Along Highway and Byway

Catholic Physicians' Guild
WITH this issue The Linacre is three years old. It is not a bouncing baby. Far from increasing in size and weight, it has suffered a loss in both. Its survival at all, however, is a testimony to the medical skill and unflagging devotion of those who believe and have always believed that The Linacre has a great task ahead of it in the medical world. Small as it is, it is a winsome child. It has made friends everywhere. The Commonwealth paid respects to it in its issue of October 26, 1934. The Denver Catholic Register calls it a “learned Quarterly.” Everyone seems to be charmed by its breezy prattle on medical, on medico-moral and on medico-religious topics. There is universal regret that its content is not extended over many more pages. The Rev. Adrian P. Lynch, C.P., of the Sign, in a very friendly and constructive letter, writes: “The issues are getting thinner. Is the offspring of the Catholic Physicians’ Guild suffering from undernourishment? Doctors ought to know how to fatten their own children. With so much to write about in the field of medical ethics, it seems to me that there should be no great difficulty in getting plenty of copy. . . . It is the philosophy of current medical practice which needs criticism from a sane, moral viewpoint. Catholic physicians, with their background of science and their Christian training, ought to be able to find plenty of matter for comment and instruction.” The Linacre’s slimness is a matter of great regret also to the editors. But the reason is no paucity of matter; it is paucity of means to pay our current expenses. The editors, however, have a fond hope of reaching soon
the ideal set for them by the Catholic Medical Guardian of England and the Bulletin de la Société Médicale of France. This ambition will be realized with the growth in numbers of the unit-guilds. In the future, address all editorial communications to: Editor of THE LINACRE QUARTERLY, Fordham University, The Bronx, New York City.

THE SPREADING GUILD IDEA

The Ecclesiastical Review for November, 1934, presents an article by Rev. William Schaefer of Wichita, Kansas, entitled “Catholic Physicians and the Sacrament of Extreme Unction.” Urging the Catholic physician to make use of the sacrament of Extreme Unction for its therapeutic value he says: “Catholic Physicians’ Guilds are gradually spreading from diocese to diocese in this country. The major purposes of the Guilds are: to uphold and apply the principles of Catholic faith and morality, as related to the science and practice of medicine, to condemn un-Christian materialism, and to promote sociability among Catholic groups of physicians. Priests are rapidly identifying themselves with this movement, because the Guild meetings offer excellent opportunities for the priest or priests attending to enlighten Catholic doctors on a number of things. Specifically, here the way is open for priests to dispel some of the gloomy and foreboding thoughts that too many Catholic doctors associate with the administration of the Sacrament of Extreme Unction.”

NEW GUILD ARRIVALS

The Reverend John J. Healy has set up a chapter of the Federated Catholic Physicians’ Guild at Little Rock, Arkansas. There is another Guild in full swing at Belleville, Illinois, under the leadership of the Very Reverend Monsignor M. J. Gruenwald. The Most Reverend Bishop of Newark, Thomas J. Walsh, D.D., has appointed the Very Reverend Monsignor Frank J. Monaghan, S.T.D., of Seton Hall College, to establish a Guild in that diocese. Wichita, Kansas, has its newly organized Guild under the direction of Reverend William Schaefer. The Reverend Francis G. McNulty, D.D., of St. Peter’s Cathedral, Scranton, Pennsylvania, has been appointed by the Most Reverend Bishop Thomas C. O’Reilly, D.D., to form a Guild in that city. The Most Reverend Michael J. Curley, D.D., has commissioned the Reverend Louis C. Vaeth, Archdiocesan Director of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith to form a Guild in Baltimore, Maryland, and Dr. Margaret M. Nicholson, M.D., has already been instrumental in forming a Sodality-Guild at Washington, D. C. Thus the Guild movement marches on. We envision the time not far dis-

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tant when the Federated Catholic Physicians’ Guild will stage a National Convention simultaneously with the American Medical Association’s Convention and at the same place. Then it will be possible for the Catholic doctor to become articulate in laying down soundly scientific principles with regard to medical and moral problems.

GOD’S ANSWER TO BIRTH CONTROL?

