

## GARCIA MORENO,

PRESIDENT DE L'EQUATEUR, VENGEUR ET MARTYR DU DROIT CHRETIEN, (1821-1875),  
PAR LE R. P. A. BERTHE, C. S. S. R.

(Concluded.)

WHILE creating literary and scientific schools, Garcia Moreno also gave his attention to, and founded several charitable institutions, such as the Good Shepherd's, for fallen women, and entered upon the reform of the prisons. Besides an assiduous and prudent religious teaching, he introduced amongst the prisoners manual labour, and a sound elementary training; and at the end of every year the President, in full dress, and surrounded by the most distinguished personages, went to the jail, and proceeded to a scholastic examination, putting the questions himself, and all wondered at the progress of the prisoners, and at their good appearance. At the close of each visit the President bestowed rewards upon the most deserving students, lessening the punishment of some, and even setting at liberty the one who, more than others, had signalized himself by his good conduct. The prisoners applauded heartily, and many shed tears of joy. They could hardly understand how the President of the State could thus condescend to alleviate their misery, and henceforth they rivalled each other in meriting his precious favours.

Generally, prisons are peopled by men so hardened by crime that they are scarcely freed from one penalty ere they deserve another. The following fact shows the efficacy of the penitentiary system of Garcia Moreno. For seven years he had been endeavouring to construct a model reformatory in place of the unhealthy prisons of Quito, but when the building was completed there were no prisoners to occupy it. In the whole Province of Quito, but fifty convicts could be found.

If such was the solicitude of this Christian President for prisoners, we can easily believe that he was untiring in his efforts to procure comfort for the sick in the hospitals. He was accustomed to pay them not merely annual, but daily visits.

From the very commencement of his Presidency he took upon himself the office of director of the largest hospital, and every day he went there, and watched over the employees and servants himself. He would go around the halls, read the medical prescriptions, teach the infirmarians how to prepare medicines, or how to bandage a wound, and the slightest carelessness was always severely punished.

The lepers having complained of their board, Gracia Moreno appeared one day, unexpectedly, at their table, and finding their complaints well grounded, he gave orders that the diet should be improved. Returning a second time, and seeing his order complied with, he was about to retire, satisfied, when one of these poor creatures followed him, with a renewal of the complaint. "My dear friend," said the President, "do you know that I, the President of the Republic, am not so well attended to?"

It is related that at the beginning of his presidency, his wife remarked to him that it would be convenient on that occasion to entertain at dinner the ministers, diplomatists and other men of note. He answered that his private purse could not stand the expense, and as to his salary as President, one half would be given to the state, which was even poorer than himself, and the other half to charitable works. The noble and rich lady willingly offered to take upon herself all the expenses, and handed him 500 dollars. Garcia Moreno took the money, went to the hospital, supplied the most pressing needs of his dear poor, and with the money remaining provided them with a good dinner. On his return his wife asked him if the sum proved sufficient. He answered, laughing heartily, "Yes, indeed. I thought however that a good dinner would prove more beneficial to the sick than to the diplomatists; accordingly I brought my