
Have Pity!

Suppose you were a victim of a hit-and-run driver at night. Trapped in your own car, burning slowly, you lay alone in unbearable pain along a lonely road. Another car comes along, filled with young people. They slow down. You cry at the top of your voice for help, but they merely give a passing glance, then drive on into the night.

Would that negligence be criminal?

How would you characterize the negligence of those students who heartlessly ignore the Poor Souls? Carelessness and indifference may be quasi-excuses for neglecting other devotions, but woe to them in their day of suffering if they now make those excuses for neglecting the Poor Souls.

"You Dirty Cur!"
(Reprinted by request)

Pain, surprise, and a mixture of pity and loathing are the emotional reaction of normal, decent boys when they hear companions apparently normal boast or make light of dark and disgraceful deeds, sometimes miscalled exploits. And because the question, "How can they do it?" is asked by people who have the normal sense of shame, it will perhaps be well to wander briefly into the shady paths of abnormal psychology to discover what leads them to do it.

There are three explanations (and they are explanations, mind you, not excuses):

1. Degeneracy;
2. Immaturity, mental or moral or both;
3. Moral cowardice, working itself out in a defense mechanism.

With the first we need not concern ourselves. Most of you will meet with few degenerates, and you will instinctively shun them. Immaturity is more common, and moral immaturity arises not only from slow mental and emotional development, but also living in a pagan environment hostile to the growth of moral ideals. In these two classes, the degenerates and the immature, the sense of shame is not well developed.

In the third group there is a strong sense of shame, but its unfortunate victim is guilty of overdoing his attempt to talk down his own conscience. An excellent analysis of the situation was given a few years ago by a young man who came in to get help in overcoming his weaknesses. Here is what he said:

"I imagine that no one can hate that sort of conversation more than I do, and it is one of my chief sources of temptation -- and yet I indulge in it very frequently; in fact, I often start it. All the time that I am in it I am saying to myself: 'You dirty cur.' I know that others know of my weakness, so I like to brag of it as strength. Down in my heart I despise myself for my weakness and I loathe my sins, but I don't seem to have the will power to come out and declare my true feelings; so the harder my conscience rides me the more I brag."

You can help the poor victims of the second and third group. The immature kids must be taught caution; a good spanking will give them that. The cowards are cured by calling their bluff, by playing shame against cowardice. Look them in the eye and say: "Why don't you tell the truth?" If they have any spunk at all they will take offense at that, but it will cure them -- and if the cure doesn't work it is a sign that you have mistaken your man, and that he is a degenerate instead of simply a coward. (Mail this Bulletin to any student whom you think needs it.)