The Dionne quintuplets continue to be of national and international news value. Many aver that this interest has done more against birth control propaganda than anything since the contraception movement got its start. Dr. Dafoe shares the glory with the quintuplets and their mother. His recent visit to New York was a triumph. Many papers carried laudatory editorial comment. The World-Telegram writes editorially: “In the hearts of thousands of city folk there is a tender spot for some particular old-fashioned country doctor—philosopher and friend to a community back in the hinterland whence they came—of whom Dr. Allan Roy Dafoe is the perfect counterpart. For years he has been building up that character and competence which enabled him to preserve the lives of the famous Dionne quintuplets. It was the merest chance which brought the challenge to him and thrust him into fame. But he was ready. * * * Such men, scattered over the land, are those who made the medical profession glamorous and a symbol of the good life to many of us. In paying affectionate notice to Dr. Dafoe New York is expressing more than mere curiosity toward the deliverer of wonderful babies—it is offering a bouquet to the beloved old-fashioned general practitioner of its youthful memories.”

The New York Times in its column called “Topics of the Times” states: “Twenty thousand persons are said to have applied for the 3,000 tickets available for yesterday’s meeting addressed by Dr. Dafoe. Mainly it was curiosity, no doubt, but about the manner in which the American and Canadian public has rallied to the Dionne quintuplets, their mother, and their guide, philosopher and friend in the person of Dr. Dafoe, there is something more than idle curiosity. There is an unmistakable touch of awe in the presence of an affirmation of life at a time when, all the world over, human life has become so cheap and so incidental.” Truly human nature is perenially interested in birth and life, not in prevention of birth and in death. The contraceptionists who are trying to make it appear that doctors advising contraception are medically and socially conscious, whilst those who do not are callous, ignorant and prejudiced, confer no benefit on the medical profession. The aim of sound medicine is the preservation of life not its prevention.
The statistics sent out recently by the United Press to the effect that pregnancies are more frequent in unemployed families than in employed families, are birth control propaganda, whether the United Press is conscious of that fact or not. And the answer to that propaganda is simply this, that if it is desirable to reduce the birth rate, and employment produces that effect without the immoral practice of contraception, then the proper solution of the difficulty is to grant employment to all capable of working and not to grant contraceptive information. This latest phase of birth control propaganda shows that its advocates are really active in propagating an unjust economic system through advocacy of an immoral means to reduce the economic burdens put upon society by the present unnecessary depression.

SOCIALIZED MEDICINE

Speaking of socialized medicine, mark this from the New York Times entitled “Friendly Medicine Needed”: “Speaking of socialized medicine there was a time, many years ago, when socialism was new in this country, and some people thought that a Socialist was one who liked to go out with his friends and have a good social time. How will it be with socialized medicine? Will it have a good social time with its patients, or will it tend to become cold and impersonal and institutionalized, as people not rarely complain of public health service even now? For the present system of rugged individual doctors it is to be said that the family physician has been always greatly valued for his pleasant bedside manner. The scientific practitioners might sneer but the psychologists have been discovering that there was a good deal in that bedside manner. It provided that human fellowship and homely cheer for which many sufferers now flock to the cults and the near-religions.”

STERILIZATION PROPAGANDA

If the sterilizers were as good scientists as they are propagandists we might soon see the end of the sterilization movement. They carry their propaganda everywhere but their science is pseudo. The State Association of Elementary Principles adopted a resolution at Syracuse on December 28th urging a study by the State Legislature and Congress of sterilization of mental incompetents and criminals. Mr. Donald M. Wright of the Resolutions Committee said: “I would stress the sterilization of feeble-minded rather than criminals, since the heredity transmission of criminal tendencies has not been so clearly demonstrated as has heredity transmission of mental deficiency.” Mr.
Wright is optimistic, we know practically nothing about the "heredity transmission" of mental deficiency. This has been shown by two excellent pamphlets recently brought out by Guild members, "What about Sterilization" by Reverend Ignatius W. Cox, S.J., and Dr. James J. Walsh, M.D., Ph.D., N. C. W. C., 1312 Massachusetts Avenue, N. W., Washington, D. C., and "The Folly of Human Sterilization" by Reverend Ignatius W. Cox, S.J., Paulist Press, 401 West 59th Street, New York City.

