworn in  
513. at court. I now see, however, that I had no sustained de-  
514. sire to stop drinking until this last debacle. It was only  
515. then that I realized it must stop and forever. I had come  
516. to fully appreciate that once the first drink was taken,

517. there was no control Why then take this one? That was it-  
518. never was alcohol to cross my lips again in any form. There  
519. was, I thought, absolute finality in this decision. I had  
520. been very wrong, I was utterly miserable and almost ruined.  
521. This decision brought a great sense of relief, for I knew  
522. that I really wanted to stop. It would not be easy, I was  
523. sure of that, for I had begun to sense the power and cunning  
524. of my master - John Barleycorn. The old fierce determination  
525. to win out settled down on me - nothing, I still thought,  
526. could overcome that aroused as it was. Again I dreamed  
527. of my wife smiling happily, as I went out to slay the dragon.  
528. I would resume my place in the business world and recapture  
529. the lost regard of my fiends and associates. It would take  
530. a long time, but I could be patient. The picture of myself  
531. as a reformed drunkard rising to fresh heights of achieve-  
532. ment, quite carried me away with happy enthusiasm. My wife  
533. caught the spirit for she saw at last that I really meant  
534. business.  
535. But in a short while I came in drunk. I could  
536. give no real explanation for it. The thought of my new re-  
537. solve had scarcely occurred to me as I began. There had  
538. been no fight - someone had offered me a drink, and I had  
539. taken it, casually, remarking to myself that one or two  
540. would not harm a man of my capacity. What had become of my  
541. giant determination? How about all of that self searching I  
542. had done? Why had not the thought of my past failures and  
543. my new ambitions come into my mind? What of the intense de-

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544. sire to make my wife happy? Why hadn't these things - these  
545. powerful incentives arisen in my mind to stay my hand as I  
546. reached out to take that first drink? Was I crazy? I hated  
547. to think so, but I had to admit that a condition of mind re-  
548. sulting in such an appalling lack of perspective came pretty  
549. near to being just that.  
550. Then things were better for a time. I was  
551. constantly on guard. After two or three weeks of sobriety  
552. I began to think I was alright. Presently this quiet con-  
553. fidence was replaced by cocksureness. I would walk past my  
554. old haunts with a feeling of elation - I now fully realized  
555. the danger that lurked there. The tide had turned at last -  
556. and now I was really through. One afternoon on my way home  
557. I walked into a bar room to make a telephone call, suddenly  
558. I turned to the bartender and said "Four Irish whiskies -  
559. water on the side" - As he poured them out with a surprised

560. look, I can only remember thinking to myself - "I shouldn't  
561. be doing this, but here's how to the last time". As I  
562. gulped down the fourth one, I beat on the bar with my fist  
563. and said for "God's sake, why have I done this again?" Where  
564. had been my realization of only this morning as I had  
565. passed this very place, that I was never going to drink again  
566. I could give no answer, mortification and the feeling of  
567. utter defeat swept over me. The thought that perhaps I  
568. could never stop crushed me. Then as the cheering warmth  
569. of these first drinks spread over me, I said - "Next time  
570. I shall manage better, but while I am about it, I may as  
571. well get good and drunk". And I did exactly that.  
572. I shall never forget the remorse, the horror  
573. the utter hopelessness of the next morning. The courage to  
574. rise and do battle was simply not there . Before daylight  
575. I had stolen out of the house, my brain raced uncontrollably.  
576. There was a terrible feeling of impending calamity.  
577. feared even to cross a street, less I collapse and be run  
578. over by an early morning truck. Was there no bar open? Ah,  
579. yes, there was the all night place which sold beer - though  
580. it was before the legal opening hour, I persuaded the man be-  
581. hind the food counter that I must have a drink or perhaps die

