

GARCIA MORENO.

PRÉSIDENT DE L'ÉQUATEUR, VENGEUR ET MARTYR DU DROIT CHRÉTIEN.

(1821-1875) Par le R. P. A. Berthe, C.SS.R.

HERE are few who do not remember the name of this remarkable man whom God gave to our century in order that society, trampled under foot by revolution should see in him the sublime type of a Catholic ruler and the advantages accruing from a Christian policy. Yet many who have treasured up his name, and even wept over his sad fate at the hands of Freemasonry, know very little about his deeds, and would be almost tempted to overlook the statesman in their admiration of the saintly martyr.

Thanks to the Rev. Father Berthe, Garcia Moreno's peaceful conquests will be henceforth known to the whole world: his book is a worthy monument to the Christian hero, as a short analysis will prove.

In his preface the author unfolds before his readers the origin and leading events of Ecuador, Columbia and Peru. Bolivar's portrait and deeds are vividly outlined, as well as the unfortunate condition into which these republics were soon to fall at the hands of ambitious and cruel revolutionists.

Then appears Garcia Moreno. Born of a noble but very poor family, he received his early instruction from a good old priest of the Order of Mercy. When fifteen years of age he was sent by him to Quito, and while a student there he showed himself as pious in his disposition as he was zealous in his studies. His vast and powerful genius soon mastered law, mathematics and chemistry and won for him the admiration of his teachers.

Scarcely had he taken his place among his fellow-students when he revealed himself as a future statesman. Appointed a study master by the learned Bonavetura Prona, professor of literature in the University of Quito, he, although but fifteen years of age, could, by his grave countenance, his vigilance and his inflexible in-

tegrity, maintain order among the students and at the same time win the affection of all.

Every day he gave a proof of his wonderful memory by calling, without any list whatever, the names of more than three hundred students and giving each one of them the number of marks he had deserved.

One of the most remarkable qualities of Garcia Moreno, which helped him most in the fulfilment of his difficult mission, was his fearless firmness in the midst of danger. One day, relates Berthe, he was taking a walk in the country; he sat down to read a book under the shade of a steep declivity, suddenly looking up he saw a big stone hanging over his head and almost detached from the mountain. At first Garcia leaped from his position, but soon, ashamed of his fear, he went back, sat down in the same place and remained there for a whole hour. It was not enough, in his estimation: as long as he did not feel that he had fully controlled his fear he returned to the same spot and at last succeeded completely. Who would wonder, after this, that such a man could later on pass over the sayings of men, and even walk quietly in the midst of threats, even in sight of death?

After he had completed his studies and become a lawyer Garcia Moreno was soon obliged to take part in the political movements of his country; he fought valiantly with both the pen and the sword. *The Whip* and the *Devil*, two papers edited by him, one under the supervision of Flores, the other with Rocafuerte as editor-in-chief, proclaim by their very names the vigor with which he rose against ambitious adventurers and tyrannical oppressors of the Republic. Afterwards he published the *Nation* against the despotic President Urbina. Seized by the myrmidons of the latter, condemned to exile, he succeeded in escaping from the hands of his captors.