

DIGEST OF PROCEEDINGS AT DINNER GIVEN BY  
MR. JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER JR., IN THE INTEREST  
OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, AT UNION CLUB,  
NEW YORK CITY, FEBRUARY 8, 1940.

Mr. Nelson Rockefeller, after the dinner, called the meeting to order and expressed regret that his father would be unable to be present, but that Mr. Scott, president of Lockwood Greene Engineers, Inc., would take over the meeting at this point.

MR. SCOTT: "It is a very difficult situation to pinch hit for Mr. Rockefeller, but Nelson and I have agreed between us that we are going to do the best we can. Mr. Rockefeller asked me particularly to say how much interested he was in the work that is being done and how very sorry he is that he cannot be here, and how much he appreciates the fact that you gentlemen have come out to hear what is to be said.

My own experience with this group dates back to December 1937. I was asked to attend a meeting in Rockefeller Center and I met some fifteen or eighteen men there and I heard a story that thrilled me from the start. Mr. Wilson, Dr. Smith, Mr. Mayo and some of the others who are here tonight told of their experience in getting control over alcoholism. The thing that particularly impressed me as a business man was that this was done without any theatrics, without any strong appeal to the emotions, without any effects or any activities which perhaps a conservative person might criticize. What they had done, it seemed to me, had gone back to the techniques of primitive Christianity, where one person told the good news to another. And it did not seem to make much difference whether the person they told it to was a Jew, a Protestant, a Catholic or nothing at all. If he observed the techniques which had been developed and reached out into the unknown and asked for help, the help came.

I am not here to make a speech but to introduce the other speakers. I first want to introduce my friend Bill Wilson, who is at my right. Of this group Bill Wilson here has been the leader. He is almost, if not entirely, the originator of the undertaking. I know you will all want to hear from Mr. Wilson, and now I present him to you—Bill Wilson."

MR. WILSON: Mr. Chairman, Mr. Rockefeller, friends and guests: If there is one thing that most people would like, it is to recover the good things they have lost. With us who have been alcoholics one of those good things is the regard of our fellow men. Therefore we are especially grateful to you gentlemen because your coming here is a mark of renewed confidence, and we want to thank you for the opportunity of presenting the little story of what has happened.

I might start off by giving an account of a man whom I have not seen for two or three years. His experience so well illustrates the nature of the problem with which we have been dealing. This man was a rich man's son, and I can pay him no greater tribute than to say that he was very successful in business; I think that is a real tribute. He was a person of dignity, good taste, education. He had a great many friends. Well, he did a conventional amount of drinking, and that went along nicely a number of years, and then he found that he began to get drunk, very much to his own consternation, for he had looked down upon people of that type before.

I have indicated, I think, that he was a person of character, and great force of character. Therefore the question immediately arises in everyone's mind: "Why didn't he stop?" But he did not.

Little by little matters got worse and he began to go from one hospital or cure to another. He consulted psychiatrists. He began to make a study of himself, and of this thing which is called alcoholism. Little by little the realization dawned on him that although he might have been foolish in drinking too much, now he had become sick. In desperation he went to Dr. Jung in Zurich, who is considered by many physicians the world's leading authority on the alcoholic mind. There he was under treatment, I believe, for a long time. In the course of that treatment he said to Dr. Jung: "Doctor, you are for me the court of last resort. Will you please tell me how serious this is and where I get off?" And the doctor said: "It is this serious. I have never seen one single case where the alcoholic's mind was in the state that yours is that ever recovered." And our friend said: "Ever recovered? Are there no exceptions?" And the doctor said:

"Yes, there are some exceptions—those cases where men have had so-called vital spiritual experiences." An expression of relief went over our friend's face as he said: "Well, Doctor, I am a good Episcopalian. I used to be a vestryman before I got so bad." The Doctor shook his head. "That is not enough to expel this obsession which you have, this so-called compulsion neurosis." So our friend said, "What next, how do I get one of those things?" "Well," the Doctor said, "I don't know. Certain orders in the Catholic Church have had success with alcoholics. The Salvation Army . . . priests and ministers partially . . . Christian Science. . . . But these successes have been only occasional, sporadic." And he added, "I don't know whether the lightning will hit you or not. You might try. Otherwise you may as well shut yourself up, because if you don't you will die."

