

AN OUTLAW of CHRIST

Miguel Augustin Pro, S.J.



"Father, into Thy hands"

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The Catholic Mind

Here are the contents of the issues of half the year, 1929. The articles are gathered from all over the world.

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MIGUEL AUGUSTIN PRO, S.J.

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INTRODUCTION

IN obedience to the imperious duty that rests upon all Catholics to defend our Holy Mother the Church, Catholic, Apostolic and Roman, and her faithful sons who have shed their blood and given their lives in her defense, I have wished to write these lines to give a clear account of the events which took place in the city of Mexico, November 23, 1927.

On that day four heroic Mexican Catholics, after having been outrageously calumniated as assassins by the Government of President Calles, and without any legal formalities in their cause, were shot as criminals. The deed was so disgraceful that even some persons of prominence in the present administration have reproved it in public.

Seeing that the irreligious press of the world published the calumny just as it was sent out from Mexico, and that there has been up to the present no effective protest, I have judged it timely and necessary to publish as soon as possible a true account of what has taken place.

Owing to the haste attending the publication of these pages, they do not do full justice to the merits of the illustrious victims to whom we give the sweet title of martyrs, without, however, any intention of anticipating the declarations of the Church.

I hope that this modest effort will help to bring the truth to light, so that our answer to the query, "Martyrs, or assassins?" will be one full of holy pride, "Martyrs, and NOT assassins!"

Father Miguel Augustin Pro Juarez, S.J., because of his sacerdotal and religious character, occupies a place of importance, and this fact urges me to offer to the Catholic world, together with an account of the events, a few biographical data about the apostle.

A SINCERE ADMIRER OF THE NEW MARTYRS.

I

APOSTLE

MIGUEL AUGUSTIN PRO JUAREZ, S.J.

ON the 23rd of November, 1927, a new champion of Christ the King met his death in the city of Mexico. He was born on January 13, 1893, in the mining town of Concepción del Oro, in the State of Zacatecas. At the age of nineteen he felt the first invitation of Our Lord calling him to the Religious life. He was admitted into the Society of Jesus on August 10, 1911, and had the happiness of consecrating himself to Jesus Christ by means of the holy Vows, on August 15, 1913, the feast of the Assumption of our Lady.

When Carranza's revolution dragged from their hearths so many thousands of good citizens, and so many souls consecrated to the Divine service, the young Jesuit, as well, had to leave his country to eat the bread of exile. His family, which had enjoyed an enviable position, was reduced almost to misery in the confusion accompanying the uprising. The filial heart of the young Jesuit felt all the weight of the bitterness which bore down upon his relatives; but confiding in the Father of all mercies, he was able to wrench himself away from them to follow with his cross in the footsteps of his King and Captain.

THE STUDIES OF THE JESUIT

Exiled from his beloved country, he remained almost a year in California pursuing his studies. In 1915 he was sent to Spain, and there, in the city of Granada, he finished his course in languages and began the course in philosophy. This completed, he was set aside, as is the custom in the Society, for a period of teaching. The field of his first apostolic labor was the Republic of Nicaragua, C. A.

In the summer of 1922, he returned to Europe to finish his studies. He spent some time in Barcelona, in the

Colegio Máximo de San Ignacio, Sarriá; before the end of his studies he was sent to Belgium, where he specialized in social branches, and was ordained to the priesthood in the middle of 1925, at Enghien.

His disposition was always gay and buoyant; and the infirmities which accompanied him through life were never able to dim his gaiety of heart, which more than once must have risen to heroism, according to the testimony of several of his brothers in Religion; for he always knew how to smile and even cheer others when he should have been in bed with the pain of his infirmities. But the heart of the martyr is forged in pain.

RETURN TO MEXICO

From the time that the young apostle left his country, he gave himself up entirely by means of prayer and study to a worthy preparation for the Divine ministry. It was his hope to dedicate his entire life to the service of the Church.

The longed-for moment arrived. A command of holy obedience opened again the gates of his native land. Let us hear what he himself says in the intimacy of certain letters written to his fellow students. There is reflected in them his gaiety of heart, and at the same time, the solidity and energy of a spirit given up to the priestly apostolate in the midst of the greatest human difficulties. He writes:

By a special permission of God, I was able to re-enter my country. I don't understand how the Government, being what it is, and casting out, as it is doing, priests and Religious, allowed me to enter. There was neither objection on the part of health officials, nor examination of my passport, and in the customs office they did not even look into my bags.

At six in the evening I left the port, and by seven of the following morning I was in the capital, which had been assigned to me by Superiors as the field of my activity (July, 1926).

Owing to the suspension of worship, thousands of the Faithful in these last days crowded to receive the Sacraments. For this reason I had to remain in the confessional from half-past five in the morning to eleven; and in the afternoon from half-past three to eight. As I was still rather weak, having been in the hospital dur-

ing the last period of my stay in Europe, I had twice to be removed fainting from the confessional.

As soon as services in the churches were suspended, I organized what were called "Communion Stations." They were various places where I went to give Communion. In this way, I daily distributed some three hundred Communions. On the first Fridays there was a considerable increase; the last first Friday I distributed 1,200 Communions. I have fixed days for hearing confessions, and various houses designated whither people of all classes come to consult me, to receive advice, or listen to an exhortation.

How do I bear up under so much work, being so weak and having just left the hospital? . . . This proves conclusively that if Divine Providence, which makes use of me as an instrument, did not have a hand in the work, I would have failed entirely, . . . *Unde non ego sed gratia Dei mecum.*

In spite of the strict watch on the part of the secret police, which has in this city more than ten thousand agents, I am able to baptize, preside at marriages, and bring Viaticum to the dying. Twice the police have arrived at the place whither I was going to exercise my ministry. Once, it was at half-past six in the morning, in one of the Communion Stations. I was right in the midst of the Communions, when a servant girl came crying, "The police!" Everybody became pale with terror. "Be quiet," I said, "hide your veils and scatter through the rooms, and don't make any noise." Disguised as I was in a gray suit, and carrying the Blessed Sacrament on my breast, I went to receive the intruders.

"There is public worship here," they said to me.

"No, there is not," I replied.

"But there is, Sir, there is public worship here."

"Well, then, they have just deceived you, gentlemen."

"I saw a priest enter. . . ."

"We have orders to search the house. Follow us."

"Well, I like that! I follow you? At whose order? Let me see my name. Go through the house, and when you find public worship, come and tell me, so that I may hear Mass."

They began to run through the house, and, to prevent greater misfortune I accompanied them, telling them what was behind each closed door. But, as it was the first time that I had gone through the interior of the house, what I declared to be a sleeping apartment turned out to be a study. They found no priest, and the clever police took up their guard at the entrance to the house. I took leave of them, telling them that if I did not have something else to do, I should remain with them until they seized the bold priest who so made sport of the extraordinary vigilance of such

keen-sighted policemen. I then finished the distribution of Communion, and when I returned that way, the priest had not yet appeared.

.

On another occasion, on going to say Mass in one of the suburbs, I suddenly ran into two policemen who were guarding the house where I was going to celebrate.

“This time we’re lost,” I said to myself. To go in would be to expose one’s self; to go back would be fear; to abandon the people who were within would be disgrace. With the greatest coolness possible, I stopped in front of the policemen, noted down the number of the house, unbuttoned my coat as though to show them something, and said: “There is a cat inside there!” They gave me a military salute, and allowed me to pass. They thought that I was on the reserve force, and that I had shown them a badge which the reserves are accustomed to wear under their coats. “Now there is a cat inside,” I said, as I raced up the stairs. Mass was impossible. And the people on seeing me come in grew pale and wanted to lock me up behind a wardrobe. “We are safer now,” I told them, “seeing that we have the police guarding our house.” But it was no use. They wanted me to go out over the roof. I took my cassock and went out where I came in, and received two superb military salutes from the policemen.

My appearance as a student quiets many suspicions about my profession. Sometimes with a cane in my hand, at others with a police dog which had been given me, following at my heels, at others riding my brother’s bicycle (which has already given me a bruise on the left arm and a bump on the forehead), I go about everywhere day and night, doing good. . . .

I have been appointed head of the Board of Conferences, and my duty consists in preparing those who have to go to speak to the crowds. Many young men of the Capital come to us, young men of talent and promise, to settle their difficulties in philosophy, morals, sociology, and politics.

