

have reached a half-way house in the year's working life. The year's work has been taken up, well or ill; and is in full progress, each man's hand is on the plough, now in mid-furrow.

Well or ill? How is it with you, brother, each one? How is it with your part, so far, in the year's work? If *well*-begun, beware of slackening, of losing ground. I would urge you—take care of your holidays. Enjoy them, but do not let them relax your energies, impair your resolution, blunt your relish, for the work which should be the leading purpose, the main effort, of your life this year.

On the other hand, if *ill*-begun, this working year, what then? Well, even so, its course is not yet so far advanced, but that there may be time to regain in some measure lost ground, to repair past failures. It *may* not be too late now,—how soon it will be so is a solemn question.

Consider then, young brothers, whither this first term's work has brought you. And then consider how the two terms which are yet to come may, on the one hand, maintain and improve your present condition of advanced progress, or on the other, repair the mischief which the past term's negligence has brought about.

But this special season, the closing weeks of '99, has brought with it peculiar causes for serious thought, yes, and deepest sadness.

Uppermost in all our minds at the present time is the sentiment of sympathy with our Mother Country in this her hour of grievous trial, forced to look on while the blood of her children, her noblest, her bravest, her gentlest, her very strength and stay, is being poured out like water,—freely, generously lavished, without stint or wavering, for her dear sake. A noble motive surely; but alas, for what end else?

And we too here in Canada have given practical expression to our loyal sympathy by joining with our sister colonies in sending of our best and bravest to stand shoulder to shoulder with the warriors of our Motherland, and, if it must be, to mingle their blood with theirs in the same noble cause.

A sad sad Christmas will this be for England. And we her sons cannot be so selfish as not to partake in some measure in her sadness. "Be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another: be pitiful." The shadow which has fallen upon her must fall on us too. Who can say but that this shadow over our coming Christmas festivities may have a meaning for us, a purpose of kindly rebuke, reminding us that in our past observance of the sacred season our thoughts have been too much taken up with the merely social aspect of our great festival, and not sufficiently impressed with the glorious realities of its spiritual significance. Surely the events which are now transpiring, while they restrain in some degree the exuberance of merrymaking which otherwise might be suitable to the occasion, should yet tend to quicken our appreciation of those higher joys which no earthly ca-