That is a typical statement of the alcoholic's dilemma. It describes in a loose way a condition in which we have gone from habit to obsession, to insanity. And the very strange thing is that while this is going on, many of us seem to all outward appearances to be sound and able citizens in other respects. Our minds waver, and we wonder what in thunder is the matter.

Recently I attended a dinner given by the Research Council on Problems of Alcohol. Several of the country's leading authorities on the subject spoke. At the end of the meeting, the chairman, urging the need for research, called attention to the fact that all of these authorities were in serious disagreement as to the fundamental cause.

We laymen don't pretend to say just what it is that has ailed us. We know it is deadly. We know it to be hopeless unless the key is turned in the lock to the extent that it has been turned for the members of our group who now number between four and five hundred.

I might refer briefly to my own experience . . .

(Here Mr. Wilson gave his own experiences as an alcoholic and in discovering a way out for himself which after seventeen years' continuous drinking had brought him to a condition which leading medical authorities on alcoholism pronounced hopeless, has enabled him to be sober for five years.)

This experience is given in full in the book "Alcoholics Anonymous," so it seems needless to recount it in this necessarily concise report.)

After I had been free from liquor for several months I went to the city of Akron on a business trip, a business trip which promised a great deal to me. It meant perhaps the presidency of a small company; it meant coming from a state of having no business friends or prestige whatever to a state of easy circumstances, and I counted a great deal on it. When I got there the matter bogged down into a proxy fight. Now that was a state of affairs that would have formerly thrown me into a tailspin at once. I was walking up and down the corridor of the hotel without any sure way of getting home, the bill unpaid, and the old thinking started to come back—well, after all, I ought to go into the bar and think things over, I see some nice people in there, etc.—that vague thinking that so often precedes the first drink, even though one may have had delirium but a month before. That sort of thinking was started but immediately I had a feeling of alarm which was new to me. I began to wonder if I should not try to be helpful to someone else in that same position.

I had tried to do some alcoholic work prior to this business trip, although without much success. So after inquiring about a little bit, I ran across the gentleman who sits over there, his name is Dr. Bob Smith of Akron. A great many of us hope and believe that Dr. Bob Smith will be known in time to come as the Louis Pasteur of alcoholism, because he has personally done more about it than anybody else, and it was in Akron really that the thing was worked out and so many things were proved up.

Bob said afterwards that he expected to spend only fifteen minutes, but as a matter of fact we spent several hours together. I told him of my experience, what I had found, and we talked about drinking. Shortly after that he had one little relapse and that was the last. He has had no more alcoholic trouble since.

He himself explains it this way: "For the first time in my life I talked with someone who knew by personal experience what the problem was, and because of that identity of experience you were able to carry to me convictions that I did not have before;

one as to my hopelessness and two as to the absolute necessity of finding a spiritual basis for living."

Now Bob is a doctor. He knew a great deal about the problem. He had tried many avenues of escape and among those was the religious solution. He had tried them earnestly, and still with no success. Therefore we stumbled upon one of the principles upon which we now operate, and that is that one alcoholic talking to another seems to carry conviction, or, as you might say, packs a wallop that the outsider, no matter how understanding, cannot.

That summer in Akron, while my business dragged along into a lawsuit, Bob and I found that we had to work with others to stay alive ourselves. We kept scouring around for prospects. A couple were fiat failures. Two fellows we succeeded with, and then I came back to New York.

Now I am going to take you on with an account of what happened after I left, because to my mind that is where the real story of this thing begins. There were then three fellows in that town who felt that they must help other alcoholics to get well or die themselves. Then they found that when they tried to help these people, and as they found they could help them, they loved to do it. Now that is exactly what we have all discovered, each in his turn. That is why this organization needs little driving power from the top. Surely if each of us were a member of a conventional organization, and the undertaker and the asylum were just around the corner unless we were reasonably diligent, such an organization would function pretty smoothly.

Meanwhile, as an avocation—and that is what it is with all of us—I did some work here in my spare time. I was going on in business then. A few of us sprung up about New York. I began to go back to the hospital over on Central Park West and talk to patients there, and they began to return to their communities and in some cases they started to work. When we came down to about two years ago there were about forty of us whom we thought had recovered.