I have heard confessions even in the jails, and here I spend most of my time, for they are filled with Catholics. I bring them meals, pillows, blankets, money, cigars, or all these together. If the jailers only knew what sort of bird I am! How I wish they knew, so that I could be their prisoner, if only for two weeks! Twenty days ago an order was given for my arrest. But it has not yet been carried out, and that in spite of the fact that I am not in hiding, and do what I have to do in broad daylight, and electric light, since the sun does not always serve my convenience.

I have given many retreats. One of them I gave disguised as a mechanic to some twenty chauffeurs. We held it in a large yard. Another retreat was for some eighty women teachers, of the Government, women without any fear of God or man. They denied the existence of Hell and the immortality of the soul. The retreat ended with twelve notable conversions; and all the women who made the retreat received Communion. Good Friday was one uninterrupted round of work,—a retreat in the morning, the *Tre Ore*, a retreat for young men and a Passion sermon,—all in different districts of the city.

One day I went to attend a sick woman. She was a theosophist of the first order, and let loose a torrent of curses and blasphemies against what we hold most holy and sacred. A mouth truly hellish—but in six days she has completely changed. Very likely she will die tomorrow as the result of an operation, but I will bring her Holy Communion early.

On the fourth of December, the day on which six hundred balloons were released to distribute thousands of leaflets for the defense of religion, I was taken prisoner together with other young men. They conducted us to jail that evening at seven o'clock, marching us off between two files of soldiers. We passed the night in the courtyard, under the open sky, for in the prison-order was the instruction: "Let the prisoners feel no comfort." During the night we said the beads, and sang all the pious songs we could think of. The following day we were set free. Now that I think of it, I wonder that they did not shoot me. Before going out, they asked me: "Are you ready to pay such a sum as a fine? Mr. Calles is very much put out about that matter of the balloons." "No, sir," I answered, "and for two reasons; first, because I haven't a cent; and secondly, even if I had, I would not want to keep for the rest of my life the remorse of having contributed even a penny from my pocket to the support of the present Government."

The Catholics have taken the defensive against Calles, and the reprisals are going to be terrible, above all, in the city of Mexico. The first to suffer will be those who have put their fingers into the religious question, and I have put mine there up to the elbow. Oh, would that it were my lot to be among the first,—or the last,—anywhere, to be one of the number. And if I am, get your prayers ready for Heaven.

I had a very droll experience which could have ended tragically, the first night of a retreat. On leaving the house at half-past nine, I caught sight of two fellows who crossed the street and waited for me at the corner. "My boy," I said, "good-bye to your life." But relying on the proverb that he who strikes first strikes twice, I

turned towards them and asked them for a match. "You can get one in the store," was the answer. I moved off, but they followed me. "Perhaps it was only a coincidence," I thought. I turned this way, and that: they did the same. "This time you're a goner," I said to myself. I took an auto; they did the same. Fortunately, the driver was a Catholic, and seeing me in such a fix, he put himself at my service. "Look, my lad, at the corner that I point out to you, slow up a bit, I'll jump out, and you go right on."

I put my cap into my pocket and . . . jumped. I got up at once and leaned against a tree, but in such a way *that I might be seen* by them. They passed me a second later, almost grazing me with the mud-guards of their car. They saw me, but it did not in the least occur to them that it was I. I turned to go, but not as nimbly as I could have wished, for the fall I got had left me numbed. "Steady, my boy; now we're ready for another." And with a limp I took the road home.

Yes, I sigh for the quiet of our houses, for the ease with which our ordinary duties are done. . . . But here, in the midst of the whirlwind, I wonder at the special care of God, the very special graces which He gives us,—His presence most intimately felt when discouragement comes to make us feel our littleness, and I feel the truth of that sublime answer: "My grace is sufficient for thee: for virtue is made strong in infirmity."

The great power of our enemies who rely on money, weapons, and lies is going to fall very soon, like the statue which Daniel saw overturned by the pebble which fell from heaven. Already the splendor of the Resurrection is felt because the blackness of the Passion is almost at its thickest. From all sides we receive news of attacks and reprisals; the victims are many; the number of martyrs grows every day. Oh, if only I should draw a winning number.

Thus far the passages quoted have been selected from personal letters of the Father. (Owing to the difficult circumstances in which he wrote them, he set down some words which for a better understanding we have had to change).

THE TRUE CAUSE OF HIS DEATH

All those who have had the happiness of dealing with Father Pro in the last days of his life declare that his zeal for the salvation of souls was most ardent, and that he omitted no sacrifice to console the Faithful with the administration of the Sacraments. Of this his letters are a very eloquent proof.

But the persecuting Government did not overlook the presence of a tried soldier in the ranks of Jesus Christ. They were perfectly aware that they were dealing with a young Jesuit who, in love with Christ the King, had placed his youth, his talents, and his heart at the service of the suffering Mexican Church. The Government understood that he was not one of the common run of men, but an active shepherd who toiled with zeal, nobility, and unselfishness for the Faithful, without any distinction of social class. And they determined to bring about his disappearance.

No occasion was more opportune than the bombing of Alvaro Obregon, which took place on November 13, 1927. The strategy was—calumniate the priest, lay the crime at his door, and assassinate him.

II

CALUMNY

THE THREAD OF THE PLOT

EX-PRESIDENT OBREGON was made the object of the attempt while he was riding in his sumptuous automobile through the woods of Chapultepec. Bombs were thrown from another automobile, with no other result than a few injuries to the car occupied by Obregon. The companions of Obregon drawing their revolvers, followed the fugitives, and succeeded in capturing Nahum Lamberto Ruiz.

The prisoner was wounded by "a bullet which penetrated the left temple, dashed out the left eye, and came out through the forehead." (*El Universal*, November 22, 1927).

The wound was very serious, and the injured man was carried to the hospital, where he lost the other eye. Another daily says: "In the hospital to save him, they had to remove both eyes."

A workingman named Tirado was also captured. As it appears, he was walking along unconcernedly, when, hearing the shots, he began to run to avoid being wounded. According to the Government, he was one of the bombers who was trying to get away.

Who were the companions of Ruiz? This was the mystery which presented itself to the Chief of Police; and to clear it up, he tried to draw from Tirado the confession of a secret of which he was ignorant, and which he could not, therefore, confess. On the silence of Tirado, *El Universal* says, in the issue already quoted:

"The police pretend to have drawn a confession from Tirado; but he has maintained the most complete silence."

Excelsior, November 17, 1927: "Antonio Tirado continues to keep silence, or better, persists in maintaining that he had absolutely nothing to do with the attempt." Thereupon, they had recourse to an examination of the dying Ruiz, not without a certain amount of trickery. Concern-

ing this, the same papers give us some very important details.

THE DECLARATION OF A DYING MAN

Although both draw from the same source, *i. e.*, the Police Department, *Excelsior* and *El Universal* are not, however, entirely in agreement; but they do agree in this, that they speak of a dying man, who had lost his eyes, who had received a bullet in the head, and whom the police tried to deceive.

Excelsior says that Ruiz having lost both eyes, the police made his wife take a seat at his side, while one of the police officials said to him: "Listen, Nahum, I am Joe, your brother-in-law. Don't you want to tell me something, now that the police are away. Tell me here in secret; nobody is listening." The wounded man in his semi-conscious condition answered: "Tell the Engineer Luis Segura to get away. Tell Father Pro Juarez and his brother Humbert to get out of the way, and say the same to Mrs. Montes de Oca."