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582. on the spot. Cold as the morning was, I must have drunk  
583. a dozen bottles of ale in rapid succession. My writhing  
584. nerves were stilled at last and I walked to the next corner  
585. and bought a paper. It told me that the stock market had  
586. gone to hell again - "What difference did it make anyway,  
587. the market would get better, it always did, but I'm in hell  
588. to stay - no more rising markets for me. Down for the count-  
589. what a blow to one so proud. I might kill myself, but no -  
590. not now," These were some of my thoughts - then I felt  
591. dazed - I groped in a mental fog - mere liquor would fix  
592. that - then two more bottles of cheap gin. Oblivion.  
593. The human mind and body is a marvelous  
594. mechanism, for mine withstood this sort of thing for yet  
595. another two years. There was little money, but I could al-  
596. ways drink. Sometimes I stole from my wife's slender purse  
597. when the early morning terror of madness was upon me. There  
598. were terrible scenes and though not often violent, I would  
599. sometimes do such things as to throw a sewing machine, or  
600. kick the panels out of every door in the house. There were  
601. moments when I swayed weakly before an open window or the  
602. medicine chest in which there was poison - and cursed my-

603. self for a weakling. There were flights from the city to  
604. the country when my wife could bear with me no longer at  
605. home Sometimes there would be several weeks and hope would  
606. return, especially for her, as I had not let her know how  
607. defeated I really was, but there was always the return to  
the  
608. conditions still worse. Then came a night I when the physi-  
609. cal and mental torture was so hellish that I feared I would  
610. take a flying leap through my bedroom window sash and all  
611. and somehow managed to drag my mattress down to the kitchen  
612. floor which was at the ground level. I had stopped drinking  
613. a few hours before and hung grimly to my determination that  
614. I could have no more that night if it killed me. That very  
615. nearly happened, but I was finally rescued by a doctor who  
616. prescribed chloral hydrate, a powerful sedative. This reliev-  
617. ed me so much that next day found me drinking apparently  
618. without the usual penalty, if I took some sedative occasion-  
619. ally. In the early spring of 1934 it became evident to

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620. everyone concerned that something had to be done and  
621. that very quickly. I was thirty pounds underweight, as I  
622. could eat nothing when drinking, which was most of the  
623. time. People had begun to fear for my sanity and I fre-  
624. quently had the feeling myself that I was becoming deranged.  
625. With the help of my brother-in-law, who is a  
626. physician I was placed in a well known institution for the  
627. bodily and mental rehabilitation of alcoholics. It was  
628. thought that if I were thoroughly cleared of alcohol and  
629. the brain irritation which accompanies it were reduced, I  
630. might have a chance. I went to the place desperatly hoping  
631. and expecting to be cured. The so-called bella donna  
632. treatment given in that place helped a great deal. My mind  
633. cleared and my appetite returned. Alternate periods of  
634. hydro-therapy, mild exercise and relaxation did wonders for  
635. me. Best of all I found a great friend in the doctor who  
636. was head of the staff. He went far beyond his routine duty  
637. and I shall always be grateful for those long talks in which  
638. explained that when I drank I became physically ill and that  
639. this bodily condition was usually accompanied by a mental  
640. state such that the defense one should have against alcohol  
641. became greatly weakened, though in no way mitigating my  
642. early foolishness and selfishness about drink, I was greatly  
643. relieved to discover that I had really been ill perhaps for  
644. several years. Moreover I felt that the understanding and

645. fine physical start I was getting would assure my recovery,  
646. Though some of the inmates of the place who had been there  
647. many times seemed to smile at that idea. I noticed however  
648. that most of them had no intention of quitting; they merely  
649. came there to get reconditioned so that they could start in  
650. again. I, on the contrary, desperately wanted to stop and  
651. strange to say I still felt that I was a person of much more  
652. determination and substance than they, so I left there in  
653. high hope and for three or four months the goose hung high.  
654. In a small way I began to make some progress in business.  
655. Then came the terrible day when I drank again  
656. and could not explain why I started. The curve of my de-  
657. clining moral and bodily health fell of like a ski jump.  
658. After a hectic period of drinking, I found myself again in

[archivist's note: the typewritten manuscript text continues correctly with page 23, but line numbers 659 - 679 remain unknown ]

