

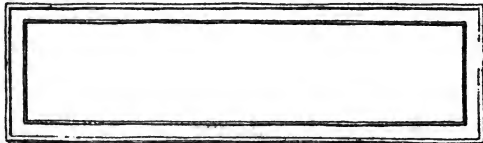
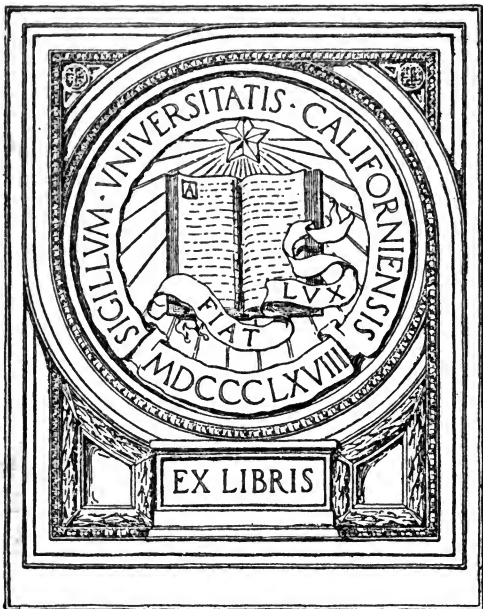
UC-NRLF

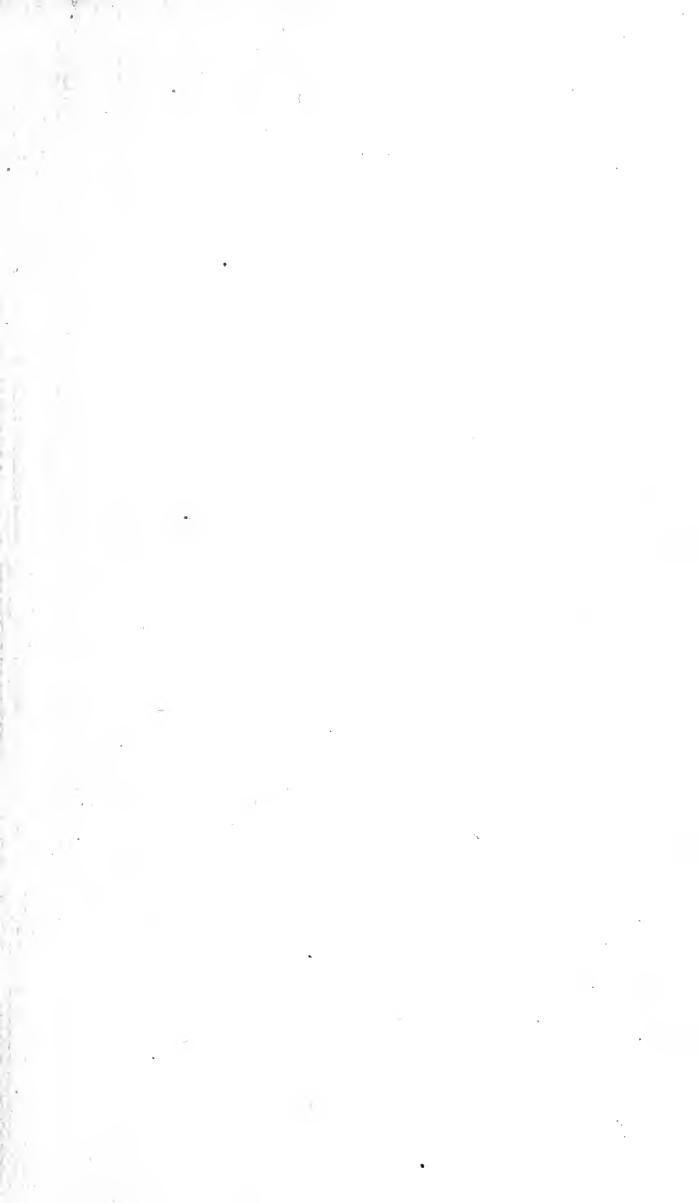


5B 605 383



GIFT OF
JANE K. SATHER





Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2008 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

The St. Nicholas Series

EDITED BY THE REV. DOM BEDE CANN, O.S.B.

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO



Nihil Obstat.

D. BEDA CAMM

Censor Deputatus

Imprimatur:

✠ GULIELMUS *Episcopus Arindelensis*

Vicarius Generalis

WESTMONASTERII,

die 14 Januarii, 1908.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40
41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50
51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60
61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70
71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80
81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100



A. J. ... 1902.

"The President . . . laden with the precious burden, walked through the streets." [P. 127]

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

REGENERATOR OF ECUADOR

BY THE

HONBLE. MRS. MAXWELL-SCOTT



THIRD EDITION

R. & T. WASHBOURNE, LTD.
PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON

AND AT MANCHESTER, BIRMINGHAM, AND GLASGOW

1914

All rights reserved

F3735
G3M3

TO MR
ANDREW

History - Sather

BOOKS FOR HOME READING AND PRIZES

The St. Nicholas Series

EDITED BY THE REV. DOM BEDE CAMM, O.S.B.

