

THE COWARD

"It was all so dark, it was all so still,
Yet somethin' pushed me against me will;
'Ow I wanted to turn! Yet I crawled until
 I was seein' a dim light shine.
Then thinks I: 'I'll just go a little bit,
And see wot the doose I can make of it,'
And it seemed to come from the mouth of a pit:
 'Christmas!' sez I, 'a mine.'

"Then 'ere's the part wot I can't explain:
I wanted to make for 'ome again,
But somethin' was blazin' inside me brain,
 So I crawled to the trench instead;
Then I saw the bullet 'ead of a 'Un,
And 'e stood by a rapid-firer gun,
And I lifted a rock and I 'it 'im one,
 And 'e dropped like a chunk o' lead.

"Then all the 'Uns that was underground,
Comes up with a rush and on with a bound,
And I swings that giddy old Maxim round
 And belts 'em solid and square.
You see I was off me chump wiv fear,
'If I'm sellin' me life,' sez I, 'it's dear,'
And the trench was narrow and they was near,
 So I peppered the brutes for fair.