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680. Everyone became resigned to the certainty that I  
681. would have to be confined somewhere ore else stumble  
682. along to a miserable end, but there was soon to be  
683. proof that indeed it is often darkest before dawn,  
684. for this proved to be my last drinking bout, and I am  
685. supremely confident that my present happy state is to be  
686. for all time.  
687. Late one afternoon near the end of that  
688. month of November I sat alone in the kitchen of my home.  
689. As usual, I was half drunk and enough so that the keen  
690. edge of my remorse was blunted. With a certain satis-  
691. faction I was thinking that there was enough gin se-  
692. creted about the house to keep me fairly comfortable  
693. that night and the next day. My wife was at work and I  
694. resolved not to be in too bad shape when she got home.  
695. My mind reverted to the hidden bottles and at I carefully  
696. considered where each one was hidden. These things must  
697. be firmly in my mind to escape the early morning tragedy  
698. of not being able to find at least a water tumbler full  
699. of liquor. Just as I was trying to decide whether to risk  
700. concealing one of the full ones within easy reach of my  
701. side of the bed, the phone rang.  
702. At the other end of the line Over the  
703. wire came the voice of an old school friend and drinking  
704. companion of boom times. By the time we had exchanged  
705. greetings, I sensed that he was sober. This seemed

706. strange, for it was years since anyone could remember his  
707. coming to New York in that condition. I had come to think  
708. of him as another hopeless devotee of Bacchus. Current  
709. rumor had it that he had been committed to a state institu-  
710. tion for alcoholic insanity. I wondered if perhaps he had  
711. not just escaped. Of course he would come over right away  
712. and take dinner with us. A fine idea that, for I then  
713. would have an excuse to drink openly with him. Yes, we  
714. would try to recapture the spirit of other days and per-  
715. haps my wife could be persuaded to join in, which in self  
716. defense she sometimes would. I did not even think of the  
717. harm I might do him. There was to be a pleasant, and I

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718. hoped an exciting interlude in what had become a  
round

719. dreary waste of loneliness. Another drink stirred my  
720. fancy; this would be an oasis in the dreary waste. That  
721. was it - an oasis. Drinkers are like that.  
722. The door opened and there he stood, very  
723. erect and glowing. His deep voice boomed out cheerily -  
724. the cast of his features - his eyes - the freshness of  
725. his complexion - this was my friend of schooldays. There  
726. was a subtle something or other instantly apparent even to  
727. my befuddled perception. Yes - there was certainly some-  
728. thing more - he was inexplicably different - what had  
729. happened to him?

730. We sat at the table and I pushed a  
731. lusty glass of gin flavored with pineapple juice in his  
732. direction. I thought if my wife came in, she would be re-  
733. lieved to find that we were not taking it straight -  
734. "Not now", he said. I was a little crest  
735. fallen at this, though I was glad to know that someone  
736. could refuse a drink at that moment - I knew I couldn't.  
737. "On the wagon?" - I asked. He shook his head and looked  
738. at me with an impish grin .

739. "Aren't you going to have anything?" -

740. I ventured presently.

741. "Just as much obliged, but not tonight"

742. I was disappointed, but curious. What had got into the  
743. fellow - he wasn't himself.

744. "No, he's not himself - he's somebody  
is

745. else - not just that either - he was his old self, plus

746. something more, and maybe minus something". I couldn't put  
747. my finger on it - his whole bearing almost shouted that  
748. something of great import had taken place.  
749. "Come now, what's this all about", I  
750. asked. Smilingly, yet seriously, he looked straight at me  
751. and said "I've got religion".  
752. So that was it. Last summer an alco  
753. alcoholic crackpot - this fall, washed in the blood of the  
754. Lamb. heavens, that might be even worse. I was thunder-  
755. struck, and he, of all people. What on earth could one