Sterilization is based on a lost sense of the value of the human body and of human personality. It is in direct contradiction to our fundamental political philosophy. The logic of this lost sense of values carries to an approval of euthanasia and compulsory death for the insane and for all types of criminals. That logical application was made by Dr. Charles W. Burr, alienist, recently at Philadelphia: "Most insane criminals are not worth saving and should be put out of the way. Why put them in jails or institutions where they are just an expense to taxpayers and a decided menace in the event they are liberated again?" To our way of thinking psychiatrists and physicians advising sterilization are tacitly admitting the breakdown of their own sciences as conceived by themselves. As a matter of fact propagandists for sterilization in reality are pseudo-economists rather than psychiatrists or doctors. They are more concerned with the economic burden entailed by caring for the mentally sick than they are for sound medicine or sound psychiatry.

THE LATZ FOUNDATION

It is with great pleasure that we present in this issue an article, written for The Linacre by our urgent request, on "The Latz Foundation, Its Aims and Achievements," by Dr. Leo J. Latz, M.D. We are also reviewing for our readers two new books on the Rhythm Theory by non-Catholics: one by the distinguished Japanese physician, Dr. Ogino, and one by Dr. Victor C. Pedersen, M.D., the author of "The Woman a Man Marries," and "The Man a Woman Marries."

In giving so large a share of our small publication to the Rhythm Theory in this issue, we are in no way departing from the stand of The Linacre, expressed by Ethicus in the issue of September, 1934, under the caption "Publicity and the Safe Period." It may seem utterly academic at this moment when more and more books are being circulated on the Rhythm Theory to maintain the stand that publicity with regard to the Safe Period should be restricted to such circles as those represented by priests, physicians and social workers. The Linacre took this stand under the guidance of high ecclesiastical
authority and the almost unanimous opinion of the great moral theologians. It will depart from that position, when a lead in that departure comes from the source of all ecclesiastical authority, Rome.

At the same time THE LINACRE maintains that the proper place to discuss the momentous questions raised by the Rhythm Theory is in its pages and in the pages of similar professional publications. It believes that all Catholic doctors and priests should be intimately acquainted with the facts so splendidly presented by Doctor Latz in his book on "The Rhythm" and the results both moral and physical which have been the consequence of the application of the theory. Evidence of these results is presented by Doctor Latz in this issue.

With the reservation made above THE LINACRE takes this occasion to congratulate Doctor Latz not only on his scientific knowledge and his experimental confirmation of the findings of Doctors Knaus and Ogino, but also on his patient, persistent toil without which "The Rhythm" would have been an impossibility.

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THE LATZ FOUNDATION — ITS AIMS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

By LEO J. LATZ, M.D.

THE LINACRE presents this article without approval or disapproval of the moral questions involved. In our issue for March, 1933, we discussed some of these moral questions. Others are still being hotly discussed by European moralists, notably and recently in the "Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses" for July, 1934 and "L'Ami Du Clergé" for November 8, 1934. Among these problems is the problem of the validity of a marriage contracted with a deliberate intention of perpetually restricting the use of marriage to the sterile days.

It is an honor to be asked to contribute an article to THE LINACRE QUARTERLY on the topic indicated above. As far as possible, I shall let the record speak for itself.

The aims of the Latz Foundation are five-fold:

1. To spread information about the rhythm theory of sterility and fertility in women, as discovered by Drs. Ogino and Knaus.

2. To confirm the theory by the collection of pertinent data and to study problems that are closely related, like the changeability of the menstrual cycle, the factors that bring about the changes, the shortest basic period of fertility, etc.

3. Through the dissemination of the knowledge of the rhythm theory to assist married people in overcoming sterility, in choosing the time and arranging the circumstances that are most propitious for the generation of children, or, where circumstances indicate such a procedure, in spacing births or in avoiding them entirely. Through this service, the Latz Foundation aims to help married people to a