



PREFACE.

*Blow out, you bugles, over the rich Dead !
There's none of these so lonely and poor of old
But, dying, has made us rarer gifts than gold.
These laid the world away ; poured out the red
Sweet wine of youth ; gave up the years to be
Of work and joy, and that unhop'd serene
That men call age ; and those who would have
been
Their sons, they gave, their immortality.*

RUPERT BROOKE.

No nation goes to war other than seriously : neither have we. But, after our manner, we have hidden our seriousness in laughter and song. Yet the earnestness of our soldiers reveals itself in spite of that invincible gaiety of bearing which has baffled the less observant among our friends and enemies. It is revealed in the letters from the Front which have been published in the newspapers ; and again in the numerous poems born in the war zone (sometimes in the trenches under fire) and in the military encampments throughout the Empire. As editor of *T.P.'s Weekly* it has been my privilege and good fortune to read much in this inspiring literature of the moment, and in that way I became acquainted with the verses which follow.

In January last of the present year Sergeant Frank Brown called at my office in Covent Garden with a packet of poems under his arm.