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756. say to the poor fellow.  
757. So I finally blurted out "That's  
758. fine", and sat back waiting for a sizzling blast on sal-  
759. vation and the relation of the Cross, the Holy Ghost, and  
760. the Devil thereto. Yes, he did have that starry edy  
761. eyed look, the old boy was on fire all right. Well, bless  
762. his heart, let him rant . It was nice that he was sober  
763. after all. I could stand it anyway, for there was plenty  
764. of gin and I took a little comfort that tomorrow's ration  
765. wouldn't have to be used up right then.  
766. Old memories of Sunday School - the profit  
767. temperance pledge, which I never signed - the sound of the  
768. preacher's voice which could be heard on still Sunday  
769. mornings way over on the hillside beyond the railroad  
770. tracks,- My grandfather's quite scorn of things some  
771. church people did to him - his fair minded attitude that  
772. I should make up my mind about these things myself - his  
spheres  
773. convictions that the fears really had their mooxx music -  
774. but his denial of the right of preachers to tell him how  
775. he should listen - his perfect lack of fear when he men-  
776. tioned these things just before his death - these memories  
777. surged up out of my childhood as I listened to my friend.  
778. My own gorge rose for a moment to an all time high as my  
779. anti-preacher - anti-church folk sentiment welled up in-  
780. side me. These feelings soon gave way to respectful at-  
781. tention as my former drinking companion rattled on.  
782. Without knowing it, I stood at the great turning point of  
783. my life - I was on the threshold of a fourth dimension  
784. of existence that I had doubtfully heard some people des-  
785. describe and others pretend to have.  
786. He went on to lay before me a simple

787. proposal. It was so simple and so little  
788. complicated with the theology and dogma  
789. I had associated with religion that by  
790. degrees I became astonished and delighted.  
791. I was astonished because a thing so simple  
792. could accomplish the profound result I now  
793. beheld in the person of my friend. To say that  
794. I was delighted is putting it mildly , for I  
795. realized that I could go for his program also.  
796. Like all but a few u human beings I had truele  
797. believed in the existence of a power greater  
798. than myself true athiests are really very scarce.  
799. It always seemed to me more difficult and illogical  
800. to be an athiest than to believe there is a  
801. certain amount of law and order and purpose  
802. underlying the universe. The faith of an athiest  
803. in his convictions is far more blind then that  
804. of the religionist for it leads inevitably to  
805. the absurd conclusion that the vast and ever  
806. changing cosmos originally grew out of a cipher,  
807. and now has arrived at its present state thru  
808. a series of haphazard accidents, one of which  
809. is man himself. My liking for things scientific  
810. had encouraged to look into such matters as  
811. a theory of evolutionthe nature of matter itself  
812. as seen thru the eyes of the great chemists  
813. physicists and astronomers and I had pondered  
814. much on the question of the meaning of life itself.  
815. The chemist had shown me that material matter  
816. is not all what it appears to be. His studies  
817. point to the conclusion that the eliments and there  
818. meriad combinations are but in the last last  
819. analysis nothing but different arrangements  
820. of that universal something which they are pleased  
821. to call the electron. The physist and the  
822. astronomer had shown me that our universe .  
823. moves and evolves according to many precise  
824. and well understood laws. They tell me to the  
825. last second when the sun will be next eclipsed  
826. at the place I am now standing, or the very day  
827. several decades from now When Hallyes comet  
828. will make its turn about the sun. Much to my  
829. x interest I learned from these men that great  
830. cosmic accidents occur bringing about conditions

831. which are not exceptions to the law so much  
832. as they result in new and unexpected developements  
833. which arise logically enough once the so called  
834. accident has occured. It is highly probable for  
835. example-that our earth is the only planet in the  
836. solar system upon which man could evolve - and it  
837. is claimed by some astronomers that the chance  
838. that similar planets exist elsewhere in the universe  
839. is rather small. There would have to be a vast  
840. number of coincidences to bring about the exact  
841. conditions of light,warmth, food supply, etc.  
842. to support life as we know it here. But I used to  
843. ask myself why regard the earth as an accident  
844. in a system which evidences in so many respects the  
845. greatest law and order' If If all of this law  
846. existed then could there be so much law and no  
847. intelligence? And if there was an intelligence  
848. great enough to materialize and keep a universe in  
849. order it must necessarily have the power to create  
850. accidents and make exceptions.  
851. The evolutionist brought great logic to bear  
852. on the proposition that life on this planet began  
853. with the lowly omebia , which was a simple cell  
854. residing in the oceans of Eons past. Thru countless  
855. & strange combinations of logic and accident man  
856. and all other kinds of life evolved but man possessed  
857. a consciousness of self, a power to reason and to  
858. choose , and a small still voice which told him the  
859. difference between right and wrongand man became  
860. increasingly able to fashion with his hands and  
861. with his tools the creations of his own brain .  
862. He could give direction and purpose to natural laws  
apparently  
863. and so he,created new things for himself and of  
864. [line number skipped in the typewritten manuscript]  
865. and do he apparently created new things for himself an  
866. [line number skipped in the typewritten manuscript]  
867. out of a tissue composed of his past experience  
868. and his new ideas. Therefore man tho' resembling  
869. other forms of life in many ways seems to me  
870. very different. It was obvious that in a limited  
871. fashion he could play at being a God himself .  
872. Such was the picture I had of myself and the  
873. world in which I lived, that there was a mighty