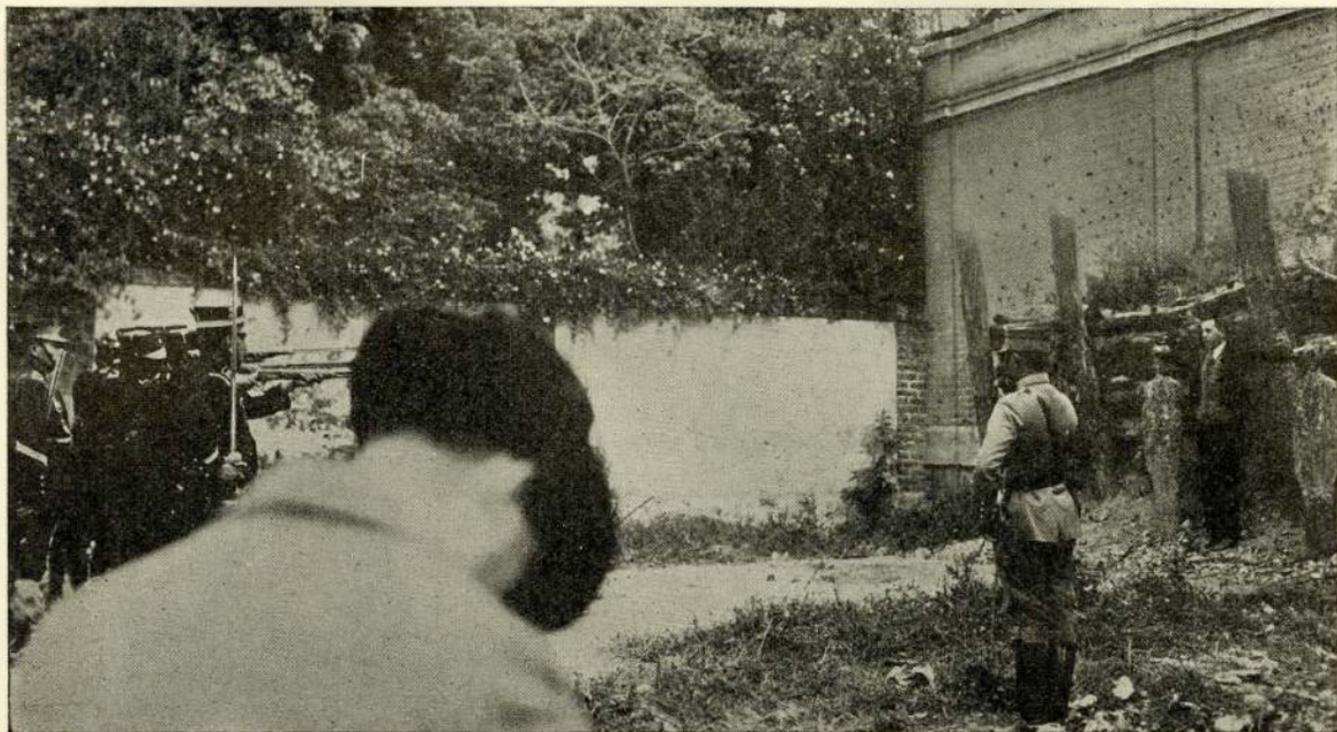
El Universal's account is as follows:

It was known that the prisoner had a brother called Rudolph Ruiz [*Excelsior* had said a "brother-in-law"], and one of the officials took advantage of this circumstance. From the first moment, Ruiz remained with his eyes bandaged, because of the wound he had received. And for this reason he could not observe what took place about him. The official, with all secrecy, and after having made Ruiz's wife greet him, said to him: "Nahum, I am your brother, your brother Rudolph. I want you to tell me anything you feel like telling."

It was then that Ruiz, according to what was told us at police headquarters, answered with a muffled voice: "I want you to tell the Engineer Segura and the Pros to go into hiding, for they are in danger." Guided by this declaration of the dying man, the police officials went off in search of the "guilty men."

THE VICTIMS

Besides Father Miguel Augustin Pro and the laborer Juan, or Antonio, Tirado, the police arrested the engineer, Luis Segura Vilchis and young Humberto and Roberto Pro,



WITH ARMS OUTSTRETCHED FOR HEAVEN. .

brothers of the priest. Mrs. Montes de Oca was also taken to prison, but after a few days was set at liberty under bail.

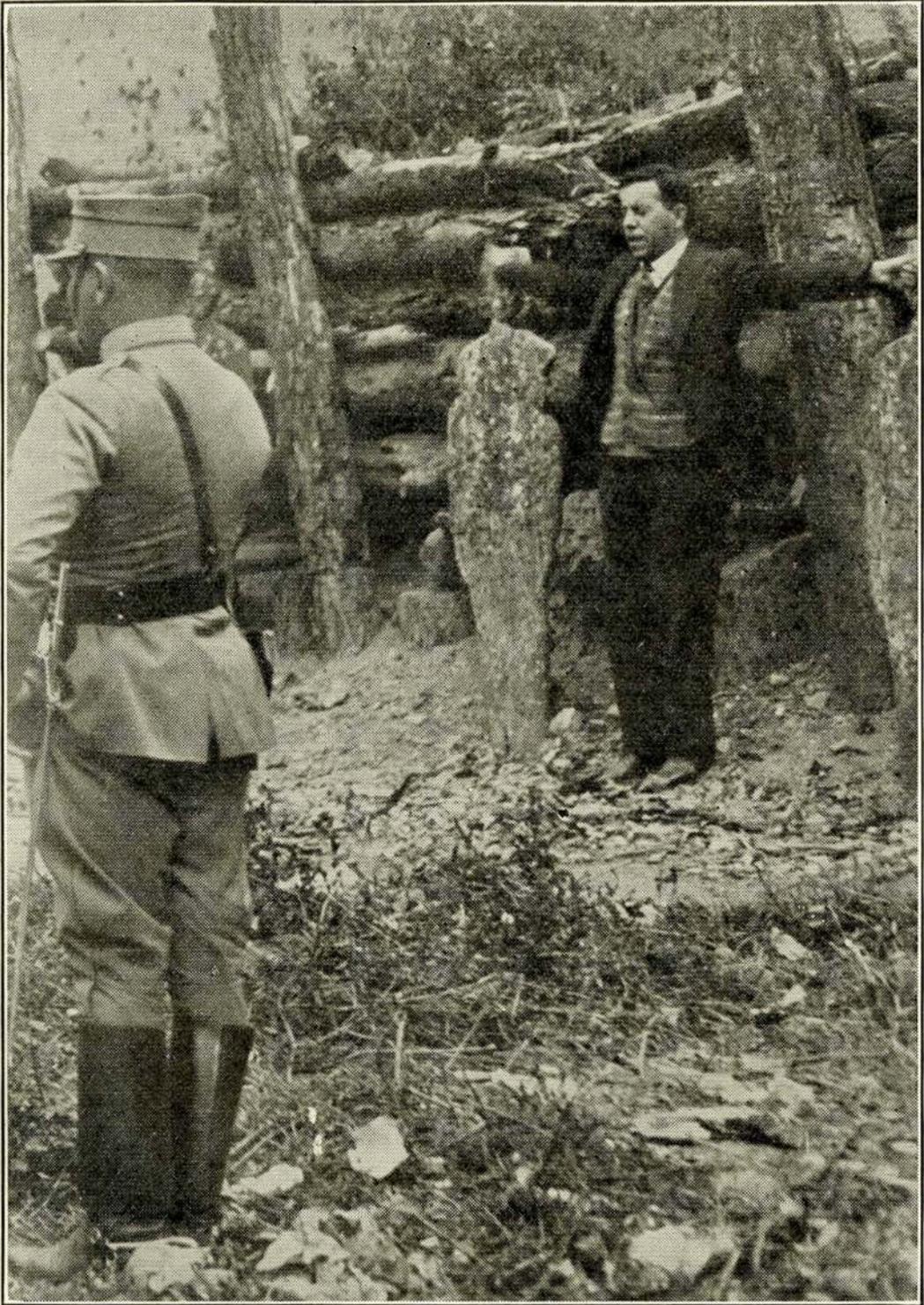
The engineer, Luis Segura Vilchis, was one of the most promising of the Catholic youth of Mexico. He was noted from early youth for his marked talent and for very notable gifts as a speaker and organizer, and for his loyal and fervent devotion to the Catholic cause. He held at the time an important post in the League for the Defense of Religious Liberty. He was also a member of the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin.

Humberto Pro was another remarkable factor amongst the more active Catholics. For several years he had served in the ranks of the A. C. J. M. (Catholic Association of Mexican Youth), as an ardent defender of Christian ideals and an able promoter of the liberty of the people.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the Government should have been interested in making a holocaust of these men who figured so prominently as Catholics. The very police officials had confessed that for some time they had been seeking to lay hands upon Father Pro. Why were they looking for him? For the conspiracy which was to be hatched and brought to life months afterwards? Let us hear what *El Universal* has to say on November 23:

Concerning the capture of the priest, Miguel Augustin Pro, the information which we obtained at police headquarters indicates that he had always shown a great deal of cleverness in keeping himself out of reach; for, on three different occasions he had succeeded in escaping, when he was almost in the hands of the officers of the Committee on Safety. This took place at the very height of the propaganda which was being conducted by some religious groups. Then, so we are told, there was a move to capture the priest Pro, since he was considered one of the principal propagandists; but as he frequently changed his domicile, he always succeeded in escaping his pursuers.

