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THE MARTYRDOM OF FERRER

JOSEPH McCABE



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MY BURROS SOMETIMES GO ASTRAY
BUT MY BEST BOOK
BY GUM - HOW D'YA S'POSE IT GOT AWAY ?

ORLEE & JEAN JACQUES

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FRANCISCO FERRER,

MARTYR IN THE CAUSE OF SECULAR EDUCATION,
BORN JANUARY 10, 1859; MURDERED OCTOBER 13, 1909.

THE MARTYRDOM OF FERRER

BEING A

TRUE ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE AND WORK

BY

JOSEPH McCABE,

AUTHOR OF "THE DECAY OF THE CHURCH OF ROME,"
"LIFE OF GEORGE JACOB HOLYOAKE," ETC., ETC.

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1909

FERRER, SPANISH MARTYR, CLEARED BY HIGH COURT

BRUSSELS, Jan. 27.—A Belgian newspaper states that it has received information from executors of the estate of Prof. Francisco Ferrer, executed by the Spanish government a year ago for participation in the Barcelona bomb outrages, that the supreme court at Madrid has found the noted educator innocent of the crime with which he was charged. The confiscated property of the dead man will therefore be restored to his heirs.

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INTRODUCTION

SINCE the Dreyfus case set France quivering with agitation and drew the earnest attention of the whole civilised world, no judicial or semi-judicial procedure has stirred the feelings of men and women so profoundly as the execution of Francisco Ferrer y Guardia. The eyes of Europe have been directed to Barcelona with a keenness and suspicion that has completely baffled the Spanish censorship. Strictures have been passed on the Spanish Government's conduct by grave bodies of lawyers in France and Belgium, and by some of the most authoritative Conservative journals in Europe ; while a wave of popular indignation has fallen on Madrid with a force that has dislodged the Government from its position. By an inevitable reaction the Press of Europe has been employed by a corps of anonymous contributors to besmirch the memory of the dead man, and to vindicate those who are responsible for his death. While leaders of culture, such as Sudermann, Maeterlinck, and Anatole France, have branded the execution of Ferrer as a judicial murder, a flood of stories and documents has been poured out which, if one-half the statements were true, would place the Spanish Government in the position of the most tolerant power on earth for its long forbearance.

Which side in the great controversy is right? It is no academic question. If a man whose only object in life was to uplift his fellows by educating them, who had no share whatever in the violent outbreak which was put to his charge,

has been hypocritically tried and executed by persons whose corrupt interests were endangered by his educational work, then a foul and repellent murder has been perpetrated. Such murders do stain the chronicles of nearly every country in Europe, but they belong to a barbaric past. If Spain has stooped to such a murder in the twentieth century, the tattered mantle of its pride must be stripped from its shoulders; the corrupt system which finds room or need for such a crime must be laid bare to the eyes of the world.

A sympathetic student of Spanish life and letters, I have endeavoured to ascertain the true story of Ferrer's life, work, and death. I have conscientiously considered the statements on both sides. I have scanned the columns of Spanish, French, Italian, Belgian, German, and English journals, and listened to the special pleadings of Roman Catholics, Conservative Spaniards, Freethinkers, Socialists, and Anarchists. I have, in a special visit to the Continent, closely examined men who had taught in Ferrer's schools—men who were in the midst of the tumult at Barcelona from July 26 to 29. I have plied Ferrer's intimate friends, some of whom are friends of my own, searched diligently for authoritative documents, submitted legal points to lawyers, listened to the pleas of opponents—in a word, made every conceivable effort to learn the truth. And that truth I now place before English readers in a plain narrative, with an enormous accumulation of proof.

The brief and astounding summary which I give here will be fully substantiated in the following chapters. I must ask the incredulous, shuddering reader to examine carefully the evidence I have gathered, and the counter-evidence which I analyse, before he allows his feeling to submerge his judgment. The number of English readers who understand

Spain is exceedingly small. I trust that this plain and fully documented story of the real situation will prevent that fine and promising people from having its annals again stained, by those who hold power over it, with another such crime against humanity as the murder of Francisco Ferrer.

For Ferrer was murdered. He had no connection whatever with the fatal disturbances which recently wet the streets of Barcelona with blood. He was in England a few weeks before the outbreak, and intended to remain in England for some months. The news that a dearly-loved niece was dangerously ill caused him to return to Barcelona. The child died; but another accident, a request for information from Paris, detained him in Barcelona over the fatal day. He wrote to a friend from Barcelona in the midst of the riots—wrote as a spectator, wondering what would happen next. Every word of this was proved by his letters to intimate friends. And when those friends sent these decisive letters to his advocate at Barcelona *they were stolen by the officials, and not suffered to be used in his defence.*

Ferrer had for many years held aloof from politics. Of the two chief groups of advanced political enthusiasts in Barcelona, the Republicans and the Anarchists, neither recognised him as entirely belonging to them. His work was education alone, and not one line of his school-books has yet been quoted, with chapter and verse, in the journals of any country in support of the calumny that his schools taught violent rebellion. They did not. Ferrer had political ideals, which I will duly describe; but his personal task was to make the people of Spain competent to use their judgment on political, social, and religious subjects. With single aim and noble self-sacrifice he used a comfortable estate in providing the schools which the Government refuses—in

view of its own laws—criminally refuses, to provide. For providing those schools he was murdered.

But who in modern Spain could seek a man's life for erecting schools in which violent insurrection was not suggested? Here is the second part of my task. By a similar collection of authoritative proof I have to show how education alone, without any inspiration of violence, endangered certain corrupt interests and moved high-placed men to perpetrate a thinly veiled crime. As far as the Roman Church is concerned, the task is not difficult. From time immemorial it has not argued with heretics, but burned them, where the conditions were medieval. The conditions are medieval in Spain. My evidence will show that it was the Barcelona clergy who first demanded that the riots should be put to the account of the founder of the Modern Schools. Other and most extraordinary evidence of the guilt of the Spanish clergy will be found in the pertinent chapter; but if I indicated its nature here, apart from the evidence itself, the reader would deem it incredible.

At first sight I seem to have a more difficult task in extending the guilt to the statesmen of Spain. In reality, one who is acquainted with Spanish literature could fill whole chapters with weighty denunciations of the utter corruption of the Spanish political system. I will lay before the reader such proof, even in the words of Señor Maura himself, of that corruption that he will understand why Spanish politicians dread the educator of the people. I will show that the device of "suspending the constitutional guarantees"—or suspending civilisation—is a scandalous trick for throwing on legally incompetent military men the work of ridding the corrupt system of its critics without the inconvenience of a trial. I will show that the bomb outrages which are pleaded in

justification are the work of the clergy and the civic officials. I will show that the witnesses against Ferrer—who were never cross-examined—would have failed ignominiously in any civil court, and that in a fair trial a mass of rebutting testimony would have been produced. All this was known to the Home Secretary, Señor La Cierva, and the Prime Minister, Señor Maura, and they also knew that only a military council would condemn Ferrer. I warned them that the evidence would be produced when Ferrer was dead. They have been swept from office by the indignation and disgust of Europe, but the memory of a brave and noble-spirited man remains to be vindicated.

This is the gist of the story which the following chapters will tell and substantiate. England stirred to some purpose with effective anger and disgust when Papal and Austrian power fought their bloody fight to retain the domination of Italy ; but no single deed was done by those Powers comparable in enormity to this ; for Ferrer used the pacific weapon of enlightenment. England was not restrained by consideration of France's internal politics when a corrupt body attempted to consign Dreyfus to a living death ; and a greater wrong was done to Ferrer than was contemplated against Dreyfus. Many English journals, dissenting from Ferrer's views, have nobly pleaded for justice in Spain's treatment of him. But many English journals have opened their columns to the lying and reckless statements of the Spanish and clerical agents, mantled with anonymity, who have set out to poison the mind of Europe, and who fancied that bold mendacity would suffice where proof was wanting.

This little work is not made up of the contrary assertions of anonymous informants. It is built on solid and analysable evidence. I never met Ferrer, and do not write under the

influence of his great personal charm. I do not share the ideal of Anarchism—a system, however, which must not be confounded with the use of explosives—and do not write in defence of a school of thought. I write as one who, after laborious search for the true features of the case, feels that a man of noble aspirations has been murdered by corrupt politicians, at the instigation of an equally corrupt Church, and I trust that an exposure of their corruption will enable English men and women to keep in memory the name of one more man who has died in what he believed to be the cause of humanity, and to watch the course of events in Spain with more enlightened interest.

CHAPTER I.

THE LIFE AND AIMS OF FERRER

FRANCISCO FERRER Y GUARDIA was born at Alella, in one of the quiet vine-clad valleys of Catalonia, January 10, 1859. Nothing in his origin gave promise of the distinguished career which has been brought to so tragic a termination. For half a century Spain had been washed with blood, and the new aspirations of Europe had fought valiantly for a place in its life. Over Spain had been spread the titanic struggle of Napoleon I. and England. To Spain the Holy Alliance had sent back the Catholic monarch, who, with a lying oath to observe the Constitution, had turned on his more enlightened subjects with a ferocity that far outran the "white terror" of France, Austria, and the Papal States. Over Spain had raged, when Ferdinand VII.'s bloody reign was over, the long and violent conflict of Liberals and Conservatives, Clericals and Anti-clericals.

No valley of Spain was so remote or so densely ignorant as to be insensitive to the prolonged and murderous conflict of the old and the new ideas, but it was only a vague and confused echo that rumbled in the ears of the peasantry. Usually only one man in their village could read—the priest—and the version he gave them of the distant battles was couched in the language of the seminary. The Liberals were the forerunners of Antichrist. The mouth of the pit had been suffered to open; the emissaries of Satan were then, in 1859, in power at Madrid. They had ventured, two years earlier, to pass a law of universal elementary education. So the small vineyard-owner Ferrer and his wife—from whom, by a pretty Spanish custom, the martyred teacher took the name of Guardia—shrank closer to their church, looked on letters as more dangerous than wine or pretty faces, and bought their indulgences of the *cura* with a complete

ignorance that Europe at large had trodden them underfoot three hundred years earlier.

One thing of import Francisco Ferrer, to keep the shorter name by which he will live, inherited from his parents—vigour of character. The cardinal mistake of English judgment on Spanish affairs is the belief that Spain is an outworn and decadent nation. It is a complete and fatal misunderstanding. The new ideas have had to fight a sterner battle in Spain than in any other country, except (in recent years) Russia, and the best blood of the country has been spilled like water. Yet the enthusiasts for progress have re-formed their shattered ranks decade after decade, and it is only by the unscrupulous and barbaric procedure, of which this story will give a vivid illustration, that the medieval abuses have been retained by Church and State. Spain does not lack vigour or ambition. But its vigour is in part paralysed by the deliberate refusal of education, and in part suppressed by an utterly unscrupulous political system and an apprehensive Church.

Seven years after Francisco's birth, in 1866, the reactionaries again resorted to the expedient of bleeding Spain to reduce its insurgent vigour. By that time Europe at large had fought and won the battle for freedom of ideas. The Papal monarchy was shrinking before the advance of enlightened Italy, while the English fleet encouraged the advance from the blue shores. But Spain, an isolated fragment of the Middle Ages, escaped or deceived the eyes of Europe, and perpetrated infamous deeds in defence of the ruling clerical and political interests. Even then Spain proved its vitality. The progressive forces, seeing that disunion had put them at the mercy of reaction, joined once more and effected a revolution. An Italian prince, Amadeo of Savoy, was called to the throne, but his foreign ways gave material to the malcontents, and Amadeo retired in mortification from his hostile kingdom. Then the Cortes (Parliament) proclaimed the Republic of 1873, by 258 votes to 32—a triumph won by the Progressists, it must be remembered, after seventy years of war and brutal persecution.

It is at this period that the son of the vineyard cultivator in the quiet Catalonian valley comes to years of discretion.

Devoid of education, living in a family of fanatical orthodoxy, the lad had no encouragement to lean towards rebellion. His brother José was a young iconoclast, it is true, with a destructive aversion for objects of piety. But Francisco was quiet and respectful. I do not labour the obscure details of his boyhood. We have graver matters to consider. All that one need note is that, as Francisco advanced into youth, his younger spirit responded to the cries that echoed from over the hills, and he began to differ profoundly from his father. At the age of thirteen he was sent to Barcelona, some twelve miles away, to take service in a drapery establishment. The proprietor had known religious persecution, and his anti-clerical temper was communicated to the industrious and intelligent boy, who became a great favourite. By his twentieth year he openly declared himself Republican, and the family link was broken. A few years later he joined the Freemasons.

It is important to understand Ferrer's early revolutionary career, because some of the documents which were embodied in the charge against him belong to this early period. Those who framed the charge were well aware of the real nature of these documents. They knew the recent history of Spain, and the part that Ferrer had played in it. But few people outside the country are acquainted with the stirring and complicated story of Spain's political development in the later nineteenth century, and Ferrer's murderers found it possible to surprise foreigners with revolutionary documents and insist, mendaciously, that they were of recent date. They belonged to Ferrer's early manhood, and were curious relics of a phase in his career that he had long outlived.

The figure in Spanish political life that caught the eye of the young Catalanian was that of Ruiz Zorrilla, the brilliant and passionate leader of the Republican Progressist party. Zorrilla had been one of the leading spirits in the revolution of 1868, and had then joined in the importation of Amadeo of Savoy, under whose short reign he occupied the post of Minister of Public Instruction. Ferrer was destined to enter into close co-operation with him, and in Zorrilla's anti-clerical, Republican ideal and zeal for education one can see the early source of his inspiration. If the reader finds the atmosphere of rebellion unfamiliar, I must remind him of the long decades

of bloody persecution that the Church and the old dynasty had perpetrated, and must ask his reserve until later chapters have set before him the repellent features even of the actual Church and political world. Spirited and enlightened men, when they had no interest in the existing caucus, or refused to put self before humanity, were muttering rebellion all over Spain. The reign of Charles I. in England was not a juster ground of revolt.

When Amadeo was driven out and the Republic of 1873 was set up, Zorrilla went to Paris and declared that he renounced politics. He returned to Spain, however, when the army destroyed the short-lived Republic and enthroned Alfonso XII. He then formed his Republican Progressist party, and worked with remarkable success. The army had made or marred revolutions, and the army must be republicanised; so he pushed his propaganda with great effect among the military. Francisco Ferrer, who had left his home on account of his advanced ideas, was now an inspector of railways, and was in a position to render important service by conveying the secret communications from centre to branch.

This was in the early eighties—Ferrer's early twenties. Undoubtedly he was then devoted to the cause of violent revolution, and any document that merely implies such a sentiment—setting aside the gross and clumsy forgeries which involved murder and pillage—can very well be admitted for this early period. It was only through a very natural ignorance of this period of Ferrer's career that English people were persuaded to accept them as sentiments of the mature Ferrer. We shall see immediately how his ideas evolved. Revolution was a familiar thing in recent Spanish history. There had been seven revolutions in the preceding seventy years, and those who desired the remedying of Spain's repellent maladies turned instinctively to that method.

This period of Ferrer's life culminated in 1885. That was the year of the abortive revolution led by General Villacampa, and Ferrer took part in a local Catalonian rising. The insurrection was suppressed. General Villacampa was condemned to death, but the sentence was commuted to deportation by the Queen Maria Christina; a point worth

remembering in view of the statement that a Spanish monarch has no such prerogative. France, as usual, received the fugitives, and both Zorrilla and Ferrer settled in Paris, where Ferrer filled the honorary position of secretary to Zorrilla.

In this decade of life in Paris we have a second and very interesting period in the young man's career. I need not dwell long on the material details. With the inevitable limitations of a foreigner, he found life hard at first, and attempted to obtain subsistence as a commission agent. The occupation failed, and it is difficult to trace his movements for a few years. What is clear is that, after a time, we find him in the position of professor of languages at the Philotechnic School in Paris. A writer in *Le Temps* remembers him as "a man of iron will, and especially an idealist.....a model professor, giving excellent lessons in a very original manner." He is described as "a man of medium height, very nervous and refined, with extraordinary eyes, like live coals, and a look that one could never forget." His lessons were much sought, and he made lasting and devoted friends in the French metropolis. One who knew him there a few years later tells me that he had a comfortable and refined home, using his resources with great ability and moderation. Since he had first become conscious of his lack of culture, he had studied most assiduously, and held a high position as teacher. It is another element that enters into the ideal of his later life.

That ideal slowly took shape in the pacific, intellectual atmosphere of Paris. I wish to speak with the most complete candour on the important aspects of Ferrer's personality and ideals. Skulking under the disguise of anonymity, there are writers who have shamefully traduced a murdered man, and nothing that one can say will escape misrepresentation in the cheap Roman Catholic journals. But I am laying my case before those men and women who would form an honest judgment on this great crime, and it is my duty to place before them the facts as I know them. I have examined half-a-dozen intimate friends of Ferrer on the evolution of his ideas. It is unfortunate that he wrote no work from which one can learn his mature views. An elementary Spanish grammar is his only literary work. But there are passages enough in his

letters and journal to bear out entirely the judgment I formed, after closely questioning his friends, on his later views.

I must say at once that the statement of some of his less intimate friends, that he came to hold views akin to those of Tolstoy or those of our English Quakers, is denied by those who knew him better. On the other hand, there is not the slightest doubt that, after his long sojourn in Paris, Ferrer ceased to advocate, counsel, or in any way encourage violent insurrection. I have spoken fully on the matter with his intimate Anarchist friends, and the utmost that any of them claimed was that he did not go out of his way to condemn other people's methods. His method was that of education. Do not let me be misunderstood. He did not educate without an ulterior ambition. He trusted that an educated Spanish nation would put an end to that corruption of Church and State which I will presently describe, and which fills modern Spanish literature with laments. But he nowhere, either directly or indirectly, suggested or counselled violence. He held aloof from active participation with any political party in Barcelona, and was absorbed in his schools.

This will be quite apparent as we follow him through the last decade of his career, but it is important to establish that he went back from France to Spain with no intention to engage in political work. We shall see the nature of the "evidence" against him on this point later. It has not the shadow of a particle of value. For the moment I will give a few of the many weighty testimonies to his real views and disposition.

The first testimony is his own explicit declaration, published in the Barcelona Republican weekly, *Fructidor*, February 8, 1907. He had been asked to furnish an account of the origin of the Modern School, and, in referring to the idea which inspired it, he said: "When Zorrilla died I lost all my confidence, which had been already much weakened, in the results of a revolution effected by superficial revolutionaries, who were themselves the victims of much the same prejudices as the monarchists whom they would deprive of power. From that time forward I devoted all my activity to the task of establishing a school which, in my humble opinion, might serve as a model for all the schools which

advanced bodies were endeavouring to found, in order to preserve the child from the mendacious teaching of the official schools. That was the origin of the Modern School." This emphatic repudiation of revolution, in a Republican paper, to be read by his friends of all parties in Barcelona, is decisive. It was not submitted at his "trial." It is supported by the testimony of all who knew him.

