WILFRED OWEN

THE LAST LAUGH

‘O Jesus Christ! I’m hit,’ he said; and died.
Whether he vainly cursed, or prayed indeed,
The Bullets chirped — In vain! vain! vain!
Machine-guns chuckled, — Tut-tut! Tut-tut!
And the Big Gun guffawed.
Another sighed, — ‘O Mother, mother! Dad!’
Then smiled, at nothing, childlike, being dead.
And the lofty Shrapnel-cloud
Leisurely gestured, — Fool!
And the falling splinters tittered.
‘My Love!’ one moaned. Love-languid seemed his mood,
Till, slowly lowered, his whole face kissed the mud.
And the Bayonets’ long teeth grinned;
Rabbles of Shells hooted and groaned;
And the Gas hissed.