874. rythm, intelligence and purpose behind it all  
875. despite inconsistencies. I had rather strongly  
876. believed.  
877. But this was as far as I had ever got toward  
878. the realization of God and my personal relationship  
879. to Him. My thoughts of God were academic and  
880. speculative when I had them, which for some years  
881. past had not been often. That God was an intelligence  
882. power and love upon which I could absolutely rely  
883. as an individual had not seriously occurred to me.  
884. Of course I knew in a general way what theologians  
885. claimed but I could not see that religious persons  
886. as a class demonstrated any more power, love and  
887. intelligence than those who claimed no special  
888. dispensation from God tho' I grant de that  
889. christianity ought to be a wonderful influence  
890. I was annoyed, irked and confused by the attitudes  
891. they took, the beliefs they held and the things  
892. they had done in the name of Christ,. People like  
893. myself had been burned and whole population put  
894. to fire and sword on the pretext they did not  
895. believe as christians did. History taught that  
896. christians were not the only offenders in this  
897. respect. It seemed to me that on the whole  
898. it made little difference whether you were  
899. Mohamadem, Catholic, Jew, Protesant or Hotentot.  
900. You were supposed to look askance at the other  
901. fellows approach to God. Nobody could be saved  
902. unless they fell in with your ideas. I had a  
903. great admiration for Christ as a man, He practised  
904. what he preached and set a marvelous example.  
905. It was not hard to agree in Principle with  
906. His moral teachings bit like most people, I preferred  
907. to live up to some moral standard but not to others.  
908. At any rate I thought I understood as well as any  
909. one what good morals were and with the exceptions  
910. of my drinking I felt superior to most christians  
911. I knew. I might be weak in some respects but at  
912. least I was not hypocritical, So my interest in  
913. christianity other than its teaching of moral  
914. principles and the good I hoped it did on  
915. balance was slight.  
916. Sometimes I wished that I had been religiously  
917. trained from early childhood that I might have the  
918. comfortable assurance about so many things I found

919. it impossible to have any definate convictions  
920. upon. The question of the hereafter, the many  
921. theological abstractions and seeming contradictions  
922. - these things were puzzling and finally annoying  
923. for religious people told me I must believe  
924. a great many seemingly impossible things to be one  
925. [line number skipped]  
926. of them. This insistance on their part plus a  
927. powerful desire to posess the things of this life  
928. while there was yet time had crowded the idea of  
929. the personal God more and more out of my mind as the  
930. years went by. Neither were my convictions strengthea  
931. by my own misfortunes. The great war and its  
932. aftermath seemed to more certainly demonstrate the  
933. omnipotence of the devil than the loving care of  
934. an all powerful God  
935. Nevertheless here I was sitting opposite a  
936. man who talked about a personal God who told me  
937. how hw had found Him, who described to me how I  
938. might do the same thing and who convinced me  
939. utterly that something had come into his life  
940. which had accomplished a miracle. The man was  
941. trasformed ; there was no denying he had been re-  
942. born. He was radiant of something which soothed  
943. my troubled spirit as tho the fresh clean wind of  
944. mountain top blowing thru and thru me I saw and  
945. felt and in a great surge of joy I realized  
946. that the great presence which had made itself felt  
947. to me that war time day in Winchester Cathedral  
948. had again returned.  
949. As he continued I com menced to see myself as in  
950. as in an unearthly mirror. I saw how ridiculous and  
951. futile the whole basis of my life had been. Standing in  
952. the middle of the stage of my lifes setting I had been  
953. feverishly trying to arrange ideas and things and people  
954. and even God, to my own liking, to my own ends and to  
955. promote what I had thought to be true happiness. It was  
956. truly a sudden and breath taking illumination. Then the  
957. idea came - " The tragic thing about you is, that you  
958. have been playing God." That was it. Playing God. Then  
959. the humor of the situation burst upon me, here was I a  
960. tiny grain of sand of the infinite shores of Gods great  
961. universe and the little grain of sand, had been trying  
962. to play God. He really thought he could arrange all of  
963. the other little grains about him just to suit himself.