As I go to press an important article on Ferrer appears in the *Nineteenth Century* (November). The writer, M. Naquet, is not only a high Parisian authority, both from the cultural and the political point of view, but he knew Ferrer well, and had given material assistance to Ruiz Zorrilla in his revolutionary campaign. He was in close touch with Ferrer during the fifteen years he spent in Paris, and later, and describes their relations as "of the most fraternal character." Further, M. Naquet himself openly advocates the removal of corruption and abuses in Spain and Russia by violent methods. His authority is, therefore, quite apart from his well-known personality, extremely great, if not decisive. And this is what M. Naquet writes on the subject: "Ever since the days when he acted as the lieutenant of Don Zorrilla, Ferrer's point of view had undergone profound modifications. The successive checks to all the Spanish conspiracies in which he had been involved, and his deeper study of the domestic quarrels which had ruined the Spanish Republic of 1873, had imparted a new direction to his political ideas. He had arrived at the conclusion that the employment of violence is useless; that, despite its apparent swiftness, it is the slowest method in the end. Without going to the length of accepting the doctrine of resignation, or accepting the passive-resistance theory of Tolstoy—he was far from that—he believed that the surest and quickest way to progress was that pacific way which consists in transforming by means of education the conceptions of one's contemporaries." These are not the ideas of M. Naquet, when there is question of such countries as Spain and Russia, nor do the words express a mere inference in regard to Ferrer's development. The point was often debated between the two friends, and to Naquet's contention the younger man used to reply: "Time respects only those institutions which time itself has played its

part in building up. That which violence wins for us to-day another act of violence may wrest from us to-morrow. Those stages of progress alone are durable which have rooted themselves in the mind and conscience of mankind before receiving the final sanction of legislation. The only means of realising what is good is to teach it by education and propagate it by example."

These were the real sentiments of the man who was shot on the charge of having led or inspired a violent rising of obviously hopeless character; and M. Naquet expressly adds that these ideas took deeper and deeper root in the mind of his "noble friend" in the later years. But, the astonished reader will ask, why was not the testimony of so authoritative a man as Naquet brought forward at his trial? Listen. "I communicated this crucial fact," M. Naquet proceeds, "to his noble defender, Captain Francisco Galcerán, but he was not allowed to read my letter, any more than the others which were received from England and France in exculpation of his client." We shall see that this is only one of the "crucial facts" that were suppressed by the servants of the Spanish State and Church.¹

Another French writer who knew him, André Morizet, gives the same testimony in *L'Humanité*. "Intellectually," he says, "Ferrer was not one of us. He was one of those who prove refractory to all ideas of organisation, and expect the renovation of the old world solely by the development of freedom of conscience.....He not only kept aloof from the action of political parties, but even Trades Unionism had little interest for him." The last phrase must not be taken too strictly, however.

From distant Italy comes the same testimony. In an article in *La Ragione* (Rome, October 10) Oddo Marinelli writes: "Fifteen years in Paris, in constant expectation of the revolution which was to regenerate his country, had caused him to lose all hope that Spain would rise again through the efforts of revolutionaries.....Having taken part in the many attempts at revolution engineered by Zorrilla, he came to the

¹ The whole article must be read, in the *Nineteenth Century*, November. In conversation with me M. Naquet expressed his great pleasure at being allowed to vindicate his friend in one of our leading reviews.

conclusion that the education of the child alone would lead to the betterment of men and to the dawn of happier days for his unhappy country." Marinelli adds that Ferrer wrote (May 27, 1907) from his prison cell to a group of Barcelona youths: "Do not let us play with words. Liberals, Republicans, or Anarchists—these were, and are, words to be avoided by us who march with all our hearts towards the ideal of human regeneration."

These concordant testimonies are a few out of the many that have been published, and agree entirely with the words of the seven or eight personal friends of Ferrer with whom I have spoken. We shall find him, true to that ideal, looking on, passively and wonderingly, when the crowds are seething about him in the fatal days of July at Barcelona. The fifteen years of study, observation, and reflection at Paris had induced him to turn from revolutionary ways to an ideal of education. Of "revolution" he still spoke and wrote frequently; but he always said "social revolution." He gained belief in the power of ideas. To the end he had cherished friends of the revolutionary school. He did not criticise their hopes and methods, but followed his own.

A distinguished Anarchist said to me: "To the Republicans he was an Anarchist; to the Anarchists he was a Republican." It is the finest statement of the political position he had reached. The works of Professor Reclus and Prince Kropotkin had a fascination for him. With them he believed—little wonder after his experience of the Spanish political world—that a decentralised administration of a nation's affairs, leaving the maximum of liberty to the individual, was the best ideal of society. This is the real gist of Anarchism. Its accidental alliance in a few cases—about one in a thousand Anarchists in Spain, a Spanish Anarchist tells me—with the use of dynamite must not blind us. As a social ideal it has a right to plead at the bar of public discussion like any other. But the work to be done immediately in Spain was to educate, and Ferrer eschewed political organisations to turn teacher.

He was then nearing his fortieth year. A teacher of merit in a small institution, unknown to the world, he moved restlessly under the burden of his ideal. The great contrast

of France and Spain saddened him. The Spanish law of universal education was a comedy, as we shall see. Two-thirds of the Spaniards could neither read nor write at the beginning of the twentieth century. Only a few million could both read and write. One-third of the population of Madrid were utterly illiterate. In such a soil corruption thrived vigorously. The reflection, the contrast, burned into Ferrer's mind, and made education his constant day-dream. How was a young man of no fortune and no authority to educate a people, to fight the hostile influences of both Church and State? And suddenly an unexpected stroke of fortune put a powerful weapon in his hand, and he flew back to Spain to establish his now famous schools.

Among the many who admired the young teacher of the Philotechnic school and listened to his fervid ambitions was a wealthy Roman Catholic lady, Mlle. Meunier. She caught the glow of his enthusiasm, and, when she died at the end of the century, left him an estate in Paris worth some £30,000.

His relations with Mlle. Meunier have provided material for the anonymous writers who have thought fit to serve some cause or other by recklessly slandering the dead man. How some of their suggestions came to be printed passes understanding; but we may notice one Catholic untruth. A priest wrote in the *Manchester Guardian* that Ferrer had deceived this pious Roman Catholic lady, who believed he would employ her money in accord with her religious convictions. It is difficult to consider such puerilities seriously. Ferrer knew Mlle. Meunier for three years. He argued constantly against her religious beliefs. She knew him as an extreme Rationalist during the whole of that time, and she left the money to him, unreservedly, to be used as he thought fit. She thoroughly understood that he would use it in carrying out his new ideal. How educated men can, in such circumstances, suggest that she believed Ferrer, the notorious Agnostic and anti-clerical, would expend the money much as the priest would do is a problem I do not care to discuss. As the reader will guess, and as I was informed in Paris by those who knew her, Mlle. Meunier was really very unsound in dogma, not in judgment. Ferrer assured her that he would only accept the money as a trust for the foundation of secular

schools, but she bequeathed it to him without any directive clause.

So Francisco Ferrer set out for Barcelona; eight years ago, with uplifted and unselfish feelings. Many things had happened in Barcelona since he had last seen it. Exiles had invaded his home in Paris with stories of brutality and injustice—stories we shall consider later—that hardly any but a Spaniard could credit. The tortures of the Inquisition had been revived. The corrupt officials of Church and State had descended with ferocity on the new generation that aspired to liberty and progress. Ferrer would not give them occasion to destroy his work. It would be such as civilisation could protect. But its ultimate outcome would be that those grim dungeons of Montjuich would never again echo with the groans of tortured men, nor would priests and politicians any longer keep Spain in the far rear of human advancement. And within five years he would be fighting for his life in the courts of Spain. Within eight years he was to yield up his life in the trenches of Montjuich to the forces he had challenged.

This tragic ending to so fine an ambition has so perplexed Europe that I cannot proceed further until I have plainly described, with adequate evidence, that profound corruption of Church and State to which I have already alluded. One point, however, remains to be considered in regard to Ferrer's earlier years. His domestic conduct has been so grossly impugned that one is compelled to say a few words about it.

Ferrer's legal wife was a woman of heated temper and pronounced orthodoxy. Needless to say, the difference of views drew on him painful attacks from his wife, especially after the birth of their three daughters, Trinidad, Paz, and a young girl, Sol, who is at school in Madrid. Ferrer was a Freemason, and had his elder daughters initiated in a Masonic ceremony. The irritation of the mother ended in a revolver-shot, and Ferrer, instead of prosecuting, consented to a separation. The eldest daughter works in a bakery or confectionery at Paris, and received help from her father until his imprisonment. The second daughter, who has entirely discarded her father's views, is an actress—a Catholic and Royalist. Both were profoundly attached to their father,

and depicted him in the most affectionate terms in the Paris Press. Both honoured his conviction that the money bequeathed to him was a trust for humanity, and should be spent in public work, not on them. Trinidad, in the fine spirit of her father's wish, even refuses the help now willingly offered her, and supports herself by her own labour.

Mme. Ferrer went to Russia. There she joined the Orthodox Church, obtained a divorce, and remarried. For Ferrer himself no divorce was possible. In spite of the general immorality, the clergy of Spain cling to the antiquated ideal, and bitterly oppose a law of divorce. When, therefore, Ferrer found among his teachers at Barcelona a woman of great charm and helpfulness, a true and sustaining companion in his arduous struggle, he was not at liberty to contract legal marriage with her. It is one of those very exceptional cases that need only to be known in their true features. We have known such in high circles in England, and understood. But for the Spanish clergy, with their own body deeply infected with immorality, with their genial toleration of the most flagrant laxity in their most religious centres, to make a crime or a vice of this act of Ferrer's is one of those pieces of insolence which one can only brush aside. To his real wife, Soledad Villafranca, and to his daughters, Ferrer was very sweet, affectionate, and generous. The world knows how bitterly they have mourned their loss.

I have anticipated the virtual marriage of his later years, since it must be understood in the light of his experience at Paris. Now I must take up the thread of the story, and describe those features of the Spanish Church and the Spanish system of Government which alone explain the ferocity with which his death was designed and accomplished. It is true that his educational work undermined the authority of Church and State. But what a Church and what a State !

CHAPTER II.

THE CHURCH IN SPAIN

NEARLY four hundred years ago a rebellious monk set Europe aflame with insurrection against the authority of Rome. Corrupt, sensual, sceptical, laughing at its own devices, the Court of Rome ruled a densely ignorant world with a levity born of ten centuries of secure domination. The world was growing, however, and the sonorous appeal of Luther brought it to sudden manhood. As is well known, one of the historic abuses that fired the indignation of Luther was the sale of indulgences. Scornfully he tossed aside the priestly casuistry that would represent the transaction as no "sale," but the "giving" of a spiritual favour—in return for a sum of money. Half of Europe followed the German monk. But for the armies of Spain and Austria the Papacy would probably have been erased from the map of Europe two hundred years ago. Sell indulgences! Protestants look back with amazement on the Papal audacity, and take it as a measure of the dense ignorance of the Middle Ages that even the attempt should be made. It is a test of medieval conditions, a plumbing of the depths of ignorance. And indulgences are sold by the million all over Spain to-day, under the direct and annual authority of the Vatican!

The sale of indulgences is so historic a symbol of Papal corruption that I cannot do other than take it as the first point in my indictment of the Spanish Church. I refused to believe the fact when it was first brought to my notice, long after I had quitted the Catholic ministry. My informant, an American gentleman who had lived in Spain for more than ten years, forwarded to me copies of these *bulas*, as they are called, and the truth was evident. I have since made full inquiries, written on the subject, been "answered" by an English Jesuit—who explained that the indulgence was a pure gift from the Church, in return for a specific sum of money,

much as (he did not say this) your soap or your butter is—and have lost all doubt on the subject.

On the windows of Catholic book-shops in Spain one often sees the word “Bulas” in large type. You enter and ask for a “bula”—or you may go to the nearest priest’s house for one—and find that there are four species, at two different prices. Lay a *peseta* on the counter, and demand the ordinary “bula de la Santa Cruzada.” A flimsy piece of paper, much sealed and impressed, about a foot square, and with the signature of the Archbishop of Toledo, is handed to you, with your change of 25 *centimos*. You have *not* bought it. You gave an “alms” of 75 *centimos* (about 6d.) to the Church (minus the shopman’s commission), and the Church graciously accorded you—but it would occupy too much of my space even to enumerate the extraordinary spiritual privileges which you can purchase for sixpence in that favoured land. The central grace is a “plenary indulgence.”

Catholic theology teaches that there are two alternatives to heaven, two unfathomable pits of fire—Hell and Purgatory. If you die in serious, unabsolved sin, you go to hell; but few Catholics ever think of going there. It is so easy to get oneself drafted into the second department. But the second department, Purgatory, is exceedingly unpleasant; the fire and other horrors are the same; the duration is uncertain. Here, again, however, the Church comes to the relief. Confession and sorrow have relieved you of the first danger; something may be done to avoid the second. In earlier and harder times one went on the Crusades to achieve this. Some Spaniards offered the Papacy money instead, and received the comforting assurance that the Purgatory-debt was cancelled (a “plenary indulgence”). The sum has sunk with the course of centuries, and now in Spain you gain this gorgeous assurance, with a dozen others, for an “alms” of sixpence. But attempt to give your alms to the poor, and you get no *bula*.

That is the common *bula* of Spanish church life. The rich, of course, pay more than the small sum which is stated on the paper; and as the ignorant peasants find frequent need of this comforting assurance, since it only lasts until they sin

again, the amount which the Church derives annually from this sordid source of revenue can be imagined. Another *bula*, of the same price, gives you the same comforting assurance in regard to any deceased friend to whom you may wish to apply it. Since, however, it is never quite sure that your "disposition" came up to the required altitude, you do well to continue buying and trying. A third *bula* is even cheaper, yet more substantial in its advantages. For 50 *centimos* (less than fivepence) you obtain permission to eat meat on Fridays and on most of the days on which Catholics in less favoured countries must not eat meat. Unfortunately, you find that the *bula* is invalid unless you buy the other *bula* as well; but ten pence is fairly cheap for a year's permission to disregard the fast-days.

The fourth *bula* is the most infamous, unless the reader chooses to regard it with humour. Technically, it is known as the "composición"—an excellent word. It says that, if you have any stolen property of which you cannot discover the rightful owner, the purchase of this *bula* makes the property yours. The pickpocket does not usually know the address of his victim; and though the *bula* declares that the theft must not be committed in view of the *bula*, the practised conscience of a Spanish thief easily negotiates that difficulty. But this is not the full enormity or the full justification of the title "composition." One *bula* costs about a shilling, and covers about twelve shillings' worth of ill-gotten goods. For every additional twelve shillings you have stolen you must give one to the Church; in other words, take out a fresh *bula*. And—let me quote the incredible words of the document—"in the event of the sum due exceeding 735 pesetas 50 centimos [£25], the amount compoundable by fifty Summaries, application must be made to Us for a fitting solution of the case"! The priest will take his tithe of your knavery on a scale he thinks fit to determine.

Let it be clearly understood that I am not reproducing the statements of writers, travellers, or residents; I am describing, or translating, the very words of the *bulas*, copies of which lie before me. Incredible as the facts will seem to most readers, there is only one quibble which the zealous Catholic, in his misguided wish to defend the Spanish Church, can raise: he

will demur to the phrase "bought" and "sold." I may safely leave that question of casuistry to the British reader. From this appalling traffic the Spanish Church draws millions upon millions of pesetas every year—from the rich, who thus pay for its political support, and from the densely ignorant peasantry, whose hard-won centimos are stolen by this abominable chicanery.

English Roman Catholics who heard of the traffic for the first time innocently drew the attention of the Vatican to it, and were, after repeated letters, snubbed for their intrusion. The truth is that the whole traffic is under the control of the Vatican. These *bulas* are no bits of medieval parchment that have lingered into the dawn of the twentieth century; they are printed afresh every year, and they cannot be issued until an annual permission comes from Rome. Then a procession of heralds marches through the streets of Madrid announcing the glad news that Spain's unique privilege has been renewed. What a spectacle! Through streets equipped with the latest achievements of modern science there still marches the medieval troop, crying in the ears of educated Madrid that Spain still lives in the fifteenth century. I have only to add that until 1870 the Vatican openly took a percentage on this sordid traffic. In these days of inquisitive American and English converts we do not know what the understanding is between the Papacy and the Archbishop of Toledo, who issues and seals those symbols of the Spanish Church's degradation.

From the sale of indulgences I pass to other features of Spanish Church life which are hardly less repellent. One of the most offensive practices that the traveller notices in modern Spain is the persistent begging. There are 91,226 beggars in Spain, and they regard themselves as practising a profession which has the peculiar sanction of the Church. A resident in Spain informed me that he was boldly accosted for alms by a man whom he knew to have a flourishing market-garden near his own residence. Mrs. Bates, in her *Spanish Highways and Byways*, tells a story of a German lady who was accosted by a beggar. With modern feeling she explained to him that she would do something more pleasant than give him alms; she would give him an opportunity to

earn the money. He drew his cloak about him with the dignity of a *hidalgo*, as he replied: "Madam, I am a beggar, not a labourer." The Church is directly responsible for this tribe of repulsive idlers. Her edifices are thrown open periodically that pious ladies may distribute bread, wine, and cigarettes to the sitting crowd of professional beggars.

Far heavier, however, is the guilt of the clergy in regard to the atrocious proportion of illiterates in Spain. We in England are urged to regard the Catholic Church as the great founder of schools, the educator of Europe. The claim is easily tested. There are still three parts of Europe where her power is unbroken—Spain, Portugal, and Southern Italy. In Spain the proportion of illiterates is 68 per cent., in Portugal it is 78 per cent., and in southern Italy—in Calabria—it is 79 per cent. of the population.

I have explained that a law of compulsory education was passed in Spain, under Liberal pressure. By 1877 four millions out of sixteen could read and write, and in the subsequent thirty years the ratio has only arisen to six in eighteen and a-half million people. The teacher is awarded a salary of about £20 a year, so that the character of such instruction as is given may easily be conjectured. But the State will not even provide this sum, and schoolmasters are thrown on the voluntary donations of parents. The result is that the vast majority of the children get no instruction, and the schoolmaster is the butt of Spanish wit. The Madrid papers gave a case in 1903 of a master who canvassed a district to find how many parents would contribute if he opened a school. Three families in one hundred promised to contribute. In another place, not far from Madrid, the *alcalde* endeavoured to enforce the law, which is universally disregarded, that there should be no bull-fights where the master's salary was not paid. The infuriated people drove the teacher to the plaza and baited *him*. Thousands of children in Madrid itself have no school accommodation.

For this state of uncivilisation the guilt must be equally divided between the Church and the State. Neither wishes to see the people educated. The reasons of the Church will be suspected by the reader without difficulty. The reasons of the statesmen of Spain for withholding education will

become apparent in the next chapter. In one important respect, however, the Church has the greater guilt. Poor the State is, undoubtedly, though no sane social student will fail to see how profitably a large part of its expenditure would be diverted to education. But the Church is wealthy, immensely wealthy. The vast revenue I have already described, together with all parochial dues and collections, goes to the secular (or parochial) clergy, in whose larger churches and cathedrals immense treasure has accumulated. While the workers in parts of Spain must labour for about five *pesetas* (3s. 6d.) a week, and while despairing schoolmasters must set their hands to whatever incongruous employment they can discover to augment their £10 to £20 a year for teaching in barn-like structures, the wealthier churches house incalculable treasure, and the clergy usually live in great comfort. The wardrobe of the image of the Virgin at Toledo would alone suffice to build hundreds of fine schools. One robe bears, says Mrs. Bates, "85,000 large pearls, and as many sapphires, amethysts, and diamonds." The crown used to decorate the statue is worth £5,000, and the bracelets £2,000. The total value of this useless and senseless jewellery in the great churches of Spain is beyond calculation; and the country is too poor to educate more than a part of its children, and that with ridiculous inadequacy. Cordova alone has 600 priests to 55,000 people; and Cordova is on the verge of bankruptcy.

