

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 the 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, a sweet and
 8. willing helpmeet, and an 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 a 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 struggles of those early days. Such matters as
 18. cooking for twenty woodchoppers, looking after the dairy,
 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 off long before daylight that he and
 22. the choppers might have their axes thawed out so that work
 23. might begin on the mountaintop at daylight - this is the sort
 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

Wilson's original story

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Wilson's
 original
 story

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. sipated the homely virtues, the hard earned savings, ~~and~~ the
32. pioneering tradition, and the incredible stamina of your
33. Grand^{parents}~~father~~ 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 the boomerang. This spark struck tinder ~~any-~~
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

53.the church steeple. On its return trip I 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, ~~grandfather~~ 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 been very good in certain courses of study

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, I
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 inter-
88. est 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 leanings were toward 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 this 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 in mathematics. Particularly Calculus, in this
102. subject a great number of formulas have to be learned and
103. their application practiced. I remember that I absolutely
104. refused to learn any of them or do any of the work whatever

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 zero for the course. Fortunate-
117. ly for my future at the University, I was 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 body 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 a 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

151.very very damaging to my pride, though most of this damage

152.was repaired later on when I got under fire and discovered

153.I was just like other people, scared to death, but willing

154.to face the music.

155. After graduating from an army artillery school,

156.I was sent to a post which was situated near a famous old

157.town on the New England coast ~~was~~ famous for its ~~deep~~

158.whaling, trading and Yankee seagoing tradition. ~~Here I made~~

159.~~two decisions. The first one, and the best, to marry. The~~

160.~~second decision was most emphatically the worst I ever made,~~

161.~~I ~~made the acquaintance of~~ John Barleycorn and decided that~~

162.~~I liked to live.~~

163.~~My wife to be~~

164. Here I set out upon two paths and little did I realize

165.how much they were to diverge. In short I got married

166.and at about the same time, took my first drink and decided

167.that I liked it. But for the undying loyalty of my wife

168.and her faith through the years, I should not be alive today

169.She was a city bred person and represented a background and

170.way of life for which I had secretly longed. Her family

171.spent long summers in our little town.. All of them were

172.highly regarded by the natives. This was most complimentary

173.for among the countrymen there existed strong and often un-

174.reasonable prejudices against city folks. For the most

175.part, I felt differently. Most city people I knew had money,

176.assurance, and what then seemed to me great sophistication.

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 time immemorial I suppose the country boys
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.

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. ~~kilaxious~~ 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. perienced drinkers, but I argued, what did that 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
 201. wife, ⁱⁿ ~~with~~ 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.

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 ~~handkerchief~~ 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 the 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 ~~skys~~ 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
230.he dieth by musket or by pot.' ~~The~~ ^A squadron of bombers
231.swept overhead in the bright sunlight, and I cried to my elf
232.'Here's to adventure' and the feeling of being in the great
233.presence disappeared, never to return for many years.

235.I was twenty two, and a grisled 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 fancied, 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 comin' was short lived. The

244.best that could be done was to secure a bookkeeping job in

245.the insurance department of tms one of the large railroads.

246.I proved to be a wretched and rebellious bookkeeper and cou-

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 her relatives and my newly

259.made city acquaintances were snickering a bit at my predica-

260.ment.

261. Unwillingly, I had to admit, that I was not
262. really trained to hold down 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-
266. tion, partly because ^{of} 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.

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 Alger'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 a 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 knew

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

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
316.qualified ^{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.ointed and I sometimes think they were right. Our first ex-
331.ploit 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

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 ~~ix~~ 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 one 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

365. had the use of twenty thousand dollars of their money.

366. For some years the fates tossed horseshoes and gold bricks

367. into my lap and I made much more money than was good for me.

368. It was too easy.

369. By this time drinking had gotten to ~~be~~ ^{take} 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. citation 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 had 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 ~~ignat~~

386. extreme drunkenness, I had not become involved with the fair

387. sex, there were many unhappy scenes in my apartment, ^{at} which

388. was a large one, as I had hired two, and had gotten the real

389. estate people to knock out the wall between them.

390 In the spring of 1929 I caught the golf fever. My
 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 ever 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 select city membership had inspired so much
 402 awe in me as a boy. So Wall Street was lightly tossed
 403 aside while I ~~unapologetically~~ 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
 411 though I were galloping ^{rapidly} in all directions at once, for the
 412 great panic was on. First to Montreal, then New York, to
 413 rally my following in stocks sorely needing support. A few
 414 bold spirits rushed into the breach, but it was no use. I
 415 shed my own wings as the moth who gets too near 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 drunkenly ^{from} the hotel bar to an adjoining brokerage office
 419 there at about 8 o'clock in the evening I feverishly searched
 420 a huge pile of ticker tape and tore off 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

429.that I was not so weak. I realized that I had been care-
 450.less, especially with other peoples money. I had not paid
 461.attention to business and I deserved to be hurt. After ~~xxxx~~
 432.some more whiskey, my confidence returned again, and with it
 435.an almost terrifying determination to somehow capitalize this
 454.mess and pay everybody off. I reflected that it was just
 435.another whrthwhile 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-
 443.ness and ~~as~~ 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
 446.on up". That is all he said and up ^{we} went.

447. I shall never forget the kindness and generosity
 448.of this friend. Moreover I must have still 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
 456.as they were to the ravages of fire water in Canada in those
 4 6.d.ys, 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.~~Iphardingsphuzamxxxxxxxthaxxxxxisxxxxhadxxxxabckadantantly~~
 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

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 wh t 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
 492.and there were periods of sobriety which would revive ^{the} 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 as 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 gre t opportunity was at hand. So

505. prodigious bender a few days before the deal was to be

506. closed.

