

## THE GUN

A SHARP command from the misty dark,  
And we brace ourselves for the big gun's bark,  
For the echoing bang that splits the night,  
And the sudden flash of the blinding light  
That etches clear, for a moment's space  
The tense, hard lines on each straining face,  
Then the darkness folds like a robe again,  
And the squeaking scotches groan and strain,  
And we hark once more, as the orders come,  
To the quivering "plunk" as the shell drives home,  
To the leathery squeal as the wheel-brakes jam,  
To the thudding clang of the breech-block's slam,  
Then our palms fly up to our mud-stained cheeks,  
And we close our ears as the big gun speaks.

O, the enemy search for her night and day,  
And they blow up an odd estaminet  
Or a couple of churches, just for fun,  
But they never come nigh to the crouching gun,  
For she sits secure by the battered wall,  
And she bides her time while the stray shells fall,  
Yes, she waits and waits till the last one rips,  
With a sneering laugh on her cruel lips,  
Then she wakes to life with a shattering roar,  
And we feed her the shells, and she calls for more,  
And she hurls them North and East and South  
Like bitter oaths from her blackened mouth—  
Oh, well do the enemy know their path,  
And they fear our gun when she roars her wrath.