LIST OF VOLUMES

- BARNABY BRIGHT. By REV. DAVID BEARNE, S.J. (2 vols.)
- THE STORY OF BLESSED THOMAS MORE. By A NUN OF TYBURN CONVENT.
- FATHER MATHEW. By KATHARINE TYNAN.
- JEANNE D'ARC: THE MAID OF FRANCE. By C. M. ANTONY.
- ST. THOMAS OF CANTERBURY. By MGR. ROBERT HUGH BENSON.
- VITTORINO DA FELTRE: A PRINCE OF TEACHERS. By A SISTER OF NOTRE DAME.
- THE LEGEND OF ST. CHRISTOPHER. By REV. CYRIL MARTINDALE, S.J.
- GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO. By the HON. MRS. MAXWELL-SCOTT.
- CARDINAL WILLIAM ALLEN. By REV. DOM BEDE CAMM, O.S.B.
- BLESSED EDMUND CAMPION. By LOUISE IMOGEN GUINEY.
- CARDINAL POLE. By C. M. ANTONY.
- THE MAN'S HANDS. By REV. R. P. GARROLD, S.J.
- THE STORY OF THE ENGLISH POPE. By F. M. STEELE.
- MADGE-MAKE-THE-BEST-OF-IT. By M. E. FRANCIS.
- FATHER DAMIEN OF MOLOKAI. By MAY QUINLAN.

Each volume is in Foolscap 8vo., and has Six Illustrations reproduced by the three-colour process.

Price per volume, 2s. net.

740939



CONTENTS

CHAP.		PAGE
	INTRODUCTION	I
I.	YOUTH OF THE HERO	5
II.	PARIS	19
III.	THE FIGHT FOR FREEDOM	27
IV.	EFFORTS AT REFORM	41
V.	THE RE-UNION OF ECUADOR WITH THE HOLY SEE	53
VI.	MOSQUERA AND MALDANO	63
VII.	URBINA ONCE MORE	75
VIII.	HOME LIFE	87
IX.	THE PRESIDENT	99
X.	WORK FOR SOULS	117
XI.	INNER LIFE	135
XII.	THE HERO'S DEATH	151
XIII.	CONCLUSION	165

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

“THE PRESIDENT . . . LADEN WITH THE PRECIOUS BURDEN, WALKED THROUGH THE STREETS” . . .	<i>Frontispiece</i>
“THE SOLDIER THREW HIMSELF ON HIS KNEES TO IMPLORE HIS PAR- DON”	<i>face p.</i> 32
THE SIGNING OF THE CONCORDAT	,, 64
“THEN, MY CHILDREN, LET US KNEEL DOWN AND SAY THE ROSARY TO- GETHER”	,, 112
THE CONSECRATION OF ECUADOR TO THE SACRED HEART	,, 144
THE ASSASSINATION OF GARCIA MORENO	,, 160

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

1821-1875

INTRODUCTION

THE early history of Ecuador, the country which has the glory of counting Gabriel Garcia Moreno among its sons, is little known to us. In the fifteenth century, however, that portion of South America was conquered by the Incas of Peru, who, after forty years, were in their turn dispossessed by the Spaniards. At first the Spanish kings did their duty faithfully to their new possessions. Bishops and

¹ The authorities for this little Life are "Garcia Moreno"—*Le Héros Martyr, édition abrégée, par Père Berthe, Paris, 1896*; "Garcia Moreno," by Lady Herbert; and "Great Catholic Laymen," by John J. Horgan, Dublin, 1905.

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

priests were sent to evangelize the country, and civilization and religion united to secure its prosperity, but in the following century everything was changed; the wise advice given by Columbus regarding the treatment of the poor natives here and elsewhere was disregarded, and the inhabitants were enslaved by a multitude of grasping speculators and place-hunters, who, having decimated them by their cruelties, imported black slaves from Africa and established the slave trade which it has taken three centuries to abolish. In course of time followed the abolition of the Missions, the expulsion of the Jesuits and other religious orders, and the people, gradually reduced to a state of desperation, revolted against Spain who lost, one by one, all her South American colonies, till Bolivar finally drove the Spaniards from the country in 1817. But though successful in this, the tyranny of revolution succeeded to Spanish rule and, unable to stem the torrent, Bolivar died of a broken heart in 1830. The total dismemberment of the colony followed, each state set up for itself as an independent Re-

INTRODUCTION

public, of which one was Ecuador. This State is twice the size of France, and is bounded by Colombia to the north, Peru to the south, Brazil and Peru to the east, and the Pacific Ocean to the west. It comprises three departments subdivided into ten provinces with a population of about 1,000,000, including many still savage Indian tribes who inhabit the forests east of the Andes.

Nature has richly endowed this land, which, however, until Moreno's day, was practically inaccessible to the ordinary traveller. The formation of the country is similar to that of Peru; a strip of sea-coast lies to the west, and towards the east an immense slope broken by mountain ranges, while in the centre two great chains of the Andes enclose a lofty plateau. From it flow many rivers, several of them uniting with the *Guayas* estuary on the west, and the *Napo* on the east. Among the chief mountains in Ecuador is the famous *Chimborazo*, about 20,000 feet high, "sealed by a dome of snow and ice"; the volcano *Pichincha*, whose burning crater was pronounced by

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

Humboldt to offer the finest spectacle he had ever seen, and *Cotopaxi*, another volcano somewhat resembling the Japanese mountain *Fugiyama*.

The capital town of Ecuador, Quito, stands in the central plain, over 9,000 feet above the sea, and is built on the site of an ancient Inca city said to have possessed half a million of inhabitants. Here the climate by day is a perpetual spring although the nights are cold, but on the coast the temperature and vegetation are tropical. This rich tract of country is thickly covered with palms, groves of coco-nuts, and gardens of pine-apples, said to be unrivalled in flavour; and even the wild jungle is rendered beautiful by the flaming scarlet of the passion-flower creepers.

Such is the country and such the conditions of society into which our hero was born, and it is easy to understand his reply to a friend, who many years later asked him to write a history of Ecuador: "It would be easier to make one," he answered, and this it was his privilege to do.

CHAPTER I

YOUTH OF THE HERO

The better Portion didst Thou choose Great Heart.
Cardinal Newman.

O Constancy!

Where thou art wanting all our gifts are naught,
Friend of the Martyrs—both of those who die
And those who live; beneath that steadfast eye—
The breastplates and the beaming helms were
wrought

Of all our far-famed Christian Chivalry.