But this overwhelming sufficiency of parochial clergy, with its incalculable wealth, is not the chief source of offence to enlightened Spaniards. A vast population of monks and nuns and Jesuits, who do no parochial work, is spread over the land, and amasses wealth with even greater success than the secular clergy. In the heated conflicts of the two bodies the truth is suffered to leak out. A Spanish prelate, Mgr. José Veleza de Gunjado, has recently declared that these regulars (monks and nuns) own two-thirds of the money of the country and one-third of the wealth in property, etc. While they flaunt vows of poverty before the ignorant peasantry, they draw out of the healthy circulation of the impoverished country a colossal proportion of its resources. A religious review (the *Revista Cristiana*—quoted in Diercks's

Das moderne Geistesleben Spaniens) gave the income of the Jesuit body at Manresa alone as more than £15,000 a year, and this is only one among a thousand instances of an immensely wealthy community. Before the Philippine Islands were taken from Spain the Church drew 113,000,000 *pesetas* a year from the Islands, the State being content with a further 66,000,000. Barcelona had 165 convents until the recent riots, many of them worth hundreds of thousands of pounds. The province of Catalonia supported 2,300 of these institutions.

Nor must the English reader be misled by audacious Catholic assurances that these wealthy communities represent the voluntary piety of the faithful, and are holy retreats to which the timid may retire from "the world." Even in this country the Catholic clergy generally—I am not speaking at random: I have been a priest and a monk—disdain and detest the communities of monks. Cardinal Manning was sternly opposed to them. The idleness and petty hypocrisy to which their ascetic professions lead is fully described in my *Twelve Years in a Monastery*. As I had the further advantage of living in monasteries in a "Catholic" country (Belgium), I obtained some idea of the real nature of such institutions under more or less normal conditions. The appalling laziness of the vast majority, the gross ignorance which masquerades as humility, the enormous consumption of alcohol behind closed doors, the all-pervading hypocrisy and very widespread immorality would, if they were fully appreciated by the educated laity of Belgium, turn the smouldering anti-clericalism into a fierce blaze of anger. Not one monk in twenty merited respect, even in his superstitions. The great majority were grossly sensual, lazy, and hypocritical. But even in Belgium there is a large body of critical observers, and the monasteries of Spain have the same corruption in a far greater degree.

The gross animality of the monks, the unscrupulousness of the Jesuits—for the Jesuit in Spain *is* a Jesuit—and the widespread immorality of the clergy are well known to Spaniards. Any who imagine that the charge of flagrant immorality against the Spanish clergy is a Protestant or Rationalist calumny should read the article, "The Priest and the People in Spain," in the *Daily News*, October 18, 1909.

It is written by an Irish Roman Catholic, Mr. Doran, who wisely chooses to dissociate his co-religionists in the United Kingdom severely and emphatically from the Roman Catholicism of Spain. "I can remember the time," he says, "when I would have dropped the acquaintance of my best friend had he but said, or hinted, half the things I now know to be true in regard to the condition of the Church in Spain." He states that on one occasion, when he was dining with a number of Spanish priests, he remarked, "without giving the least offence," that "if some of them ventured to say Mass in Ireland they would be dragged off the altar." They replied, genially, that they always confessed to a companion before Mass. He found a state of immorality among the clergy "which it takes an Irishman half a lifetime to understand and an eternity to forgive." The sister of the gentleman at whose house he was staying was the mistress of a priest. He adds that the Spanish clergy will marry uncles to nieces readily, "given a sufficient amount of money," and that "nine Spaniards out of ten will tell you that the desire to earn an easy living is the motive which induces so many to join the clergy."¹

After this Catholic testimony I need not linger over the morality of the Spanish clergy. As an ex-priest I have always refused to create prejudice against my late co-religionists by discussing this side of their affairs; but when a body of priests like those of the Spanish Church egg on the civic or military officials to murder in their corrupt interests it is time to speak. There is immorality enough even among the priests of this country. Sordid cases came to my personal knowledge. In Belgium the condition—a condition that any candid person will expect from their enforced celibacy and good living—is far worse. In Spain and the south of Italy it is flagrant, nor is it confined to the lower clergy and the monks. A writer in the *Church Quarterly* (October, 1902) relates how an Italian prelate calmly discussed with him the fact, which he neither resented nor denied, that one of the candidates for the papal throne, one of the most distinguished

¹ But even Mr. Doran is apparently ignorant of the infamous traffic in *bulas*, since he reproaches the priests with eating meat on Fridays. They had, of course, purchased *bulas*.

cardinals in the Church, was a man of "conspicuous immorality." The cardinal in question, whose life was described to me in Rome, kept a mistress in a villa not many miles from the Vatican. The hypocrisy that asks English people to shudder over the very intelligible and quite open conduct of Ferrer, whom the Church of Spain prevented from marrying when he wished, and cheerfully acquiesces in this sordid condition of the clergy wherever the mass of the people are still Catholic, is too revolting to characterise.

It must not be imagined, however, that this condition of the clergy in Spain is one of the popular charges against them. From time immemorial, in the Latin countries, the clergy have withheld their strictures on the conduct of their followers, and the greatest laxity prevails. In Seville, a town renowned for its Catholicism, a French Catholic writer, M. Bazin, was told by a priest, he says in his *Terre d'Espagne*, that more than half the unions of men and women were "free unions." While the Church parades before the world its high ideal of chastity, and speaks hypocritically of the growth of immorality in the wake of heresy, it is precisely in those regions where it retains enormous power to-day, and has held absolute sway for ages, that we find the most immoral parts of Europe. Northern Italy, predominant in rebellion against the Church, has a ratio of illegitimate births of only six per cent. ; the Roman province has a ratio of twenty per cent., and the southern provinces much the same. It is a foolish superstition, encouraged by Catholics, that the laxity of the Latin races is a matter of temperature. The northern races were just as bad before the Reformation. That notorious laxity is due solely to the fact that an immoral clergy never dared to press on the people their theoretic gospel of chastity.

But if the bulk of the Spaniards smile at the immorality of their priests, those more enlightened Spaniards who see the life-blood of their country being drained to sustain such a system feel a pardonable bitterness. Let me give one detail by which one may measure the whole monstrosity. Diercks relates that the *Revista Cristiana* at one time made a calculation of the value of the wax and incense burned in Spanish churches in the course of a year. The total reached the extraordinary sum of £1,500,000—a sum little short of

what Spain spends on education! And this is one small item of the total cost to the country of its religious system. Add to this the millions obtained in the ordinary way of fees and collections, the millions received for bulas, the millions charged (on one pretext or another) for scapulars, rosaries, bullet-proof prayers, agnus-deis, and the whole medieval magazine of charms, the millions received for obtaining dispensations to marry, for baptisms, funerals, masses (each of which costs from two to twenty pesetas), and other ceremonies, the millions acquired by wills, by taking over the goods of monastic aspirants, and in other ways. And the whole of this vast proportion of an impoverished circulation goes to feed the parasitic growth, with no spiritual vitality or social usefulness, which I have described. Let the light fall on the mind of Spain, and this decrepit and corrupt agglomeration of medieval vices and abuses will be swept ruthlessly away. Rebellion against the Vatican has followed immediately upon the extension of popular enlightenment in France, in northern Italy, and in those South American Republics which have dared to educate. Beyond all question, it is following the same course in Spain.

Will this effete and corrupt body, with all its dependent industries, contemplate impartially the spread of education in Spain? Will that colossal revenue from bulas and other medieval barbarities continue when Spain is Europeanised—to use the phrase of its own social students?

The reader will see that we are coming back to the question of Ferrer and his work. It was quite impossible to set that work in its true perspective without first describing the institution it imperilled. Assuredly Ferrer was disseminating an explosive—the explosive of an enlightened spirit and a sense of dignity and independence. We shall see how the Church marked him out for destruction. A few years ago the greatest Spanish writer, Perez Galdos, put a drama (*Electra*) on the stage at Madrid, in which a beautiful young girl hesitated between the sombre call of the Jesuits and the call to life and happiness of sane heretics. It ended with her choosing life, instead of the living death of the medieval Church. The figure of the young girl was meant to be, and was recognised as, a symbol of Spain; and that

Madrid theatre, and many a theatre after it, shook with the ringing applause of the Spanish audiences.

But if Spain is so largely anti-clerical, how comes the Church to retain the power it does? Spain is seething with anti-clericalism. Mr. Isaacson, in his *Rome in Many Lands*, quotes an orthodox Spanish paper, *El Correo Español*, to the effect that only 1,500,000 men and 3,500,000 women, in a population of 18,500,000, now obey the clergy in Spain. I have dealt thoroughly with the question in my *Decay of the Church of Rome*. If that be so, how can we explain the power of the Church?

Here we come to another and not less sordid aspect of Spanish life, which it is absolutely necessary to understand if we wish to understand the murder of Ferrer. The political system is not less corrupt than the clerical, and the two corruptions support each other with despairing unscrupulousness. Many who are willing to admit the corruption of the Church will hesitate here, but it is a platitude of recent Spanish literature, and I will, in the next chapter, adduce such a series of witnesses to it—including the ex-Premier Maura, the present Premier Moret, and the gravest authorities in Spain—as will make the reader wonder rather why we treat with the Spanish Government as a civilised Power.

This is the opportunity of the clergy. Driven from other lands, they make their last stand in Spain and Portugal. From France, from Cuba, from the Philippines, they have concentrated on the land where only a few millions can read and write, and the political power is manipulated by a system as corrupt as their own. Within a few years, probably, they will be reinforced by the exiled monks of Italy. So long as Spain is ignorant, or only taught a smattering of letters and a vast amount of terrifying superstition in their own schools, they are safe. But they cannot wholly shut out the light from France and England, and they play a desperate game. Jesuitry is Jesuitry in Spain. From the boudoir of the Queen-mother, and now, I am informed, from the boudoir of the Queen, whom they have won, they rule Spain and swoop down with ferocity on all eruptions of revolt.

CHAPTER III.

THE POLITICAL SYSTEM OF SPAIN

WE have in English a very ample literature of travel in Spain, and description of Spanish customs. It is chiefly remarkable for the number of important and unique features which these travellers have failed to see. Their periodical re-description of fans and mantillas, of bullfights and flirting, of cathedrals and vineyards, has merely succeeded in conveying to English readers a most inaccurate impression of the country. The unique things of Spain that it is useful to know are those features of the ecclesiastical world which I have described, and the complexion of its political world, which I am about to describe. One cannot wholly wonder at the perplexity of English men and women in regard to the execution of Ferrer. One must know Spain first.

It must not be imagined, however, that I am now about to describe features of Spanish life that are so obscure as to be open to different interpretations, or that I am about to retail the partisan charges of Anarchists. What I say in this chapter is based entirely on Spanish literature of the weightiest character, and is admitted by the foremost politicians of the country. It is the "open sore" of Spanish life, and is discussed in terms of scorn, anger, or despair by scores of recent Spanish writers who are far removed from either Anarchism or Socialism. One does not love to lay bare the shame of a neighbour nation. But when those who control this political system dip their hands in the blood of an innocent and noble-spirited man, it is time to tell the truth.

Let me introduce the matter with a glance at the recent work of a Catholic writer of undoubted culture and strict loyalty to his Church—Ramon de Torre-Isunza.¹ He calls his book

¹ *La Verdad à S. M. El Rey* (1902). All quotations in this work are translated, literally, by myself.

"The truth for His Majesty the King," and prefaces it with a personal letter to Alfonso XIII. As he looks for the revivification of his "dead country" through a combination of education and a regenerated Church, he will not be suspected of bias.

In his letter to the King he uses plain, agonised language. The country, he says, consists of "a corrupt society and corrupting authority"; the political system "exhibits an essential and inevitable corruption," and "is based on immorality and ignorance." Señor de Torre-Isunza does not lack courage, but if he thinks this language will pass the cordon of Jesuits and servants of the Government round the King he is over-trustful. He quotes with approval Macias Picavea's statement that there is "no such deep immorality in any other State in the world" in the political and administrative life. But I must content myself with stringing together a few of the conclusions that the writer reaches in the course of his analysis.

"We are not far removed," he says, "from a veritable savagery, which is barely modified externally by traditional habits and imitation of foreign customs" (p. 163) "Our religion is a pharisaic formalism, the more immoral as it is hypocritical" (p. 168). There are "few men of honour" in the political world; all offices are obtained by corruption and intrigue, and the whole State is characterised by "a profound immorality and congenital debility" (p. 176). The Government is an "oligarchy," or "a number of gentlemen who take office for the purpose of exploitation," (p. 192). They are "bound by no law, and have respect neither for God nor man" (p. 197). The superficial opposition of Liberals and Conservatives has "no real significance" (p. 198); Parliamentary deputies are not elected, but fraudulently imposed on their districts; education is controlled by this "monstrous" system in its own corrupt interest, and the whole system of law and legal education is vicious and demoralising.

It would be a profound mistake to take this language as the exceptional outpouring of a writer with an aversion to politics. I have chosen to begin with Ramon de Torre-Isunza because he is a cultured and fervent Roman Catholic

and Monarchist. But twenty other writers, nearly all Monarchists, use precisely the same language. In order to dispel at once the last trace of scepticism, I will now take a very weighty work, recently issued by the Madrid Ateneo Científico y Literario.¹

The Athenæum of Science and Letters at Madrid is one of the most weighty cultural institutions in Spain. Most of the scholars and professional men of Madrid belong to it, and its publications have the highest authority. In 1902 its President, Señor Costa, opened a debate in the Section of Historical Sciences on the theme: "Oligarchy and Tammany are the actual form of government in Spain." I have ventured to insert the word "Tammany" for the untranslatable Spanish word "Caciquismo," because, as will appear, it is the only word familiar to English readers which approximately conveys the meaning. Hundreds of distinguished men were invited to this momentous debate, and a large number of the leading scholars and politicians responded, by letter or presence. The whole proceedings were then officially published, and the shame of Spain laid bare as it had never been before.

I will summarise presently the fearful indictment which Señor Costa brought against the politicians of his country, but will first quote a few of the better-known politicians. The most important of these is Maura himself, the ex-Premier, the arch-murderer. This man, who endeavoured to throw dust in the eyes of Europe by issuing to the press (through his Home Secretary) the forged documents against Ferrer *before he was tried*, and by confusing him with revolutionary Anarchists, admits genially enough the corruption of the system which sacrificed Ferrer. Señor Costa quotes a passage from a speech he delivered in the Spanish Parliament on November 29, 1901. Eloquently surveying "the great and cruel sacrifices" which Spain had made in fighting for progress during the nineteenth century, he said that they had ended in "an immense imposture." "We have," he said, "no electoral institutions, nor the results of such institutions, nor public liberty.....we have absolutely not a single

¹ *Oligarquía y Caciquismo como la forma actual de gobierno en España*; 1903.

thing the inner nature of which is in accord with its external appearance." In his letter to the Athenæum on the thesis of the debate, he said that it was "superfluous" to run over, after Señor Costa, "the virulence of their social and political malady" (p. 115). "It is," he said, "traditional that public power is not sought or used in Spain to uphold the law, secure justice, protect culture, enhance prosperity, or direct the life of the people" (p. 116). But one reaches the lowest depth of repugnance when this man, who sacrifices "Anarchists" to defend such a system, observes that Spain is "really in a state of *anarchy* [his italics], in the full sense of the word, since all the legitimate organs of its political life are atrophied and inert" (p. 118).

After Señor Maura's candid description of the system, in the defence of which (and the Church) he allowed Ferrer to be murdered, we will turn to the present Cabinet. Señor Moret did not take part in the debate, but a speech of his, delivered in the Cortes (January 27, 1888), is quoted as one that "paints with a master-hand" the corruption of Spain's form of government. The praise is not too high, but I cannot reproduce it at length. Suffice it to say that he denounces "this civilisation of which we are so proud" in unmeasured terms. He has no pity for the "burdens and corruptions"—of the machine over which he presides to-day. He draws a vivid picture of the repellent corruption of an election to Parliament, in which it does not matter how the elector votes, as the whole thing turns on the success of the candidate in buying one or the other local *cacique* at the lowest price.

Then we have quoted another, and perhaps the most distinguished, member of the present Cabinet, Count Romanones. He deplors (in the work, *Biología de los partidos políticos*, p. 128) "all the evils of our public administration, stupefying the working of the Parliamentary function, all the vices which warp the efficacy of the army and the suffrage and thwart the course of justice." The "whole atmosphere of our political life" is tainted by *cacique* [Tammany]: "like microbes, they make the regions where they are found uninhabitable." But Count Romanones is inhabiting that region to-day.

It must be well understood that these politicians are not denouncing the rival party. They are describing the system which flourishes to-day, and is employed by each party when it comes to power—the system which the Marquis de Riscal scourged in the same terms twenty years before, and that the Marquis de Torre Hermosa described in 1899 as “not a Parliamentary system with corruption, but what we call its corruptions are the system.” However, I need not now fill the chapter with quotations. A few more responsible strictures, and I pass on to describe the system.

“All is rotten in our unfortunate country. It has no government, no electoral body, no parties, army, or navy. All is fiction, decadence, and ruin” (*El Correo*, February 7, 1901). “We are now more or less at the level of a *kabila* of the Rif, though we seem in constitution and laws to be a civilised people” (April 19, 1901).

“Every citizen has a vote, but few use it; and if they do so to the detriment of the Government, it is falsified in the urn” (*El Imparcial*, January 26, 1901).

Señor Sanchez de Toca (in *El problema cubano*) not only roundly denounces the whole system as corrupt, but traces the corruption to “the demoralisation of those who hold the highest political offices” (p. 234). It is “a government by the worst”: honest men hold aloof from politics. Dr. Madrazo (*El pueblo Español ha muerto?*) tells us that “all the institutions of Spain are framed to put abilities at the service of the oligarchs,” that the Liberals and Conservatives are “branches of one tree,” and that the Church “shrinks from no means, however unjust, to attain its end.” But these authorities will suffice. Further dozens will be found in the work issued by the Madrid Athenæum.

Many a reader will begin to wonder, not that there are revolutionaries in Spain, but why there are not more, and those more effective. The story we have to tell presently may throw some light on that; but it must not be supposed that cultivated Spaniards who are not working in the system, and living on it, are silent. I repeat that the whole of recent Spanish literature is full of fierce strictures and pathetic demands for reform. But I must now explain more in detail what is meant by this extraordinary corruption.

