

not stained. * * It is twice blessed: it blesseth him that gives and him that takes." And there is something wrong with the man who has not this melting sympathy, this forbearing compassion in his heart. It is a gift from heaven, a clear flowing fountain, that revives the spirit crushed and beaten down in the harsh struggle of life; the heart of man has recorded in the institutions that govern him a higher law than blind justice, a law of equity and mercy.

But we have forgotten the meaning of that word mercy. Too often our so-called mercy sets the guilty free regardless of national welfare. Because the guilty man was previously a respected member of our midst, we hesitate to punish him, to dishonor him, to bring shame to his family, and so we seek extenuating circumstances. But in a larger sense, is this extenuation merciful? Merciful to whom? True mercy sternly punishes as often as it sets at liberty. The most tender mercy of the mother is that which inflicts upon the child just punishment. Counterfeit mercy knows neither the welfare of the subject nor the good of the state. It is sentimental, politic, and condemns,—thrice condemns: condemns the giver in that he loses his power to discriminate between right and wrong; condemns the receiver by confirming him in his contempt for law; condemns society by contributing to the general disregard for law, by making it a light thing to violate the law. Though all the forces of my soul, crying out against the sin and blackness of man, impelled me to slay my neighbor, could I demand at the hands of my countrymen my life? Rather should it not be made a holy sacrifice to that larger need of the nation? Justice must have her course that a nation may live; "The very mercy of the law cries out most audible."

The ever growing need of our country is a broad-minded, deep-thinking patriotisk. She needs the services of sons and daughters who look below the surface and farther than the needs of the hour, who recognizes as a foe to permanent government the palliation of wrong, the indiscriminate and blind mitigation, that overlooks the right, forgets the needs of the nation, and clothes the wrong-doer with a sentimental, destructive pity. Our eyes are closed to the portent of this evil because it is cloaked in the hypocritical garment of a false virtue. But it is upon us, as a vampire in the night, drinking the lifeblood of the nation, perverting justice, undermining law, destroying national unity. It is not enough that our President and a few brave followers should enforce the laws. Alone they cannot fight the fight. What will it avail if the great