Aubrey de Vere.

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO was born at Guayaquil, one of the chief ports on the Pacific coast, on Christmas Eve, 1821, and was the youngest child of Don Gabriel Garcia Gomez, a native of Villaverde in old Castille, and of Donna Mercedes, daughter of Don Manuel Ignatius Moreno, Knight of the Order of Charles III and perpetual Director of the Chapel of Guayaquil. Both were devout and amiable,

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

and they were much blest in their children. Gabriel had four brothers and three sisters, most of whom were already settled in life when he was born. Great family sorrows overshadowed his childhood. His father sustained heavy pecuniary losses, and died suddenly, leaving his family in poverty and desolation. Gabriel, whose early education had been entirely undertaken by his mother, had just begun to go to school, but the poor widow could no longer afford the expense. In this difficulty a friend, Father Bétancourt, undertook the boy's education, and found in him an eager and intelligent pupil.

Even in these early years Gabriel was initiated into the political troubles of his country, for before he was nine years old Guayaquil had passed through four successive forms of Government, while bombardments and street fights served to familiarize him with danger and added to his acquired courage. Strange to say, he who was to be the bravest of the brave was timid and fearful by nature, a weakness which his father strove, and successfully, to overcome by very heroic

YOUTH OF THE HERO

methods.¹ Alluding to his native town and its frequent revolutions, Gabriel once said, "I know of only two good things in it—my Mother . . . and bananas." His devotion to his mother was indeed one of his chief characteristics through life.

When the time came for Gabriel to go to the University at Quito, a sister of Father Bétancourt's living in that city offered him a room in her house from which he could attend the classes, and in September, 1836, he left home to begin what proved to be a brilliant scholastic career; during his first year at the University he won the esteem and regard of his masters and the friendship of his companions. He took up a course comprising philosophy, mathematics, and natural sciences, and showed such talent that the Government placed a free Burse at his disposal on condition that he should continue the professorship of grammar

¹ On one occasion Señor Garcia Gomez made his son stand, alone, on a balcony during a terrific storm, and on another, he sent him to light a candle by a corpse at night.

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

while still following the course of philosophy.

His great and very practical piety struck everyone, and at this time he fancied that God called him to the ecclesiastical state, actually receiving the Tonsure and Minor Orders. His mother rejoiced at this hope, and his eldest brother, already a priest, had offered to pay the expenses of his training, when Gabriel suddenly became absorbed by a passion for science which seemed for the time to close his thoughts to all other hopes and plans. He determined to learn *everything*, and from his strength of will we can understand how he succeeded afterwards in becoming at the same time a great orator, a profound historian, an excellent linguist, a poet, and an "incomparable statesman." At this early age he lived the life of a student and recluse, his only relaxation being the study of foreign languages and especially of English and French.

At the age of twenty, although his piety had in no way diminished, Moreno was advised to abandon the idea of becoming a

YOUTH OF THE HERO

priest, and was told he could serve God more effectively in public life: that he could be "A Bishop in the World"—strangely prophetic words for one who was eventually to help his country to be a truly Christian state and re-unite her to the Holy See. Moreno therefore chose the Law for his profession and at twenty-three obtained the rank of doctor. He did not long practise, but he never refused to plead the cause of the poor and oppressed. Accomplished in the best sense of the word, Moreno also possessed great personal attractions; tall and with regular features, intelligence beamed in his large, dark eyes, while his frank and loyal expression won all hearts. An intrepid and somewhat fiery character almost led him on one occasion into a youthful duel, but in other ways it aided him to train himself to great endurance.

In 1848 he married Doña Rosa Ascusabi, a young lady of noble birth. She was clever and charming, and their union was one of great happiness, saddened only by the storms of public life and the many separa-

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

tions which Moreno's duties rendered necessary.

We must now try to understand the political position of Ecuador, which for years had been, and still was, absolutely revolutionary, and the history of which is very confusing to the historian. At the beginning of the Republic, General Flores, one of Bolivar's chief officers, had been elected President, to be succeeded by a mere adventurer named Roccafuerte. In 1844 Flores, who again resumed office, determined to make a *coup d'état* and to secure a new constitution which would make him absolute ruler. To this the people might have agreed had not Flores, who was in league with the Freemasons, shown great intolerance against the Catholic Church and its ministers. For this reason the country rose *en masse* to oppose him, and patriotic societies were formed in every town and village to organize resistance against the new laws.

To such events Moreno could not remain indifferent. He was but twenty-three, but

YOUTH OF THE HERO

in consequence of his ability, eloquence, and high character, he was quickly surrounded by young men of the best families whom he prepared for active resistance. When the protest of the clergy against their exclusion from the Legislative Chamber was treated with contempt, and the Government issued a *ukase* commanding everyone to take an oath to the Constitution, civil war broke out in earnest. The Patriots seized Guayaquil and a Provisional Government was formed consisting of Olivedo Roca Noboa, and other eminent persons, who pronounced sentence of banishment upon Flores. The latter at first endeavoured to stand his ground with his troops at Elvira, but, at last, unable to resist the army and the nation, he capitulated, stipulating that he should lose neither his dignities nor his property, and should go into exile for two years.

Moreno had been foremost in this crisis. Struck by the influence he exercised the Provisional Government confided to him the delicate task of levying a special tax to pay

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

the troops, as the Treasury was empty. He was completely successful and absolutely refused all payment for his services, counting personal sacrifices as nothing if he could help to rescue his country from the despotism of her late rulers.