Those writers are correct who say that there is no political system in the civilised world—I do not include Russia—so depraved as that of Spain and demand its “Europeanisation.” Its combination of “oligarchy” and “Tammany”—the two features on which all agree—is unique, and the depravity is increased by the subservience to the priest. By oligarchy Spanish writers mean that Spain is wholly ruled, not in its own interest, by the group of its highest politicians, without representation of the will of the people. It does not matter whether these politicians are in office or not; there is a persistent mutual understanding between the apparently hostile groups, and the rhetoric flung from bench to bench in the Cortes has an element of comedy. Even Major Hume observes disdainfully that “there is no sincerity or reality in the pretended antagonism of the political parties.” They change office by mutual agreement. The spoils must not be retained too long in the hands of one set, or, as has happened recently, the opposition will paralyse its efforts to pass laws.

This is the consistent teaching of the critics I have quoted, and I will make only one reserve. That some of the abler Liberal politicians have convictions differing far from those of the Conservatives cannot be doubted. We shall see how far the convictions of Señor Moret and Count Romanones will find expression in legislation. The respectable link between Liberals and Conservatives is, of course, that both are “dynastic,” and hold the Republicans, Socialists, and Anarchists at bay.

But how do the ministers return to power after a General Election? Is there not a very wide suffrage in Spain? I have quoted half-a-dozen writers of great weight to the effect that there is “no electoral system” in Spain, and that the elections are largely comedies. Incredible as it seems to English voters, the “oligarchs” settle by agreement how many deputies of each party are to be returned, and manipulate the electoral results accordingly. The procedure is a commonplace in Spain, and is fully described in the work published by the Athenæum.

Here the “caciquismo,” or Tammany, comes into play. Imagine Tammany spread over the whole of the United States, and embracing Washington in its corrupt network,

and you have an idea of Spain's "political system." All the officials of the country are in it. When we come to examine the evidence against Ferrer, it will be essential to remember this. The *alcalde* (head official) of a small town is not a free agent, deposing out of conviction. He is "appointed," and owes his place to what the Spaniards genially call "His Majesty Recommendation." The Civil Governors are "recommended"; the posts in the army and navy are secured by "recommendation"; from college upward one dreams of "recommendation"—and the price of recommendation is loyalty to the recommender. The whole set of officials in a district is the "cacique," or clique of appointed men depending on the central "oligarchs." This is the most notorious part of the "immorality" and "corruption" which we have heard denounced. And as an "eloquent example" of such a structure Señor Costa instances (p. 53) the "cacique at Barcelona"!

The link between the central power and the local body of dependents is the "Civil Governor," an official whom we shall find at work later. I pretend to no knowledge of him, but consult the Athenæum's work on his position. The Civil Governor, Señor Costa says, is "the link between the central oligarchy and the peripheral caciquismo." One may add, "and the dutiful servant of the local bishop." Sanchez de Toca says that he is sent down by the central power "on the juridical fiction" that he is merely an agent for the supervision of public order and fiscal matters. This, he says, is a fiction, because he is the absolute tool of the oligarchs and is their "electoral agent." So the system is bound together, and the manipulation of the elections secured. In the large towns such electoral corruption can no longer be practised with impunity, and they send Republican deputies to the Cortes. Perez Galdos, the greatest writer in Spain, is Republican deputy for Madrid; Alejandro Lerroux for Barcelona.

But in the small towns the electoral returns are a mockery. Señor Moret describes the candidate hypocritically seeking votes. "It does not matter," he says, "whether they vote for him or not." His real work is the secret and corrupt negotiation with the local cacique. Cases have been put before me in which votes have been cast somewhat in the

proportion of 300 for the dynastic candidate and 3,000 for the Republican; but the result was announced the other way round. The whole system is one of deliberate, self-seeking corruption of the most repellent character. Isern writes of it: "All provincial administration is in the hands of caciques and their representatives, and is profoundly immoral in eighty cases out of every hundred. Yet, of the immoralities which we find in families which pay little or no taxation, in alcaldes and councillors who fill no office, yet live magnificently at the public expense, in politicians who receive more or less considerable bribes from these families and alcaldes—of these the provincial authorities and tribunals take notice only on the eve of elections, and prosecute only when the culprits have given some cause of offence to the Ministry, such as *failing to give beforehand to the governor the forms, signed and blank*, to be filled up on the day of the election with the number of votes which it is thought fit to assign to the 'pigeon-holed' candidate, as they say."¹

The elections in the majority of constituencies are what J. R. Lowell pronounced them in 1877—"a sham." I am told by a Spanish journalist that less than 200 out of 400 deputies are genuinely elected. The stolid English voter probably wonders why the voters do not violently rebel, as he would, against such a system. And so we come back to the recent trouble in Barcelona. They do violently rebel sometimes. Then English people are informed that they are all "Anarchists," and half the English press commends Spain for promptly suspending the constitutional guarantees, and shooting, or condemning to twenty years in prison without trial, whomever it chooses to represent as the fomentor or the leader of the "revolution."

We may agree with Señor Maura—before he took office—that the great fight which enlightened Spain fought during the nineteenth century has ended in "an immense imposture." Two things only need be added to complete the situation. One is that the system, though checked in the large towns by the growth of enlightenment, has steadily deteriorated from an accidental cause. A large number of Spaniards were,

¹ *Del desastro nacional y sus causas*, p. 123; 1900. Señor Costa quotes this with full approval.

before the American War, accommodated with real or lazy or nominal offices in the Colonies. They came back to Spain with their fortunes made—out of the Cubans or Filipinos. All these are now thrown on the “system” and the Church.

The other element to be noted is that these two comfortable dynastic parties now see their power menaced by the rise of Republicanism, Socialism, and Anarchism. Socialism is not a power in Spain. It proposes a new and more concentrated form of central government, and long experience has made the Spanish worker hate the idea of central government. Some of us can understand it, though we do not despair of the Spanish middle class. Republicanism is described by many political writers as “the force of the future.” It is already a very powerful movement, openly advocating a new form of government. The point in the indictment which laid stress on Ferrer’s aspirations towards a Republic was one of the most shameless pieces of hypocrisy in that unspeakable collection. On the one hand, Ferrer was not a Republican, and was not on very good terms with the Republicans of Barcelona, precisely because he gave them no aid. On the other hand, many of the finest men in Spain, from Salmeron and Perez Galdos downward, are open and insistent Republicans. They form a recognised group in the Cortes, and it is only by the scandalous manipulation of the election returns that their number in the Cortes is kept down. Anarchism the oligarchs fight by the weapons we shall have presently to consider.

The rapid spread of these parties, which menace the sacred system, has an effect on the dynastic politicians which needs no emphasis. The oligarchy-Tammany combination is beginning to rock on its foundations. The State finds itself in exactly the same position as the Church. New ideas sprout in the minds of the Spanish people, as they do in the minds of civilised nations. In civilised communities, with no more than a normal and incidental corruption to conceal, we agree to let the new ideas vent themselves and fight their intellectual battle. But in Spain the two systems, Church and State, with which these new ideas would wage war, are essentially, fundamentally, and incurably corrupt. Hundreds of thousands of men, drafted into or dependent on the two

great corporations, clerical and political, see the very bases of their economic life threatened. They have, from their youth upward, on the confession of their own leaders, been taught to deal in intrigue, deceit, and corruption. They have been forced to lay aside moral principles, and press unscrupulously in the struggle for "recommendation."

Let the reader ask himself candidly if the leaders and agents of these menaced systems are likely to be scrupulous in their methods of removing the danger from their path. Let him reflect that one of the most formidable opponents of these systems is the man who would open the eyes of Spain and teach the workers to think. I have grave facts to relate of the agents of these systems, graver than any that this or the preceding chapter contains. The most adequate proof will be given of them, but I felt that it was necessary to describe the systems, in their own language, before I proceeded further. We are now ready to return to the noble-spirited man who is passing from Paris to Barcelona to dissipate the ignorance of Spain. Assuredly Francisco Ferrer is bringing dynamite with him ; but the dynamite of Spain is a gift of the gods in any honest and civilised community.

CHAPTER IV.

THE MODERN SCHOOLS

FERRER returned to Barcelona at the opening of the twentieth century to find the confederate systems I have described flourishing vigorously in an atmosphere of dense ignorance and illiteracy. "Our social condition," the President of the Madrid Athenæum wrote in 1903, "is barbaric, in harmony with our barbaric form of government." The census of 1903 returned 11,945,971 out of a population of 17,667,256 as entirely illiterate. Spain had been far more literate under the Romans 1,700 years earlier; vastly more enlightened under the Mohammedans. Spain in the twentieth century was spending considerably less than two million pounds a year on elementary education, while retrograde clergy and corrupt officials prospered on the general ignorance.

Such education as there was had the express aim of supporting the existing *régime*. All the authorities agree in describing middle-class education as narrow and heavily biassed. The educated class, says Dr. Dillon, betrayed "a monumental ignorance of contemporary history and foreign languages." With something of the quaint conceit of the Chinese, they tried to convince themselves that the traditions of Spain were too precious and splendid to be lost by the process of "Europeanisation" which their deeper thinkers were demanding. The last chapter gives the real meaning of this "Spanish pride." Happily, as far as the middle class was concerned a fine spirit of revolt was spreading. Brilliant writers like Perez Galdos endeavoured to bring Liberal Spain back to the splendid aspirations for which it had made heroic sacrifices in the first half of the nineteenth century. Blasco Ibañez, another distinguished novelist, shamed it with pictures of its lamentable fall from Moorish splendour to Catholic debasement. Of forty books that the educated Spaniard reads to-day thirty-five are Rationalistic.

But the corrupt practices of Church and State could not be abolished as long as the overwhelming majority of the nation was densely ignorant. When it is said that something over four millions (out of eighteen millions) could read and write, one must understand what this means. I may seem to have been unjust to the Church in so heavily charging it with criminal responsibility for the ignorance of the nation—the acknowledged root of half its evils. Do not thousands of nuns and other conventual inmates spend their lives in teaching? Does not the Church provide numbers of schools, day and night, at its own expense?

It does; unhappily for Spain. These schools are made the pretext for suppressing better schools, and for making no national effort to remove the nation's shame. They are schools of the type we had in England fifty years ago. The religious organisation which, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, counteracted the growing demand for education in England by founding schools of its own, expressly stated that it would be careful to educate children "in their proper station," which was, in the old phrase, a condition of respectful submission to their pastors and masters. That is the direct aim of elementary education in Spain, as will be understood from our study of the character of the Spanish peasant's "pastors and masters." The child was taught to read, with fiery injunctions as to what it should and should not read. The curriculum was narrow, arid, and unstimulating. It was indeed especially devised to meet the old idea of teaching without educating. And the whole period of school-life was filled with fulminations intended to keep the child in its proper station.

Before Ferrer returned to Barcelona little bands of mutinous workers here and there had clubbed together and founded secular schools of their own. Middle-class Rationalists and Republicans took some interest in the enterprise, but the teaching—stimulating enough, in all conscience—was hampered by lack of funds. Church and State looked on with tolerable indifference at the mushroom-growths of revolt. An ex-priest who had been active in the work returned to the Church, and many little institutions were closed. Those that survived were mainly Republican

schools, which have greatly increased in number and grown in efficiency under the inspiration of Ferrer's fine creations.

It is most important to distinguish between these Republican schools and the Modern Schools established by Ferrer. They existed before Ferrer started his work, they differed from his in giving (often) religious instruction and in political tendency, and of late years their leaders have not been on the best terms with Ferrer, because of the absorption of his funds in purely educational work. But pro-Spanish writers—to be quite correct (since I am a pro-Spanish writer), the anonymous and unscrupulous slanderers who have poisoned our Press in the interest of the corruption of Spain—have found it useful to confuse the Modern and the Republican schools. Much that may have been taught in the Republican schools was certainly not taught in those of Ferrer, to whom a Republic was not the acceptable political ideal. But I will anticipate a later discussion so far as to say that the maxims which correspondents of the *Saturday Review* and other journals assert they saw on the walls of schools in Spain did not exist in either the Modern or Republican schools in any form whatever. I have questioned on the subject masters of Ferrer's schools; and Alejandro Lerroux, the leader of the Barcelona Republicans, emphatically denies them on his part. A moment's candid reflection would convince anybody that no school would last a week in Spain, or anywhere else, in which injunctions to massacre all officials and the whole middle-class, and indulge in general pillage, were printed in large capitals on the walls.

The Church and the *caciques* had been content with petty persecution so long as these schools depended on the coppers of the workers. An entirely new era opened when a brilliant professor from Paris, with a capital of £30,000 and a fine capacity to control and employ it, entered the field. The notion that Ferrer gathered about him all the iconoclasts of Barcelona and "literally taught the young idea to shoot," as the *Daily Dispatch* (October 16) said, in an article with the disgusting anonymous heading of "By One who Knew Him," is a grotesque untruth. Ferrer incurred the annoyance of many of his earlier friends, with whom he wished to remain on terms of personal friendship, precisely because he deter-

mined to use his funds for his single aim. He refused to spend money on his children, beyond a modest allowance to his struggling elder daughter. He refused to live in the comfort which his new circumstances would have justified. He regarded the money left to him by Mlle. Meunier as a moral trust, and scrupulously expended it in the cause of education and philanthropy; though the money was bequeathed absolutely to him.¹

Instead of calling to his aid the violent revolutionaries of popular legend, Ferrer invited the co-operation of some of the best-known scholars of France and Spain, such as Dr. Odon de Buen, member of the Spanish Senate and a distinguished scientist; Dr. Martinez Vargas, Professor of Medicine at Barcelona; Professor Ramon y Cajal, one of the finest physiologists in America; and Professors Reclus and Letourneau of Paris. Other scientific men were invited to co-operate as time went on, with the result that these schools, which "literally taught the young idea to shoot," had a series of scientific text-books which have no parallel in any elementary school system in the world. Five of them are from the pen of Dr. Odon de Buen, of European repute. They include manuals of reading, grammar, history, all branches of natural philosophy, psychology, and sociology. The reader who would know Ferrer's schools should glance at this fine series of thirty manuals, a set of which has, I understand, been deposited at the British Museum.

It has been stated all over Europe by the anonymous defenders of Spanish corruption, with the aid of simple-

¹ A scurrilous letter was contributed on the subject to the *Manchester Guardian* by a responsible priest, Canon Lynch. He says:—

"The facts are these. Ferrer was teacher of Spanish in Paris. One of his pupils was a very wealthy Catholic old lady. She fell sick, and in her will wished to leave all her wealth to works of Catholic piety. Ferrer induced her to leave him personally the money, and promised that he would conscientiously carry out her wish."

I have already pointed out the stupidity of such a suggestion, but the letter deserves quoting as an example of "Catholic truth." Mlle. Meunier was only fifty years old; she knew Ferrer and his views intimately for three years; she did not leave him all her money (Canon Lynch will find it interesting to discover how the rest is being employed), and she had the keenest sympathy with Ferrer's ideal. The rest of this priest's letter is of a similar character. Happily, the editor of the *Manchester Guardian* has a sense of truth and justice, and in publishing Canon Lynch's letter he appended a note that effectively exposed its reckless statements.

minded zealots like Canon Lynch, that these text-books were armouries of insurrection. Let me introduce the subject by a letter received by Ferrer, not in the early days of the *Escuela Moderna*, when the books were few and critical attention had not been directed to them, but in the spring of the present year. This letter, which was not produced at Ferrer's condemnation, as it would have been if he had had a trial, was published prominently in the *Boletín de la Escuela Moderna* ("The Bulletin of the Modern School") for June, 1909, and was fresh in the memory of the Barcelona authorities. It is from a bishop, unconnected with the Vatican—the "supreme bishop of the Independent Church of the Philippine Islands." It is dated from Manila, March 10, 1909:—

SR. D. FRANCISCO FERRER Y GUARDIA,
Director of the Modern School,
Barcelona.

Accept, Sir, the assurance of my most distinguished consideration : My delegate at Barcelona, Sr. Isabelo de los Reyes, has sent me most of the magnificent works edited by you. I have been agreeably surprised by the modern, scientific, and civilising tendency of their teaching. If the Filipinos had studied those works instead of the stupefying treatises of the monks and Jesuits, which betray the evil odour of their cells, they would have learned in a few years what it has taken them nearly four centuries to learn from the fantastic disquisitions of St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Augustine, and others, who were assuredly, in their time, brilliant lights of the Church. But how are we going to teach from their archaic doctrines young people who are the contemporaries of aeroplanes, radium, and the thousands of other scientific discoveries ?

Pray accept the warmest congratulations of our Church for your praiseworthy efforts and sufferings in the cause of Rationalism. Our Church believes that reason is directly inspired by God, and that to seek the truth is to seek the Lord.

The Supreme Council of our Bishops, which is composed of twenty-four prelates, has agreed that some of your manuals shall be established as text-books in our seminaries and schools—namely, the *Natural Sciences* and *Physical Geography* of Dr. Odon de Buen (to whom please send an assurance of our admiration), the *First Stages of Humanity* of Engerrand, the *Ethnical Psychology* of Letourneau, and *Man and the Earth*, by Reclus—merely rectifying or explaining the atheistic or anti-religious tendencies by saying that the authors are anti-religious because they, like yourself, have endured savage persecution at the hands of those who ought to be imitators of the gentlest, most humane, most noble, and free in spirit of all masters.

In your person I respectfully salute the whole of the professors of the Modern School in Spain.

GREGORIO AGLIPAY,
Supreme Bishop of the Independent Philippine Church.

It will be seen that a Liberal Catholicism of a remarkable type has evolved in the remote Philippines ; but the lack of consecration from the Vatican does not affect the value of this testimony. Within two months of the receipt of this religious encouragement the Modern Schools were to be closed, on a scandalous pretext, their founder branded through the Press of Europe as "the Fagin of revolt," and savagely murdered in the prime of his life. It is true that the Bishop recognises anti-religious sentiments in the works ; but there is not a word about those murderous phrases which Ferrer has been so widely accused of disseminating through his schools.

On the point of Rationalistic teaching the Modern Schools were perfectly open. Ferrer was what we should call in England an Agnostic. In the genial note he appends to the Bishop's letter in his *Boletin* he repudiates the idea that he and his friends opposed religion only because it persecuted. They oppose it, he says, from conviction. The manuals and the teaching were professedly Rationalistic, in the general pervading sense in which the text-books and teaching in a Roman Catholic school are Catholic ; and there was a special Rationalistic manual on *The Origin of Christianity*. The idea that the schools could be suppressed on that account by any civilised Government is ludicrous. If an Agnostic cares to use his fortune in establishing schools, he has the same elementary right to have his ideas, provided they do not tend to violent disturbance, taught in them as has a Roman Catholic. Indeed, the contention of our Roman Catholics that, while the State here ought to pay practically the whole cost of their specific education, the State in Spain should not allow ideas opposed to theirs to be taught at private expense, is only remarkable for its audacity.

The children of Ferrer's schools came from Rationalist homes, and their parents desired this teaching. The alternative schools violated their consciences and merited their disdain. There was nothing secret or insidious in the teaching. The

Jesuits very loudly proclaimed it. But, while Spanish agents have somehow persuaded many people in England that a State may fitly confiscate schools and shoot their founder because of his Agnosticism—an assumption which we should regard as an outrage on civilisation here—the truth is that, bad as Spain is, such a thing is not possible even there, and a lying pretext had to be invented. Ferrer's schools were closed, his property confiscated, and his life ruthlessly taken, because he was a Rationalist. Let us see what there is in the charge that he "literally taught the young idea to shoot."

