

THE MAN HE KILLED

Thomas Hardy

a poem

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“ 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.”



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