The last time that he succeeded in escaping the hands of the police was towards the end of October, at the end of a mission which he gave in Toluca, amidst great danger and with much fruit.



AS THE BULLETS PIERCED HIS BODY.

THE ARRESTS

The men who were presumed guilty of the attempted bombing were so unsuspecting of what Roberto Cruz was plotting against them, that after the bombing took place, they remained peacefully in their homes and went on with their ordinary life.

They found the engineer Segura Vilchis in the office of the Light and Power Company, attending to his regular duties.

El Universal (November 22, 1927) says:

General Cruz tells us that the success of these investigations is due exclusively to the activity and intelligence displayed by the Chief of the Commission of Safety, Mr. Jose Mazcorro and his officials. The same General Cruz also made them, in the presence of their companions, the object of his very warmest congratulations,—congratulations which he hoped would serve as a spur to their companions.

DOCUMENTS COLLECTED

It was said that bombs, sulphuric acid, and weapons, etc., were found in the house of Mrs. Montes de Oca.

They also found "many documents": a post card of Father Pro's; a letter of the A. C. J. M. (Catholic Association of Mexican Youth) of Tacubaya, where it appears that the A. C. J. M. is at the disposition of the League, and the plans of an economic project promoted by the League.

Granting the authenticity of the documents, not one of them proves that the martyrs were the authors of the plot. Regarding the objects which were said to be found in the house of Mrs. Montes de Oca, as there is no further proof than the word of Roberto Cruz and his agents (who are quite discredited), we shall content ourselves with saying that these things and many more Chief Cruz could have brought there and then exhibited as a *corpus delicti*. Suffice it to recall that when General Obregon was actually murdered, one of the first actions of President Calles was to remove Cruz summarily from office.

THE PUBLIC STATEMENTS

The only public statements which the martyrs made were those which were made to the newspaper representatives. It must be noted that this interview took place in the presence of the police, and that everything published by the papers is subject to the strictest censorship.

The interview published by *Excelsior*, on the 22d, says:

Under police guard, the priest Miguel Augustin Pro was brought in and presented to us.

"Are you a priest?" we asked.

"Yes, sir; a Jesuit priest."

"Do you wish to make any statement?"

"I wish to make no statement. I will only say that I am thankful for the attention on the part of those who have arrested me. I have had absolutely nothing to do with this affair, as I am a law-abiding man. I am quite at ease in the matter, and I trust that justice will be done. I D E N Y definitely having taken any part in this plot."

(It is to be noted that the word D E N Y appears in the paper itself in spaced letters).

Let us see now the account published by *El Universal* in its edition of the same day, November 22:

When we asked him about his participation in the criminal act which had been imputed to him, he said: "I have nothing to do with these revolutionary schemes: when justice is done me, it will be seen that at this moment I spoke the truth." He most resolutely denied having taken any part in the attempt, and he also expressed the desire that as soon as possible he be committed so that the judge, once convinced of his innocence, might set him at liberty.

When we asked him [Humberto Pro], he answered: "The account which I have given the police is accurate," and he started to retire, but returned, and said: "I wish to emphasize my denial of having taken any part in this affair, and all I ask is that they grant me the opportunity of proving my assertion. It is useless to go on talking about the matter. All I hope is that the fullest justice will be done."

"Do you care to tell us, Mr. Segura, what part you took in this attempt?" He shook his head in denial, and answered: "I have nothing, absolutely nothing to say."

"We tried to get Mrs. Montes de Oca to give us some detail

about her share in the affair, but she shook her head, "I have had nothing at all to do with the matter," she said drily.

"What, then, is the reason for your detention?"

"I don't know."

The interview with the workingman Tirado is not given, but the paper says for its part: "Tirado sees no more use in repeating his denials. The only thing that interests him is to make it clear that he had no part in the attempt, and that he was only a witness of what took place."

THE ROMANCE

According to the investigation of Chief Cruz and his sharp-sighted agents, they formulated the following "conclusions":

Father Miguel Augustin Pro was the brains behind the attempt. The engineer, Segura Vilchis, and young Humberto Pro, were in the car of the bombers. Tirado received a bomb from his friend, Ruiz, which he was afraid to throw. Nahum Lamberto Ruiz, quite near death, had the fortunate presence of mind to send word to his accomplices to go into hiding, because they were in danger.

The "guilty" confessed their crime in the sole presence of the Chief and his agents. These men were the accusers, the witnesses, and the judges. The accused were held *incomunicado* until the last moment, and *the only time they spoke* was with the news-reporters, and then *they denied their guilt*.

As a result of all this, the Chief of Police, Roberto Cruz, made the following statement when interviewed: "The accused being convicted, and having confessed their direct responsibility for the attempt against General Obregon, and their responsibility in the crime being fully proved, the order was given for their immediate execution."

IMPROBABILITY OF THE ROMANCE

The Chief of Police, Roberto Cruz, surely thought that the invention of a romance was as easy a thing as laying a whip across the face of ladies of the capital. But events have proved the contrary. It would be proper, therefore, if the pride he now feels over his triumph and the warm

congratulations he has for Mazcorro were reserved for the day in which he presents us, convicted and confessed, the criminal really responsible for the attempt, at whom public opinion, shrewder perhaps than the agents of Cruz, is already beginning to point an accusing finger. The romance offered us by the Chief of Police is incredible because of its inherent improbability.

The dying statement of Ruiz which, according to the words of the police, served to reveal his accomplices, does nothing of the kind. If the police had nothing more than that to go on, they are convicted by their own acts. The most probable explanation of it, if he did make it, is that Ruiz, having overheard that the police intended to "hang" the accusation on Father Pro and the others, took that means to warn them.

The police affirmed that Ruiz was one of the conspirators, since they found him almost dead in the automobile occupying the place of the chauffeur. The accusation against Tirado was founded, during all the time of his denials, on a blood-stain on the left leg of his trousers, and they argued from this, that he must have been seated at the right of Ruiz. They declared that their other two companions must have been wounded, for they found large blood-stains in the rear seat of the auto, on the floor, on the rug, and on the wooden parts. On the left back door they also found bloody finger prints. *Excelsior* says (November 15): "These finger prints found on the back of the auto are neither those of the chauffeur, Lambert Ruiz, nor of Antonio Tirado." It also says that the bloody finger prints were photographed by the head of the Identification Department for the purpose of studying them.

Well, then, Humberto Pro and the engineer Segura were not wounded, and, therefore, the occupants of those back seats are laughing at the cleverness of the Chief of Police. But as soon as this Chief became aware of his own stupidity, he wished to change the facts, and declared that Ruiz could not have been the chauffeur; but he was a little late, for we have already become perfectly aware of his dishonest intentions. He has wished to involve four innocent Catholics in a crime committed by the political enemies of

Obregon, and for this he has been obliged to invent a romance, but without success; and the man who helped him was none other than Mazcorro.

And if this is not true, why the stubborn determination to hold the martyrs *incomunicado* to the last moment? Let us see what *El Universal Grafico* says on this point, in its edition of November 23:

Painful scene: In the neighborhood of the police department we saw Miss Ana Maria Pro Juarez, sister of the prisoners, looking for some way of getting in, begging admittance and trying to evade the vigilance of the guards. She wished at any cost to be permitted to see and to speak for the last time with her brothers, for she already feared that they were going to be shot. Efforts were made to have her petition granted, but to no avail. The order was final, and the prisoners were taken from their cells straight to the place of execution without communication with anyone.

INJUSTICE

The *Diario de El Paso*, in an article entitled: "The Persecuting Government Has Defied Civilization," sums up the evidence for the statement made by Carleton Beals:

The holding of the accused unconstitutional. No detention, not even temporary, can be carried out without a written order from a judge. Administrative authority, such as is that of the Chief of Police, may order temporary detention only, when there is no judicial authority in the neighborhood! It seems that there *are* judges in the City of Mexico. (Art. 16, Const.).