Then we began to say to ourselves: well, here, we owe it to other men in this dilemma to let them know how they can get

well. Moreover we felt that we ought to have a book which would represent a pool of our experience down to that particular time, feeling that enough had been proved to be surely of distinct help. Another thing we felt necessary was the matter of getting the advice and counsel of people outside our group. And so it was that the Alcoholic Foundation came into being.

Well, then the book was written and that book, I hope, has no theory in it. It is all our own experience as we see it, and it sets out in detail the methods that we employ, so that an alcoholic at a distance, be he a person of enough determination and substance, can take hold of that book, follow its directions and get well. As in fact some men seem now to be doing alone.

To continue with what had happened out in Akron. By the time the book was published last April there were about one hundred of us, the majority of them in the West. Although we have no exact figures, in counting heads recently, we think it fair to state that of all the people who have been seriously interested in this thing since the beginning, one-half have had no relapse at all. About 25% are having some trouble, or have had some trouble, but in our judgment will recover. The other 25% we do not know about.

In Akron the club had got up to a membership of forty or fifty when some people in Cleveland began to hear about it. One of those fellows was a chap who is here tonight, by the name of Clarence Snyder. Clarence began to work around among people in Cleveland and began to attend Akron meetings—this goes back some two years—so little by little a nucleus was formed in Cleveland of people who were getting well.

By this same spilling over method two men appeared after a time in Chicago, and in the fall of this year they were joined by a woman alcoholic who had some means and spare time. I was there, for the first time, by the way, about two weeks ago. I found thirty people there in that Chicago group whom I had never seen. Twenty-six of them had had no relapse.

The book is finding its way over the country. It is being used by doctors and sanitariums. The Alcoholic Foundation, to date, as the result of publicity and the book, has had about a thou-

sand inquiries. Fortunately these inquiries are on the whole very good material, because they emanate from people and families who have tried about everything else. Those men and those women having alcoholic trouble who write in and demand personal contact are prima facie good prospects.

The results, so far as percentages go, are beginning to be impressive with the lapse of time. Enough has been demonstrated to be worth while, eminently worth while. But what the final verdict of medicine will be I do not know. We have here tonight Dr. Blaisdell, who is head of the Rockland State Hospital. The doctor thinks enough of us to allow us to talk to committed alcoholic cases, and ten of them have been liberated since last summer. About twenty more are just now coming out.

Our group over in Jersey numbers, oh, say forty. I should think about one-third of that group are people who have come out of Overbrook, the county place over there. And we have some men in this room who have been out of Greystone for a year or so without any relapse. We are finding that the asylum boys and girls, as we call them, are very good prospects, provided they are not otherwise impaired. It is obviously not difficult to convince them that they are "behind the 8 ball." And if we carry that conviction to a man once, he accepts a spiritual solution for his difficulties rapidly.

To date, more than 400 of us know that we have found an answer to the alcoholic riddle.

So that is, in effect, what is going on, and the opportunity of coming here to tell you gentlemen about it is deeply appreciated by all of us of Alcoholics Anonymous."

Mr. Scott then introduced Dr. Foster Kennedy as one who has been in touch with this group and who knows about what they are doing, ending in these words: "I suppose most of you know Dr. Kennedy by reputation. But for fear that there may be some obscure people here who do not, let me say that he is a neurologist, born and trained as a physician in Ireland and England. He is now Professor of the Clinical Division of Cornell Medical University, and in charge of Alcoholics in Bellevue. He

want to say one thing about him in addition to his other qualities. I consider him my guide, counselor and friend. Dr. Fosdick.

DR. FOSDICK: Mr. Chairman and friends: I suppose we all wish that this problem of alcoholism could be solved by prevention rather than cure. There is a famous test of sanity: namely, turn a faucet into a basin and ask the patient to dip out the basin. If he starts to dip out the basin without turning off the faucet first he is probably an imbecile; if he has sense enough to turn off the faucet first the chances are he is normal. We wish we could turn this faucet of alcoholism off. I don't know how we are going to do it. We tried prohibition and that did not work. But I sincerely hope that this movement which starts on the curative side of dipping out those who have fallen into alcoholism may indicate a coming psychological revolution in this country against the mad extremes to which the use of alcohol is going, and that it may lead to preventive measures.