During the next troubles caused by the illegal election of Roca as President, Moreno essayed to unmask the corruption of the Ministry by starting a humorous paper called *El Zurriago* (The Whip) which by its original and powerful satires delighted the Patriots while arousing much indignation in the opposite camp. The discontent of the people was daily increasing, when a fresh turn of events caused all parties to unite against a common danger. General Flores had quitted Ecuador, humiliated but not discouraged, and in his exile he planned, with the support of Spain, to equip a body of mercenary troops and reconquer the country. Reports of his intention reached Ecuador and caused alarm there, and throughout the South American States. Moreno saw that the moment had come to

YOUTH OF THE HERO

sacrifice party spirit and to unite for the defence of the country, and he offered his services to the President, who gladly accepted them.

He started a new paper—*The Avenger*—which appealed to the patriotism not only of Ecuador but to that of all the States, boldly calling them to arms. The appeal was answered by a burst of enthusiasm from all the Republics. So warlike was the league that the ships and men which Flores had collected ready to start from England were forbidden by Lord Palmerston to set sail, and the Ex-President was forced to give up his expedition.

His followers in Ecuador still hoped for success, however, and before long raised the standard of revolt in Guayaquil. Garcia Moreno was sent to restore order and in a week he crushed the conspiracy and re-established peace. He once more refused any reward for his services. He had served Roca from patriotic motives, but wished to accept nothing from a Government that he despised. In a new paper *El Diabolo*, in

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

which its misdoings were severely criticized, he explained his own position. "I am neither a ministerialist nor a place-hunter," he wrote, "never having chosen to sell myself for money, nor am I a soldier boasting of the blows I have given or received. I am simply the friend of an unfortunate people who have no defenders against the devils who oppress them, and I will fight to the death against those who martyrize or betray them."

About this time a new figure appears in our history, General Urbina, socialist and adventurer, who, after being twice exiled for intriguing against the State, finally succeeded in becoming influential owing to the election of his friend Noboa to the Presidency in 1850.

Moreno took no part in these fresh troubles, for, wearied by the political warfare, he had left for Europe in the previous year. He travelled through England, France, and Germany, living on his own meagre private fortune, and earnestly studying the political state of those countries, all

YOUTH OF THE HERO

of which were suffering in a degree from the revolutionary outbreak of 1848. What struck him most was the return of France to religious ideas as the only possible hope for the country, and he went back to Ecuador firmly convinced that religion alone can save nations, and that a country without it must be the prey either of autocrats or of anarchists. On his return voyage he met, at Panama, a body of Jesuits who had just been expelled by the irreligious Government of Granada. He at once offered them a refuge in Ecuador, and Noboa received them gladly, although it was not till after a violent discussion that the Chambers ratified his consent. The people welcomed the Fathers with enthusiasm, and they were installed in the former Jesuit House in Quito.

Urbina immediately began to plot for their banishment and inspired the Government of Granada to demand it, but in vain. The Freemasons then published a furious pamphlet against the Society. To this Moreno wrote a magnificent reply entitled

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

Defenso de los Jesuitas, from which we have only space to quote a few noble words: "You pretend to exterminate the Jesuits out of love and for the greater glory of the Catholic Church. Falsehood and lies: you only strike at the Jesuits to attack Catholicism. It is an historical fact that all the enemies of the Church abhor the Society of Jesus." And again: "Ecuador will hold fast to the faith of our fathers. To defend it the clergy and people will not be deceived or yield to apathy or indifference. We will march to the fight under the guidance of Divine Providence. If, like the Hebrews, we have to pass through the Red Sea, God will open a path to His chosen people, and on the opposite shore we too shall lift up our voices in a hymn of triumph and deliverance."

This Defence silenced the Freemasons and was read throughout Ecuador. Urbina however bided his chance, and seizing the President in July, 1851, sent him to sea in a sailing vessel, in which he was kept wandering about for months while Urbina had himself installed as President. Under

YOUTH OF THE HERO

his rule theft, pillage, sacrileges, and murders became the order of the day and the Jesuits were again expelled.

At the time Moreno was laid up owing to an accident, but he once more tried to stem the horrors by his pen and started a weekly paper called *The Nation*. Urbina forbade the publication of a second number, on pain of arresting the Editor. Moreno published it without a moment's hesitation and two hours later he was arrested in the Plaza Mayor of Quito amidst the tears and indignation of the people. He was at once banished to Peru, but being promptly elected as Senator by the city of Guayaquil he returned to take his seat, but was again arrested by a flagrant breach of the Constitution and re-banished to Peru. He spent eighteen months at the Port of Payta devoting his time to study. "Once in solitude," says his biographer, "the passion for knowledge took possession of him anew," and made him forget everything else. Once only he broke the silence with which he had surrounded himself to publish an energetic

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

protest, when the wretched Urbina, in order to give some colouring to the decree of banishment, accused him of having conspired against the State.

In spite of the unsettled state of Ecuador and of all the horrors that had accompanied the different revolutions, Moreno did not despair of his Country's future. Owing mainly to his own efforts the people had not allowed themselves to be entirely dominated and although for the moment they seemed apathetic there were signs that they would make fresh efforts to preserve their religion and their liberty. In a dim way Moreno probably now also saw his own destiny shaping itself, and felt that he must prepare for the high duties which might await him. He determined once more to seek light and practical knowledge in Europe. He therefore quitted Payta and set sail for France towards the close of 1853, reaching Paris a month later.

