

What does it really mean—
to see Christ in my brother?
Today, I saw a photograph of the dead body
of an inmate of a concentration camp.
He had tried to escape through a barbed wire fence,
but was shot as he began, frantically, to force his way
through it.
His corpse is fastened to the fence,
with arms outstretched, hands closed tight in death,
upon the sharp edged barbs,
face twisted in pain and anguish . . .
The picture of utter wretchedness,
loneliness and despair.
The caption—a masterpiece in incarnationalism—reads:
“Eli! Eli: My God! My God! Why have you abandoned me?”
Christ stretched upon His Cross—
this poor wretch, stretched upon his cross-fence—
the tattered, sad-eyed beggar, pleading for his next
meal—
the friend who has just told you of his father’s sudden
death
all crying out with the same shrieks of anguish:
“My God, my God, Why? . . . Why? . . . Why? . . .
Oh Christ, let me always hear your cry—
on their lips . . .
let me always hear their cries—
on your lips!
Let me always see a sort of double-exposure crucifixion—
Your cross and my brother’s barbed wire fence—
Your cross and my brother’s sadness, grief, despair . . .
Your cross and his cross—for . . .
Your cross is his cross!
After a time, this double-exposure will no longer be
necessary—
I will see You hanging on the barbed wire fence,
and him, my brother, on Your cross.
For there’s really only one Cross—
and we all share it.
We all die upon it “together”;
and this must be—if we are really to live upon it
“together”.

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