In the meantime, however, we face the need of helping out those who fall under the spell of this habit. Just as we all would like to have an economic system that would abolish poverty, but still face the fact that the poor are here who must be helped, so is it with alcoholism.

There is a particular reason why the appeal of the alcoholic is strong. Alcoholism does not affect simply the raff of humanity. It commonly afflicts some of the most charming, lovable and valuable people in the community. Every one here, going back over the recollection of his friends, would at once validate that statement. The alcoholics that I have known have commonly been among the most charming, convivial, and congenial people. I well remember one of the handsomest men in college in my day, one of the best musicians, one of the best students. I never will forget in his senior year his meeting me one night on the campus—we had all been worried about his condition—and throwing his arms around me, saying, "Fosdick, it has got me, it has got me." Well, it had. He was fired from college and a year or two later forged his father's check and shot himself.

Every one of us can remember these lovable, able, efficient, charming personalities that have fallen under the curse of al-

cohol. There is a particular appeal in any movement that promises to rescue men like these from their thralldom.

Dr. Foster Kennedy, speaking from the standpoint of the scientific medical man, has expressed his interest in this movement. As a minister I am interested too, because cases in this field are laid month after month upon the minister's doorsill. Just as Dr. Kennedy would say that a certain measure of success attends the efforts of the neurologist, so a minister would say that a certain amount of success attends his efforts. We all of us have happy memories of cases that have come to us, in one degree or another the victims of alcohol, and we have helped to get them on their feet, have brushed them off and sent them back high, wide and handsome. But the percentage of failures is appalling, and there comes a place where the degree of obsession is so terrific, as Mr. Wilson has pointed out, that a minister is baffled, and turns frantically wherever he can hope to find some help.

There are two or three special reasons why this movement which has been presented to you tonight interests me and seems to me to have unusual promise in it. In the first place, this idea of setting an ex-alcoholic to catch an alcoholic is good. You remember the title of Charles Reade's novel, "Put Yourself in His Place." You cannot really help a man in tragedy unless you can put yourself in his place. What good am I, then, in dealing with an alcoholic? I cannot stand liquor; I go to sleep on a glass of wine; I could not be a drunkard if I wanted to; I don't like the taste of alcohol, hate the effect of it, cannot stand it. Now a fellow who is in the grip of alcoholism comes to me. I cannot put myself in his place. There are certain areas where I can help people. I can help people in Dr. Foster Kennedy's realm, for the simple reason that I have been through a complete nervous breakdown, and with all due respect to the neurologists, once in a while I think I can supplement what they do. For while a neurologist knows more in a minute about a nervous breakdown than I do in a week, there are a lot of them who have never been through a nervous breakdown themselves. So I often help in cases that come to me in various stages of nervous decomposition. The other day I said to a young neurotic, who started to tell me how he felt, "Wait a minute, you don't need to tell me

is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, the Royal Society in London and served during the World War with distinction. And if you are interested in the further record of his degrees and medals, I refer you to Who's Who.

DR. KENNEDY: "Gentlemen, I am exceedingly glad to be here. I had a friend and patient who became interested in this movement. She had a very unhappy, in fact quite desperate situation. It has not been one of the complete successes of this group, but she at least has stayed in the course longer with the aid of these ideas than at any other time in her adult life, and the effect of these doses still is working in her and I believe she will reach health. I am sure she will.

I don't think I ought to make a long speech. You have been told in simple and most affecting language the story of this movement. I think I perhaps might be allowed, if it has not already been spoken of before I was able to get here, to speak of a review that appeared in the Journal of the American Medical Association."

MR. SCOTT: "It has not been referred to."

Dr. Kennedy then read to the audience a review which appeared in the Journal of the American Medical Association of the 14th of October. It was a review of the book "Alcoholics Anonymous." At the outset the reviewer spoke of the seriousness of the psychiatric and social problem represented by addiction to alcohol, stating: "Many psychiatrists regard addiction to alcohol as having a more pessimistic prognosis than schizophrenia. . . ."

"Schizophrenia," Dr. Kennedy interpolated, "is at the moment the fashionable name for dementia praecox. That is the progress that has been made regarding this disease in thirty years. (Laughter) Each ten years we medicos have another name for these things and it is wrong now to speak of schizophrenia as dementia praecox. But it is a serious condition."