I will examine in a later chapter the forged documents and the phrases of anonymous origin which Catholic journals began to publish *before* Ferrer was tried. Not the slightest effort was made to *prove* that these sentiments were ever, in any shape, disseminated in Ferrer's schools. They are indignantly and emphatically repudiated by the men I have examined who taught in those schools. It is, in fact, preposterous to think that the authorities, who have watched Ferrer assiduously since his trial in 1906, would have allowed such phrases, or any remote approach to them, to be paraded in the Modern Schools. English journals of great weight have admitted to their columns statements of this kind which had not a tittle of evidence or authority, and were in themselves wildly improbable. English Roman Catholic priests have seized and employed them with a blind bigotry, a gross injustice, and a disregard of truth that make one wonder how much of the spirit of the Inquisition lurks beneath their professions of humane conversion.

We shall speak of the origin of these documents later. For the moment we are confronted with the statement that the manuals themselves taught anarchy, revolution, pillage, and massacre. We turn with interest to the "quotations" which Catholics have disseminated, and we find that in not a single instance is there a reference, not merely to a specific page, but even to a specific book. We are left to make our way through a series of thirty-one text-books and fifteen other books published by the Escuela Moderna in search of half-a-dozen phrases. Then we are told by Canon Lynch that *we* suppress the truth and misrepresent Ferrer. Until a particular passage in the works is submitted to us, we cannot be expected

to take serious notice of such charges. Anonymity of writers is bad enough; anonymity of quotations usually means forgery or falsification.

I have examined many of the works in question; informants of mine who possess the whole series report that no such passages occur in them. Again, one must reflect whether the Spanish authorities would have waited so long to entrap Ferrer, and would have shrunk from a civil trial, if they could have put before a court works containing the passages alleged. The civil courts of Spain would suffice to deal with schools in which children were taught "literally" to shoot or to pillage. Even before the Military Council these books were not produced, and no allusion was made to them whatever.

The plain truth—and it is the plain truth I submit in contrast to a crowd of anonymous allegations, resting on no proof or authority—is that the spirit of the teaching in some of the manuals was democratic. Ferrer, seeing the political and clerical corruption about him, would have thought it cowardly to conceal his social ideal or his views of religion. His schools were founded to inaugurate the elevation of the Spanish people, and protests against injustice and war had a legitimate place in them. This is a matter on a totally different plane from the incitements to kill and to pillage which have been fraudulently ascribed to him. Not a single word of that nature ever occurred in the Modern Schools, and not the least attempt has been made to prove that it did. The well-known Anarchist, M. Malato, informed me that Ferrer expressly directed him to avoid Anarchism in the one or two works he compiled for the schools. Only such sentiments were communicated to the children as will be found in any democratic school in England. The dissemination of such sentiments in so corrupt a country as Spain is dangerous to the corruption. But even there no law is broken by the peaceful propaganda of advanced social views. The case of the murderers of Ferrer rests entirely on allegations that he, directly or indirectly, incited to murder or the destruction of property. We have shown that this was utterly foreign to the spirit in which he left Paris. We shall see that it is a gross and groundless calumny.

The real spirit in which Ferrer set about his work is made

clear in the following passages from his private letters, which I translate from the Italian *Ragione* (of Rome): "As is notorious, the child is born without any preconceived idea, and in the course of life it imbibes the ideas of those who first surround it, modifying them afterwards according to its culture, observations, and relations to its environment. It clearly follows that, if the child be educated in true, positive ideas about all things, and taught that, to avoid errors, it is indispensable that it should accept nothing on faith, but only what science can demonstrate, the child will grow up with its powers of observation sharpened and with an aptitude for all kinds of study.....To educate children with freedom from prejudice, and publish the works necessary for that purpose, is the work of the Modern School.....The whole value of education consists in respect of the physical, intellectual, and moral will of the child.....The true teacher is he who can defend the child against his own will and ideas, making his appeal in increasing measure to the energies of the child himself."

We thus see that this man who has been so grossly misrepresented had a profound theory of pedagogy, which he embodied in a fine constructive system of education. Construction was essentially his aim. He would make a new Spanish race, of upright life—the scurrilous charge that he undermined morality is too frivolous to be considered—informed mind, and scientifically trained judgment. This new democracy would create a new Spain. I have before me the index to the *Boletin* he published from 1901 to 1909. The articles are often by some of the most eminent men of science in Europe. They deal with every aspect of pedagogy and science, and often with religion; but, except in this broad sense, not one article in a hundred deals with social questions, none deal with political questions, and all reflect a serious, scientific temper.

I need only add, in regard to the general principles of his work, that after his schools had been threatened in 1906 his friends co-operated in forming an "International League for the Rational Education of Children." Ferrer was made President, and Professor Haeckel (an anti-Socialist) and Professor Sergi (the great Italian anthropologist) are among the Vice-

Presidents. Its spirit is the spirit of the Modern Schools, and is expressed in such principles as: "Instruction is only a part of this education. It must also, in addition to the formation of the intelligence, embrace the development of character, the cultivation of the will, the creation of a moral and physical nature, nicely balanced, with faculties harmoniously associated and drawn out to their full power. Moral education, much less theoretic than practical, must chiefly be given by example, and be based on the great natural law of solidarity."

This ideal—the ideal of progressive teachers the world over—is the true spirit of Ferrer's work. It is repeated in every number of his *Bulletin*, reflected in all his manuals, and informed the whole activity of his schools. Not a line of correct quotation from any authentic document of Ferrer's is out of accord with it. But this is precisely the ideal of education that would soon put a term to the *bulas* and *caciques* of Spain, if it were embodied in a general system of education.

The work commenced with the opening of the original and central Escuela Moderna at Barcelona in 1901. Its classes were first attended by twelve girls and eighteen boys. At the end of the first year the number had increased to seventy, in spite of priestly strictures. Its fine rooms, genial teachers, and enlightened lessons could not fail to win adherents. Ferrer quoted in 1907, from a Spanish educational journal (*La Escuela Española*), some unpleasant facts with regard to the schools which the Jesuits thought sufficient for Spain. They were largely, it seems, "without light or ventilation—dens of death, ignorance, and bad training." It was estimated that 50,000 children died every year in consequence of the mischievous character of these school-rooms; moreover, there were still half a million children without any school accommodation at all, and crowds of hungry, unpaid, incompetent teachers seeking a livelihood.

The Escuela Moderna continued to gain adherents. Demands came from other parts of Catalonia for modern schools, and Ferrer eagerly co-operated and shared his manuals. The Republican schools received a great impetus, and spread equally. By the year 1906 more than fifty

schools had been founded, mainly in Catalonia, on the model of the original Escuela Moderna. In that year Ferrer gave a feast to 1,700 children who were pupils in the various schools set up under his inspiration. Teachers and pupils were devoted to their founder, and his *Boletín* testifies constantly to the keen interest he took in their moral no less than their physical development.

I have so often spoken of Spain as a century behind the rest of Europe that I may complete the parallel. A hundred years ago groups of educationists were plotting to rid England of its degrading condition of ignorance, and one of these, Robert Owen, inaugurated a work very closely similar to that of Ferrer. He built a fine school for the children of the workers at New Lanark, dispensed with religious instruction, paid great attention to the training of character on humanitarian lines, and devised the most advanced curriculum that could then be found in Europe. It was well known that Owen detested militarism, advocated Socialism, and rejected theology. We did not shoot or persecute Owen, even in those days. Queen Victoria's uncle, the Duke of Kent, followed his work with the closest interest. Indeed, the success of his moral training was so astounding that New Lanark drew educationists and representatives of governments and monarchs from all parts of Europe.

Francisco Ferrer was the Robert Owen of Spain. I have met men or women who have known both of these educators, and if there is any difference—besides the ultimate political ideal—it is that Ferrer was less absorbed in large ideas, more quick and direct in human sympathies. His letters, many of which I have read, suggest a man of very warm affections, very genial presence, great generosity and refinement. One letter shown to me recalls a typical instance of his ways. A cultivated refugee from some other country had reached England, and, in great privation, became known to a friend of Ferrer's. As the man spoke Spanish, Ferrer was told of his case. Ferrer at once sent the man's fare to Barcelona, and found him employment. His whole career since 1900 was one of generous giving.

He was a man of medium height, with penetrating black eyes, whitish hair, and roundish face. Gifted with a high

intelligence, an iron will, and a fine business capacity, he took pride and pleasure in work. A French writer, who knew him, observes that "it was difficult to approach him without loving him," but that he was reserved, and only responded when he willed. His many intimate friends to whom I have spoken—and had spoken often before the tragedy occurred—felt and suffered as one does only where great charm is associated with great worth of character. Of children he was passionately fond. His work for them had a ground of human sentiment as well as of social and moral principle. It was the peril of a child that caused him, quite accidentally, to break a sojourn in England that was to last some months, and drew him into the death-trap at Barcelona.

Ferrer was a happy man. Quiet and dignified in bearing, he had all the Spaniard's love of life, and in his last decade it found satisfaction. Welcomed in a score of circles throughout Eastern Europe, wedded to a charming and beautiful woman, comfortable in his small estate (a farm) on the fringe of Barcelona; he needed but one further solace—the success of his work, the enlightenment of Spain. And it was succeeding as rapidly as he had ever hoped it would. With warm feeling he watched the rays of his ideal spread slowly over the map of Spain, and nursed the little schools which sprang up on all sides. Here was a pacific victory, far more promising than the silencing of rifle by rifle which he had once meditated. But the reactionary powers were watching with inflamed anger and dread, and he was hardly five years in Barcelona when the first attempt was made to destroy his work and take his life.

CHAPTER V.

THE REPLY OF CORRUPTION

IN order to explain the first imprisonment and trial of Ferrer I must take the reader back ten years in the story of Barcelona. The moment one mentions in England that Barcelona has thousands of Anarchists there is a perceptible shudder in one's audience. This is due to sheer insular ignorance. The presence among us of Prince Kropotkin, the European prestige of Count Tolstoy, should have long ago corrected it. An Anarchist is not a man who throws bombs, but a man who believes that centralised government will always lead to corruption; and therefore decentralised administration, with greater liberty of personal development, is the ideal of social form. A very intelligible ideal in Spain. Occasionally, one in a thousand Anarchists may reach so uncontrollable a pitch of indignation at the existing corruption that he vents his feeling in an isolated outrage.

Anarchism is the most popular social theory among the workers of Barcelona, as Socialism is in North Italy. So long as it does not seek to remove the Government by violent means, it has, in any civilisation, as much right as any other social ideal to existence. It is in the position of the Liberal who plots humanely to overthrow a Conservative Government. The sole question which concerns any civilised Government is, whether the rebels against it, of whatever school, plainly meditate or use violence. Then they take their lives in their hands, and are the first to admit it.

Now, there have been violent outrages done by Anarchists in Barcelona, but two things must be borne in mind by those who would have a correct judgment on these matters. The first is that most, if not all, the bomb outrages that have occurred in Barcelona for the last ten years or more are due to clerical and political agents. This, we shall see, is now fully established. The second point is to understand the special circumstances which embitter Anarchists in Spain.

In 1892 there was a small rising of the peasants in Andalusia, with loss of life. An Anarchist was arrested, and, under threat of excruciating torture, gave a number of names to the authorities. It was the beginning of the reaction of the corrupt powers on the rising insurrection. Without trial, with gross pretence of military justice, several men were executed. They were known in the district to be innocent, but obnoxious to Church or State. In any case, they had no trial. Worst of all, in order to wring fresh names from the prisoners, the most revolting tortures were inflicted on them. The specific accounts of these tortures were published in the Madrid and Barcelona press. It was the beginning of the Anarchist "propaganda by deeds." On evidence thus obtained by horrible torture men were shot, or sentenced to ten or fifteen years in prison.

A fierce anger blazed through the non-clerical workers of Spain. In the following year a bomb was thrown at, and wounded, the commanding officer at Barcelona. The author acknowledged the crime, and was executed, calling for vengeance. A companion Anarchist—Salvador—then threw a bomb in the theatre, with horrible effect, in 1893. He escaped, and a large number of arrests were made at once, and the constitutional guarantees were conveniently suspended—as the police could find no evidence.

In Montjuich, the grim prison-fortress that commands Barcelona, there are certain cells known as the "zero," "double zero," and "counter-zero." These cells now witnessed tortures as infamous and brutal as ever medieval jail had witnessed. For five or six days and nights (consecutive) the men were forced by the whips of their jailers to keep on the move, without resting or sleeping. During that time the only food given them was bread and dried fish, without a drop of water. They were flogged until their bodies were a livid mass. Cords were tied to their genital organs, and were pulled by the Civil Guards, inflicting the most exquisite torture conceivable. One man committed suicide. Several died. Some yielded, and were conveyed into the next cell, where a lieutenant of the Civil Guard wrote down their denunciation of the men he wanted. Several were shot, and many imprisoned on that evidence. After some weeks of this

ferocity, the author of the outrage, Salvador, was caught. He explained that he had acted quite alone, to avenge his friend. To avoid discomfort, he pleaded repentance and conversion, was petted by the clergy until the day of execution, and then laughed in their faces.

What proof is there of these inhuman tortures? The sworn testimony, the lacerated bodies, the atrophied genital organs, of the men themselves. One of them, Cerezuela, smuggled a full account to the Republican journal *El Pais*. The others in time obtained liberty, recanted the evidence wrung from them, and described the tortures. Their letters were collected and published by a Spanish schoolmaster, J. Monsey, in a work entitled *El Proceso de un gran crimen*. He observed that, if in the course of time people were informed that he had retracted, they would know that he was being tortured in prison. At the next "suspension of constitutional guarantees" he was put in prison.

This "suspension" occurred in 1896, and needs very careful examination. In the month of June, on the festival of Corpus Christi, the great religious procession of the Sacrament was marching through the streets of Barcelona. At the head were the chief clerical and military and civic dignitaries; in the tail walked the poorer groups of Catholics. A bomb was thrown from a window, with deadly effect, not at the head, but *at the tail*, of the procession. A strange thing for an Anarchist to wait until My Lord the Bishop, the Civil Governor, and all that he hated most fiercely had gone by, and then throw his bomb at a group of innocent men and women of his own class! The criminal was never discovered, but the Freethinkers and Radicals of Barcelona began to suspect that there were bomb-factories in unexpected places. We shall see that two police-agents have since been caught red-handed, and exposed in civil trial; and that the recent rioters at Barcelona found a bomb-factory in a convent.

What earthly object could civic or clerical authorities have in countenancing such a deed, the astounded Briton asks? I will only say that the throwing of that bomb was singularly profitable to the clergy and their allies. At once the constitutional guarantees were suspended. Jesuits and lay confraternities of Catholics ran about with denunciations

of "irreligion" and "anarchy." Within a few days they had under lock and key four hundred active anti-clericals, without the inconvenience of a civil trial. There were Anarchists, mostly of the pacific school, among them, but the great majority were Radicals of other schools. All but one were anti-clericals and Republicans. Professors, journalists, medical and other professional men were included, and were packed in fetid jails under disgusting conditions.

The same tortures were applied to many of them as had been used in 1893. One, whose body was already livid from the lash, was kept afoot for nine days. A youth of twenty-one, Ollé by name, was scourged till he vomited blood, kept walking for thirty-seven hours, and fed on dry fish. He stuffed himself with all the most nauseous things in his cell, in the hope of poisoning himself. A friend of mine, one of the prisoners whom I will quote presently, saw Ollé in his appalling state as he was being reconducted to his cell. The nails of others were torn off; they exhibited the nailless fingers after their release. One young man, Gana, went to Paris after his release, and was taken by my friend to be examined by M. Clemenceau and other distinguished Parisians.

Professor Tarrida del Marmol was at that time Director of the Polytechnic Academy. He was imprisoned on the pretext of a forged letter (the author of which, it has since transpired, was a convict), but escaped through the influence of relatives of high rank. He has gathered together the testimonies of the tortured men, and described the whole episode—with others of equal discredit—in a French work, *Les Inquisiteurs d'Espagne*. His name will be familiar to many as an able contributor to our chief scientific journals: his profound humanity and honour are known to me. He is under standing sentence of death in Spain.

The emotional reader will pardon me for not suspending my narrative to express my feeling in becoming rhetoric. There is still much to say in preparation for the trial of Ferrer, towards which I hasten. I beg to call attention merely to three facts: (1) The author of the outrage was never discovered. (2) Men were shot, or received long terms of imprisonment, on the "evidence" of the tortured men.

(3) The suspension of the constitutional guarantees, or supersession of the civil courts, enabled the authorities to make a sweeping clearance of all the most active rebels against Church and political system in Barcelona. It may also be useful to recall that the President of the Madrid Athenæum selects "the Liberal *cacique* at Barcelona" as an "eloquent example" of the corruption he so vehemently denounces.

From 1896 to 1906 anti-clericalism and anarchy continued to grow in Catalonia. A new force, a new centre of strength and inspiration, had come into the province—the educational work of Ferrer. Workers were no longer compelled to send their children to learn servility to corrupt priests and corrupt politicians at Catholic schools, or to leave them illiterate. A magnificent enthusiasm ran through the scattered ranks of the rebels. Something tangible, a positive institution, was now before their eyes; and its influence was spreading slowly over all Catalonia and a good deal of Spain. Then, on May 31, 1906, an Anarchist threw a bomb at the young King and his bride. In a few days Ferrer was in jail, and all the Modern Schools were closed.

As the more unscrupulous of the anonymous writers are representing that Ferrer was at least the "moral" author of this outrage—since he stood all the pressure of the Fiscal (Attorney General) for months and had to be entirely acquitted, there cannot be the slightest question of complicity—a few words may be said on the culprit. Matteo Morral was not a pupil of Ferrer's, as the more ignorant of the slanderers have it, nor was he an out-at-elbows desperado. He was a cultivated, well-to-do young man, speaking several languages. Concealing his disposition to use violence, he won Ferrer's regard for a time, and was employed by him to translate some books for the Modern School. What the precise importance may be of the fact that he was deeply enamoured of Soledad Villafranca, and repelled by her, one hesitates to say. Some attribute his act, in throwing a bomb at the King and Queen, to a desire to implicate Ferrer. I do not believe it. He made no effort to do so, and he unconsciously gave this important testimony to Ferrer, in a letter reproduced by Rochefort in *L'Intransigeant*: "I don't trust Ferrer, nor Tarrida [del Marmol], nor Lorenzo, nor any of

those unfortunate people who think that words will ever lead to a practical result."

Ferrer offered himself to the authorities, who at once detained him, closed his schools, and sought to confiscate his funds. But the constitutional guarantees were not suspended. They were forced to grant him a civil trial. How he had to be acquitted, after thirteen months' detention, is still remembered. But there are features of the trial which have the greatest interest in connection with the later and fatal charge against him, and I will briefly discuss them.

The Madrid magistrate, before whom he was first brought, declared that he could see no valid ground for keeping him in custody. The fact, which Ferrer fully recognised, that Morral had done some work for him, could hardly influence a civil judge, and there was not the least particle of "evidence" beyond this. The Fiscal (Attorney General) intervened, however, and there ensued a long and extraordinary struggle. Becerra del Toro, the Fiscal, demanded that Ferrer should be garrotted for complicity. The civil court required evidence. All Europe was by this time watching the struggle, and Ferrer's admirers in every country educated the public to see that no injustice was done. For twelve months Ferrer was detained in prison to give time for the "discovery" of evidence. At length, in the month of June, he was brought before the civil judges at Madrid—brought handcuffed every day into court—and Becerra del Toro unfolded the case he had prepared.

