

*The Army of God-Knows Where*

No bands are playing gaily when they're going into action  
 No crowds are cheering madly at their deeds of derring-do;  
 They are owing small allegiance to any flag or faction—  
 Their colors on the sky-line and their war cry, "Put it through"

Ahead of bath and Bible and of late repeating rifle,  
 The flags can only follow to the starting of their trail;  
 They heard the leagues behind them, every mile the merest trifle;  
 They mark the paths of safety for the slower sail and rail.

Their standards kiss the breezes from the Arctic's cooling ices  
 To where the South Pole's poking out its undiscovered head;  
 You can see their chains a-snaking through the lands of rum and spices—  
 And East and West you'll always find unrepining dead.

No time for love and laughter, with their rods upon their shoulders,  
 No time to think with vain regret of home or passing friends,  
 They are slipping down the chasms, charging up the mighty bowlders,  
 The compass stops from overwork; the pathway never ends.

They slit the gullet of the earth; disgorge its hoarded riches  
 (But life's too short for them to stop and snatch a rightful share);  
 They've a booking on the Congo putting in some water ditches;  
 A Dating to take tea with death; they make it by a hair!

You will find their pickets watching in the unexpected places;  
 You will hear them talking freely of The-Things-that-Can't-Be-Done;  
 Oh, the Faith they speak so strongly and Hope that's in their faces—  
 It lights the gloom of What's-the-Use as brightly as the sun!

No bands are playing gaily and no crowds are madly cheering;  
 No telegraph behind them tells their deeds of derring-do;  
 But forward goes the legion, never doubting, never fearing—  
 Their colors on the sky-line and their war cry, "Put it through"!

—Bohemian Magazine  
 ALFRED NOYES DAMON