In continuing with the review which described "Alcoholics Anonymous" "a curious combination of organizing propaganda and religious exhortation" . . . and closed with the words: "The

one valid thing in the book is the recognition of the seriousness of addiction to alcohol. Other than this, the book has no scientific merit or interest." . . . Dr. Kennedy continued:

"I did not like that review much and I sent a letter to the editor of the Journal of the American Medical Association and asked him to put it among the, oh, trivia, or whatever they would put it in. But he wrote a very decent letter back and said he thought no good purpose could be served by publishing my letter. One never likes to see one's child aborted, so I thought I would read you my reply here:

"Sir:

An unsigned review appeared in the Journal of the American Medical Association October 14th of 'Alcoholics Anonymous,' the story of how more than 100 men have recovered from alcoholism. The cheapish tone of the review is surely a reflection on the thoughtfulness, the experience, and the innate kindliness of the reviewer, and not at all indicative of lack of humane spirit in the Journal.

The aim of those concerned in this effort against alcoholism is high, their success has been considerable and I believe medical men of good will should aid these decent people rather than loftily condemn them for not being scientific.

One might ask the reviewer to produce a book on the subject of alcoholism concocted by him out of "pure science." Medicine, surely, is Science touched with emotion. It is quicker and more precious *in vivo* than *in vitro*. This group of workers I have regarded as enlisting Belief and the herd-instinct to fortify and implement emotionally men's actions. In doing so they have chosen well-tried weapons. It would be unfortunate if the opinion of your "Cynic Anonymous" be given too wide credence by our profession which has never before refused to use faith to move mountains."

I thank you.

In presenting the next speaker, Rev. Harry Emerson Fosdick, D.D., Mr. Scott said in part:

"I will not attempt to introduce Dr. Fosdick to this audience. I know of course that you all know him perfectly well. I simply

how you feel. Let me tell you how you feel." I gave him a blueprint of all the feelings and thoughts that were going on inside of him, and when I was through he said, "My God, how did you know that?" I could put myself in his place, but I cannot do it with an alcoholic.

Now comes a movement, an astonishingly apt and pertinent movement, where men who have been in the thick of this thing, who have faced the hopelessness of the situation, who have felt that they never could get well, have found resources of strength and have come out and there is not a thing about alcoholism they do not know. I think that psychologically speaking there is a point of advantage in the approach that is being made in this movement that cannot be duplicated. I suspect that if it is wisely handled—and it seems to be in wise and prudent hands—there are doors of opportunity ahead of this project that may surpass our capacities to imagine.

There is another element in this movement that interests me—its tolerance, its breadth, its inclusiveness, its catholicity. If this were a movement that thought it had a panacea, that had a neat exclusive formula, that was dogmatic about it, I would have my fingers crossed. But here is a movement that puts its arm around medicine on one side and religion on the other and says, we will take in everything that can help us, that crosses all boundaries of sect and creed and is ready to use any resources of assistance that are available. These men are open-minded, not supposing that they have a neat formula that settles everything. I think the spirit in which this work is carried on is wise and promising.

Still another element in this movement greatly concerns me. Just as Dr. Kennedy would be interested in the medical aspects of it, I am interested in the religious aspects of it. It is a movement which treats on equal terms Jew, Roman Catholic, Protestant and even agnostic. Mr. Wilson, I am right, am I not, you told me you had always been an agnostic?

MR. WILSON: Very much so.

DR. FOSDICK: He did not say that when he spoke, but I think it will help you to get this background of Mr. Wilson's irreligion.