CHAPTER II

PARIS

THE next two or three years were the most important in Moreno's career, and in studying his life during this period we watch with intense interest the development of a great character. He brought, as we may say, the talents and aspirations of the New World to learn from the wisdom and experience of the Old, and the result to his country, and to his own higher life, were remarkable. Paris, which to many is only a city of pleasure, offered in this sense no attractions to our hero. Possessed with the thought of his unhappy country, and by the secret presentiment that he might aid her in the struggle, he immersed himself in the studies necessary to fit him for his part. "In order to work for the regeneration of a nation one must ascend, not descend. This he realized, and Paris became to him

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

the Manresa where all the noble seeds planted by God in his heart received their full development.”¹

Moreno established himself in a modest lodging in the Rue de la Vieille-Comédie, far from the noise and traffic of the great city. He rose very early, worked all day, and the light of his lamp was seen far into the night. This hard, laborious life won him the respect of his neighbours, and offered a great contrast to the usual habits of the too famous *Quartier Latin*. At this time he wrote to one of his friends: “I work sixteen hours a day and if there were forty-eight hours in a day I would work for forty without flinching.” His one distraction was smoking, but one day when a fellow countryman was bidding him farewell on his return to Ecuador, Moreno insisted on giving him the supply of cigars he had brought from the Antilles, “Take them,” he said, “you will do me a great service. I must work—work always, and I do not wish to waste time over lighting those wretched cigars.”

¹ Life by Père Berthe, p. 76.

PARIS

Among the studies which he had continued from his youth, chemistry had a special attraction for him, and his first search, on reaching Paris, was for Masters, Instruments, and Laboratories. It was his good fortune to be accepted as a pupil by the distinguished naturalist Boussingault, who had himself, twenty years before, travelled in Ecuador, studied its volcanoes and even climbed Chimborazo. An American gentleman had had the same privilege for two years, and Boussingault remarked to Moreno that possibly he would find it hard to keep up with one who was already familiar with the subject of instruction. "We will try," replied Moreno, and in a few weeks he had reached his companion. Moreno diligently studied the political, military, literary, and industrial side of French life, and especially the Education question in the Colleges and Lycées, and in the elementary schools.

Paris, which offers to the world perhaps the greatest contrasts of good and evil of any city, brought to Moreno an inestimable gift. In his defence of the Jesuits he had said, "I

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

am a Catholic and proud of being one," but he had added these words: "Although I cannot count myself a fervent Christian." In the tumult of public life and amidst the excessive study to which he had devoted himself, he had remained indeed a practical Catholic and a loyal son of the Church, but his early piety had grown cold, and although his conscience often reproached him, he had lost sight of the "life of the soul" which a striking incident now brought back to him.

One day, when Moreno was walking in the Luxembourg gardens with some of his countrymen, exiles like himself, but whose religious views differed from his, the conversation turned upon the death of a wretched man who had refused the Sacraments on his deathbed. Some of those present defended his conduct, but Moreno affirmed that if irreligion is more easily understood during life, considering human weakness and the absorption of business, it becomes, when dying, a veritable monster. The others then attacked Catholicism with all the objections with which unbelief assails

PARIS

her dogmas, but they soon found that they had met more than their match. With ardent faith and pitiless logic Moreno reduced their arguments to nothing, and demonstrated to them not only the truth but the grandeur and ideal beauty of the Christian faith. He spoke with such enthusiasm and ability that one of his hearers, to stop the discussion, exclaimed: "You speak very well, my dear friend, but it seems to me that you rather neglect the practice of this beautiful religion. When did you last go to Confession?"

Disconcerted for a moment, Moreno bowed his head, but then, looking straight at his questioner, he replied: "You have answered me by a personal argument which may appear to you excellent to-day, but which will, I give you my word of honour, be worthless to-morrow."

Returning home in a turmoil of emotion, he meditated seriously over the years that had elapsed since the moment when, full of fervour, he had devoted himself to God's Service at the feet of the Bishop of Guayaquil. Almighty God had not called him to

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

the Priesthood, but was he not bound to love Him with all his heart and soul? Full of sorrow and remorse, he fell on his knees and prayed for a long time, and then went the same evening to Confession. Next morning he received Holy Communion, thanking God for the grace which had shown him his negligence and tepidity.

From this moment Moreno resumed his old pious habits, never again to neglect them. He was to be seen almost every morning at Mass at St. Sulpice before commencing work, and recited the Rosary daily. Another Church, that of the "Missions Etrangères" also became dear to him, and he might be seen there praying for the heroism which fears nothing in this world, even death itself, in the face of duty.

Moreno had watched with deep interest the march of events in France, and the change that the last few years had wrought. The spectacle of the power of one man, Napoleon III, to restore order after the revolutionary chaos of 1848 was not lost upon him. He felt that, with God's help, a

PARIS

strong, wise man may save a nation even from itself, and he prayed for strength and courage to save his own distracted country. He received a special light and assistance from the study of a book with which he first became acquainted at this time. Rohrbacher's *History of the Church* seems to have given him those high views of national polity which he was actually to realize in practice. He saw "that the Church is the Queen of the World whom kings and people must obey; that She is the head, and that harmony should ever exist between Her and the State by the subordination of the latter to Her." He understood that God's people have a right to be governed in a Christian manner, and that they cannot be deprived of the Church, without losing likewise liberty, progress, and civilization. Moreno was profoundly impressed by this History; he read its twenty-nine volumes three times over and, thanks to his wonderful memory, he would cite whole pages in support of his opinions.

His exile was now nearing a close and he was about to return to his country matured

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

and strengthened for the combat before him. But before concluding this part of his life we cannot but quote a few words from Louis Veuillot's eloquent tribute to our hero. "Alone and unknown in a foreign country, but sustained by his faith and his great heart, Garcia Moreno educated himself to reign if such were God's will. He learnt all he should know in order to govern a nation which had once been Christian, but was becoming almost uncivilized. . . . Paris Christian, but at the same time irreligious, offers the spectacle of a fight between the two camps. The future President and future Missioner of Ecuador thus saw before him good and evil. When he returned to his far country his choice was made. He knew where to find true glory—true strength—God's true workers. If we may indicate the spots which received his last farewell, and to which he was most attached, we would name his beloved Church of St. Sulpice, and possibly the humble Chapel of the Foreign Missions, to which he was in the habit of going to pray for his country."

