

a problem to avoid accepting the gratitude that the miners could not be restrained from expressing often in touching and beautiful ways. In the frightful pressure under which we worked, it was hard not to become automatic, mechanical, in the distribution of our bounties. On the other hand, we could not let our sympathies submerge us. When the inevitable happened, as it did on occasion, and we saw that because of our own limitations or spiritual inadequacy what we did and what we gave blessed neither those who received nor those who gave, we were overwhelmed by a realization of wrong piled on wrong until the historical causes and the social iniquities back of all we were facing almost drowned us in despair. Not altogether, however; not for long. Some corrective experience, the sweetness of a little child's thanks, or the dignity and honesty of a brave mother or father would revive our faith in the reserves of decency in human nature; and we would find ourselves saying to ourselves:

"In the dirt and scum of things,  
There alway, alway something sings."

I remember one Scotch father who, when I was questioning his wife as to the needs of the children, interrupted to say, "I'll tell you how it is with us. Our children haven't the clothes we want them to have to go to school in; and they haven't got the clothes they want; but as long as there are other children worse off than ours, we'd rather you'd give to them first."

An inside view of things affected a change in one's first superficial appraisal of the social scene. When one entered the field and saw the ugly contrast between the poverty of the camps and the still luxurious scale of living of many in the nearby towns who had made their money directly or indirectly from the mines, one was shocked only until one remembered a little story told long ago, the story of Dives and Lazarus. We understand Dives only too well—from the inside. We too are now enjoying our "good things," some-

times very complacently, with slums around the corner and beggars at our doors, beggars for work as well as for bread. Are we not, like Dives, pre-occupied? We think we have done what we can, or are, forsooth, steeled in resentment against those who are openly opposed to an order of society from which we have ourselves so benefited. That we can learn to share as the miners have learned is perhaps too bold and too fantastic a hope. I recall a man who had only cornbread for his family sharing that dull diet with the fatherless home next door. It is this kind of thing that throws a blazing light on the words of Jesus' "Blessed are ye poor." It is only the poor who can live innocently and completely as children do, as the saints have done from Peter and John and Paul and St. Francis to Kagawa. There has been, even in our own day and our own land, one who has some profound truths to teach us in the matter of giving. Kahlil Gibran writes thus in "The Prophet":

"There are those who give with joy, and that joy is their reward.  
And there are those who give with pain, and that pain is their baptism.  
And there are those who give and know not pain in giving, nor do they seek joy, nor give with mindfulness of virtue;  
They give as in yonder valley the myrtle breathes its fragrance into space.  
Through the hands of such as these God speaks, and from behind their eyes He smiles upon the earth."

The coming winter looks very dark in the coal fields. Recently I received a letter from a principal of a school in Tennessee saying that only about one-fifteenth of the one hundred and eighteen children in her school had books. I wonder what fraction will have adequate food and clothes in the cold months ahead. There are still those ready to distribute to the needy all that comes to their hands, but their resources are dwindling.

He who would do good knocks at the gate;  
He who loves finds the gate open.

—Rabindranath Tagore