He was not a religious man. He came into this experience out of fairly pugnacious agnosticism. Confined in an asylum, laid up by alcoholism, he reached the end of his rope, hopeless, no way out at all, until one day he said, If there be a God I will throw myself back on any God there is. Here is a discovery, it seems to me, on the part of people who come from Judaism, Roman Catholicism, Protestantism and agnosticism, of one of the most elemental experiences in religion,—the inner tapping of resources of power beyond ourselves. A whipped man morally feels like a pool that is exhausted. It is as though all the strength he had were a pool on the surface of his life, and the sun has been too hot and it has dried up, there is nothing more for him to rely on. Then he discovers this elemental religious experience and he does not feel like a pool any more but like a river; there is a lot of water coming down from upstream if he will keep the channels open; the sources of power are no longer so much in him as through him. Ruskin used that idea, you will remember, in describing great artists, some of whom he said knew they were doing the best work that had ever been done, but they were very humble about it because, said Ruskin, they all knew that the power was not *in* them but *through* them. To use the figure of Prof. Wieman of the University of Chicago, it is as though a man could inwardly throw a switch and complete a circuit and lo, the waiting power comes in. A lot of these men, as I have touched this group, have gotten at God that way, not theoretically, not as a matter of speculation but rather in a moment of despair they found out how to throw a switch and complete a circuit, and lo, something came into them. They call it God. It is God.

I remember as a boy I was brought up near Niagara Falls. I was there when the turbines were put in at the power plant, and I shall never forget the first time I saw that man walking quietly around in the room in which their controls were located. He was not creating power, he was releasing it. We never create power. Nobody ever created any of his own physical power. You do not blow on your hands and create power. All power comes from assimilation, we take it in. These men have gotten somehow at this inner core of religion, deeper than Judaism, deeper than Roman Catholicism, deeper than Protestantism,

underlying them all, experienced in them all, so that men from all these different fields meet on equal terms in this group, and the agnostics come in too, who never have had any theories of God, but now have found His power. Throw a switch, complete the circuit! Stop being a pool, become a river! Do not create power! You cannot! Release power! I call that an essential experience of religion, and I am interested to see a group that has run on it in this utterly unconventional, unorthodox way and is so inclusive, taking in all sorts and conditions of men from all kinds of religious and irreligious backgrounds, finding here the one spiritual dynamic that can lift a man out of the mire when nothing else can.

Last of all, I admire the quietness, the anonymity with which this movement is carried on. Very small overhead financially, no big organization, nobody making anything out of it, no high-salaried staff, people for the love of it sharing with others the experience that has meant life to them—that is good work. No one is a prophet, but I suspect that there is a long road ahead of this movement.



1940

DINNER GIVEN FEBRUARY 8th AT THE UNION CLUB BY MR. ROCKEFELLER, JR.  
ON BEHALF OF "ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS"

Acceptances

- Age C file* x Mr. Frank B. Amos
- ✓ Mr. Gordon Auchincloss
- Age C file* Mr. Stephen Baker
- ✓ Mr. James G. Blaine
- x Dr. R. E. Blaisdell
- Age C file* Dr. Godfrey L. Cabot
- x C file* Mr. William G. Creamer Int. Com.
- Age C file* Mr. Lincoln Cromwell
- x Mr. Horace Crystal
- x Mr. James S. Cushman
- No C file* Mr. Benjamin M. Day *Riverside Ch.*
- x Mr. B. R. Donaldson
- No C file* Mr. A. LeRoy Chipman
- x Mr. Fred I. Eldridge
- Age C file* Mr. Henry J. Fisher *U. Hospital Fund*
- " Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick *Riverside*
- ✓ Mr. Robert Garrett
- Age C file* Mr. Wm. Albert Harbison
- Age C file* General James G. Harbord NBC
- ✓ Mr. Leonard V. Harrison
- x Mr. Buchanan Houston
- ✓ Dr. Frank B. Jewett
- ✓ Dr. Foster Kennedy
- ✓ Mr. P. Kellogg
- x Mr. Norman Klauder
- Age C file* Mr. Samuel H. Kress *Nat. Museum*
- x Mr. C. Walter Lotte
- x Mr. Fitzhugh Mayo
- Age C file* Mr. William H. Matthews *Comm. Service Soc.*
- Age C file* Mr. Edwin G. Merrill " "
- Age C file* Dr. Seth Milliken *Lenox Hill Neigh. Assn.*
- ✓ Mr. Dave H. Morris
- Mr. Gilbert H. Montague
- ✓ Mr. Charles F. Noyes
- Age C file* Mr. Lewis E. Pierson *N.Y. State Chamber of Com.*
- No C file* Mr. W. S. Richardson
- ✓ Mr. Stanley Resor
- Age C file* Dr. George W. Riley
- Mr. C. M. Rodefer
- x Mr. William Ruddell
- x Mr. Morgan Ryan
- No C file* Mr. Nelson A. Rockefeller
- Age C file* Judge Jacob Gould Schurman, Jr.
- Age C file* Dr. William J. Schieffelin *Hampton Inst.*
- ✓ Mr. Albert L. Scott
- Dr. D. R. Sharpe
- Mr. Carlton M. Sherwood
- Age C file* Mr. Robert A. Shaw
- x Dr. W. D. Silkworth
- x Mr. Clarence H. Snyder
- x Dr. R. H. Smith
- ✓ Mr. James M. Speers
- Age C file* Dr. Allen A. Stockdale
- Dr. Leonard V. Strong, Jr.
- x Mr. H. F. Taylor
- Age C file* Mr. Samuel Thorne
- ✓ Mr. Thomas J. Watson
- ✓ Mr. Wendell L. Willkie
- x Mr. William Wilson
- x Mr. Leslie R. Rounds

