THOMAS HARDY

THE MAN HE KILLED

“Had he and I but met
By some old ancient inn,
We should have sat us down to wet
Right many a nipperkin!
“But ranged as infantry,
And staring face to face,
I shot at him as he at me,
And killed him in his place.
“I shot him dead because —
Because he was my foe,
Just so: my foe of course he was;
That’s clear enough; although
“He thought he’d ’list, perhaps,
Off-hand like — just as I —
Was out of work — had sold his traps —
No other reason why.
“Yes; quaint and curious war is!
You shoot a fellow down
You’d treat if met where any bar is,
Or help to half-a-crown.”