Two things are chiefly noteworthy in connection with this trial. One is that the clergy, through their Press and pulpits, as well as through the reactionary Becerra del Toro, were making frantic efforts to secure the condemnation of Ferrer. Writers like Mr. G. K. Chesterton, whose literary faculty has the fullest and most entertaining play when they refrain entirely from studying the facts of the case they discuss, assure you that this introduction of the clergy is unjustified. The Spanish papers of the time were full of clerical comments on the case, *pendente lite*, and published broadcast the evidence to be used against Ferrer; but I need give only one instance. Before me lies a picture post-card issued at the time by the clergy. In the upper part it represents Morral

issuing, bomb in hand, from the Escuela Moderna. He is shaking the hand of someone whose face is not seen. In the lower part is depicted the honest, industrious workman who is turned out "in thousands" from the Catholic schools. Ferrer has lightly written on it that "the Jesuits are not backward," and sent it to an English friend. The date stamped on it is March 2, 1907. In other words, this infamous inculpation of Ferrer was circulated over Spain while he still awaited trial in the prison at Madrid. In England we should know what to do with those Jesuits. In Spain they pursued the same tactics this year.

However, as we shall find ample proof of the guilt of the clergy and of their unscrupulous poisoning of the public mind while Ferrer awaited trial this year, we need not delay. The action of the Fiscal was not less instructive; the evidence he gathered not less hypocritical. At first, in the absence of anything with the remotest pretension to be proof of complicity in the bomb outrage, he demanded that Ferrer be imprisoned for life as "a man who was extremely dangerous on account of his anti-religious views"; and this note was struck repeatedly throughout the trial when evidence broke down. During the twelve months' wait in jail (June 3, 1906, to June 3, 1907), moreover, the evidence for the prosecution was communicated to the Press (as in the present year), and garbled versions of it were disseminated through Spain and the rest of Europe. A Madrid magistrate, Santiago Mataix, showed the case for the prosecution to several journalists, with the express object of condemning Ferrer in advance. One of these, Urales, editor of the *Diario Universal*, resigned his position, and exposed the scandalous action in the *España Nueva*. Urales also interviewed Becerra del Toro. "Have you any proof of Ferrer's guilt?" he asked. "No," the Fiscal answered; "we have no proof of Ferrer's guilt, but *we have a moral conviction of it.*"

It was the shameful story of 1909 in anticipation. The determination to kill Ferrer was dressed as a conviction that he was the "moral author" of outrages; and the reader may guess whether, in a country where officials do not even need to trouble that the end justifies the means, since the end itself has no justification, the collection of evidence would be

conducted with much scruple. In point of fact, the evidence was contemptible. Mysterious documents were discovered which had passed between Ferrer and his former friend, Mme. Bonnard. Were they not revolutionary machinations couched in cipher? Mme. Bonnard, who had long before been alienated from Ferrer, came forward and showed that they were French shorthand. A most seditious letter was found, which purported to be from Ferrer's son, Riego. Riego was four years old. The prosecution had to fall back on the sworn declaration of the Lieutenant of the Civil Guard at Barcelona that he was "convinced" that Ferrer had organised the crime, and similar "convictions" on the part of the police. Remember what Spanish writers have told us of "His Majesty Recommendation."

In spite of forged letters, selected judges, and frantic appeals of Becerra del Toro to stop the work of the Modern Schools, Ferrer had to be liberated. His friends were busy in many lands, and Europe followed the long trial with interest. There was not evidence of a kind even to satisfy judges belonging to such a system as I have described, impelled by the whole force of the Catholic press, which does not seem to be subject to any law of contempt of court in Spain. On June 12 Ferrer returned in triumph to Barcelona.

Few will doubt that, had the constitutional guarantees been suspended and Ferrer been tried by a military council in 1906, he would have been executed. The witnesses would not have been cross-examined, the documents would not have been produced in open court, and the "moral conviction" of lieutenants—of that famous "Barcelona cacique"—would have passed as evidence. But a few more particular reflections of moment will occur to the reader who studies the trial of 1906. In the first place, the action of the Church must be remembered. What the law of contempt of court may be in Spain I do not know, but an elementary delicacy and sense of justice would have restrained Catholics from issuing picture post-cards and publishing anonymous documents and violent assurances of guilt before the court even had the evidence submitted to it, if the clergy possessed any such delicacy and sense of justice. The end justified the means. Whatever Catholic theology has taught on that principle in

the abstract, Catholic priests have unceasingly acted on it in the concrete. The history of the Spanish clergy, even in the nineteenth century, shows it on every page. The Modern Schools were to be suppressed ; and if this could be effected only through the suppression of their leader, so much the worse for him.

It will be noted further that some of the remarkable documents and "proofs" which have been produced this year were not produced in 1906. This is a point of the greatest interest. Where were the phrases impelling to violence in his text-books? Where was the extraordinary inscription, inciting to pillage and murder, which anonymous "travellers" now declare they themselves saw posted up, in large capitals; in all the Modern Schools? These would have been invaluable to the prosecution ; yet, though Ferrer's papers were ransacked and his schools exhaustively discussed, they do not appear until 1909. Does anyone imagine that Ferrer, with the sword hanging above him after 1906, with police spies openly watching all he did, set up these things after his narrow escape? The supposition would be childish. These things did not appear in 1906, because the witnesses would have had to submit to cross-examination by Ferrer's able advocate.

An attempt had been made, before Ferrer was tried and acquitted, to induce the French Government to suffer the confiscation of his property in Paris, but it was warmly repelled. Ferrer's deposit in the Bank of Spain had already been confiscated, but it had to be released. In defiance of all justice, however, the central Modern School was closed, and has been ever since. It was a piece of spite and malignant injustice.

Ferrer passed to Paris and to England, to thank the friends who had worked for him, and returned to continue his perilous mission in Barcelona. Fresh Modern Schools were opened in various parts, and a new institution was founded in Barcelona. This foundation was designed to become in time a "popular university." In the brief space that remained for Francisco Ferrer, it developed into a fine and successful publishing business, disseminating cheap literature in Catalonia. On the very eve of the tragedy Ferrer set forth an ambitious programme for his "Encyclopædia of Higher Popular Education." Its aim was, he says

in the *Boletin* for June, 1909, to provide the public with "sound and nutritious intellectual food." It was professedly Rationalistic in spirit. The Church was vitally interested in this project of "socialising science." But lest any should think that the aim was ineptly or fraudulently expressed, let me quote the titles of the whole of the projected works:—

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|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1. The Evolution of Worlds. | 8. The History of Civilisation. |
| 2. The Story of the Earth. | 9. Religions. |
| 2. The Origin of Life. | 10. Law and Morals. |
| 4. The Evolution of Living Things. | 11. Social Organisations. |
| 5. The Factors of Organic Evolution. | 12. Economic Systems. |
| 6. The Origin and Development of Man. | 13. The Evolution of Technics and Art. |
| 7. Thought. | 14. The Factors of Social Evolution. |
| | 15. Man and the World. |

The conception brings out once more the fact that Ferrer was a serious and very thoughtful teacher, and the idea recurs throughout the manifesto that this popular dissemination of science had for its aim "the improvement of the moral and physical condition of mankind." English readers must remember that the mere idea of "evolution" is anathema in Catholic Spain. To a Spanish priest this innocent and excellent programme was a plain emanation from the pit.

This manifesto was published, as I said, in the *Boletin* for June, 1909. At that time Ferrer was in England, and I must deal fully with his intentions and movements. We are within the advancing shadow of the great crime.

It was stated in the indictment against Ferrer that he made frequent visits to criminal and dangerous characters in other countries, chiefly Belgium, France, and England. I have had pleasant hours with his criminal associates in Paris, and I believe that the most dangerous of his Belgian *habitués* was the distinguished and fine-spirited Brussels barrister, M. Furnemont, whom I have occasionally met. But it will be most profitable to designate the dangerous criminals we harbour in this country, to whom Ferrer made his English visits. Most of them are personally known to me. I need only name them:—

Professor Tarrida del Marmol, an acute student of mathematics and astronomy, formerly Director of the Barcelona Polytechnic and Professor at the School of Arts and Crafts, cousin of the Marquis of Mont-Roig, a personal friend of mine.

Professor Portét, of the Liverpool School of Commerce.
Prince Kropotkin.

Mr. Ward, a well-known Trades Union worker, of Sheffield.

Mr. W. Heaford, of London, who is neither Anarchist nor Socialist.

Those who have pictured Ferrer as frequenting obscure rooms in Soho for the purpose of concerting plans with bomb-throwers have made a ludicrous mistake; but the insertion of that stupendous piece of folly, or fraud, in the indictment against him is on a level with the whole document.

Ferrer came to London with his wife this spring, for two purposes, both of which are expressed in the extant letters of his intimate friends. The first object was rest and recuperation. On arriving at his hotel in Russell Square, he wrote as follows to Professor Tarrida del Marmol:—

21/4/1909

FRIEND FERNANDO,—We are here for a time to rest. We have had so much to do lately that we do not wish to see anybody just yet. Naturally, that does not apply to you. Do not make a special journey to see us. Merely drop in on us, when you come to the City, at 9, or 1, or 6 o'clock, and we will have a chat.

Kind regards, etc.,

F. FERRER.

He had, he told his friends, the design of staying some months in England, which he greatly liked and admired. To the secretary of his International League for the Rational Education of Children, M. Albert, of Paris, he wrote on June 9 that he did not know when he would return to Paris. If M. Albert (I have seen the letter) did not see him before the end of the month, he must act, in the matter in question, on his own responsibility.

Letters to his friend Mr. Heaford show that the work he was doing in England was something very different from that

attributed to him. The moral education of children always preoccupied him. In this country an important League has been formed (the Moral Education League) for furthering this education, and has had its ideas embodied in the curricula of a large number of our educational authorities. It was a study of the results and methods of this League that occupied Ferrer during the time when he is alleged to have been plotting revolution at Barcelona. He was struggling with the asperities of the English tongue, and examining a series of works for the moral training of children which Mr. Heaford had suggested to him. Barcelona politics he did not discuss. I have shown that he held aloof from the subject; and we shall see presently that the violent outbreak at Barcelona was purely spontaneous and unforeseen. He even threw out the idea that his school system was now so firmly rooted in Spain—there were then ninety schools of his and of the Republican model—that he might soon be able to entertain the idea of living elsewhere. But when his friend, who had known the horrors of Montjuich, begged him never to return to that land of corruption and official crime, he shook the suggestion lightly aside. Had he but remained in London two months longer, as he intended, he would be living to-day.

His plans were interrupted by the news that his sister-in-law and his niece were seriously ill. I have before me the last letter that he wrote in England, to his friend Del Marmol. It is a letter-card, stamped officially with the date June 11. Even a military council could not have questioned its genuineness. It runs:—

Friday, 11/6/09.

DEAR FERNANDO,—We hear from Mongat [his brother's farm] that my brother's wife and my niece are seriously ill. We leave by the first train to-morrow, and shall not be able to bid you all good-bye. The supper must be postponed until the next time. I will send news from Mongat. Cordial greetings to all from Soledad and yours,

F. FERRER.

He reached Barcelona on June 19. No one at that time had the faintest presentiment of serious trouble, and Ferrer's attention was divided between his sick relatives, the translation and publication of a work of Prince Kropotkin's for his new library and his English books on moral

instruction. His niece died in his arms, and he was presently free to return to France or England. Towards the close of July, however, a friend in Paris, M. Malato, who related the incident to me, sent him a request for information in regard to certain Spanish stock, and he delayed in order to obtain it. By sheer accident he was in Barcelona when the riots broke out, and his bitter and unscrupulous enemies closed on him.

Why, the reader will ask again, was not this evidence put forward on his behalf? There is surely not a court in Europe on which it would fail to make an impression. Why were not these letters I now reproduce sent to be used in his defence? Why did not Mr. Heaford, with his ample documents, prove on what business Ferrer was engaged? Why did he not rebut the abominable charge that Ferrer corrupted his pupils' morals with the plain evidence of Ferrer's preoccupation with the literature of moral education? Why did not M. Malato send documentary proof of his queries to Barcelona?

The reply to the first question is that Professor Del Marmol is one of the Barcelona refugees of 1896, and knows the ways of "military councils." He produced the letters at a public meeting at which I presided, and said that if they were sent to Barcelona they would be "lost in transit." He entrusted them to me, and I warned Señor Maura that I held them. The answer to the other questions will show that my friend was right. Ferrer was to be shot. The letters would at least help his memory.

Mr. Heaford and M. Malato, like M. Naquet and others, sent valuable documents to Ferrer's advocate at Barcelona, to be used in Ferrer's defence. They have not been heard of since. Further, the parcel of English works on moral education which Ferrer took back, together with his notes and plans on the subject, are in the hands of the police at Barcelona. They were refused to his advocate, who wished to account for his visit to London and to prove what subject it was that really pre-occupied Ferrer during the months of June and July.

But here we enter upon the shameful story of the "trial" and execution of this high-spirited idealist; and I must relate what was happening in Spain, in Ferrer's absence, to lead up to the violent outbreak in Barcelona.

CHAPTER VI.

THE INDICTMENT OF FERRER

WE have seen the true story of Ferrer's movements and pre-occupations in the period immediately preceding the riots at Barcelona in July. It rests on the evidence of a dozen witnesses of known character, and letters which were not entrusted to the Spanish post. The officials of the Spanish postal service are expert at tampering with the service. We shall see more of their activity. And they are dependent on that "eloquent example" of Tammany, "the Barcelona cacique." Now we must follow the development on the Catalonian side, which just as plainly excludes Ferrer from the slenderest complicity in the riots.

Let me first bring before the reader two earlier facts in the recent experience of Barcelona. By the adroit use of the British Press certain anonymous writers have contrived to convey an impression that Barcelona is honeycombed with "Anarchist" dens, in which deadly explosives are daily manufactured, and so measures of unusual rigour have to be adopted. The real truth—I mean the demonstrable truth—is that since the fatal and horrible crime of Salvador in 1893—sixteen years ago—not a single Anarchist, out of many thousands, has been convicted of throwing or possessing bombs in Barcelona! The remarkable thing is that the horrors of 1896, the attempt on Ferrer in 1906, and the prevailing corruption did *not* evoke violence earlier, if Barcelona is such a city of desperadoes.

Two men have been convicted of placing or possessing bombs in Barcelona since Salvador criminally avenged the execution of Pallas in 1893. Those two men were agents of the police or other officials. Lieutenant Morales, of the Civil Guard, was caught red-handed in 1907. The case was fully reported and aroused intense interest—though it was not worth mentioning by our foreign correspondents—at the

time. The police of Barcelona do not love the Guardia Civil (Civil Guards, or gendarmerie), and they promptly arrested the lieutenant of the rival force, with his bombs. He was put on trial, and, though he threatened to incriminate high officials, they were compelled by the publicity and flagrancy of the case to sentence him. He was not long in prison.

The other case is more recent, and just as notorious. Juan Rull, a Barcelona hooligan, was executed in April of last year (1908) for placing bombs. His trial lasted over a fortnight. He, with a small gang, was convicted of five outrages. Were they adherents of the Escuela Moderna? No, they were adherents of the clergy. It was proved in the course of the trial that Rull had received sums from the police amounting to at least £215. The ex-Chief of Police, Tressolo, declared in court: "I am fully convinced that Rull placed the bombs, but I must also state clearly that I believe Rull is only the arm and instrument of a terrorism with which the Anarchists are in no way associated, and that behind Rull there are persons of high station, who are not in the prisoner's dock." Who these "high-placed persons" were was indicated plainly enough in the course of the trial. They were the leaders of lay Catholicism in Catalonia, nobles who were sustaining the evil repute of Barcelona, for the purpose of repression, by making use of such scoundrels as Rull. He had to be sacrificed in spite of his threats. The whole evidence conjured up an appalling intrigue of clerical and political authorities.¹

Where were the bombs fabricated? By one of the most singular pieces of hypocrisy in the whole sordid campaign for the support of an acknowledged corruption, the crowd which broke into the Jesuit convent at Barcelona found the shells of bombs therein! For a long time this was widely suspected in Barcelona, where the Jesuits are known to be capable of any enormity. It is not many years since a drama—*Paternidad*—was staged at Barcelona, in which the Jesuits were loaded with all the most shameless and criminal excesses that

¹ English readers will find a full account in an article by Mr. Ward in the *Sheffield Independent*, April 18, 1908.

any Protestant ever believed them capable of perpetrating. At an enthusiastic call for the author, a Catholic priest, Segismondo Pey-Ordeix, walked before the curtain. I have, therefore, made the most careful inquiry in regard to this reported finding of bombs. When I am assured most emphatically by a schoolmaster who was present in the attack on the convent that he saw and handled these objects, there is no room for doubt.

The hesitating reader must remember two facts. The first is that not a single bomb was used by the rioters, though they would have found them most useful in attacking the powerful convents or the troops. The second is that since the riot a remarkable number of bombs have been found by the police at most opportune moments, in situations where they were finely calculated to kill nobody. Do Anarchists work thus? But the constant announcement of such discoveries sustains in the Press of Europe that fictitious repute of Barcelona which enables Church and State to suspend civil law, and put thousands of men and women, who are known to be restive, in prison without trial. The bomb which was thrown at the *tail* of a procession in 1896 enabled the clerical and political controllers of Barcelona to rid the town of four hundred Freethinkers and Freemasons without trial. The bombs of to-day afford a pretext for maintaining the suspension of the constitutional guarantees, and keeping three thousand men and women in jail without trial. I am content to put the facts. The reader may judge.

This is the Barcelona in which Señor Costa finds the most corrupt *cacique* in Spain; in which the hundreds of wealthy convents stand out amid a bitterly hostile population. Let a spark fall on the inflammable material, and there will be a terrible conflagration.

The spark fell in July. The inner history of the war which Spain has entered upon in Morocco will one day be written. It is sufficient here to note that the workers of Catalonia believe that the war is waged solely in the interest of certain wealthy Catholics. A great many people in Europe besides the workers think so. The war was very unpopular, and indignation meetings multiplied. The Government forbade the holding of meetings, and increased the

resentment. The reservists were called out; families were robbed of their bread-winners. The King was hooted in Madrid. At Barcelona, when the wealthy Catholic ladies went on board the troopships to distribute medals and cigarettes to the soldiers, the men threw their gifts into the sea. The Government had enacted that young men would not be called out whose families could pay 1,500 *pesetas*. The poorer mothers were aflame with anger.

On July 23 the Socialists and Trade Unionists decided that there should be a general strike, in protest, over the whole country on August 2. Under pressure of one group the date was anticipated, and a committee was formed to inaugurate the strike at Barcelona on July 26. I am quoting the authentic statements of the officials. Three bodies were represented on this committee—the Socialists, Anarchists, and Trade Unionists. They worked with secrecy and energy, and completely outwitted the police, who were intensely angered to find the town on strike on July 26. The crowds gathered in the streets, stopped the trams—women everywhere taking the leading part in the work—and cut the telegraph wires. The strike drifted towards riot, and there were collisions with the police. The troops were then called out, and, on the crowd appealing to them, refused to fire. All organisation was now broken, and no step that was taken after this point was in the least premeditated, as the Protestant ministers of Barcelona have written. The crowd developed, under the influence of its own passions and the stupid provocation of the Civil Guard, into an insurgent mob.