At the end of forty-eight hours the prisoner must make his preliminary declaration before a judge or a jury. (Art. 20, Const.). At the end of seventy-two hours, the judge to whom the prisoner has been committed will decree, as the case may require, the absolute liberty, or liberty under bond, or give a formal order for the imprisonment of the accused. (Art. 20, Const.). *Not one of these constitutional provisions was complied with in the case.*

The supposed criminals being civilians, and the presumed misdemeanor belonging to the civil order, the military power examined the cause and appointed itself judge in the person of the Chief of Police. The Thirteenth Article of the Constitution definitely prescribes that civilians be judged by civilians, even in crimes of a military nature. And it orders that any transgression on the part of

the military in this regard be judged and punished, as well the authority which gives the order as the subordinate who executes it. Therefore, in this case, the Supreme Court of Justice should bring to trial, and punish those who had anything to do with the process of the accused, whether it be the authority which gave the order for the execution, or those who carried it out,—from General Cruz to the soldiers who did the firing.

The so-called process against the accused. There was no trial, nor the appearance of one,—not even a court-martial. And the Fourteenth Article of the Constitution provides that no one be deprived of life, except after a trial which fulfils all the requirements of the Penal Code and of the Processes; and Article Twenty expressly orders that every culprit be tried before a judge or a jury, as the case may require, *in a public court*. The accused must not be held *incomunicado*. He must name some one to defend him, or if he refuses to do so, the judge will name some one . . . *and they had no defender*. He ought to be confronted with his accusers . . . *but they were not confronted* with Albert Ruiz, who, according to the doctors and according to the same press, was in a state of "coma," and whose declarations the public heard only *after he had died!* ! !

Finally, the accused must be able to require the appearance of the witnesses whom he summons to his defense, and in this the judge must assist him. In this case the Pro brothers were surely able to demonstrate by witnesses that they could not have taken part in the attempt, since they were in places very distant from Chapultepec when the attempted assassination took place. All this is prescribed by Article Twenty of the Constitution, and all is fulfilled to the letter when there is a question of real assassins: but at every point the Government has failed,—this Government which, in its love for the Constitution, keeps the entire nation in a state of chaos. Is, then, the law obeyed, or not? Or are the people bound to obey it, and the Government not bound? And if this is so, does the Government defy society, or not? Finally, no one but a judge can pronounce the sentence. Who pronounced it in this case?

The accused were condemned to death. According to Article Twenty-two of the Constitution, the penalty of death can be pronounced only against a traitor to his country in a foreign war, or in the case of homicide committed with treachery, perfidy, premeditation, and profit. In this case, there was no homicide, consequently, the death penalty could not be pronounced even by the judiciary. And it must be noted that Article Fourteen of the Penal Code forbids expressly the application of a penalty by analogy, or an *a fortiori* application: it must be applied solely to the case *in*

hand. An attempted homicide cannot, therefore, be punished with the penalty of a consummated homicide.

The circumstances of the execution.—In full daylight, in the heart of the city, in a temporary prison where executions may never take place, with a great display of force, denying to relatives the consolation of taking leave of the condemned, without earlier notification to the condemned men themselves than the very moment of removing them from their cells to be shot—all of which circumstances obstructed all recourse to appeal.

Certainly in the present case the Government challenged society, and said to it: "In Mexico there is no other judge than Cruz, and we must believe him: there is no other law than the caprice of Calles, and we must bless him! !"

If they had delivered the accused to a judge, all four, or some of them, might have been convicted of the crime. But now their guilt will never be able to be proved, for we have no other testimony than the word of Chief Cruz. . . . And in admitting this supposition, we do so not as though we admitted the declarations of guilt which Cruz has put upon the lips of the martyrs, but only to prove, as all those who have argued on the supposition of some guilt have done, the greater injustice. The evidence in the present case to prove the innocence of the accused is abundantly clear. The Pro brothers said that they had nothing at all to do with the attempted bombing, and *we know for certain that they could prove it.*

The Mexican Episcopal Committee residing in the United States has received direct and complete information concerning the martyrdom of Father Pro and his companions. The character of the person who has sent this information and the high respectability of the Episcopal Committee to which it was sent are strong arguments which have led us to transcribe the following paragraph:

It is for me a duty of justice to send you my explicit and positive testimony of the innocence of Father Miguel Augustin Pro, S.J., and my calm but energetic protest for the unjust and calumnious manner in which he and his companions were treated . . . and I can assert, and *I do assert under oath*, that it is absolutely false that Father Pro has assisted at any meeting in which the attempt was planned, or that he has taken part in it, and much less, that he has been the intellectual author of the plot.

From the very first moment Obregon himself looked for the guilty ones outside of the ranks of Catholicism. Here are the statements made and published by *Excelsior*, November 14, 1927:

Reporter: "Where do you think the idea of the attempt originated?"

Obregon: "Any judgment of mine would be a hazard, but I venture to believe that in this instance there is question of a political plot."

The New York *Times* (November 16, 1927), tells of the visit which the lawyer Orci made in the name of Obregon, on November 22, to the police department in Mexico, for the purpose of learning the progress of the case. Cruz was absent, but one of his subalterns called Guerra showed him a paper, saying that it was the process. Orci returned it with the observation, "This is not an investigation, but simply a statement by the police which precedes the judicial investigation." He was told that there were no further details.

Orci asked: "What is the Chief's opinion of the guilt of these men?"

Secretary: "Father Pro Juarez did not confess, and we have no proof against him. About the others—you may ask them yourself. . . ." Orci let Guerra understand that Obregon was anxious to have the investigation finished, and the secretary answered: "Tomorrow we shall hand the case over to the judges." Orci said in his statement on the following morning:

To my great surprise, as I was sitting in my office, I was informed that the four prisoners had been executed. I spoke over the 'phone with the Chief of Police Cruz, asking him for further details, for the reason why the investigation was not yet finished, and why there was nothing which could be called judicial action. General Cruz answered me with the explanation: "Before your visit to the police station, and in spite of the recommendations of General Obregon, *I had a positive order to do what I did.*"

Thus far the statements of Arturo Orci. Well, then, we ask, who gave that order? Why was it given? The answer has been given by the same anti-reëlectionists who

tried to make known the truth "not for any love of the Catholics, but for fear of their lives." It is they who have shown that the death of the Catholics is due to the fact that to avoid a tragedy among prominent revolutionists the really guilty persons must remain unknown.¹

Another account of the facts which has come to hand from very reliable sources says, "When Roberto Cruz received the order to shoot the prisoners, he asked how he could manage the deed so as to appear to be observing the formalities. He was answered: 'I don't want formalities, I want the thing done!'"

The final verdict was given by one who cannot be suspected of partiality, Carleton Beals, a sympathizer with the Mexican regime. In the *New Republic*, on Dec. 21, 1927, he said:

Every constitutional and humanitarian guarantee was violated in the case of the four civilians, members of the Catholic League of Religious Defense, one of them a priest, who were alleged to have hurled the dynamite bomb at Alvaro Obrgeon's auto in Chapultepec Park and to have engaged in shipping ammunition in egg cases (heavy eggs!) to the "Hail, Christ the King" rebels in the states of Michoacan and Jalisco. The shooting of the supposed malefactors, within less than forty-eight hours of their arrest, on mere police accusation of guilt, makes one less critical because American "justice" sometimes delays seven years in a Sacco-Vanzetti case. . . . Universal doubt has been cast on their guilt, and a hundred rumors set afloat that the Government hastened to assassinate them in order to conceal the real culprits. Probably local public opinion has not been so shocked since the assassination of Madero and Pino Suarez by the underlings of Huerta; but all criticism has been stifled by the iron-clad censorship maintained by the Government over all newspapers and cable service, and the fear engendered by the recent arbitrary deportation of prominent Mexican editorial writers. This flashlight violence—comparable, in my mind, to the Matteotti murder—must be stigmatized as a tactical stupidity and a moral blot on an administration which has, on the whole, been energetic, far-sighted, and constructive (*sic*). . . . Unfortunately, this deplorable incident is not an isolated one. It is the culmination of a long train of official acts, resulting from the conflict with the Church. . . .

¹On May 28, 1928, the *Kansas City Star*, stated on its editorial page: "The case for Father Pro's innocence appears pretty well established."

III

THE MARTYRDOM

GENERAL HEADQUARTERS OF POLICE

The general headquarters of police are at present in the most central point of the Mexican metropolis. On the Avenida del Palacio Legislativo, close to the Plaza of Carlos Quarto, it occupies the sumptuous palace which once belonged to General Fernando González during the administration of Porfirio Díaz.

Only in the revolutionary régime which is at present reigning in Mexico can one conceive of such a shameful crime in the full light of the twentieth century as that which we are about to recount. It took place a few steps from the Embassy of the United States, and without favorable intervention from the diplomatic corps of both continents resident in the city.

