
Translations From The Vernacular--IV.
"I Didn't Think."

There are alibis and alibis. Some are good, some clearly futile, some which leave you on the fence, and a few that are positively atrocious.

Most frequently we escape from our neglect by bestowing the blame for it on other persons or upon untoward circumstances or, as the contractors say, on "Acts of God." Rarely do alibis directly involve oneself.

Failure to keep an engagement, or at least to keep it on time; neglect of detail in some work called for and guaranteed to be forthcoming; breeches of courtesy or of propriety; omission of duties which results in embarrassment or loss to others, are palmed off on importunate visitors, on sudden and unforeseen inroads upon our time and energy, on illness (perhaps the handiest of all, since confession of it naturally calls for sympathy), on the weather, and so on.

Rarely, comparatively speaking, does one seriously receive the reply, "I didn't think," for that is merely to admit one fault in order to condone another.

Charge the culprit with this as a fault, and he becomes indignant, as though you had no business contending that he had any duty to think when thought was called for, or at least that such omission should rightly be set down as a fault.

True, as the psychologists tell us, thought draws its materials from the senses. And the senses are bombarded from every side. The whole external world clamors for our attention, makes a bid for our interest, demands a share of our admiration.

Eyes, ears, nose and tongue are appealed to--not to mention the succession of pains and pleasures the body is heir to, with their concomitant variations in moods and dispositions.

It is a wonder, really, that we are able to concentrate at all. A wonder, yes, but

CORRECTION: The announcement of Bishop Kelly's lectures for the week of December 13, is entitled "The New Samaritan", not "The Good Samaritan".

PRAYERS: (deceased) Sister M. Amatus (Holy Cross, Ind.); Monsignor Franche; son of Samuel T. Murdock ('86). Ill, mother of Pete Zachek (St. Eds.). 5 spec. intentions.

a possibility none the less, for the fact is we do it, and we find that we can always do it when we want to. In the give and take between self and the environment, the latter does not always win, need not, in fact, ever wholly win.

We can dominate our environment--even to radios, brass bands, and bridge games--and, since it is a necessary measure for self-defense, we ought to do so. Indeed, our very mental and moral life depend on our doing so, and succeeding in it.

"I didn't think." One asserts it not only as a fact, but also as an excuse. He brings forward negligence to compensate for negligence, and yet takes it ill if the offended party is not readily appeased.

He resembles the merchant who, to the complaint of the buyer that the eggs were rotten, offers to make amends by giving him an equal number of broken ones.

To say in extenuation of neglected duty, "I didn't think" is simply to contend that you are entitled to exemption from responsibility for your actions.

Well, do not be surprised then, if your associates say of you: "He's an irresponsible fellow. I wouldn't recommend him for any position of trust." It's a bad reputation to get, and a far worse one to live down.

Being human, it is our duty to think, not about anything that fancy or external distraction puts in the mind, but about what it is our daily business to attend to.

In the Final Judgment it will obviously be presupposed.

"I didn't think" is the alibi atrocious!