To understand the situation entirely it is essential to note that the more serious revolt did not begin in Barcelona. Some sixteen miles off is Sabadell, an industrial town of 18,000 inhabitants, the chief manufacturing centre of the province. Intensely Republican and disdainful of the corruption of Church and State, Sabadell lost its head in the whirl of news of riot from all parts of Spain. It cut its communications, disarmed its police, and proclaimed the Republic. In the afternoon messengers arrived from Sabadell in Barcelona with the news, adding that 1,500 armed Sabadellians were ready to come and help to found the Republic. It is profoundly pathetic to picture these few thousand badly

armed men, feverish and reckless with anger, cutting the wires which might have informed them that Spain was not rising. Over the country beyond were thousands of trained troops concentrating on them.

The morning of July 27 found everybody in a state of perplexity. There was no plan, no leader, no definite aim. The anger of the people was, however, quickly revived, the barricades were manned—and womanned—the guard were engaged in bloody conflict. It was an old tradition of Spain that when you rioted you burned convents. A Catalan popular song commemorated the burning of seven Madrid convents seventy years before because the authorities had provided spiritless beasts for the bull-ring. The Barcelona convents, so sleek and prosperous in a land that largely disdains them, are particularly hated, and before night forty convents and churches were in flames. Eye-witnesses speak with wonder of the curious mingling of reserve and passion.¹ The buildings, hateful to the Catalans for so many reasons, were ruthlessly set aflame, but the ailing and infirm religious were assisted out of danger by the assailants, who had generally given notice of their intention. From conflicting accounts I gather that only two inmates were killed. One was shot, rifle in hand, in the defence of his home. One was asphyxiated with smoke, obstinately refusing to leave. Money and valuables that were discovered were cast deliberately in the flames by the rioters. It was a new form of revolution.

Catholic journals have stated that Ferrer and his friends took "hundreds of innocent lives and violated the bodies of nuns." Of Ferrer's position at the time I speak presently. The rioters unintentionally took, or were responsible for, two lives in the attack on the convents, though some communities naturally met rifle with rifle, and the most sinister rumours were current among the heated populace. It was widely believed, not only that the bombs of 1896, 1907, and 1908, which had strengthened the arm of despotic corruption, were Catholic bombs, but that the religious were even then provoking

¹ See, for instance, the accounts written by Protestant ministers in the *Protestant Alliance Magazine* (November, 1909) and the *Methodist Recorder* (August 26, 1909). The correspondent of the *Times* confirmed this.

the reluctant soldiers to fire on the mob. A circumstantial account by a creditable eye-witness of one incident was submitted to me. A group of men were firing from an elevated position at the troops. Up to this point the troops had taken no part. Infantry refused to fire, and cavalry to charge; the whole riot was on their behalf. The shrewder spirits among the people saw the danger and criminality of this attack on the soldiers, and dislodged those who were firing on them. The witness emphatically asserts that they were from the convents.

The "violation" of the dead bodies of nuns is an unscrupulous mis-statement. In one convent an iron bed was found, with gas-fire underneath its perforated sheet. Was it an instrument of torture? Well, the Catholics say that it was a philanthropic apparatus for warming the beds of ailing nuns. The reader may form his own opinion. It was, remember, a sheet of iron, perforated, with burners immediately beneath. At all events, the bodies of recently deceased nuns were disinterred solely to examine if they bore marks of torture, and were subjected to no indignity. I am further assured by a schoolmaster who entered the Jesuit convent with the crowd that, as was reported in the press, not only the shells of bombs, but apparatus for coining money was discovered. He declares that he examined this, and smiles at the Catholic suggestion that it was for making medals for sale. It was a time of great turbulence and intense passion. The reader must balance the probabilities from what I have previously described as to the known condition of the clerical and political authorities. One thing is certain. R. Thirlmere, in his authoritative *Letters from Catalonia*, said four years ago that the Church was doomed in that province, if not in the whole of Spain. That is beyond question now.

To conclude with the outbreak. By July 28 the insurgents were masters of the Town Hall and most of Barcelona, and the question now arose of forming a definite plan of action. The whole episode had been an unthinking release of pent-up anger against the war and the clergy. The Republican and Radical leaders had kept entirely away, the committee of the strike were appalled at the turn of events,

and the people had no leaders and no plan. The notion that the outbreak was organised, by Ferrer or anybody else, is grotesquely untrue to every account we have of the course of events. The slightest acquaintance with Barcelona politics shows the absurdity of such a notion. Advanced bodies in Barcelona are so fundamentally opposed to each other that the moment a question of construction arose it would be utterly impossible to take a single step. The Separatists would demand the autonomy of Barcelona; the great body of the Republicans, under Alejandro Lerroux, would oppose it (because the Separatist movement has a suspicious proportion of Catholic adherents); the Socialists would plead for an entirely new economic system; the Anarchists would strongly oppose all their plans.

But the spontaneity and aimlessness of the outbreak are palpable. I will add only two curious testimonies. I was permitted to see a letter written secretly from one of the Anarchists of Barcelona, who had eluded the police, to a sympathetic leader outside Spain. In this candid and intimate account the working-man writer says, exultantly: "The *people* did the whole thing, without anybody's help." The next witness is the South American Anarchist daily, *La Protesta*. Writing to this journal from Barcelona on July 30, *before the reaction has begun*, Alejandro Sux remarks on "the absolute lack of aim" in the disturbances. No leaders were seen, he says. It was a spontaneous outburst of "the indignation of men and sorrow of the women" on account of the corruptly engineered war, which fell on the poor. Anselmo Lorenzo tells exactly the same story.

The sequel need be recalled in few words, before we return to Ferrer. Fresh troops were introduced, and the insurgents were at once repressed. The barricades were swept with artillery. The number of rioters and soldiers killed is differently reported, and may be roughly set down at about a hundred. Then the "white terror" set in. The constitutional guarantees had been already suspended, and there was no pretence of seeking evidence. Within a few weeks 3,000 men and women and some children were packed in the jails of Catalonia. In many cases, the official journal (*Correspondencia Militar*) admitted, there was "no time" to frame

a charge before the arrests were made. The arrests were made, notoriously, from the lists of names of obnoxious persons supplied by the police, the clergy, and the Catholic ladies who visited among the poor. At night especially the civil guards went from house to house, arresting all the more active members of the advanced political or anti-clerical organisations, working-men's clubs, and every institution that had been set up apart from the orthodox political bodies or the Church. Their schools and halls were closed. A special installation was made of powerful arc-lamps, to prevent escapes in the night; and, according to the *Matin* (the *Daily Mail* of Paris), September 28, all were arrested "who could not give a satisfactory account of their means of subsistence *and their opinions.*" As in 1896, the outrage was made a sheer pretext for suppressing every institution and body that opposed the corruptions of Church and State, and intimidating Barcelona from setting them up afresh. All the jails of Catalonia—for men and for women—were crowded to suffocation; and weary, haggard bands of men and women were dragged on foot over the provinces to more distant jails. Every message that has since appeared in a Spanish journal or been telegraphed abroad has been rigorously censored. Europe, which knows not the ways of Spain, was cynically deluded by the Home Secretary, La Cierva.

Mendacity is essential and habitual to the pro-Catholic and pro-Spanish writers. As far as they are concerned, I know that my plainest words will be completely misrepresented. But I will make it plain, nevertheless, that I have no sympathy with the burning of convents, however corrupt, no leaning to the political Anarchist ideal, and no inclination to criticise Spain for punishing violence. What I say is that the violence has been made the pretext for imprisoning thousands for totally different and corrupt reasons. Many have been shot, many condemned to imprisonment for life or for twenty years without trial. What the value of a condemnation by "military council" is we shall now see in the indictment of Ferrer.

The founder of the Modern School was in Barcelona on the Monday, June 26, when the movement was at its height. It is quite true that he was "seen talking to leaders of the

people." I have before me a letter of this "leader of the people" (with whom, moreover, I have spoken on the subject) in which the fact is admitted and explained. Señor Moreno was at work in the organisation of the strike, and adds his testimony that it drifted into riot solely under stupid provocation. "On the Monday," he writes to an Anarchist friend, "I had a note from Ferrer making an appointment for half-past eight, in the railway station of the Paseo de Isabel, for the purpose of discussing the creation of a new school, for the 'Alliance,' a society affiliated to the Solidarity of Workers." There are previous references to this school in Ferrer's published letters. Moreno adds that he then told Ferrer about the organisation of the strike, which had been conducted with great secrecy. Ferrer had not worked with any of the groups co-operating in it, and they would not have dreamed of taking him into their confidence.

This entirely agrees with Ferrer's account of his movements, in a letter published in the *Daily News* on October 11. He explains that, as we know, he had much work at his publishing office, especially in connection with a forthcoming history of the French Revolution by Prince Kropotkin. He spent the whole day in visits to printers and publishers or in his office. He went to the station to take the train for Mongat, where he was staying with his brother, at ten minutes past six. The line was up, and he returned to the printer's house. Prudently, however, he concluded that Barcelona was unsafe, and he walked on foot to Mongat, where he arrived at five in the morning and remained until the 29th.

In another letter he describes his occupation during the period between his return from England and the outbreak. He was occupied solely in studying English works on the moral instruction of children—such works as Miss Alice Chesterton's *Magic Garden of Childhood* and Mr. Waldegrave's *Teacher's Handbook of Moral Lessons*. These and other works were read and annotated by him, and selected for publication in his schools. "Where are these dear books now?" he writes, before his condemnation. "They have been seized by the police at my house, Mas Germinal; but I shall, no doubt, have them returned to me later."

Even Ferrer doubted the full guilt of his persecutors. He requested the authorities to put at the disposal of his advocate, Captain Galcerán, this important batch of notes and books. They would have met the charge that he sought to corrupt children, as well as show his real occupation after his return to Spain. The request was refused, and they were not put before his "judges."

At Mongat, a farm a few miles from Barcelona in the direction of his native place, Alella, he presently heard that the authorities had taken over and searched his publishing house in Barcelona. Next a message came from Alella that a young woman, a nurse, was informing the authorities that she had seen him lead a band to burn one of the convents at Premia. No convents had been burned at Premia, as Ferrer afterwards discovered; but he saw that the affair of 1906 was to be repeated. He, therefore, concealed himself, and eluded the police for five weeks, though, he says, he "suffered much from reading the charges made against him in the papers." On August 29 or 30, he adds, in this interesting letter to Mr. Heaford, he read that the Fiscal (Attorney-General) had declared, after making an investigation at Barcelona, that "Ferrer was the director of the revolutionary movement." This atrocious declaration on the part of the first legal official of Spain, condemning Ferrer even before an elementary case had been made up against him, drew him from his hiding-place. He resisted the entreaties of his friends, and went out to give himself up. He was arrested on his way to Barcelona.

At once Ferrer began to experience the ferocity which disgraces the whole of the rest of the story. He demanded that he should be conducted forthwith before the magistrate who was to make the preliminary inquiry. They took him instead to the military governor, who assured him that he was responsible for the outbreak by reason of his schools. He was then taken to the Prefecture of Police, and made to submit to a singular procedure, which astonished even the officials. The whole of his linen and clothes were taken from him, and he was dressed in fresh cheap linen, a "ten shilling suit of clothes, which were too small for me, and the rough cap of a hooligan." All these details have transpired through his

being able to bribe a jailer to post a long letter to M. Malato, at Paris.²

In this guise he was the same evening brought before the examining magistrate, or military man acting as such, who questioned him as to his movements during the outbreak. This magistrate, he observes, showed a spirit of justice and honesty, and Ferrer concluded that his detention would be brief. Witnesses to his story could easily be procured. Apparently this magistrate *was* a man of honour. The case was taken out of his hands, and Ferrer never saw him again. He spent nearly a week in a squalid dungeon, without air, warmth, or light, and infested with swarms of vermin; and he was refused soap and water for several days.

Five days later he was again summoned. It was a fresh military magistrate, a polite, correct Spanish gentleman, but—we shall see what happened. The first day was spent in a fruitless attempt of the military surgeons to find marks of fighting or burning on his person. Another delay, and then the magistrate discussed his movements in Barcelona, and laid great stress on certain revolutionary sentiments which were attributed to him in a Freethought Almanack published in Brussels in 1907. Ferrer at once pointed out that this passage referred to his youth, and that in this very article he expressly avows that an adequate education of the people is now the sole work of his life. He had written the notice—which I have before me—himself. But from this and certain letters they had obtained, and were wholly misrepresenting, he saw what kind of a case was being made up.

The next visit completely opened his eyes. While Ferrer was hiding, the police had, on August 11, searched his house in the presence of his family. After twelve hours' search by a band of twenty agents only three articles were thought worthy of removal—a letter from a Paris friend to his brother José, a key belonging to Lerroux (a leader of the recognised Republican party), and a note indicating that he had lent some £30 to a working-men's society. Of this Ferrer was aware, and felt some security against misrepresentation. To his astonishment, at the third visit to the magistrate, a month

² Facsimile pages of this letter are given in the life of Ferrer which the Committee of Defence have just published at Paris.

after the search at Mas Germinal, that officer produced a faded document of a violently revolutionary character, and said that it had been found among his papers. Ferrer at once protested that no such document had been found at his house during the official search in the presence of his wife. Soledad also wrote an emphatic denial of the "discovery." The magistrate politely promised to incorporate a due report of his denial, but nothing of the kind was done.

What was the origin of the document, with its incitements to murder and pillage, of which so much has been made in certain British journals? The band of police found no such document on August 11. But on August 27 they returned to Mas Germinal. This time the family were not invited to be present, as an elementary instinct of justice and even the Spanish practice demanded. For two days a band of military engineers ransacked the house, and, as we know from the betrayal of a disgusted official, the search was controlled by continuous telegrams from the Home Secretary. In view of the guilty refusal to have witnesses present in Ferrer's interest, any documents alleged to be found in such a search have no legal value. In view of the "profound immorality"—to quote again authoritative Spanish writers—of the whole civic and political system, they have not an atom of moral value. In view of the repeated declarations of Ferrer, published before the trouble and addressed to revolutionary friends, that he had abandoned all revolutionary action, the documents must be regarded as gross forgeries.

I may add that the alcalde of Alella has been decorated since by the late Home Secretary, and a sum of £120 has been distributed among the country police who arrested Ferrer.

These documents, moreover, were communicated to the Catholic press *before* the trial. They began to appear in *El Mundo* and other reactionary journals on September 17. The Church was egging on the willing officials with all its power. Not only did the orthodox press scatter over Spain, and over Europe, these scandalous documents, without a word as to the real story of the "search," but the prelates of Catalonia publicly demanded that the outrages should be visited on the founder of "the schools without God."

Writers like Mr. Chesterton, who treat the charge against the Church as an idle one, have not taken the least trouble to ascertain the facts. The *Heraldo* of Madrid published on September 4 a letter addressed to the Prime Minister by the prelates of Barcelona. They assured him that the evil was due to the promoters of the Modern Schools, declared that the late outbreak was only the prelude to worse, and trusted that "his piety, his patriotism, and his compassion for the Church in its misfortunes" would move him to rigorous action. "Pious" Señor Maura replied (September 7): "I hasten to assure you that the Government will act in the spirit of your letter and follow the line of conduct that you indicate." Mgr. Guitari (Barcelona), interviewed by a *Matin* correspondent after the murder, said (October 13) that "the principal character of the outbreak was that it was essentially anti-clerical," and that, quite apart from his "alleged" participation in the outrages—the Bishop obviously doubts it—Ferrer "deserved to be punished because he had prepared the way for them by his doctrinal propaganda."

Let us return to the manufacture of evidence. The magistrate had discovered another revolutionary document. He had, he told Ferrer, "sat up until three in the morning studying its real significance" (to quote Ferrer's letter)—which does not say much for its revolutionary value. This document is genuine; but it belongs, as the magistrate quite admitted, to 1892! It was sent by Ferrer to a Congress at Madrid in his early revolutionary days. The date was thus fixed so plainly that the magistrate did not attempt to alter it. He admitted it as "evidence" because there was "a curious coincidence" between the words, as he read them at three in the morning, and the actual outbreak at Barcelona, seventeen years later. In spite of Ferrer's protest that his ideas had, as we saw, utterly changed, it was made a formidable point in the indictment. I may add that this is one of the documents published, with suppression of date, by the Catholic Press of Spain and this country.

Ferrer now felt alarmed, especially as the magistrate told him the preliminary work was over, and he must choose an advocate for the military council. Ferrer protested that he had still most important evidence to lay before him, including

proof that the police were offering money to his servants to testify against him, and explaining the real motives of the Republican witnesses who were appearing against him. The reader must remember that there was to be no cross-examination. The magistrate refused to hear him, declaring that "military law was not civil law," and closed the inquiry.¹

The sitting of the military council—I cannot call it trial—was fixed for October 9. Europe was being informed, in spite of the expulsion from Barcelona of every journalist who told the truth; and the Cortes was to assemble on October 15, when the Liberals might give trouble—as they did. Meantime the foul conspiracy hampered Ferrer at every point. The indignities to which he was subject, in the refusal of decent clothes, handkerchiefs, etc., were bad enough—he was told that his things were "confiscated"; but the unscrupulous thwarting of his efforts to put material in the hands of Captain Galcerán, who had been appointed his advocate, is appalling to read. He had been hitherto *au secret* (forbidden to communicate), but this had now to be removed. The official, however, tried to render this liberty useless by refusing to let him touch any of his money for postage and telegrams. With less than three weeks to gather material for his defence, surrounded by corrupt officials, the hunted man made his last struggle. He sent a letter to a lady at Paris, with a full and important analysis of the case against him. The letter was stolen.² He sent to England to have the material proofs of his innocence forwarded to his advocate. Mr. Heaford and others sent a number of important letters and documents. They were all suppressed. He demanded that the moral-instruction books should be given to his advocate. They were refused. Friends in Paris sent him 300 francs. One-third of the sum was stolen. Thus was engineered the "trial" which the correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* described as having been conducted with perfect honour and honesty.

¹ This important account of the manufacture of the case is from a long letter, smuggled out of jail to Paris by Ferrer, and published in full in the work issued recently by the Committee of Defence. Facsimile sheets of the letter are prudently reproduced.

² We know of his sending it by a reference to it in a later letter which managed to get through.

CHAPTER VII.

THE DEATH OF FERRER—AND THE ECHO

THE defenders of the memory of Francisco Ferrer would be justified in declining to examine the proceedings of the military council which condemned him. What was its legal value? A lieutenant-colonel and five captains, utterly untrained to judge the value of evidence, were his judge and jury. Those six officers, moreover, belonged to a political system unique in its corruption and immorality. The counsel for the prosecution was an officer whose work gives evidence of considerable ability and intense effort, and who had the full resources and the warm blessing of Church and State. The counsel for Ferrer was an officer to whom success or zeal would mean ruin. I hasten to say that he behaved nobly, but we have seen how he was prevented from obtaining material evidence. The witnesses for the prosecution, many of whom were allowed to be anonymous, were not cross-examined, and the incriminating documents were not discussed. No witnesses for the defence were admitted, although Captain Galcerán demanded this.