THE LAST NIGHT OF THE MARTYRS

Excelsior (November 24, 1927):

The fact that the prisoners were held *incomunicado* made it impossible for us to exchange even a few words with them, and the only notice we had was from one of the jailers, that the night was spent very quietly and without complaint or demonstration, except from Tirado, who complained of a pain caused by congestion of the lungs.

The Pro brothers and the engineer Vilchis slept quietly until they were awakened to be informed that in a few hours they were going to pay the penalty they had incurred.

THE PREPARATIONS

Close to nine o'clock in the morning, General Cruz arrived at headquarters, and at the same time Messrs. Guerra Leal, Mazcorro, General Palomera Lopez and others; and with their arrival the preparations for carrying out the executions were begun. An order was given for two squadrons of armed mounted police to take up a position in front

of the building to prevent the public from crowding against the iron railing, or from promoting any disturbance. The higher points were mounted with machine guns. This movement of forces, and the orders which were issued in the courtyard of headquarters, drew at once the attention of the passersby, who soon gathered in large numbers, although they were not permitted to approach the building.

Very soon word passed about that this display of force had no other object than to prepare for the execution of the men imprisoned for the attempt against General Obregon.

General Cruz manifested the desire that *Excelsior* should be granted every opportunity to give a complete illustrated account of the proceedings.

It was at that moment that we realized that the report of the execution had circulated throughout the city; a proof of which was the fact that a great multitude filled the Avenida del Palacio Legislativo, in front of the police headquarters, and extended as far as the equestrian statue of Carlos Quarto.

To keep order in the street it was necessary to reinforce the mounted police with motorcycle police and patrolmen. The crowd became so dense as to interrupt traffic for nearly half an hour at the corner in front of the National Lottery.

About ten o'clock General Antonio Gomez Velasco, Chief of the Traffic Department and Colonel Cornejo, Chief of Staff of the Division of Public Streets, arrived. Cornejo was present as official witness of the execution.

THE MARTYRDOM

El Universal (November 24) says:

The garden of police headquarters was practically filled with troops. The mounted police formed a square, occupying every available position, but leaving a free space in the center, where the four firing squads were drawn up. At the back of the garden, all along the wall, there is a large open space free of every obstacle. It is the firing stand; and standing against the wall are "dummies" of natural size arranged in symmetrical lines and used as targets for those making their debut at this pastime. This was the place assigned for the execution.

A voice of command was heard: "Squad! Attention! Right



LEST GOD'S OUTLAW BE YET ALIVE!



HUMBERTO—"WHERE SHALL I STAND?"

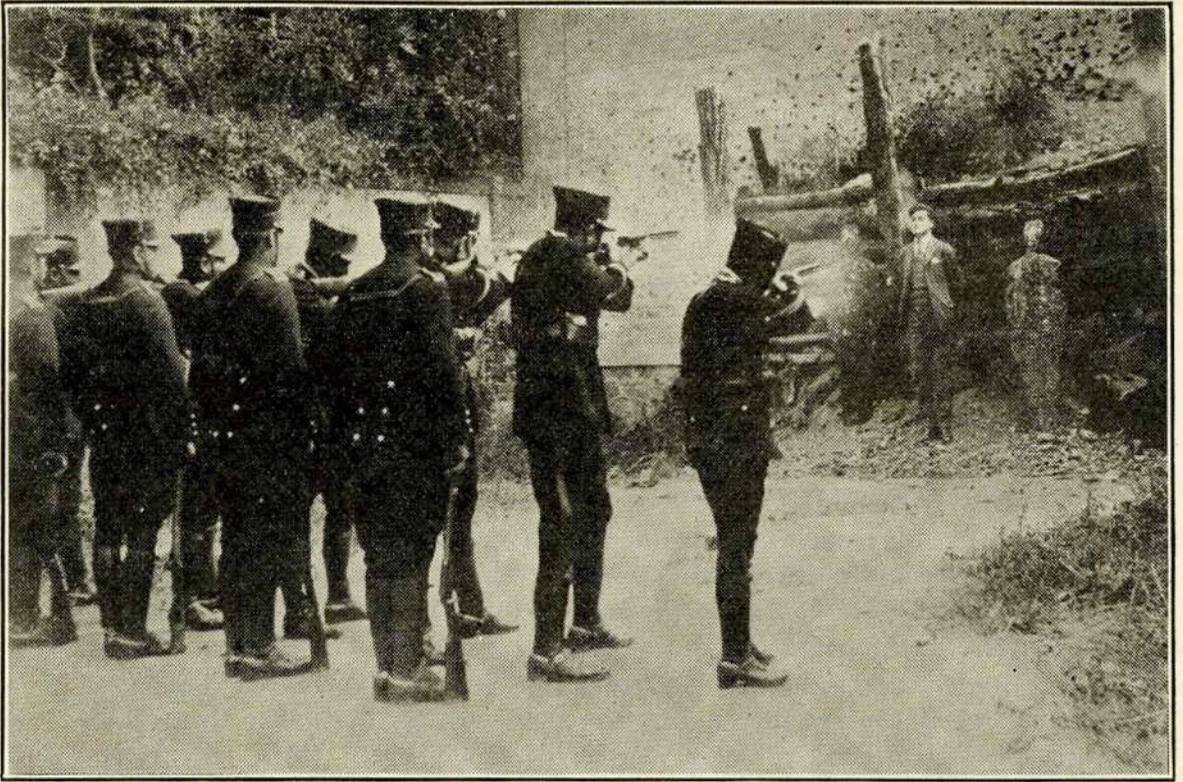
about! March!" The first group of soldiers advanced to take a position at the proper distance, in front of the targets of the "stand." The head of the mounted police gave the order, "Load!" The soldiers loaded their weapons together, and then remained at attention, awaiting orders. Meanwhile the Chief of the Board of Safety went to the cells in the headquarters to bring out to the wall the first of those to be shot. It was Father Miguel Augustin Pro Juarez, S.J., the first of the innocent men who had the happiness to die. Before appearing in public, he took leave of his companions, saying: "Good-bye, my brother! Good-bye, my sons!" And as one of the jailers asked him if he forgave him, he answered: "I not only forgive you, but I am deeply grateful to you," and then embraced him.

He walked with a firm step, carrying his beads in his hand, and on arriving at the spot indicated, stood and bravely faced the soldiers. One of his executioners drew near to him to ask him to make known his last wish. The Father answered, "Allow me to pray." The request was granted; he knelt down, took into his hands a crucifix which he carried in his pocket and kissed it with all the love of a man who gives his life for his God.

The day on which a Jesuit pronounces the holy Vows by means of which he consecrates himself to his Lord, a crucifix is given him, which accompanies him as his best and most faithful friend throughout all his life. The martyr before dying was able to gaze upon this most beloved possession of his heart, and renew at the feet of his Master his oath of fidelity. What great happiness was his! He was going to die by martyrdom, as his King and Captain died under the ignominy of the cross.

After praying for two minutes, the Father arose and blessed his executioners, saying, "May God have mercy on you! Lord, you know that I am innocent; I forgive my enemies from the depth of my heart."

They asked him if he wished to be blindfolded, but he answered, "No." At the word, "Get ready!" he extended his arms in the form of a cross, and keeping his rosary in one hand and his crucifix in the other, he cried, not with the wild martial accent of other witnesses of our faith, but with the accents of the formula of consecration with which the priest sacrifices the Divine Victim, *Viva Cristo Rey!* After the fraction of a second, the command, "Aim!" was lost in the ringing report of the single volley. Five shots lodged in the breast of the priest, who collapsed and fell gently forward to the ground. He fell with his arms extended in the act of blessing. A sergeant gave him the *coup de grace* with a bullet through the head.



LUIS SEGURA—"I AM CERTAIN THAT IN A FEW MINUTES I SHALL
BE IN HEAVEN."



JUAN TIRADO—"I WISH TO SEE MY MOTHER."

While the martyrdom was going on, a voice was heard in the precincts of the headquarters, a woman's voice that begged and pleaded to be permitted to enter. It was Miss Ana Maria Pro, sister of the martyrs, who desired to see her brothers. In fulfillment of the order that the martyrs were not to speak with anybody before death, she was answered with a flat and inhuman refusal, and she had to be resigned to remain in the gates of the police headquarters and listen to the reports of the murderous weapons.

