by Ed BELL

'Twas the night before Christmas When all over 'the hill', Nothing was stirring . . . . Not even a still! The classrooms were empty, There were no more capers; But lights burned in the city As professors marked papers . .

After the preceding bit of plagiarism, . . . a few thoughts on and all the best on term exams, the coming season as it applies to university students... with a few a safe journey home, an enjoy-presents for some particular "needy" persons. The forecast is for a safe journey back and a riot-... serious worry over examinations (not only by the Frosh either), exuberant train trips to various cities (last year a few of the boys were asked to leave the Montreal train at McAdam), a few quiet days at home (rationalizing to "Daddy" the reasons why low marks might come on certain subjects) . . . a family Christmas, growing restlessness between Christmas and New Year's Day, a hectic round of social activities (which causes "Momma" to inquire, "Is this the

way you act at UNB") . . . and back to classes to show off the new clothes which were tastefully selected (probably by a maiden aunt).

The Christmas season is hectic . . . with its tinsel and glitter, its commercialization . . . with its Sally's and Freddie's (shudder) "Cheerfully lying to Momma . . ." It has its wild parties, its mad rush by department stores to sell everything at boosted prices and rush by department stores to sell everything at boosted prices, and all the other aspects that cynics feast upon. Ogden Nash, in A Carol For Children, writes:

"God rest you, merry Innocents, While Innocence endures. A sweeter Christmas than we to ours May you bequeath to yours."

But these things are not all . . . or even an important part . . . of the spirit of Christmas. Small unasked favours by your friends, the smile and greeting of a stranger on the street, an understanding hand on your shoulder when things are not going well, the feeling you get when you know you've helped someone without their knowing it, a smile from a child . . . these are the little things that put the first syllable in Christmas. When you stop and take stock of the past year and find with a feeling of warmth that you know many wonderful people and that all people, despite minor differences in your relationships with them, are good and kind in their own way . . . this is the spirit of Christmas. You cast aside the petty little prejudices in your own life and appreciate what a great world it is, how fire papels are the conditions and how for the conditions are set to the conditions and the conditions are set to the conditions are

how fine people really are, and how fortunate you are to be a part of it all . . . then you realize that Christmas is not just a tradition or a commercial enterprise . . . it is a feeling of gratitude for life that lasts all year long.

In all sincerity, I wish all my friends, and those whom I would like to have as friends, best wishes for a happy holiday and a true and meaningful Christmas. To those who do not hold Christmas as a religious holiday, again my sincere best wishes for a good holiday and a happy and prosperous new year. As Dickens put it, let's make it a Christmas so that it can always be said of us that "we know how to keep Christmas well". And I join with Tiny Tim . . . "God bless us every one."

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Until then, we wish you one ous second term.

And to those students who will not be privileged to return next term, the Christmas graduates, farewell, and good luck.

Bye now!

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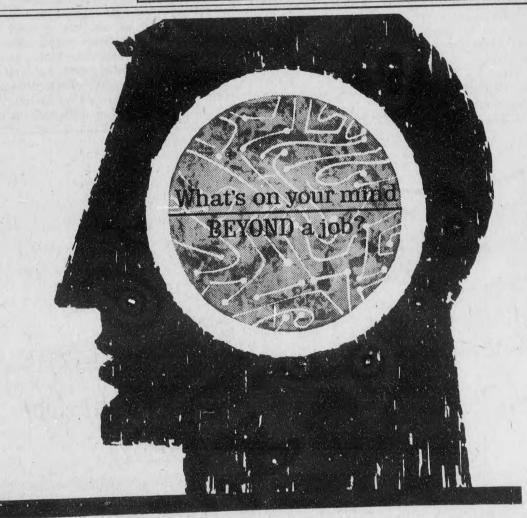
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