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Prisoner No. 28072 and the Federation

George W. Winkler

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priest in the diocese for the names of all Catholic doctors in their parishes. This is to be followed with a letter to each one in an attempt to interest them in joining this Guild. Finally, we plan to ask the Cardinal to issue a diocesan letter to be read in all the churches of the diocese emphasizing the necessity for being a member of this Guild and the advantages in being connected in this most important form of Catholic action.

Our guest speaker of this meeting was Mr. Maurice Lacy, President of the Irish Charitable Society of Boston, and Headmaster of Jamaica Plain High School, who is an eloquent speaker and an authority on Ireland and her history. His address was, "The Story of Ireland." In true schoolmaster style he brought an outline of the subjects he intended to touch upon, for he said he would be unable in the time allotted to him to do more than to go over a few of the points which, in his opinion, were of particular significance in the history of this country. The address was most interesting and instructive and everyone present enjoyed the evening. We have been fortunate in the speakers who have consented to address us and Mr. Lacy was certainly in the front rank of these distinguished gentlemen. The usual collation was served and a social hour followed.

PRISONER NO. 28702 AND THE FEDERATION

Prisoner No. 28702, George W. Winkler, at McAlester, Oklahoma, is about to make a test case of the Oklahoma Sterilization Law. One of the officers of the Federation of Catholic Physicians' Guilds sent him several issues of THE LINACRE QUARTERLY, the official organ of the Guilds, containing arguments for the case against sterilization. Prisoner Winkler replied to this officer in the following letter which is a document of much human import and not without pathos.

"I HAVE your letter of August 4th, expressing your opinion of sterilization, and of the action you have taken in my behalf.

"First, I want to thank you sincerely for myself, and extend the full-hearted gratitude of some four hundred inmates of this institution who are subject to the state's sterilization law, and I also, even though I belong to no church, take this opportunity to thank the Catholic Church, and the other organizations made up of its members, for the editorials and articles, appearing in THE LINACRE QUARTERLY, against this program which I believe to be so unjust to the extent that it is cruel and unusual punishment, attempted to be inflicted on myself and

my fellow prisoners, for the reason of 'experiment' to satisfy or to please a group of individuals who claim to be Eugenists.

"Your offer of assistance, and the attitude taken by the high-minded organization, the 'Catholic Physicians' Guild,' prompt me to advise you as fully as possible as to the present status of the case, and explain as best I can the Law I am endeavoring in my humble way to defeat.

"Oklahoma had a previous sterilization law, affecting the insane, which was amended in 1933 to include or affect inmates of the penal institution who had been convicted of three or more crimes. The phase of the law, which the state is applying to my case, is that I have been convicted of a crime three times and therefore come under the provisions of the law, and acting on this assumption alone, the State Board of Public Affairs has ordered the Warden to perform or have performed by a competent physician a vasectomy operation on me, and will say here that I consider an operation of this kind as a mutilation in its worst form.

"It makes no difference under this law what a person's mental or physical condition is—they do not in my case contend that I am mentally or physically deficient, but base their entire reason for sterilization on the number of times I have been convicted of a felony, and therefore I contend that I am being subjected to an outrageous operation—a punishment that is against all God's teachings, to satisfy the author of the present bill and its advocates, who say that a law of this kind will deter crime.

"As an example, a man who has always been a good citizen may, under a circumstance, forge three checks or commit three crimes in a period of one hour, and if he is convicted of three offences he must therefore be sterilized. You see how absurd and far-reaching this law is."

"At the recent hearing when the State Board of Affairs, 'three men who are not doctors,' and who know nothing of matters pertaining to eugenics, or physiology, ordered my sterilization, they used as witnesses three doctors who are hired by them to treat inmates of the penitentiary and the Insane Asylum and the testimony of these doctors was for the State and against me. I had no one to testify in my behalf, and as yet I have no expert testimony to offer against this program.

"Sterilization in this State is misunderstood, that is, the doctors and the lawyers know so little about this subject that they, when influenced by a group of politicians, will testify as they have been taught to.

"We need and are in dire necessity of having some doctor or medical expert to enlighten the Judge in this matter, that is our principal problem, as we have no money with which to obtain this service.

"I will greatly appreciate your sending me any literature or articles that will help in my case for unless I can overthrow the medical testimony that has been offered by the State's doctors, I will be greatly handicapped in my defense.

"The Warden, Honorable S. E. Brown, is a very broad-minded man, and has granted us every consideration in this case, and any literature that you will send will be allowed."

THE CATHOLIC MEDICAL MISSION BOARD AND ITS WORK

By EDWARD F. GARESCHE, S.J.

The month of October is a month especially dedicated to stimulating interest in foreign missions. To show how the Catholic doctor can contribute to the spread of the Kingdom of Christ, we are presenting this splendid article by the Director of the Catholic Medical Mission Board, 10 West 17th Street, New York City.

THE medical side of the missions should especially appeal to men who have devoted their lives to medical ministrations. The fruitful field offered by medical work in the missions is inconceivably great. Many of the missionaries live and work at distances of hundreds of miles from any hospital, doctor, nurse or even drug store. They are besieged by crowds of sorely afflicted people, suffering from almost every ill that human flesh is heir to and without the elementary knowledge of the simplest remedies to help them. Thus the missionary and his helpers, though they would often much prefer to confine their activities to preaching the Gospel, find themselves almost forced to establish a dispensary and do what they can to relieve so much suffering. As a reward for their charitable efforts, they find that this kindness to the sick is the most effective means of interesting the pagans in Christian teaching. Thus is verified the motto of the Board, approved by the Holy Father with such heartfelt interest and affection, "The Body for the Sake of the Soul, the Body and Soul for God."

These dispensaries are, of course, only emergency and first-aid stations and it is desirable that they should be improved as rapidly as