The engineer Vilchis was the second to be shot. He is said to have exclaimed a little before his execution, "I am certain that within a few minutes I shall be in Heaven." He appeared, accompanied by Mazcorro, and walked with great calmness, casting about him a look of indifference. On being called by name, he advanced to the wall. He looked at the body of Father Pro, and took his position at the right of those beloved remains. He refused to be blindfolded, and said that he had no wish to make known. As soon as he faced the squad, he put his arms behind his back, threw out his chest, and with a valor worthy of a soldier of Christ the King, said: "Gentlemen, I am ready." He lifted his eyes to Heaven, and the volley caused him to fall quickly to the earth.

A few minutes after the death of Segura, his mother arrived at the police headquarters to bring him his meal, altogether ignorant of what had taken place. When only a few steps from the body, the mother learned that her son had taken his flight to Heaven.

The third to be summoned to martyrdom was the young brother of Father Pro, Humberto. Passing in front of the spectators, he drew from the right pocket of his coat a little leather purse, and took from it a pious medal. Almost stumbling upon the body of his brother, he asked quietly, "Where shall I stand?" And he stood upon the spot pointed out to him. To comply with the order he had to step upon the still fresh blood of his beloved brother. Seeing in front of him the firing squad which was to take his life, he placed his hands in front of him, still holding the medal and never ceased to caress it. He would not have his eyes covered, and after looking at the soldiers, fixed his gaze upon the sky until the volley brought him lifeless to the ground.

And finally the turn of young Tirado came. He appeared wrapped in his blanket, and walked with difficulty because of a congestion in the lungs which he had contracted in the cell of the prison. The contrast with the firm and determined stride of his predecessors was notable. He was trembling and consumed with fever. The emotion produced by the sight of the bodies of his companions close to the wall was visible, and he asked where they were taking him. The only answer he got was to be shown the

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ing, kissed the face of his son. Then, seeing that there was a drop of blood on the martyr's forehead, he took his handkerchief and carefully wiped it off to keep afterwards as a precious possession. He did the same with the body of his other son, Humberto.

Shortly after, Miss Ana Maria Pro, sister of the martyrs, accompanied by several ladies, entered the amphitheater, and before that scene of grief, embraced and kissed her father with a great sob. Mr. Pro pushed her gently away, and, looking at her steadily in the eyes, said: "My daughter, there is nothing to weep for." And no more was said.

Later, Miss Josephine Segura arrived at the hospital to claim the body of her brother.

THE FINAL VICTORY

As soon as the bodies of Father Pro and his brother, Humberto, were brought to the home of their aged father, they were laid out in state.

On November 23, from five to eleven o'clock at night, at which hour the doors of the house were closed, and from six the next morning to half-past three in the afternoon, the hour of the funeral, many thousands passed through the room where the bodies rested, anxious to venerate the remains of the martyrs, to kiss the caskets, and to touch them with pieces of linen, rosaries, medals, and other pious objects.

In all those who came there was to be seen intense grief joined with a profound respect and deep devotion.

Many were the moving scenes that were enacted during these hours. I must content myself with mentioning the following. A lady of high social standing drew her little son of ten years by the hand, and with all the fervor of her Christian heart, said to him: "My son, look at these martyrs; I have brought you for that; engrave deeply on your memory what you see, so that when you grow up you will know how to give your life for the defense of the Faith of Christ, and to die as these men have died, blamelessly and bravely."

THE BRANDMARKS OF CHRIST'S OUTLAW.



THE BRANDMARKS OF CHRIST'S OUTLAW.

Without the least fear of the Government officials, one of the Jesuit fathers, a brother in Religion of the martyrs, clad in cassock and surplice, remained at the house, and in the presence of all recited the usual prayers of the Church. Various other priests recited the Office of the Dead, and celebrated holy Mass.

Throughout the night of the 23d-24th, the Blessed Sacrament reposed upon the coffins alternately, a scene which brought back to memory the venerable traditions of the catacombs.³

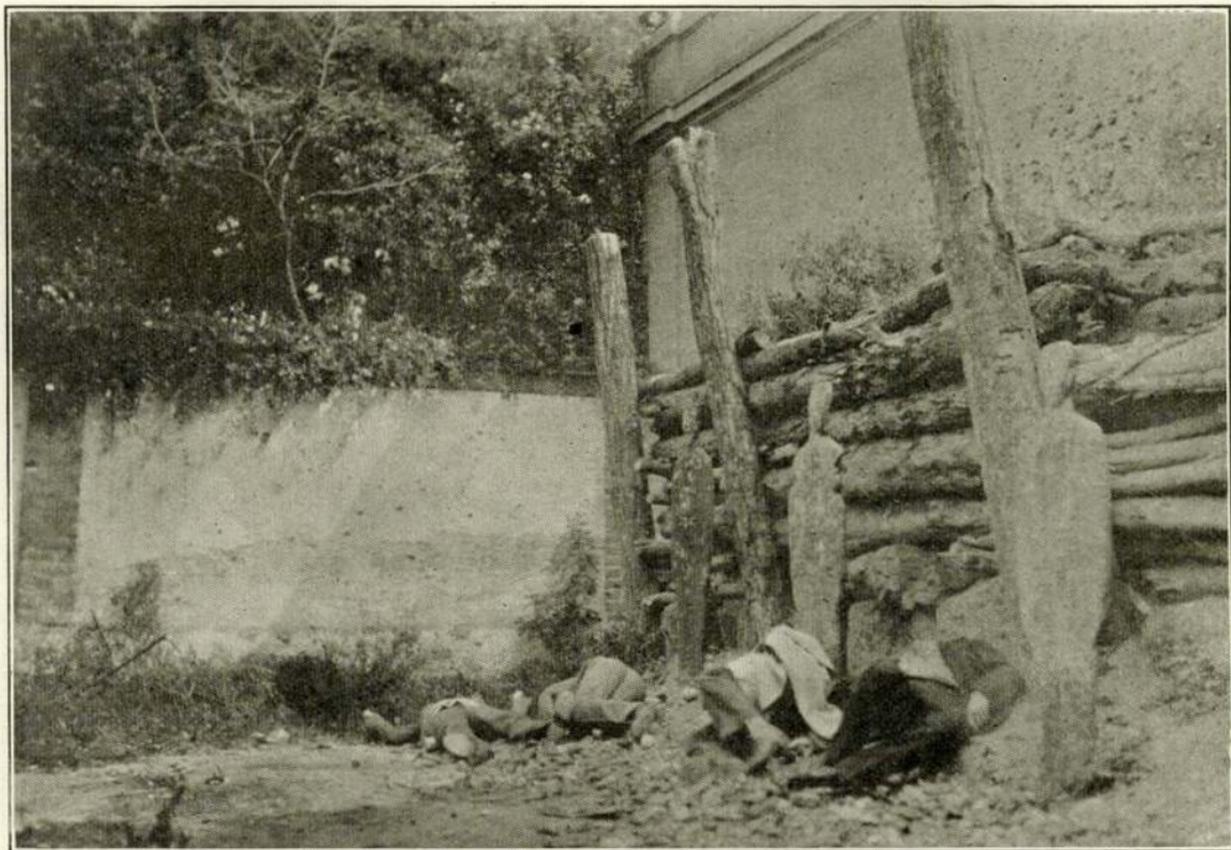
The father of the martyrs gave sublime proof of Christian fortitude, passing long hours on his knees before the bodies of his sons, resting his hands upon the coffin and buried in profound meditation. He evinced a noble pride in his sons, without any sign of hostility towards the murderers, or speaking ill of them.

On November 24, at half-past three in the afternoon, the hour for the burial, the clergy disputed with one another the honor of bearing the remains upon their shoulders as far as the hearses, which were the finest in the city. The hearse which was to bear the remains of the priest was entirely white.

In these moments grief was turned into joy, the funeral cortége into a triumphal march, a real Catholic outburst, such, perhaps, as has not been seen in the history of the nation. More than twenty thousand, defying the anger of the persecutors, and opening for themselves a way between bayonets, rushed out to acclaim Christ the King and the new martyrs.

The Catholics of the capital reënacted one of those pro-

³The reason for having His Divine Majesty in the home of the Pro's was because of a promise that at two o'clock in the morning, Roberto Pro, also a prisoner for Christ the King, would be permitted to come to visit the bodies of his brothers. We wished that he should be able, on this occasion, to receive Holy Communion. From eleven to twelve o'clock we had a very fervent "Holy Hour" with a sermon. Poor Roberto did not arrive, but the announcement of his promised visit gave us the royal presence of his "Great Friend" as he calls Him. (From a private letter.) Roberto Pro was reprieved at the last minute at the instance of a South American Ambassador, who had attempted, too late, to save the others also.