CHAPTER III

THE FIGHT FOR FREEDOM

WHILE Moreno was thus preparing for his future responsibilities the state of Ecuador had become almost desperate. Urbina waged a regular war against religion, and against priests and religious. The convents were turned into barracks, and all ecclesiastical establishments secularized—the primary schools abolished, and the University itself brought to ruin by the fact that students were permitted by a new law to take degrees without study or examinations. Urbina created and dominated both legislative chambers, and the election of honest deputies was invalidated. In 1856, however, at the end of his term of office, General Roblez succeeded him as President, and one of his first acts was to issue an amnesty to political exiles, and in especial to grant a safe-conduct pass

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

for Garcia Moreno, thinking thus to gain the hearts of the people.

Hardly had Moreno set foot in his native country when every honour was showered upon him. The Municipality of Quito named him *Alcade*, or Supreme Judge, and presently, the office of Rector of the University falling vacant, the Professors elected him to fill this important post. Moreno devoted himself to the work of restoring the University to its proper position, stimulating the work of both teachers and students, and presiding himself at the examinations, where he saw that the awards were given only to those who had justly earned them.

The Faculty of Science existed only in name. The Government "considered experiments dangerous and in any case too expensive." Moreno therefore presented the University with the fine chemical laboratory which he had brought from Paris for his own use, and himself gave the lectures in this science which was almost unknown. His pupils very soon grew to appreciate his rare knowledge and talents, and his wonder-

THE FIGHT FOR FREEDOM

ful memory. To the daily lectures to the students he added public ones, when he demonstrated by interesting experiments the application of science to agriculture and manufacture, in a manner suited to the most ignorant hearers.

Everyone admired his devotion to science and his genius, but the young men especially looked up to him with an enthusiasm which eventually led them to follow his cause, and that of their country, to the death.

An opportunity for the great work of his life came to Moreno in the elections of May, 1857, when, in spite of armed intimidation and open corruption, he was returned by his countrymen at the head of a new independent party. At the first meeting of the Chambers he intervened in three matters of the highest importance. These were: the Capitation Tax on the Indians, which he succeeded in abolishing, the closing of the Masonic Lodges, and the repeal of the powers given to Urbina's Government.

This last step and Moreno's charges against him so incensed Urbina that he

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

gave orders to a band of his *Tauras* to go the following day to the Assembly and arrest the speaker, should he again attack his policy. This project got about, and Moreno's followers implored him not to go to the Chambers. Regardless of his danger, he of course refused to absent himself, and on entering the Senate was surrounded by a large party of young patriots, who had come from all quarters of the town to protect him in case of need. But he was, as usual, quite equal to the occasion. In the middle of a stern denunciation of the Government Moreno stopped and, pointing to the *Tauras*, denounced in thrilling tones Urbina's plots, and the baseness of the soldiers who had consented to act as assassins. His words had such an effect that the *Tauras* left the Senate trembling and abashed.

A short time before this Urbina and Roblez had declared war against Peru, and now, reckless of their own unpopularity and of the fact that a divided country cannot face a foreign foe, they resolved to abolish all parliamentary government and dissolved

THE FIGHT FOR FREEDOM

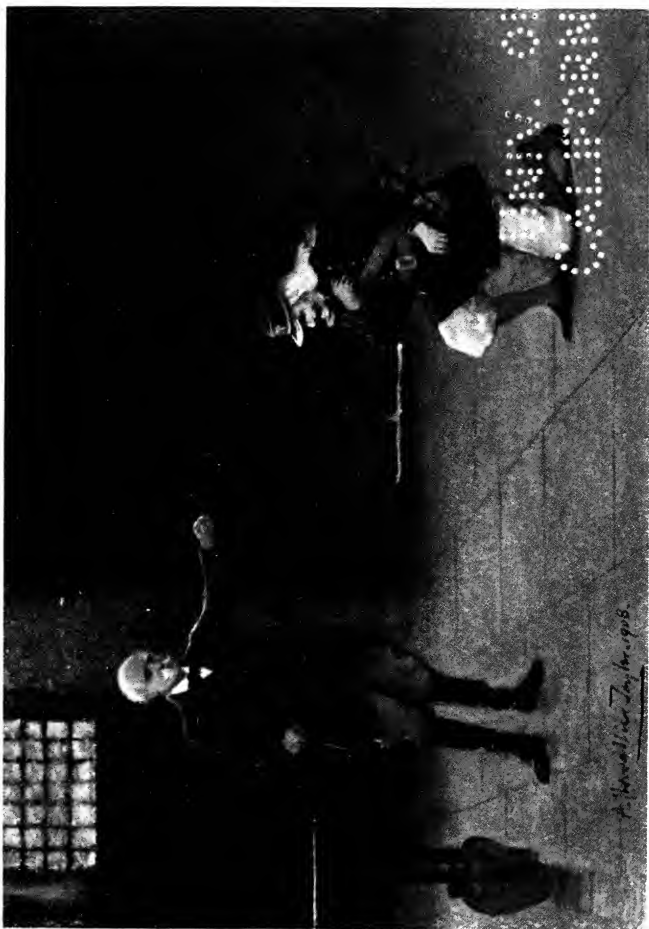
the Chambers, first proclaiming themselves Dictators. This final step produced open Civil War. On the 4th of April, 1858, the troops, under the direction of General Maldonado, revolted against the Dictators. At first the movement was checked, but on January 1st, 1859, Quito rose against the tyranny of Urbina and Roblez. A provisional government was formed of three members, Garcia Moreno, Carrion, and Gomez de la Torre.

