

metres above the level of the sea, and favoured by the most delicious climate all the year round. Here the greater part of the population of Ecuador is concentrated. There stands Quito, the capital of the country, and other important towns like Cuenca, Riobamba, Abato, Ibarra and others. Here also are the great farms called *haciendas*, often as large as an English county, upon which are pastured three or four thousand head of cattle, and fifteen or twenty thousand sheep.

“When we leave this high ground and descend the slopes of the Andes, towards the east, we come to the immense plain called the Napo, full of virgin forests and inhabited by two hundred thousand savage Indians. This is a brief description of the country where the interesting life of Garcia Moreno was passed, and where he died a martyr.”

But as it is not for the mere material prosperity of Ecuador that the Holy Father wishes us to pray during this present month, but for its moral and religious welfare, the consideration of the natural features of the country is little calculated to enlist our sympathies for a nation which God has blessed with a dwelling place, one would fancy, resembling more the Garden of Eden than any other region on the face of the earth. Other nations there are, indeed, which stand far more in need of our prayers in this respect, and for which the necessities of life are a matter of every-day anxiety and care.

To excite our sympathy as Catholics and as Associates of the Apostleship of Prayer other more weighty reasons must be invoked, and we must give heed for the nonce to the present precarious condition of our fellow Catholics in that country, to the vicissitudes through which the cause of religion has passed, its noble struggles in that country, its days of glory and gladness followed by its period of trial, suffering and mourning.

“The history of the people,” says Lady Herbert, “goes back to the very first centuries of our era. But in the