507. In a measure that did bring me to my 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 that 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 friends 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-

544. sire to make my wife happy? Why hadn't these things ~~xxxxxxx~~
 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 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, lest 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 dis

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 - more liquor would fix
 592.that - then two 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 I 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 home 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
 608.conditions still worse. Then came ^{the} a night ~~it~~ 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 cloral hydrate, a powerful sedative. This relief
 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

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 desperately 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. clineing moral and bodily health fell off like a ski jump.
658. After a hectic period of drinking, I found myself again in

680. Everyone became resigned to the certainty that I
 681. would have to be confined somewhere or 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 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 telephone rang.

702. ~~At the same time~~ 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. ~~idea~~ I might do him. There was to be a pleasant, and I

718.hoped an exciting interlude in what had become a
 719.dreary ~~waste~~ ^{round} of loneliness. Another drink stirred my
 720.fancy; ~~this was it~~ 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
 745.else - not just that either - he ~~was~~ ^{is} 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 ~~alcoholic~~
 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

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 ~~my~~
 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 quiet 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
 773. conviction that the ^{spheres} ~~planets~~ really had their ~~music~~ ⁷ 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 ~~say~~
 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~~ ^{realized} that I could go for his program also.
796. Like all but a few ~~x~~ human beings I had ~~truly~~
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 than 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 ^{me} to look into such matters as
811. a theory of evolution, the nature of matter itself
812. as seen thru the eyes of the great chemists
813. physicists and astrononers 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 at all what it appears to be. His studies
817. point to the conclusion that the elements and there
818. ~~various~~ ^{various} 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 Halley's comet
828. will make its turn about the sun. Much to my
829. 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 developments
833. which arise logically enough once the so called
834. accident has occurred. 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~~^{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~~^{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 how 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 amoeba, which was a simple cell
854. residing in the ~~oceans~~^{oceans} of ~~the~~^{the} 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 wrong. ~~Man~~^{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
863. and so he ^{apparently} created

864. and so he apparently created new things for himself ~~and~~
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. ~~system~~^{system}, 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 granted 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 populations 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

Mohammedan

899. Mohammedan, Catholic, Jew, Protestant or Hottentot.
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 his
906. His moral teachings but like most people, I ~~perferred~~ ^{preferred}
907. to live up to some moral standards 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 definite 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. of them. This insistence on their part plus a
926. powerful desire to possess the things of this life
927. while there was yet time had crowded the idea of
928. the personal God more and more out of my mind as the
929. years went by. Neither were my convictions strengthened
930. by my own misfortunes. The great war and its
931. aftermath seemed to more certainly demonstrate the
932. omnipotence of the devil than the loving care of
933. 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. transformed ; 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 a
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 commenced to see myself ~~as in~~
950. as in an unearthly ~~mirror~~^{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 on 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 then how 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 interfered 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 ~~that~~ 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 was
1009. was warned that no one can say that he is a completely honest

1010. person. That would be superhuman and people 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, selfpity, fear, in-
1034. feriority, pride and egotism, were ~~things~~ attitudes which
1035. distorted ones perspective ~~xxx~~ 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 now be accomplished by
1044. myself alone, therefore I was to humbly ask God that he take
1045. these handicaps away. To make sure that I had become really
1046. honest in this desire, I should sit down with whatever person
1047. I chose and reveal to him without any reservations whatever
1048. the result of my self appraisal. From this point out I was
1049. to stop living alone in every particular. Thus was I to ~~xxx~~ keep
1050. myself free in the future of those things which shut out
1051. God's power, It was explained that I had been standing in my
1052. own light, my spritual interior had been like a room darkened
1053. by very dirty windows and this was an undertaking to wipe them
1054. off and keep them klean. Thus was my housecleaning to be ac-
1055. complished, it would be difficult to be really honest with my-
1056. self and God and perhaps to be completely honest with another
1057. person by telling an other the truth, I could however be ab-
1058. solutely sure that my self searching had been honest and effective.
1059. Moreover I would be taking my first spiritual step towards my
1060. fellows for something I might say could be helpful in leading
1061. the person to whom I talked a better understanding of himself.
1062. In this fashion I would commence to break down the barriers
1063. which my many forms of self will had erected. Warning was
1064. given me that I should select a person who would be in no way
1065. injured or offended by what I had to say, for I could not expect
1066. to commence my spiritual growth at the w. expense of another.
1067. My friend told me that when this step was complete, I would surely
1068. feel a tremendous sense of relief accompaning by the absolute
1069.

1070. conviction that I was on the right & right 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 the 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 perferred
1077. attention, provided I had done them injury or still entertained
1078. any feeling of resentment towards them. Under no circumstances
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 arguement 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 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 on a
1095. strictly confidential basis. Great was to be taken that one
1096. did not avoid situations difficult or dangerous to oneself on
1097. such a pretext. The willingness to go the limit ^{as possible} as fast had
1098. to be at all times present. This principle of making ammends
1099. was to be continued in the future for only by keeping myself free
1100. 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 symtoms 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
1109. presently see ^{how} 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 ~~etc~~ 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
1123. 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
1127. things I would have admit ^{to} 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
1133. and puffed up my self esteem, body had finally rebelled
1134. and I had become 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 behind 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
1143. with the ^{applause} ~~praise~~ 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 condescendingly
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
1152. of a simple childlike attitude toward God plus ^{this} axdrastic
1153. program of action ~~which would bring~~ 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 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 wilfulness , 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
1168. had failed in many areas of my life. With respect to
1169. alcohol it had become absolutely inopoperative . My ambitions,
1170. which had seemed worthy at one time, had been frustrated.
1171. Even had I been successful , the persuit of my desires
1172. would have perhaps harmed others ~~and~~ 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 ~~havoc~~
1178. havoc than those confessedly imoral and ~~crooked~~ 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