Moreno's name was placed at the head of the triumvirate, and was hailed with enthusiasm by the people. The Chambers announced their decision to the provinces, where thus the news spread like wildfire, and letters promising adherence to the Provisional Government poured in from all sides. While congratulating themselves on the turn of events, the patriots understood that it was easier to revolutionize the Government than to offer resistance to the veteran soldiers who formed the army of Urbina and Roblez. One man alone could, they felt, make head against such terrible

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

odds, and that man was Garcia Moreno, as yet still an exile in Peru, and ignorant of the honour proposed for him. A messenger was dispatched to Moreno to announce that the people had elected him, and imploring him to come as soon as possible to place himself at the head of the patriot troops. Moreno was not the man to make unnecessary delays. To avoid the ambushes of the enemy he took the road to Quevedo, and came by forced marches through forests and mountains towards Quito. It was a journey of peril. His guide died on the road from the sting of a viper. He lost his way among the heights of the Cordilleras, and, after being for two days without food, he had the crowning misfortune of losing his mule, who fell exhausted. At last, however, he reached the capital, where he was greeted by the Patriots as their deliverer.

In the following June the hostile forces met in battle at Tambucco. Moreno's inexperienced levies were no match for the President's seasoned troops, and they were completely defeated, Moreno escaping with



P. H. Waller Taylor, 1918.

“The soldier threw himself on his knees to implore his pardon.”

[P. 3]

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
61
62
63
64
65
66
67
68
69
70
71
72
73
74
75
76
77
78
79
80
81
82
83
84
85
86
87
88
89
90
91
92
93
94
95
96
97
98
99
100

THE FIGHT FOR FREEDOM

his life.¹ But this reverse only increased the people's patriotism, and on his return to Quito Moreno received an ovation.

The struggle continued throughout the year. In September General Franco, who was in command of the forces of the Dictators, rebelled against them and proclaimed himself President. Finding themselves deserted, Urbina and Roblez left Ecuador as quickly as they could, after tyrannizing over the country for ten years.

To send Franco to join them was now Moreno's task—no easy one, as he had no arms and few troops. But he set to work with his usual energy, and, turning a cotton factory into an Arsenal, he drilled his men from morning to night. He also approached Castilla, President of Peru, to try to avert the crisis which Urbina's imprudence had brought about; but Castilla demanded a cession of territory, and this

¹ His life was saved by Colonel Vintimilla, who insisted on lending him his horse, saying, "Vintimillas will never be wanting, but we have only one Garcia Moreno." Vintimilla succeeded Moreno as President from 1876 to 1881.

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

Moreno indignantly refused. On his return journey from this unsuccessful attempt he had a narrow escape at the little town of Riombamba, which was in the hands of the troops whom Franco had bribed to betray Urbina. At midnight these soldiers surrounded the house where Moreno was sleeping and arrested him, telling him that unless he resigned his office as head of the Provisional Government the next day would be his last on earth. Having shut him up, they left him in charge of a single sentinel. After reflecting and praying for a few moments, Moreno approached this man, and, making himself known to him, demanded his liberty. The soldier threw himself on his knees to implore his pardon, and aided his escape. Accompanied by a faithful General, Moreno rode to Calpi, and, having gathered together some loyal troops, returned to Riombamba. His would-be murderers were all drunk or asleep, and were easily taken prisoners, and the ringleaders, being judged guilty by a Council of War, were shot.

THE FIGHT FOR FREEDOM

Moreno, worn out with fatigue and heart-broken at the state of the country, returned to Quito to organize a fresh campaign against General Franco, but meanwhile the President of Peru and six thousand men had made their appearance at the mouth of the River Guayas, and were allowed by Franco to disembark. Moreno advanced against Franco, and succeeded in driving him before him and leaving him in possession only of the province of Guayaquil, which he held by the help of Castilla and his Peruvian force. Moreno now determined to return to his headquarters at Guaranda, and from there to descend the Cordilleras and attack the enemy.

The news that Franco had actually signed a treaty ceding a large part of Ecuador to Peru precipitated matters. Moreno endeavoured, however, first to avert further bloodshed, and sent a noble letter to Franco in which he suggested that, in order to stop this terrible Civil War, he and Franco should both resign their commands and go into exile, leaving their country in the hands of

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

the Provisional Government. "If you accept this proposition," he wrote, "which affords you the opportunity of securing the integrity of the frontier without wounding your honour, I will immediately renounce my official position and leave the country. I should be ashamed to ask this sacrifice from you unless I was prepared to show you the example. By imposing upon myself this voluntary exile for the good of the country, my ambition will be fully satisfied. In this way the miserable calumnies which your Guayaquil papers daily pour forth against me will fall to the ground."

In spite of the efforts of the diplomatic corps to support Moreno's generous proposal, Franco utterly refused it. Castilla some time afterwards withdrew the greater part of his forces, but remained at Guayaquil, with a portion of his fleet, to watch events. By this movement the opposed forces became more equal in numbers, and at this juncture Moreno received an unexpected and welcome adherent in the person of General Flores. The old soldier, forget-

THE FIGHT FOR FREEDOM

ting his past resentment and exile, and looking only to the sad state of his country, came to offer his sword to Moreno, who joyfully accepted it, and begged him to be Commander-in-Chief of the forces.

Flores, indeed, arrived at a moment when his military talent and experience were invaluable. Soon forestalling Franco's intention of marching into the interior, he advanced to meet him. He had a threefold task before him. The Cordilleras had to be crossed, an army superior in numbers and artillery to be faced, and the city of Guayaquil to be besieged. By a series of rapid flanking movements Flores drove the enemy's advance guard before him, and, making a forced march by unknown paths through the dense forests, he surprised and utterly defeated Franco at Babahayo, a little town at the foot of the Cordilleras. Franco himself escaped, and, retiring to Guayaquil, proclaimed it a free town under the protection of Peru.

