

The Forty-Niner

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EDITORIAL.

Christmas is with us again, a Christmas foreboding of many things, telling the old, old story in a different strain, singing us the rhythms of our boyhood days to the accompaniment of the "coal-box," the "whizz-bang," and the various other tunes man in his devilish ingenuity can produce with small doses of guncotton and a handful of the raw material. But be there bullets flying or "Jack Johnsons" bursting in places our feet have just left, it is all the same to us; Christmas is Christmas, and the Editor wishes every one of his readers all the happiness that this festive season can produce. May He Who rules the destiny of man so guide and guard the boys of this battalion that everyone may in the very near future once more be gathered round the fire-side of those most dear and most loved by them. And let us all hope that, ere another Christmas rolls round, the world may not be shaken from end to end by the cannonading of nations at war, but that the perfect harmony of true and lasting peace may have claimed the belligerent nations as her own.

This number of the magazine sees light under very different circumstances, and the task is not made any easier by the altered conditions; nevertheless, as the battalion has proved in the past that one cannot place a task too hard in their path, so we hope that this number may show that a task set is a task fulfilled. We have had the co-operation of many members of the 49th who have the gift of literary ability, and those who are not so gifted are with us in spirit, so, all things considered, we have no fears.

Among other contributions you will notice

several from members of other battalions. This, methinks, shows the unity with which the men of the Canadian contingents are knit together; shows the love for dear old Canada that every man who is fighting her battles bears towards the land of his birth or of his adoption, a land that one and all is ready to shed his life-blood for or do his little part in the greatest of all great wars.

War exacts her payment in human lives, in ruined homes, in heart-broken parents, in lands left desolate—lands where once the golden grain was king, now only the scars of warfare are left. She spares no individual battalion, and we have paid our toll. From amongst us are gone faces—men cut off in their prime, whose young lives have been given to the country they served. We honour them, and those bereft have our heart-felt sympathy. Their death has made the dawn of peace a little nearer, has made the exaction that must come a little more severe, and when the call comes may we all die as happy a death—a life given for a glorious cause. Some have seen death face to face, and have come away bearing the honourable scars of war—scars from wounds inflicted while performing their duty. May they soon be amongst us again, to once more do their little bit, perfectly restored to health and ready and willing to fight in the name of justice.

Our life out in a foreign country is certainly harder than it has been before, but let us not complain; let us but do our duty, and rest assured that abiding victory must come, and that the day of a perfect peace will soon dawn when war alarms have ceased to trouble and a glorious and abiding quiet will reign supreme in all the earth.