

PRESSING ON

In a far country lived a band of minstrels who traveled from town to town presenting music to make a living. They had not been doing well. Times were hard; there was little money for common folk to come to hear the minstrels, even though their fee was small. Attendance had been falling off and early one evening the group met, to discuss their plight.

"I see no reason for opening tonight," one said. "To make things even worse than they may have been, it is starting to snow. Who will venture out on a night like this?"

"I agree," another disheartened singer said. "Last night we performed for just a handful. Fewer will come tonight. Why not give back their meager fees and cancel the concert? No one can expect us to go on when just a few are in the audience."

"How can anyone do his best for so few?" a third inquired. Then he turned to another sitting beside him. "What do you think?"

The man appealed to was older than the others. He looked straight at his troupe. I know you are discouraged. I am too. But we have a responsibility to those who might come. We will go on. And we will do the best job of which we are capable. It is not the fault of those who come that others do not. They should not be punished with less than the best we can give."

Heartened by his words, the minstrels went ahead with their show. They never performed better.

When the show was over and the small audience gone, the old man called his troupe to him. In his hand was a note, handed to him by one of the audience just before the doors closed behind him.

"Listen to this, my friends!" Something electrifying stopped them in their work. Slowly the old man read: "Thank you for a beautiful performance." It was signed very simply -- "Your King."