964. And when his little hour was run out, people would  
965. weep and say in awed tones-' How wonderful'.  
966. So then came the question - If I were no  
967. longer to be God than was I to find and perfect  
968. the new relationship with my creator - with the Father  
969. of Lights who presides over all ? My friend laid down  
970. to me the terms and conditions which were simple but  
971. not easy, drastic yet broad and acceptable to honest  
972. men everywhere, of whatever faith or lack thereof. He did not  
973. tell me that these were the only terms - he merely said that  
974. they were terms that had worked in his case. They were spiritual  
975. principles and rules of practice he thought common to all of the  
976. worthwhile religions and philosophies of mankind. He regarded them  
977. as stepping stones to a better understanding of our relation to the  
978. spirit of the universe and as a practical set of directions setting  
979. forth how the spirit could work in and through us that we might  
980. become spearheads and more effective agents for the promotion  
981. of Gods Will for our lives and for our fellows. The great thing  
982. about it all was its simplicity and scope, no really religious  
983. persons belief would be interferred with no matter what his training ,  
984. For the man on the street who just wondered about such things, it was  
985. Was a providential approach, for with a small beginning of faith  
986. and a very large dose of action along spiritual lines he could be  
987. sure to demonstrate the Power and Love of God as a practical  
988. workable twenty four hour a day design for living.  
989. This is what my friend suggested I do. One: Turn my face  
990. to God as I understand Him and say to Him with earnestness - complete  
991. honesty and abandon- that I henceforth place my life at His  
992. disposal and direction forever. TWO: that I do this in the presence  
993. of another person, who should be one in whom I have confidence and if  
994. I be a member of a religious organization, then with an appropriate  
995. member of that body. TWO: Having taken this first step, I should  
996. next prepare myself for Gods Company by taking a thorough and ruth-  
997. less inventory of my moral defects and derelictions. This I should  
998. do without any reference to other people and their real or fancied  
999. part in my shortcomings should be rigorously excluded-" Where have I  
1000. failed-is the prime question. I was to go over my life from the  
1001. beginning and ascertain in the light of my own present understanding  
1002. where I had failed as a completely moral person. Above all things in  
1003. making this appraisal I must be entirely honest with myself. As an  
1004. aid to thoroughness and as something to look at when I got through  
1005. I might use pencil and paper. First take the question of honesty.  
1006. Where, how and with whom had I ever been dishonest? With respect to  
1007. anything. What attitudes and actions did I still have which were not  
1008. completely honest with God with myself or with the other fellow. I ws

1009. was warned that no one can say that he is a completely honest  
1010. person. That would be superhman and peiple aren't that way.  
1011. Nor should I be misled by the thought of how honest I am in  
1012. some particulars. I was too ruthlessly tear out of the past all  
1013. of my dishonesty and list them in writing. Next I was to explore  
1014. another area somewhat related to the first and commonly a very  
1015. defective one in most people. I was to examine my sex conduct  
1016. since infancy and rigorously compare it with what I thought that  
1017. conduct should have been. My friend explained to me that peoples  
1018. ideas throughout the world on what constitutes perfect sex conduct  
1019. vary greatly Consequently, I was not to measure my defects in this  
1020. particular by adopting any standard of easy virtue as a measuring  
1021. stick, I was merely to ask God to show me the difference between  
1022. right and wrong in this regard and ask for help and strength and  
1023. honesty in cataloguing my defects according to the true dictates  
1024. of my own conscience. Then I might take up the related questions  
1025. of greed and selfishness and thoughtlessness. How far and in what  
1026. connection had I strayed and was I straying in these particulars?  
1027. I was assured I could make a good long list if I got honest enough  
1028. and vigorous enough. Then there was the question of real love for  
1029. all of my fellows including my family, my friends and my enemies  
1030. Had I been completely loving toward all of these at all times  
1031. and places. If not, down in the book it must go and of course  
1032. everyone could put plenty down along that line.

