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"The Apollonian" Answered

Catholic Physicians' Guild

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"THE APOLLONIAN" ANSWERED

AN EDITORIAL on THE LINACRE QUARTERLY in the recent issue of The Apollonian raised a point of both interest and importance on the activities of the Catholic Physicians' Guilds. We feel this was somewhat answered by the editorial on our publication in the February 11th edition of America in: "Unless our professional men listen to the voice of the Vicar of Christ, a force of great power for the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth, the end of all Catholic Action will be lost." Since further explanation seems to be in order, a short discourse on the aims and objects of the Catholic Physicians' Guilds is offered.

Our Guilds and publication were established in part to enable the medical man to put into practice the necessary relationship between medicine and the teachings of the Catholic Church on medico-religious questions. There have been Catholic Physicians' Guilds in various parts of the world, but until quite recently but few here. We feel that the Catholic physicians of America should unite, rally to the defense of Christian morality, fulfill the duty to defend and advance the Faith from our particularly favorable position, and be a part of Catholic Action. No group of men, not even the priests themselves, are as aware of what is going on in our profession as we are, are better able to study the reasons why, and can exert as potent a force against the wrongs. The practice of medicine today is largely a case of this or that and a deep interest in the science pertaining to whatever the disorder might be as expressed in an entity term. Too many of us have lost sight of the fact that illness occurs in a human being and that the human being is more than a physical affair. To lead us properly we have taken a position from what Cardinal Newman saw the necessity of when he said: "There cannot be a worse calamity for Catholic people than to have its medical attendants alien or hostile to Catholicity; there cannot be a greater blessing than when they are intelligent Catholics who acknowledge the claims of religious duty and the subordinations and limits of their own functions.” Thus our movement has one of its roots in the belief that no matter how advanced or scientific a physician may be, where or how situated, or what the conditions may be at the moment, man is not a mere animal or a case of this or that, but an individual with a soul, a rational and responsible being. We feel that the patient, ourselves, and the Church would all be benefited by better understanding, consideration and application of those principles the Church has taught for centuries, but of which we have somewhat lost sight.

The Guilds have been established to be a connecting link between the two great sciences of theology and medicine, and while deepening
the knowledge of Catholic teaching with regard to very important subjects, they act as a factor for the increase of Faith among physicians themselves so as to make them capable of applying the principles of the Church properly. We believe that part of our responsibilities and activities as medical men should be devoted to combating all legislative movements that tyrannize over the inalienable right of every individual to every function of the human body, to oppose immoral laws such as have to do with sterilization, birth prevention, etc., and in this be missionaries to other organizations of all kinds. We encourage conferences between ourselves and members of the clergy for the discussion of medico-theological and medico-ethical problems. We hope to take an active part as Catholic physicians in public life, and, in taking part, discharge our duties as citizens of the commonwealth, recognizing that the Catholic Church, in the future as in the past, is the main stabilizer of Christian morals and of civilization itself. The battle should be carried forward between the Catholic exegete and the evolutionist, since scientific conclusions do not in the least affect the essential truth of Genesis. We feel much of the weakness of Christianity today has been brought about by theories and ideas not scientific or accurate which tend to make human life an affair of all sorts of improper activities. Against these the Catholic Church has stood as a unit. In all these matters the assistance of Catholic Physicians’ Guilds for the defense of Faith and morality and human well-being should be an invaluable, even decisive, influence.

The purpose of the Catholic Physicians’ Guilds is to constitute a brotherhood of all members of the medical profession; to provide mutual assistance in their religious and professional life; to facilitate intercourse between them and members of cognate branches and the clergy and others (such as judges, magistrates, lawyers, educators, politicians, etc.) who are interested in the study and discussion of medico-religious questions and those touching on the science of duty and ethics; to investigate the relations of medical theory and practice to Catholic theology and philosophy; to uphold the principles of Catholic faith and morality against an unchristian and unscientific materialism; to render such assistance to Catholic medical institutions and missions as may be practicable; and, in general, to promote among Catholic members of the profession such solidarity as may be advantageous to both their religion and their profession.

These are our aims and objects, and we hope that God in His power, Christ in His mercy, and the priests in their remembrances and goodwill, will bring success to our efforts. There is much to be done and we have a long way to go, but to the above we have subscribed ourselves and valiantly we will carry on.