May 1964

Medico-Moral Questions

Catholic Physicians' Guilds

Follow this and additional works at: http://epublications.marquette.edu/lnq

Recommended Citation
Medico-Moral Questions

Questions of a medico-moral nature are invited from readers, and should be directed to the Editorial Office of this journal, attention "Medico-Moral Questions." Answers will be supplied by qualified moral theologians whose names will be appended to the replies.

QUESTION: Recently the value of stock in a certain drug house has increased phenomenally, undoubtedly because of the popularity of an oral contraceptive. Are the moral implications for the Catholic physician who buys or sells stock involved in providing the means for people to commit at least objectively sins so remote that he would have no obligation to relinquish the stock he now owns or to refrain from purchasing further stock?

ANSWER: The influence of an individual stockholder on the policy determination of a large multi-million-dollar corporation is minimal unless he is a major stockholder. This fact alone should relieve him of doubt and anxiety regarding his moral obligations if the company is making a profit by the production and sale of drugs that are presumptively used primarily for immoral purposes. His cooperation involved in providing the means for people to commit at least objectively sins is so remote that he would have no obligation to relinquish the stock he now owns or to refrain from purchasing further stock.

—Reverend J. Joseph Hofmann, S.J.
Chaplain, Kings County Hospital Center
Brooklyn, New York

Letter from Australia

This is my first contribution as Australian correspondent and begins in a time of sadness. All Australians felt President Kennedy's death as a vivid personal blow—almost as though they had lost a member of their own family. We feel sympathy, too, for the American people in their great sadness. It is disheartening that goodness should be punished in this way; the fact that a man is good and great singles him out for an early and unexpected death. The young widow and the extremely young children remain the brave yet pitiful symbols.

I am proud to be Australian correspondent of a publication which proclaimed itself a journal of the philosophy and ethics of medical practice. I am still more proud because of the notice on the front cover that it is the official journal of the National Federation of Catholic Physicians' Guilds. In Australia our organization is called the Guild of St. Luke, and it has seven branches, one in each State capital city and one at Newcastle, a large industrial city 150 miles north of Sydney. We are also affiliated with the New Zealand Guild of St. Cosmas and Damian.

The senior guild in Australia is that of New South Wales which was founded some forty years ago, and for nearly thirty years it has published an annual volume, the Transactions of the Medical Guild of St. Luke. The editor is Dr. J. P. Gallagher of Robert Street, Willoughby, N.S.W. Having lived in three States, I have been a member of three different branches. I have often wondered about the proper function of such guilds; since the ecumenical movement has gathered force I have asked myself if they could not be made the means of fostering mutual love among doctors of all religions. The most impressive religio-medical session I have ever attended was in June 1963 at the A.M.A. Convention at Atlantic City, when Bishop Sheen and Dr. Rynders gave equally splendid religious discourses on the proper approach of the doctor to the patient.

Here is an interesting point I can make in commencing a regular Australian letter to America. Australia owes her existence as a nation to the Declaration of Independence. Before the American Revolution, 50,000 inmates of British gaols had been sent to America within fifty years. It is astonishing to record that when the thirteen colonies declared their independence the British authorities did not know that the transport of criminals had ceased. The treaty of Paris was signed in 1783; in 1784 Britain sent another cargo of convicts to America but these were rudely sent back. The official mind is strange; the British knew that immigrants were desired in the large and empty country but they could not see that immigrants of bad character would be a great handicap and not a help.

I was informed of this from The Journal of a Voyage to New South Wales 1790, by John White, Surgeon General to the First Fleet and the settlement at Port Jackson (Angus and Robertson, London, 1965). This interesting document has recently been reprinted with a biographical introduction—plus an extremely informative general historical introduction. White was in fact the first doctor to land in Australia; besides being an intelligent physician he was an observer of the previously unknown animals and birds he encountered in Australia.

MOUTH-TO-MOUTH RESUSCITATION: REPORT OF THE FIRST CASE?

But Giezi was gone before them, and laid the staff upon the face of the child, and there was no voice nor sense: and he bowed himself upon his hands, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands: and he bowed himself upon his hands, and the child's flesh grew warm. Then he returned and walked in the house, once to and fro: and he went up, and lay upon him: and the child gaped seven times, and opened his eyes.

—A Kings 4, 31-35

Letter from Australia

This is my first contribution as Australian correspondent and begins in a time of sadness. All Australians felt President Kennedy's death as a vivid personal blow—almost as though they had lost a member of their own family. We feel sympathy, too, for the American people in their great sadness. It is disheartening that goodness should be punished in this way; the fact that a man is good and great singles him out for an early and unexpected death. The young widow and the extremely young children remain the brave yet pitiful symbols.

I am proud to be Australian correspondent of a publication which proclaimed itself a journal of the philosophy and ethics of medical practice. I am still more proud because of the notice on the front cover that it is the official journal of the National Federation of Catholic Physicians' Guilds. In Australia our organization is called the Guild of St. Luke, and it has seven branches, one in each State capital city and one at Newcastle, a large industrial city 150 miles north of Sydney. We are also affiliated with the New Zealand Guild of St. Cosmas and Damian.

The senior guild in Australia is that of New South Wales which was founded some forty years ago, and for nearly thirty years it has published an annual volume, the Transactions of the Medical Guild of St. Luke. The editor is Dr. J. P. Gallagher of Robert Street, Willoughby, N.S.W. Having lived in three States, I have been a member of three different branches. I have often wondered about the proper function of such guilds; since the ecumenical movement has gathered force I have asked myself if they could not be made the means of fostering mutual love among doctors of all religions. The most impressive religio-medical session I have ever attended was in June 1963 at the A.M.A. Convention at Atlantic City, when Bishop Sheen and Dr. Rynders gave equally splendid religious discourses on the proper approach of the doctor to the patient.

Here is an interesting point I can make in commencing a regular Australian letter to America. Australia owes her existence as a nation to the Declaration of Independence. Before the American Revolution, 50,000 inmates of British gaols had been sent to America within fifty years. It is astonishing to record that when the thirteen colonies declared their independence the British authorities did not know that the transport of criminals had ceased. The treaty of Paris was signed in 1783; in 1784 Britain sent another cargo of convicts to America but these were rudely sent back. The official mind is strange; the British knew that immigrants were desired in the large and empty country but they could not see that immigrants of bad character would be a great handicap and not a help.

I was informed of this from The Journal of a Voyage to New South Wales 1790, by John White, Surgeon General to the First Fleet and the settlement at Port Jackson (Angus and Robertson, London, 1965). This interesting document has recently been reprinted with a biographical introduction—plus an extremely informative general historical introduction. White was in fact the first doctor to land in Australia; besides being an intelligent physician he was an observer of the previously unknown animals and birds he encountered in Australia.

MOUTH-TO-MOUTH RESUSCITATION: REPORT OF THE FIRST CASE?

But Giezi was gone before them, and laid the staff upon the face of the child, and there was no voice nor sense: and he returned to meet him, and told him, saying: The child is not risen. Eliseus therefore went into the house and behold the child lay dead on his bed. . . . And he went up, and lay upon the child: and he put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands: and he bowed himself upon him, and the child's flesh grew warm. Then he returned and walked in the house, once to and fro: and he went up, and lay upon him: and the child gaped seven times, and opened his eyes.

—A Kings 4, 31-35