

PREFACE

THIS is the second edition of the book, "Alcoholics Anonymous," which made its first appearance in April, 1939. More than 300,000 copies of the first edition are now in circulation.

Because this book has become the basic text for our Society and has helped such large numbers of alcoholic men and women to recovery, there exists a sentiment against any radical changes being made in it. Therefore the first portion of this volume, describing the A.A. recovery program, has been left largely untouched.

But the personal history section has been considerably revised and enlarged in order to present a more accurate representation of our membership as it is today. When the book was first printed, we had scarcely 100 members all told, and every one of them was an almost hopeless case of alcoholism. This has changed. A.A. now helps alcoholics in all stages of the disease. It reaches into every level of life and into nearly all occupations. Our membership now includes many young people. Women, who were at first very reluctant to approach A.A., have come forward in large numbers. Therefore the range of the story section has been broadened so that every alcoholic reader may find a reflection of him or herself in it.

As a souvenir of our past, the original Foreword has

been preserved and is followed by a second one describing Alcoholics Anonymous of 1955.

Following the Forewords, there appears a section called "The Doctor's Opinion." This also has been kept intact, just as it was originally written in 1939 by the late Dr. William D. Silkworth, our Society's great medical benefactor. Besides Dr. Silkworth's original statement, there have been added, in the Appendices, a number of the medical and religious endorsements which have come to us in recent years.

On the last pages of this second edition will be found the Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous, the principles upon which our A.A. groups function, together with directions for getting in touch with A.A.