



SEÑOR FRANCISCO FERRER

## THE FERRER TRIAL.

*An Account of the Court Martial and Execution of Ferrer, the Spanish Radical.*

(By PERCIVAL GIBBON.)

*A recent cablegram from Madrid stated:—"Two thousand coal workers, on the anniversary of the execution of Francisco Ferrer, visited his grave at Barcelona. Violent speeches were made blaming the Clericals for the execution, until the police dispersed the crowd. The Spanish Premier (Senhor Canalejas) banned references to Ferrer at meetings arranged in Catalonia to protest against the death penalty, and to express sympathy with the revolution in Portugal. Ten thousand Socialists celebrated the anniversary of Ferrer's execution and the Portuguese Republic. Encounters between the Catholics and Republicans on Sunday necessitated a charge by the Municipal Guard."*

THE trial of Francisco Ferrer in the Model Prison at Barcelona was a State function of the highest importance; besides the reporters, only privileged spectators were present to witness an end being made of the Government's enemy. There was a good deal of competition for a place in court; Ferrer was not known by sight to many people in Spain, and there was curiosity as to the personality and appearance of this powerful Revolutionary, the leader of a school of political thought. A colonel and six captains were appointed to try him, and a captain of engineers was deputed to conduct his defence, with a prospect of arrest and imprisonment if he went too far on the prisoner's behalf. The whole thing was stage-managed like a drama, and its end was not less certain and foreseen.

They brought Ferrer in and placed him at the bar of the court, with a sentry beside him; and the spectators jostled and fidgeted to see him close at hand. Under their curious eyes, the doomed man shrank and was uneasy. People saw him with astonishment. He had the manner and all the outward look of an elderly clerk or a country schoolmaster, of anything subordinate and plodding and uninspired. He was middle-aged and of the middle stature, with a round, dull face, and a short, pointed grey beard. There was nothing to distinguish him from thousands of men in Spain to-day, in whom the national character of reserve and incertitude are exaggerated to a sort of atrophy of the faculties. He showed no trace of that ferocity and power that had made him the enemy of the Government, and sustained him through years of war against bureaucracy and clericalism in Catalonia. It was only when, at some turn in the proceedings, he looked up

quickly, that people were able to see that the eyes in the patient face were steady and of a peculiar brightness.

A military court does not pronounce sentence at the end of the case, and when Ferrer was taken out from court, no word of death had been spoken. But he knew, and the others knew, that he went forth doomed. In London and in Paris it was known. There were attempts to influence the Governments of Great Britain and France to intervene to save him; and the advocates at the

Palace of Justice in Paris signed a protest against the manner in which he had been denied justice and an opportunity to clear himself. In Rome also it was known. The Pope addressed an inquiry to the Papal Nuncio in Spain as to whether his intervention would be taken well, and the date of Ferrer's execution was actually advanced in order that the young King might not have to refuse a request from the Vatican. Those who advise the Pope were not blind to the fact that clericalism in Spain can ill afford to make martyrs; the proof of their wisdom is in the uproar that arose from every capital between St. Petersburg and Montevideo in answer to the volley at Montjuich on October 13.

There is not lacking a mass of proof that from the moment he was arrested

leader whose disappearance would change the destinies of the struggle between the forces of liberalism and their opponents, it would have been hard to fix upon one. In Catalonia, Ferrer's native province, as in the rest of Spain, Anti-clericalism is more an instinct of the people than a matter of politics. A man may be a Republican, a Nationalist, a Separatist, a Lerrouxista, but he is an Anti-clerical as well. It is not that he is necessarily hostile to religion, or even to the Church; it is simply that the religious orders have become a heavy burden to the community, and their increase in the face of the law restricting them is making life a difficult matter for thousands of people.

Although I was not personally ac-



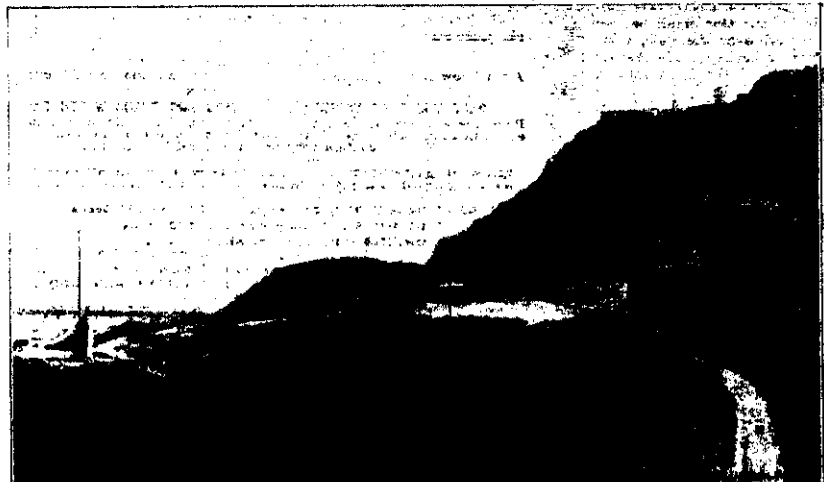
SEÑORITA PAZ FERRER.

The daughter of Senor Ferrer, who petitioned King Alfonso for her father's reprieve.

Ferrer was as good as dead. He was charged with inciting and taking part in the recent riots at Barcelona. His guilt or his innocence no longer concerns any one. The time to prove him guilty was in his life-time, when he could answer for himself.

Six months ago, if one had sought in Spain for an outstanding man; for a

quainted with Ferrer, I lived for a considerable time at Barcelona while I was studying the growth of the Anarchist movement in Spain, and I was able to follow closely the results of his work there. To gain a clue to Ferrer's share in Spanish politics, it is necessary to understand the position of the Anti-clericals. The diocese of Barcelona, to select one in-



MONTJUICH THE FORTRESS PRISON WHERE FERRER WAS SHOT.