

The Defeat of the Frost King's Hordes

By

George E. Merrick

Three thousand miles, and more, they march,
— White Armies of the North!
And in their wake where dead up-arch
Ensanguined hues flare forth.

Unchecked; they sweep from Arctic Bay
— Where first they blustered forth;
And south-ward flames their bloodhued way;
Red Armies of the North!

Through helpless shiv'ring stricken land
Southward rolls their march.
On mountain rocks; by river sand;
The dying brown and parch.

Three thousand miles they march, and more;
No army dares stand forth
To battle wage on northern floor
— With Armies of the North!

Not one within their path they spare:
No tiny flutt'ring life,
They leave high-arched aisles a-flare:
Slim throats they put to knife.

Their victims fall, thick-lain, to earth
In mounds of dying red.
Each flaring waste holds fearful dearth
Of else but heaping dead.

They leave no little humble home:
But, all, as prey acclaim.
—Tall spire and sweeping templed dome
Burst in consuming flame.

Their white, deep-steeped, glares fateful forth.
Rapacious, still, for more
Encarmined Armies of the North
Stretch south-ward hands of gore.

Three thousand miles they march, and more,
From out their frigid North.—
...But ambushed fate is waiting for
Red Armies of the North!

For, See!... From hot West Indian lands
Green-clad armies north-ward fare!
Calm, silent, unobtrusive bands
Green-swarm from jungle lair.

The green-plumed host, though witting well
The force of jealous spleen,
Surge north-ward—one green-tossing swell—
Heroic Armies of the Green!

Where other Norther armies reeled
From Seminole’s rude hank,
The palm-hued hordes, now, choose the field
To ambush,— fore and flank.

The gray-green moss, in cunning keen,
Hides countless warring head
That swarming spring from Jungles green
On Armies of the Red.

Surrounded: stunned by cunning shock:
The blood-hued minions fight.
Green-armoured warriors ceaseless flock
To choke Red-flaring blight.

And fierce the silent battle flows
Where live — and north-oak meet.
High-ridged tongues of angry glows
Pierce ambushed green-flung beat.

But reinforcements to the Green
Palmetto-clothed spring forth:
All, sisal-shod — with bay’nets keen,
Halt Armies of the North!

Past cypress swamp; by oak-grown hill
Red Armies struggle through
To palm-green vales; nor flee — until
Palms view a Waterloo.

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Yet, further south, Reds,—dying,—strive!
—Green=froned trumpets blare!
The victims,—last, of Red Horde’s drive
Sparse, exiled maples flare.

Green-froned arms in triumph wave!
Green-tossing plumes fling high!
...The gray-green moss for vanquished brave
Breathes low, magnan’mous sigh.

Three thousand miles they marched, and more;
—Red—Armies of the North!
Green-held: their southward drive is o’er:
Fled—Armies of the North!