(Resntments, self pity,fear,pride.)

1033. my friend pointed out that resentment, self-pity, fear, in-  
1034. feriority, pride and egotism, were thingsx attitudes which  
1035. distorted ones perspective suc and usefulness to entertain such  
1036. sentiments and attitudes was to shut oneself off from God and  
1037. people about us. Therefor it would be necessary for me to  
1038. examine myself critically in this respect and write down my  
1039. conclusions.  
1040. Step number three required that I carefully go over my  
1041. personal inventory and definatly arrive at the conclusion that  
1042. I was now willing to rid myself of all these defects moreover  
1043. I was to understand that this would not be accomplished by  
1044. [line number skipped]  
1045. myself alone, therefore I was to humbly ask God that he take  
1046. these handicaps away. To make sure that I had become really  
1047. honest in this desire, I should sit down with whatever person  
1048. I chose and reveal to him without any reservations whatever  
1049. the result of my self appraisal. From this point out I was  
1050. to stop living alone in every particular. Thus was I to ridx keep

1051. myself free in the future of those things which shut out  
1052. God's power, It was explained that I had been standing in my  
1053. own light, my spiritual interior had been like a room darkened  
1054. by very dirty windows and this was an undertaking to wipe them  
1055. off and keep them kleen. Thus was my housekeeping to be ac-  
1056. complished, it would be difficult to be really honest with my-  
1057. self and God and perhaps to be completely honest with another  
1058. person by telling an other the truth, I could however be ab-  
1059. solutely sure that my self searching had been honest and effective.  
1060. Moreover I would be taking my first spiritual step towards my  
1061. fellows for something I might say could be helpful in leading  
1062. the person to whom I talked a better understanding of himself.  
1063. In this fashion I would commence to break down the barriers  
1064. which my many forms of self will had erected. Warning was  
1065. given me that I should select a person who would be in ho way  
1066. injured or offended by what I had to say, for I could not expect  
1067. to commence my spiritual growth at the w expense of another.  
1068. My friend told me that this step was complete, I would surely  
1069. feel a tremendous sense of relieve accompaning by the absolute  
1070. conviction that I was on the right t road at last.  
1071.10 Step number four demanded that I frankly admit that my  
1072. deviations from right thought and action had injured other people  
1073. therefore I must set about undoing the damage to the best of my  
1074. ability. It would be advisable to make a list of all the  
1075. persons I had hurt or with whom I had bad relations. People I  
1076. disliked and those who had injured me should have perfered  
1077. attention, provided I had done them injury or still entertained  
1078. any feeling of resentment towards them . Under no sircumstances  
1079. was I to consider their defects or wrong doing , then I was to  
1080. approach these people telling them I had commenced a way of life  
1081. which required that I be on friendly and helpful terms with every  
1082. body; that I recognized I had been at fault in this particular  
1083. that I was sorry for what I had done or said and had come to set  
1084. matters right insofar as I possibly could. Under no circumstances  
1085. was I to engage in argument or controversy. My own wrong doing  
1086. was to be admitted and set right and that was all. Assurance was  
1087. to be given that I was prepared to go to any length to do the  
1088. right thing. Again I was warned that obviously I could not  
1089. make amends at the expense of other people, that judgement and  
1090. discretion should be used lest others should be hurt. This sort  
1091. of situation could be postponed until such conditions became such  
1092. that the job could be done without harm to anyone. One could  
1093. be contented in the meanwhile by discussing such a matter frankly  
1094. with a third party who would not be involved and of course ona a

1095. strictly confidential basis. Great was to be taken that one  
1096. did not avoid situations difficult or dangerous to oneself on  
as possible

1097. such a pretext . The willingness to go the limit as fast had  
1098. to be at all times present. This principle of making amends  
1099. was to be continued in the future for only by keeping myself free  
2100. of bad relationships with others could I expect to receive the  
1101. Power and direction so indispensable to my new and larger useful-  
1102. ness . This sort of discipline would help me to see others as  
1103. they really are; to recognize that every one is plagued by various  
1104. of self will; that every one is in a sense actually sick with  
1105. some form of self; that when men behave badly they are only dis-  
1106. playing symptoms of spiritual ill health .