From what we have seen, it is plain that an imposing mass of documents and witnesses could have been produced in Ferrer's favour if there had been a legal and free trial. Every paragraph in the indictment would have been torn to shreds, and it would have been made absolutely clear that Ferrer entirely modified his views after 1892. It could, in particular, have been demonstrated that he knew nothing whatever of the proposed strike in Barcelona, and took not the slightest share in the outbreak. Very interesting facts would have been elicited in regard to the character, motives, and interests of the witnesses against him.

The most elementary sense of justice demands that the defence should have had this opportunity, but it was refused.

Not justice, but death, was the end in view throughout. The prosecution was sustained with the full power of the corrupt service of Spain; the defence was hampered by the same agents; the procedure was barbaric. I do not see the force of the arguments of those who, like the Madrid correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*, plead that this barbarism was Spain's habitual usage, and was carried out "correctly."

Yet I will glance at the proceedings, the witnesses, and the documents. The court opened at 8 o'clock in the morning of October 9. Ferrer, pale, worn, clothed with deliberate ignominy, the intense black eyes flashing forth the last reserve of energy and hope, faced the six military men to whom his life was entrusted. He courteously bowed to the court, and sought to explain his disreputable appearance. The president curtly interrupted him, and called the prosecutor to read his lengthy "act of accusation."

This extraordinary document ran to more than fifty pages. It seems to have been constructed on the belief that if you poured bold, untested allegations against a man into the ears of a group of officers for a few hours, without intermission, they would be able to persuade themselves that he must be guilty of something. Let us examine such points of evidence as we have not already discussed.¹

The first witness—quoted, not tested—is the chief of the Barcelona police. He testifies that Ferrer is a "fervent Anarchist"; that after his escape in 1906 he went to Paris, where he became "one of the most active elements in the Confederation of Labour"; that he made many journeys to London to confer with "the most noted revolutionaries and Anarchists"; and that he returned to Barcelona, most suspiciously, just before the outbreak. The first charge is a deliberate attempt to mislead; the second statement is wholly false; the third statement is silly lying, after what we have seen; and the fourth is a gross concealment of the known fact of the illness of his niece and sister-in-law. And this was all that the head of the Barcelona police had against Ferrer.

Then came four witnesses to say that Ferrer had tried to

¹ I take the account from the full report given in *Gil Blas*, October 14 to 22.

stir up the inhabitants of Masnou, a village near his home, to insurrection. The first, a policeman, is bold enough to say that Ferrer "harangued the crowd." The second, the barber Domenech, gives a minute account of Ferrer's incitation, from which it appears (1) that Ferrer was endeavouring to inflame everybody, and (2) that Domenech at the time so little understood Ferrer's motives that he went about with him all day in perfect amity. This witness, with his glaring contradiction, was the chief witness to Ferrer's participation in the outbreak. The truth is that he shaved Ferrer on that morning, as he did thrice a week, and had a talk with him, as barbers do; the police helped his memory afterwards. The next witness admitted that he had not seen Ferrer for twenty-five years until the fatal day; he did not add that, as we shall see, he was himself arrested for helping to burn convents; the press has not added that he was released after witnessing against Ferrer. The fourth Masnou witness (an officer of the Civil Guard) testified that "he knew from *confidential communications* that Ferrer had taken an active part."

The next witnesses, of the same character, came from Premia, another coast village of the district. The young woman who saw Ferrer burning convents, where none were burned, has not survived the preliminary inquiry; but no less a person than the alcalde (or "mayor," as English journals put it) gives evidence that Ferrer incited him to rebel, and he refused. Premia being a village of 1,500 souls, the alcalde may be no more than a peasant. However, we need not press. Alcalde Casas merely says that "an individual calling himself Ferrer" (possibly a police-agent) did this. There is evidence that a police-agent was impersonating Ferrer. In fine, the court was not informed that, as we know, Alcalde Casas was himself arrested, on the oath of his own councillors, for complicity. He was released on testifying against Ferrer, as Captain Galcerán boldly but fruitlessly reminded Ferrer's judges.

Then a "municipal judge" of Premia (1,500 inhabitants) gives witness that "it was *rumoured* that Ferrer had brought a group of men with dynamite to Premia," and several men depose that they know Ferrer spoke to their alcalde; which Ferrer admitted. Then no less than nineteen citizens of

Premia depose that two men came to Premia on the 28th, that the pillage and incendiarism began immediately after, and that "they *learned subsequently* that one of them *called himself Ferrer.*" Then another Republican patriot, who was himself arrested for complicity (on the testimony of nineteen witnesses) and was released after his deposition, declared that Ferrer had incited him. Then another citizen solemnly deposed that Ferrer had asked him, "What do you think of events?" This witness, whose deposition was utterly worthless, was ostentatiously confronted with Ferrer.

These statements of suspicious, or futile, or anonymous, or utterly illegal witnesses are interlarded with the simple denials of the accused. Three or four of them were brought before him by the prosecuting officer, and the farce of bald affirmation and denial repeated. There was no cross-examination, and Ferrer presumably knew nothing of the arrest of these men. Counsel was not allowed to him till all the witnesses had been discharged; and then not a lawyer, but an officer. On the other hand, two or three witnesses entirely confirmed Ferrer's account of his movements in Barcelona on the 26th, and said they knew nothing of his guilt. Soledad Villafraña is allowed to admit that Ferrer was in Barcelona on the 26th, but not to account for his movements, and call her witnesses, for the 27th and 28th.¹

Next two soldiers solemnly depose that on the evening of the 26th they told an individual, whom they later recognised as Ferrer, to "move on," and he indignantly replied that he was reading the civil governor's proclamation! At this point, however, my source of information, *Gil Blas*, fails. After having given at length the depositions of these witnesses in its columns, it dismisses the rest with the disdainful observation: "At this point the reading of the report presented to the tribunal loses all interest." The writer had a shorthand copy of the whole before him. He merely adds that, when Ferrer was asked to choose an advocate—of

¹ The *Dépêche* for October 31 published a letter in which Soledad gives a minute account of Ferrer's movements from July 26 to 29. It entirely agrees with our story as to the 26th, and adds that he remained studying at home on the 27th and 28th. It was with the greatest difficulty that she induced him to take a serious view of the matter. All this would have been proved in a trial, as there were others at the house.

course, from a list of officers submitted to him—he said that he knew none, and trusted none, of them; but he selected one whose name resembled his own (Francisco Galcerán Ferrer).

The “act of accusation,” however, is followed by the “fiscal accusation,” the real speech for the prosecution. The former had been a simple recital of the statements made by witnesses on examination. The latter is a very long and oratorical manipulation of the evidence in the interest of the prosecution. It would have needed a trained magistrate to follow with balanced judgment its appalling sophistry, its wilful confusion of positive and hesitating witnesses, its culpable quotation of letters without saying if they belonged to Ferrer’s earlier or later period. As *Gil Blas* editorially comments (October 14): “The process went on with a brutality of procedure rare even in the annals of courts-martial.” I will notice such new scraps of “evidence” as are introduced in this venomous speech.

With Captain Rafales’s lengthy proof that the events of July constituted a rebellion we are not concerned. The sole question is whether Ferrer was, as he claimed, “the head of the rebellion.” To prove this he unblushingly quotes the evidence of “witnesses who are beyond suspicion because they have themselves been arrested”—as we saw, they earned their liberty; of witnesses who depose “on information that they have not the means of controlling, but believe to be exact”; of witnesses who (being in prison for burning convents) “share the general opinion” of Ferrer’s guilt; and of witnesses who merely declare that the tumult increased after Ferrer’s visit to Premia—as if it would not naturally increase after the early morning. These “fifteen witnesses” are declared to prove Ferrer’s guilt. Then comes the egregious barber, who offered Ferrer drinks and lunch, and went about with him, not noticing, until he was asked by the police, that they were engaged in revolution; his testimony “proves” that Ferrer was head of the insurrection. The evidence of the soldiers that Ferrer (or someone they afterwards believed to be Ferrer) protested when they wished to disturb him as he read the proclamation just posted up is pressed as “of evident importance”; whereas it is not disputed that Ferrer

was in Barcelona on the 26th. For the 27th we have the Masnou and Premia witnesses I have already noticed—nineteen of whom merely testify that Ferrer did speak to their alcalde (which he did not deny), the subject being unknown to them. Most of them only recognised Ferrer when the police submitted a photograph to assist them. Of the fresh witnesses introduced one has “a moral conviction” that the rioters were instigated by Ferrer, and the other heard rioters declare that they were so instigated. All of them merely retail the gossip of the crowd.

These are the fifty witnesses for the prosecution. With their private interests at stake—most of the chief witnesses are purchasing their liberation from prison—their hearsay evidence, their moral convictions, and the complete irrelevance of more than half of them, a cross-examining lawyer would have had an easy time. Even as it is, not a single witness testifies that he personally saw Ferrer commit violence; every witness who assigns Ferrer an active leadership does so on hearsay evidence: the rest report conversations with Ferrer, which he entirely denies, and which secured “provisional liberty” for themselves.

The prosecuting orator (or Fiscal) turns to the documentary proof. First is the revolutionary document (quite clear of suggestions of pillage and assassination) which Ferrer acknowledged drawing up in 1892. In face of the mass of evidence as to his change of feeling, it is quite irrelevant. Then we have two type-written circulars (of unknown date) with the now familiar suggestions of plunder and murder. How are these forgeries brought home to Ferrer? We notice that the prosecution does not make the least suggestion, as later writers did in the English Press, that they were “posted up in Ferrer’s schools.” That would be too stupid a thing to suggest to a group of Spanish officers. The whole case for the prosecution—as they could not pretend that these were found among Ferrer’s papers in the presence of the family—is that *three letters* are corrected in ink, and that certain “experts,” not named or presented, declare that the written letters are like letters in Ferrer’s writing! This is followed by an undated, unimportant letter to Odon de Buen, one of the most distinguished men of

science in Spain. Not the least reference is made to those supposed revolutionary phrases in Ferrer's school-books, of which his later calumniators have said so much. And on this sorry evidence the prosecution demands, and obtains, sentence of death and confiscation of property!

Captain Galcerán, with his fate in his hands, made a noble effort to arrest the sordid course of injustice. He told how the prosecution had built largely on anonymous declarations; how they had "refused the testimony of all who would have thrown light on the life, habits, and work of the accused"; how, after submitting the charge to him, they had refused to give him the documents of Ferrer's with which he could have been defended; and how, when he cited witnesses for the defence, he was told that they could not delay the cause by hearing them. All this was plainly and indignantly exposed to those six officers of the Spanish army. Captain Galcerán painted vividly the elements of reaction that sought the life of Ferrer because his work of enlightenment menaced their corrupt interests. He had, he said, in the preparation of his case experienced so much "fraud" and "vile passion" in a single week that he was "completely overwhelmed."

At this point, *Gil Blas* observes, the official report ceases to be verbatim; and we may add that the subsequent fate of Captain Galcerán is wrapped in impenetrable obscurity. He is said to be in prison. He went on to point out the utter worthlessness or untruthfulness of the witnesses, and boldly reminded the court that the principal witnesses had obtained their own liberation from prison "by the influence of high-placed personages," when they gave their testimony against Ferrer. He describes the real work and movements of Ferrer, which he was prevented from bringing witnesses to prove. He points out that the "two young men" whom the prosecution in the anonymous proclamation represented as experts on Ferrer's writing were falsely reported by the Fiscal as saying that the letters "must have been" written by Ferrer. A reference to the original shows that they merely said the letters "might have been written by Ferrer, but they could not affirm it categorically." He reminds them that, though the houses of the insurgents have been thoroughly searched, not a single copy of this circular has

been found. In fine, he concludes, Ferrer is at the bar solely because he is a Rationalist; and he makes an impassioned demand for justice.

The magnificent audacity and honesty of the officer took the court by surprise. His speech redeems the honour of Spain to some extent, and brands the prosecution with all the marks of a preparation for judicial murder. The civilised world should interest itself in the obscurity that has fallen on that brave officer.

Ferrer followed with a quiet protestation of innocence. He was immediately rebuked by the President for "manifestations," and was content to rebut the charge in few words, insisting that since the beginning of the century he had been occupied solely with education and moral culture. He was plainly conscious of the overwhelming forces of iniquity that were concentrated in that room. His doom was written, and a few hours later it was decreed.*

The trial took place on October 9, and the Council passed its sentence about six in the evening. It could not be made public, however, until it was signed by the Supreme Council of War and the Council of Ministers. Ferrer remained in the Model Prison at Barcelona until Monday night, the 11th. Then, with an escort of nearly a hundred mounted soldiers, he was conducted through the town which he had spent the best years of his life in educating and transferred to the grim fortress of Montjuich. Witnesses describe him as smiling and cheerfully discussing the case with his guardians. He was lodged in a separate domicile within the precincts, and the soldiers gathered about the place. Barcelona was in a fever of speculation. And near midnight they saw passing to Montjuich the sinister procession of three carriages of religious brothers, who were summoned to minister to a condemned man.

Natural as any other conduct would have been, Ferrer

* I note a point of interest to English readers in the account published by the Paris Committee, *Francisco Ferrer*. The writer says: "On the day after the trial all the journals of Europe, *except the English*, reported that the witnesses had been regularly cited and confronted, and the accused interrogated." A Spanish agency, under the control of the Home Office, had sent out this mendacious report. The *Times* alone told the truth—that the depositions of the witnesses were simply read.

behaved with full restraint and politeness to the priests who pestered him constantly after that hour. He listened with serenity to the sentence of death, and was taken back to his cell. There he courteously begged the chaplain to depart, and commenced writing his will. Jesuits and other priests incessantly interrupted him. "I have my convictions, as you have yours," he said. "If you come to argue, we will talk. Otherwise leave me." Not a word of reproach was made to them for the foul crime that they had instigated the State to commit. He worked until five in the morning at his will, thinking wholly, in that appalling hour, how the rest of Mlle. Meunier's money might still be saved for the enlightenment of Spain, and how he might make some provision for the loved ones from whom he was torn.

Let me say a word on this will, the full provisions of which have been read to me. The executors are Cristobál Litran, of Barcelona, and Mr. W. Heaford, of London. Morally, they are trustees for the carrying on of the work of education. Ferrer had always told his daughters that he would leave them a small sum, but he trusted they would not accept it, as it was sacred money. His eldest daughter not only refuses to touch the 2,000 francs he assigns her, but refuses all aid, and earns a laborious living, in the noble spirit of her father. The younger will probably do the same. For a young son, Riego, he set aside a small group of shares. They are in the hands of the police. For Soledad Villafranca he appoints a very modest annual income. The rest is to be used in the cause for which he laid down his life, and which he believed to be the truest cause of Spain. He worked for the Spain that murdered him, without a word of bitterness, in his last hours.¹ Calmly, devotedly, he went over the intricate details with his notary during his last night on earth.

"I desire," he adds in that noble document, "that on no

¹ The original property in Paris was mortgaged repeatedly to find capital for the building of schools. Probably seven or eight thousand pounds still remain of its value. Ferrer was an excellent business man, and largely increased the legacy. His little house at Mas Germinal and his funds in Spain, with his school, publishing house, and all stock, have been "confiscated." A little moral pressure from other nations might induce Señor Moret to reconsider this sordid robbery.

occasion, either imminent or distant, under no pretext whatever, shall there ever be manifestations of a political or religious nature before my remains, since the time which one gives to the dead would be better employed in the service of the living."

They had put him into a room converted into a chapel. His work was over at five in the morning, but he neither ate nor slept. At a quarter to nine they told him to prepare for death. He replied that he was ready. The chaplain stood by his side, to walk to the place of execution. For the last time he requested the clergy to respect his convictions; but, as the chaplain said he was bound to accompany him, Ferrer answered: "Very well." When one reflects that they were murdering him for his Rationalism, as his advocate said, one can admire his forbearance. His relatives had not been allowed to see him. Ferrer broke down only when his advocate came to say farewell.

I will not prolong the story. When the *cortège* reached the governor, he asked Ferrer if he had a last wish to express. "I desire," said Ferrer, "to be shot standing, without a bandage over my eyes." After a long *délibération*, they consented that he need not kneel, but that his eyes must be bandaged. He was taken into the trench. With head erect and feet firmly planted, he faced the row of rifles. "Look well, my children," he cried to the soldiers; "it is not your fault. I am innocent. Long live the School ——." The crack of the rifles, at the officer's signal, interrupted his last splendid call for the education of Spain, and he fell dead. The authorities refused the body to his relatives, and buried it in the "common ground."

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That rifle-volley has echoed through the world, and the thunder of its echo has penetrated the dense air of Spain. The world has realised the corruption of its politicians and the contemptible devices of its clergy. The notion that only Anarchists resented this foul crime is a libel on Europe. At Paris a long list of barristers, men and women, signed an indignant protest against the execution of a man "on such a caricature of justice"; and a solemn procession of 60,000

men and women marched through the town. Fifty towns of France have decided to give the name of Ferrer to one of their streets. At Brussels an imposing list of lawyers signed the indictment of the Spanish Government, and a monument is to be raised to Ferrer. In England Conservative journals like the *Times* and *Spectator* protested against the way in which the execution was secured. In Germany a number of the leaders of culture headed the protest. Even in Spain a politician with such authority as Count Romanones declared that "the Government committed a grave blunder in acting as it did with Ferrer."

But Ferrer is dead. Some weeks ago I sat in a London café with a small group of men who knew Ferrer and knew Spain. Someone entered with the news of Ferrer's arrest. Then, said my friend, he is doomed. He pleaded that I knew Spain well enough to understand that. I did not think they would dare to perpetrate so palpable a murder, and I worked hard in the education of English people as to his danger. The corrupt servants of Spain moved too quickly for us. Ferrer is dead. A man of fine character, high ability, and intense devotion to his ideals; a man who loved the sunlight, but was not happy save in the consciousness that he was bringing the sunlight into the darkened homes of the poorer Spaniards; a man whose work has stood the fiercest searching that his embittered enemies could devise, yet has proved to be one of peaceful devotion to a noble ambition—this man has sunk under a burden of calumny and hatred, and lies in the grave of a criminal. I trust I have vindicated his memory.

But I have a further trust, and a further purpose. Many besides Ferrer have been shot, without trial. We have no idea whether they were innocent or guilty. About three thousand men and women are suffocating in the jails of Catalonia, without trial. Soledad Villafranca, against whom it would be stupid even to manufacture evidence, is "detained," broken-hearted and seriously ill, her heritage confiscated. Hundreds upon hundreds of men and women have been torn from their homes, and condemned to long imprisonment, solely because they were known, in one way or other, to oppose the corrupt political system and the

corrupt Church of Spain. I trust this brief account of that State and that Church, and of the infamy to which they stoop in the protection of their interests, will move men and women of England, whose land was purged of such corruption by the Ferrers of past days, to follow the life of Spain with closer and more informed interest.

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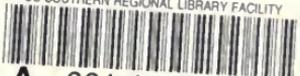
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