# ROCKEFELLER HELPS TO CURE ALCOHOLICS

John D. Jr. Is Revealed as Financial Backer of Secret Organization Which Regenerates Habitual Drunkards Into Useful Citizens.

New York, Feb. 9.—(A. P.)—John D. Rockefeller Jr., who has tried to hide many of his philanthropies and social reform activities under the bushel of anonymity, was revealed Friday as interested in a "secret" organization aimed at regenerating alcoholics. The organization is "Alcoholics Anonymous," which started when three men who overcame their craving for whisky and wanted to help others in the same plight began the movement that today numbers 120.

Rockefeller was host at dinner Thursday night to hear a report on the work of the men who have been cured or who are in the process of re-establishing themselves on a more normal plane.

Rockefeller advocated prohibition, but decided it was wrong after it had been tried twelve years. He urged its repeal and financed a survey of liquor control laws thruout the world. After repeal he became associated with the "Council for Moderation," but withdrew because of a disagreement over policy.

His interest in "Alcoholics Anonymous" apparently is a continuation of the work he has associated himself with for years.

The organization came into being about four years ago to assist, anonymously and without publicity, chronic alcoholics in reclaiming themselves.

The work is carried on principally

by personal contact of ex-alcoholics with alcoholics. Into these groups are usually brought the families of afflicted persons. Social and general meetings result whereby the determination to effect a cure is kept alive.

Dallas, Texas

# Rockefeller, Jr., Secretly Helps Chronic Drunks

New York, Feb. 9 (AP).—John D. Rockefeller, Jr., who has tried to hide many of his philanthropies and social reform activities under the bushel of anonymity, was revealed today as interested in a "secret" organization aimed at regenerating alcoholics.

The organization is "Alcoholics Anonymous" which started when three men who overcame their craving for whisky and wanted to help others in the same plight began the movement that today numbers 120.

Rockefeller was host at dinner last night to hear a report on the work of the men who have been cured or who are in the process of re-establishing themselves on a more normal plane.

Rockefeller advocated prohibition but decided it was wrong after it had been tried twelve years. He urged its repeal and financed a survey of liquor control laws throughout the world. After repeal he became associated with the "Council for Moderation" but withdrew because of a disagreement over policy.

His interest in "Alcoholics Anonymous" apparently is a continuation of the work he has associated himself with for years.

The organization came into being about four years ago to assist, anonymously and without publicity, chronic alcoholics in reclaiming themselves.

The work is carried on principally by personal contact of ex-alcoholics with alcoholics. Into these groups are usually brought the families of the afflicted persons. Social and general meetings result hereby the determination to effect cure is kept alive.

acts Misconception of

"Alcoholics Anonymous."

To the Editor of The Star:

An Associated Press dispatch from New York in The Star of February 9 states that John D. Rockefeller was host at dinner to ~~a~~ "secret organization" known as "Alcoholics Anonymous," aimed at the regeneration of alcoholics. To avoid misconceptions and for the benefit of any who may be interested. I wish to say that "Alcoholics Anonymous" is neither secret nor an organization. There are no officers, no dues. It may more nearly be called a fellowship. It exists not only in New York, but also in other cities, and has already done great work here in Washington. A book, also entitled "Alcoholics Anonymous," which gives a good idea of the work that is being done, may be either purchased or rented from the Y. W. C. A.