Humberto Luis Juan Fr. Pro

“ . . . BUT THEIR SOULS WERE WITH GOD!”

cessions of the Eternal City, the people filled with enthusiasm bearing in triumph the remains of their martyrs.

When the crowd caught sight of the remains of the martyrs, it felt itself swept by a great wave of enthusiasm and onrush of faith. The Spirit of God had taken possession of the multitude, filling it with fortitude. From the time the remains left the house until the crowd returned from the cemetery of Dolores led by Mr. Pro, it never ceased from its prayers, hymns, and enthusiastic cries of *Viva Cristo Rey!* They cried, "Long live the martyrs! Long live the Pope! Long live our Bishops! Long live our priests! Long live religion! Lord, if You wish martyrs, here is our blood, here are our lives!"

Traffic was interrupted at different points during the passage of the funeral, and the street cars were emptied as the passengers got out to swell the ranks of the marchers.

Along the line of march a perfect wall was formed of those who came out to assist at the interment, and the streets and avenues were carpeted with flowers.

As soon as they left the central part of the city, men took the bodies from the hearses and carried them upon their shoulders to the grave. On seeing this, all those who were riding in automobiles, got out of their cars to traverse the rest of the way on foot.

Owing to the immense crowd that took part in the manifestation, the funeral was some three hours in reaching the cemetery. On its arrival at the hill of Dolores, the vast crowd that could be seen scattered over the level ground was probably greater even than the crowd that was ascending the hill.

When the two sections joined in the broad way the enthusiasm became indescribable; enthusiasm and fervor, a strange mingling of triumph and of mourning which characterized the afternoon. Hymns and canticles to Christ the King were taken up again with the effect that a cataract of voice seemed to be hurling itself down from the summit of the height of Dolores, flowing throughout the valley, engulfing in its passage the neighboring Alcazar de Chapultepec,⁴ and throwing into consternation, without doubt, its Olympian

⁴President Calles' residence. (Translator.)

master, whose secret hatred in spite of himself had caused that public manifestation. . . .

While the body of the priest was being placed in the vault of the Society of Jesus, a profound silence fell upon the enthusiastic multitude, but as soon as the body was deposited, the enthusiasm was renewed and burst all bounds at a sudden shout of "Long live the first Jesuit martyr of Christ the King!"

In the midst of songs they came to the grave destined for young Humberto. Again an interval of silence while the grave was being blessed and the body let down.

Mr. Miguel Pro, standing close to the grave, heart-broken, but full of resignation and hope, took the spade into his trembling hands to cast the first clumps of the earth which must cover the remains of his martyr-son. Before withdrawing from the cemetery, he begged the priests who had accompanied him, to intone the Te Deum in thanksgiving. It was recited in a low chant with voices broken by sobs.

The graves were transformed into veritable mountains of flowers. The Faithful remained close by singing and praying until they were obliged to leave, as the night was falling and the gates of the cemetery had to be closed.

The funeral of the engineer Segura Vilchis took place at the same hour, but at the cemetery of Tepeyac, very close to the shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe. The chief mourner was the mother of the martyr, accompanied by her attendants, friends, and a large crowd of her son's admirers.

The sumptuous casket was borne on the shoulders of six men, the martyr's closest friends in life. The same love and enthusiasm characterized the shouts and acclamations here as at the same hour characterized the manifestation at the cemetery of Dolores.

The homage given to the engineer-martyr far surpassed any that has been given in these days even to persons of great note.

The burial of the workman Tirado took place the following day. His aged parents had no knowledge of the death of their son, until some pious ladies, knowing that the

body lay unclaimed at the hospital, made them acquainted with his death.

They found the parents in a miserable cottage in the poorer section of the city. The father is old and blind.

The account of the burial is given, in part, by *Excelsior*, in its issue of November 26; but it does not tell all. Its account is as follows:

At half-past ten in the morning, a well-known undertaking establishment sent one of its most sumptuous hearses to this miserable cottage with two vehicles for flowers, and two carriages for the mourners. A large cortége was formed, at the head of which were the parents of Tirado and a group of Catholic ladies who had undertaken to bear the expenses of the funeral. The body was laid in a beautiful casket of black silk, and his mortal remains were lowered into a grave close to the one just opened for Humberto Pro.

With these glorious manifestations the Catholics of the capital of the Mexican Republic have shown to the whole world that Catholicism in spite of the cruel persecution has not died in their country; that Mexico has not sent up a cry of agony, but a shout of victory; that the blood of martyrs is truly the seed of Christians. And to the Government that is persecuting the Church, they have shown that a Christian people is not easily deceived by a calumny, and that those whom it has wished to honor are innocent, and will stand forth in the history of their country among the most glorious of their national heroes.

EPILOGUE

The following are extracts from a letter written to the editor of this pamphlet by one who took part in all the incidents herein narrated:

The three Pro brothers were arrested on November 18, 1927, very early in the morning. They were still asleep when suddenly the door burst in and there entered without any excuses the police agents Alvaro Basail and A. Quintana, followed by a strong force of soldiers, all with pistols drawn to intimidate the inmates of the room and to shut off any resistance. The prisoners were not allowed to leave their beds until the premises had been searched, in vain, for arms

and incriminating documents. The three brothers, who had long lived under the shadow of pursuit, realized the gravity of their situation, and hence Humberto asked his brother the priest to hear his confessions. Basail, who heard the request, said he could not permit that, but the Reverend Father paid no attention to him and withdrawing to a quiet corner of the room, told his brother to kneel down. The confession heard, he also heard his brother Roberto. He then told both to kneel again for his blessing and in a quiet voice said to them: "From this moment let us offer our lives to God for the Church in Mexico, and let us do it, all three, in such a way that God may accept from us the sacrifice." . . . In prison they were at first all in the same cell. Once alone, they began to consider what they were to say to the judges, but immediately Miguel said: "No; we will not arrange that; God said that when we met our judges we were not to hesitate to answer, for the Holy Ghost would aid us." And so it was agreed; they recommended themselves anew to God, and then forgetting the seriousness of their plight, they began to sing happily, to joke and to converse just as they would have at any other time. Later they were each examined separately and then held *incomunicado*, though Roberto (the youngest) was locked up near his brother Miguel. They remained serene, and did not cease to declare that they had had absolutely nothing to do with the attempted murder.

During the six days that they remained in prison, they never left off their feelings of happiness, and talked to each other with loud voices. Miguel said the rosary, and his brothers answered, as did many others there confined. Father Pro made himself loved by everybody, even his jailers; he shared his food with the soldiers, gave them cigarettes, in fact was like one of them, a companion and a friend. One of his jailers submitted to him his doubts about religion and about being allowed to belong to a forbidden society. Father Pro immediately, with characteristic charity and zeal, set about converting the man. He succeeded; after his death, the man returned to the Church.

Came the day set by God for them to receive the crown of martyrdom. As before, they were tranquil, happy. About an hour before the execution, with a presentiment of what was to happen, though nothing was said to them, Father Pro turned to his brother Roberto and said: "This morning all three of us are going to be shot. Don't worry; rather let us thank God that we have been chosen, let us renew our offering, and let us pardon our enemies." When the moment came, and the Chief came to call them, he found them joking among themselves and jumping up and down to get warm, for the cold was great and inaction had slowed their circulation.

When he was called, Miguel went out as he had entered, without his sweater, which he had taken off to be more free in his movements. They sent him back for it, and when he returned his brother Roberto helped him to put it on. As Roberto was fixing it for him, Miguel gave him a little pat on the arm, as if to signify his self-mastery. He sallied forth from the prison without a word of protest or of violence. . . . What happened after that you already know. [As stated above, Roberto was reprieved at the last moment.]

Martyrs of Christ the King, bless Mexico!

THOUGHT

A Quarterly of The Sciences and Letters

In June, 1926, the first number of THOUGHT, a new Quarterly of the sciences and letters, appeared. This magazine is edited by members of the Society of Jesus and is intended to be a review of current thought and modern problems, and a clearing-house for scholarly work. It carries articles of sustained and thoughtful character, presenting the subject in an analytical and constructive manner.

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MEXICO!

On October 12, 1928, the semi-official Vatican organ, *Osservatore Romano*, referring to an article in a then recent issue of *America* said:

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