

# ON HIS WAY



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**IN EARLY youth I believe I had some of the tendencies which lead to alcoholism. I refer to attempted escapes from reality.**

**At fifteen and sixteen, although free at home to drink small amounts of beer and wine, I drank considerable quantities of stronger liquors at school and other places. Not enough to cause serious worry, but enough apparently to give me occasionally what I thought I wanted. Escape? A feeling of superiority? I do not know.**

**I then decided I'd had enough of school, which decision was probably shared by the schools. The next few years were spent in civil engineering**

**work, travel, sports, and a little idleness, and I seem to have avoided alcoholic difficulties of the more pronounced kind.**

**Immediately before marriage and in the short time before sailing for France, alcohol began to take a real part in my life. A year and a half in war time France postponed the inevitable and the post war period of hopes and plans brought me nearer and nearer to the point where I eventually found myself to be an alcoholic. Not that I would have admitted it then, having the alcoholic's usual facility for deception, both to self and others.**

**Divorced, sometimes suspecting that drinking was the basis for most of my troubles but never admitting it, I had enough left in health, interests of various kinds, and luck to carry on**

**with considerable success.**

**About this time I stopped all social drinking. I became a periodical drunkard, the sprees lasting from three days to three weeks and the dry intervals lasting from three weeks to four months.**

**During one of the best years, I made a happy marriage and the age of thirty-five found me with the following: a beautiful little home presided over by a kind, understanding, and lovely wife; a partnership in a firm I had helped to found years before; more than a comfortable income; many luxuries and many friends; opportunity to follow my interests and hobbies; a love of my work; pride in my success; great health; optimism; and hope on the credit side. On the other hand, I had a growing, gnawing fear**

**of my recurring trouble.**

**I slipped by far too easy stages to the bottom in less than eight years. Not a pleasant place, the bottom. Sometimes I slept in a cheap hotel or rooming house, sometimes a flop house, sometimes the back room of a police station and once in a doorway; many times in the alcoholic ward at a hospital, and once in a subway toilet. Sometimes decently fed, clothed, and housed, I worked at my business on commission with a large firm; sometimes I dared not appear there cold, hungry, with torn clothes, shaking body and muddled brain advertising what I had become. Helpless, hopeless, bitter.**

**Sometimes I was apparently on the way back, and sometimes writhing in bed for days at a time, terrorized by**

**the fear of insanity and by the spectres of people without faces, people with horrible faces, people grimacing and laughing at me and my misery. Tortured by dreams from which I would awake with a scream of agony and bathed in cold sweat. Tortured by day dreams of what might have been, dreams of the kindness, faith and love that had been heaped upon me.**

**Due to this last however, and to what little remained of my former self and perhaps to some lingering power of spiritual faith, I became somewhat better. Not well, but better.**

**This helped me to take stock and to try to do some clear thinking. I found my inventory somewhat mixed, but as my thoughts became clearer, I grew much better and at**

**last arrived at that point where for the first time in several years I could see some light and hope ahead of me. Through a haze of doubt and skepticism I began to realize, partly at least, many things in myself which had greased the path I had pursued, and some vague thoughts and ideas came to me that are now crystallizing with the help of the men I have been happy to join.**

**What thoughts and ideas? The answer is short, although the road to it is long and tedious.**

**My intelligence, instead of drawing me further away from spiritual faith is bringing me closer to it. I no longer react in quite the same way when my will and desires are apparently frustrated.**

**The simple words "Thy Will Be Done"**

**and the simple ideas of honesty and of helping others are taking on a new meaning for me. I should not be surprised to find myself coming to the astounding conclusion that God, whoever or whatever He may be, is eminentl y more capable of running this universe than I am. At last I believe I am on my way.**

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