

The Close of

THE WAR ~~THE WAR~~

They lay in the darkness till daylight was breaking,
And whispered in stillness as bursting bombs fell,
With muscles all tense and courage all aching,
To spring on the foe with their blood piercing yell.

Dawning comes, the word is given,
Up and over quick they spring,
The air, the hills, the earth is riven,
Bomb, grenade, and rifles, ring.

Mile on mile, hut ever backward,
Day and night, the sullen foe,
Through the wreck and devastation,
Beaten, routed, hunted, go.

Leaving dead and dying troopers,
Strewn along their blood-stained trail,
While pursuing, Allied squadrons,
Speed them on with iron hail.

Till a signal, through the mist, is
Flashed above each trench and hill,
Radiant words!—the "signed Armistice"!—
Strikes the ranks with lightning thrill.

Frenzied joy and frantic cheering,
From the million soldier throats,
Gloomy smoke of battle clearing,
With triumphant martial notes.

Dewy morn, with sun gems, covers
All the million burial mounds,
Glory saddened, mourning hovers,
Touching light the hallowed grounds.

Peace has come, but oh! the anguish,
Cheerless, hopeless, weeping homes,
Deadened, dark, despairing, languish
For the one who never comes.

The Last Charge
The Armistice