1107. one is not usually angry or critical of another when he  
1108. suffers from some grave bodily illness and I would  
how

1109. presently see senseless and futile it is to be disturbed  
1110. by those burdened by their own wrong thinking . I was to  
1111. entertain towards everyone a quite new feeling of tolerance  
1112. patience and helpfulness I would recognize more and more  
1113. that when I became critical or resentful I must at all  
1114. costs realize that such things were very wrong in me  
1115. and that in some form otro or other I still had the very  
1116. defects of which I complained in others. Much emphasis  
1117. was placed on the development of this of mind toward others.  
1118. No stone should be left unturned to achieve this end.  
1119. The constant practice of this principle frequently ask-  
1120. ing God for His help in making it work under trying  
1121. circumstances was absolutely imperative . The drunkard  
1122. especially had to be most rigorous on this point for one  
1125. burst of anger or self pity might so shut him out from his  
1124. new found strength that he would drink again and with us  
1125. that always means calamity and sometimes death.  
1126. This was indeed a program, the thought of some of the  
to

1127. things I would have admit about myself to other people  
1128. was most distasteful - even appalling. It was only to o  
1129. plain that I had been ruined by my own colossal egotism  
1130. and selfishness, not only in respect to drinking but with  
1131. regard to everything else. Drinking had been a symptom  
1132. of these things. Alcohol had submerged my inferiorities  
1135. and puffed up my self esteem, body had finally rebelled  
1134. and I had some fatally affected , my thinking and action  
1135. was woefully distorted thru infection from the mire of  
1136. self pity, resentment, fear and remorse in which I now

1137. wallowed . The motive behing a certain amount of generosity,  
1138. kindness and the meticulous honesty in some directions  
1139. upon which I had prided myself was not perhaps not so  
1140. good after all. The motive had been to get personal  
1141. satisfaction for myself, perhaps not entirely but on the  
1142. whole this was true. I had sought the glow which comes  
applause  
1143. with the flaws and Praise rendered me by others.  
1144. I began to see how actions good in themselves might avail  
1145. little because of wrong motive , I had been like the man  
1146. who feels that all is well after he has condesendingly  
1147. taken turkeys to the poor at Xmas time . How clear it  
1148. suddenly became that all of my thought and action, both  
1149. good and bad, had arisen out of a desire to make myself  
1150. happy and satisfied. I had been self centered instead of  
1151. God centered. It was now easy to understand why the taking  
this  
1152. of a simple childlike attitude toward God plus a drastic  
1153. program of action which would place him would bring  
1154. results. How evident it became that mere faith in God  
1155. was not enough. Faith had to be demonstrated by works  
1156. and there could be no works or any worth while demonstrations  
1157. until I had fitted myself for the undertaking and had be-  
1158. come a suitable table agent thru which God might express Himself.  
1159. There had to be a tremendous personal housecleaning, a  
1160. sweeping away of the debris of past wilfullness , a restoring  
1161. of broken relationships and a firm resolve to make God's  
1162. will my will . I must stop forcing things , I must stop  
1163. trying to mold people and situations to my own liking.  
1164. Nearly every one is taught that human willpower and ambition  
1165. if good ends are sought are desirable attributes. I too  
1166. had clung to that conception but I saw that it was not good  
1167. enough, nor big enough , nor powerful enough . My own will had  
1168. failed in many areas of my live. With respect to  
1169. alcohol it had become absolutely inopoperative . My ambitions,  
1170. which had seemed worthy at some time, had been frustrated.  
1171. Even had I been successful , the persuit of my desires  
1172. would have perhaps harmed others add their relizationw  
1173. would have added little or nothing to anyones peace,  
1174. happiness or usefulness. I began to see that the clashing  
1175. ambitions and designs of even those who sought what to them  
1176. seemed worthy ends , have filled the world with discord and  
1177. misery . Perhaps people of this sort created more havouqx  
1178. havoc than those confessedly imoral and krucked crooked

1179. I saw even the most useful people die unhappy and defeated.  
1180. All because some one else had behaved badly or they had

[archivist's note: the rest of this manuscript is currently missing]