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EDITORIAL

THE ASSASSINATION OF FERRER.

By DANIEL DE LEON

HIM whom the gods would destroy they first make blind.

The Spanish monarchy—tottering to its fall, and its mantle the last royal ermine behind which, crouching for refuge, cowers to-day the bloodstained L'Infame whom Voltaire's shafts drove from cover—shot itself to death yesterday in the castle of Montjuich.

Francisco Ferrer was no Anarchist. Ferrer grasped the necessity of organization and of the headship that organization implies—no *an-archy* in such a man's head. As a consequence, none better than Ferrer realized the folly, if not criminality, of individual acts of violence as the means of mass-emancipation—no *murder* in such a man's heart.

Francisco Ferrer strove for the overthrow of a governmental system that unbrained his countrymen, that unspined their backs, and reduced them to Loyola's ideal, "living corpses."

The lofty aim was pursued by the light and along the path of science. Ferrer became a center from which radiated systematic EDUCATION. The fame of the man's devotion to educational work leaped the boundaries of his own country and became European.

Too able a man for merely abstract educational activity, Ferrer took an active part in the palpitating issues of the day. The doubly iniquitous war against Morocco—a war in which commercial rapine filled its sails with the breath of bigotry—aroused the indignation of the man. The Anti-Militarist Resolution promulgated by the International Socialist Congress of Stuttgart became the



FRANCISCO FERRER (1859-1909)

rallying cry of all honorable and enlightened elements in Spain. Too clear sighted a man to be mystified, Ferrer was not deceived by Politics in ambush behind the trappings of Religion. Upon the unhallowed trinity of Crown, Crosier and Capital he turned the flashlights of his knowledge. It was a grapple between the Beast of Property and Man. At first, the Beast displayed ferocity only. The revolt against War was butchered wholesale. And then the butchery was to be conducted under the guise of legality, of formal trial.

Even if Francisco Ferrer were indeed an Anarchist, his “trial” would have disgraced a Court of naked, feathered and painted Apaches. The human conscience revolts against the added infamy of such a trial preparatory for the crowing felony of the assassination.

Even distant Russia released Gorky from prison upon the demand of cultured Europe. The assassination of Francisco Ferrer, over the protest and demand of enlightened Europe for at least a commutation of sentence—that deed, perpetrated in Western Europe, is a desperado’s deed of blind desperation.

Truth forever on the scaffold?
Wrong forever on the throne?
Nevermore!¹

Francisco Ferrer’s scaffold sways the future—the near, the immediate future.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.
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¹ [*The Present Crisis*, James Russell Lowell, 1844—*R.B.*]