

Gregorio H. del Pilar

For thirty years there mouldered, in a nameless mountain grave.
The bones of one who ventured his country's cause to save.
For thirty years the ~~h~~side clasped him tightly to her breast,
Thru sunshine and thru storm, proud of her martial guest.

At length this kindly mother relaxed her fast embrace,
And yielded up the relics to the worship of his race:
Behold these bones now honored by his country's grateful sons,
Enshrined for aye in glory, while the nation's sequence runs.

The chieftain gave his orders to the youthful del Pilar
To hold the mountain gateway, and hostile forces bar,
What time his troops, in safety, to their fastness should retire,
For they were pressed right hotly by foeman's sword and fire.

Full well the gallant remnant stood in that fateful Pass,
Cheer'd their valiant leader, against the pressing mass.
But a vantage height was captured by the unrelenting foe:
Anon the sturdy rearguard drank deep their cup of woe:

The lofty Pass is trodden by horse, and footman ranks,
Of superior foreign legions that clamber o'er the banks.
Around, the dead are lying, their hearts blood gone to earth,—
That blood they freely offered for the land that gave them birth.

On the trail is stretched a body, on the coat the lonely star,—
The victors shout in triumph, for dead is young Pilar.
They gave him shroudless, prayerless, to his mother clay,
A soldier's sigh they heaved, and lightly went their way.

Oh, life so nobly given in such a noble cause,
Awaken us to duty, make us think and pause.
And Tilad Pass so honored!—Proclaim the name afar,
For there was drained the life-blood of dauntless del Pilar.

His bones are wrapt in glory, as fitting they should be;
But more than this, O truly, upon our claims has he:
His spirit must inspire us to water well the seeds
Of sacrifice and valor, which our country sadly needs.

These seeds he nobly planted and nourished with his blood
Which raced from ev'ry conduit, in warm crimson flood.
Forever and forever, be his name embalmed in song,
To steel our drooping courage, to right our nation's wrong.

Oh mighty God of Battles, be with our countrymen,
Sustain them in their struggle, may they rise and rise again:
We're tired of talking heroes, we're tired of Mission tours,
Vouchsafe to us a leader whose hand is held by Yours.

B. F.