A month later, Moreno and Flores with their army arrived before Guayaquil. The

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

position of the town, protected on the right by the river Guayas, on the left by the *Estero Salado*, or Salt Marsh, and in the centre by a strongly fortified hill, seemed impregnable. For several days Flores ostensibly prepared an assault of the fort, while Franco, on his side, disposed his artillery so as to annihilate the enemy on the first advance.

On the evening of September 22nd the inhabitants of Guayaquil retired to rest convinced that the attack would take place on the following day, but in the middle of the night the whole of Flores' army, except one regiment of lancers and a battery of artillery (who were left to defend headquarters in case of attack), moved to the borders of the fatal Marsh, to cross it and fall upon the town from the quarter least expected. The ruse succeeded perfectly. After a weary struggle, covered with mud, and with legs and feet bleeding, the troops reached the other side of the morass, Moreno and Flores working like common soldiers to make a passage for the guns. After a short rest, the signal for attack was given at 4 a.m. With no retreat

THE FIGHT FOR FREEDOM

possible, and thirsting to avenge their country's wrongs, Flores' men fought magnificently, and the enemy soon fled in confusion to the shelter of their batteries. At nine o'clock Franco took refuge on board a Peruvian ship, leaving behind him four hundred of his men, most of his officers, twenty-six guns, and all his arms and ammunition. The victory was complete, and terminated the struggle which had lasted for fifteen months.

The taking of Guayaquil caused rejoicings throughout Ecuador, and to give the event its true significance, Moreno determined that the modern flag of Ecuador, so dishonoured by treachery, should disappear from the country together with the traitors who had carried it.

“This flag,” he said in a solemn decree, “which has been carried by unworthy hands and is covered with ineffaceable stains, must give place to the ancient flag, dyed with the blood of our heroes, the flag which was always stainless, always triumphant—the real trophy of our national glory. From

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

to-day the noble Colombian flag will become again the flag of the Republic." As we may imagine, however, higher thoughts than these occupied Moreno's mind. Recognizing in the victory a signal mercy from Almighty God, he desired to mark the day for ever in the minds of the people. The battle had taken place on September 24th, the Feast of Our Lady of Ransom, and he decreed that "to thank the Mother of the Divine Liberator, as well as to merit her assistance in the future, the army of the Republic should be placed in future under the special protection of Our Lady of Ransom, and that every year on this great anniversary the Government and army should assist officially at the services of the Church."

CHAPTER IV

EFFORTS AT REFORM

PEACE being restored to the country, the great task remained of forming an efficient and stable government. The representatives of the country, about forty in number, were all agreed in admiring Garcia Moreno, but apart from this nothing could be more varied than their opinions. Among them was General Flores, still brilliant though now ageing; his colleagues could not but remember his fifteen years' despotism and the defeat of Elvira; but his late noble patriotism and the influence of Moreno, who wished now to see in him only the old warrior of the War of Independence, caused him to be named provisional President of the Assembled Congress. His offences still rankled, however, in the minds of some, and on one occasion when Flores remarked that if a certain measure did not obtain a

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

majority of votes he would quit “not only the Congress but the country,” a young Deputy boldly replied, “*Señor Presidente*, that is the greatest service you can render to the nation.”

After the opening of the Chambers, which took place on January 16th, 1861, Moreno and his two colleagues rendered an account of their services and resigned their power. The recital of the events of the last fifteen months was received with cheers and acclamation, and on the spot it was declared that the Members of the Provisional Government had merited well of the nation, and that their busts should be placed in the Government Palace in perpetual memory of their services. Moreno was warmly congratulated and made acting President for the time. The Assembly confirmed the decree which declared Our Lady of Ransom Patroness and Protectress of the Republic, and affirmed its gratitude to the army, which, by its valour had saved the country.

Unfortunately this happy unanimity of opinion gave place to discord when the

EFFORTS AT REFORM

discussion on the new Constitution began. Moreno, as we know, ardently desired for his country a Catholic Constitution which, to use his own words, was the only way in which to "moralize the country by the energetic repression of crime by the solid education of the young, to protect religion, and bring about the reforms which neither the Government nor the laws alone can obtain." He saw, however, that public opinion was not yet ripe for all he planned, and for the moment contented himself with setting aside all measures which could interfere with the full liberty of action of the Church.

The proposed new Constitution, like those of the South America republics generally, declared the Catholic religion to be that of the country to the exclusion of every other. This clause, combated by some, was upheld by the people, who, shocked at the idea of heretical sects being placed on an equality with the Catholic Church, murmured against the Government. Garcia Moreno likewise threw all his influence into the scale, and

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

this clause was maintained. After this law and others relating to the future executive powers of the Government, the Assembly passed to the question of the election of a President. While decreeing that in future he should be chosen by universal suffrage, it reserved its liberty of choice for the present election, and by a unanimity of votes chose Garcia Moreno; a choice enthusiastically welcomed by the whole country save by Urbina's followers.

At first Moreno refused to accept office, on account of the insufficient powers guaranteed to the Government. In words which proved only too true, he declared that: "To disarm Authority in the face of the Revolution was to decree perpetual anarchy." He, however, yielded to the solicitations of his friends, who, seeing in him the only hope of the nation, appealed to his conscience and self-devotion. To show him their good will, the members of the Assembly passed several important laws, and, above all, decided that a *Concordat* should be proposed to the Pope and put in execution *without waiting for the*

EFFORTS AT REFORM

ratification of a future Congress. The re-organization of the Treasury, of the Army, and of public education was also decreed, and Moreno entered office with the hope of effecting those changes for the benefit of the nation which had for so long occupied his thoughts.

His first care was a minute revision of the financial affairs of the country, which were in a state of hopeless confusion. For thirty years Ecuador had found itself unable to balance its accounts. Moreno created a Board of Financial Control, instituted a clear account of imports and exports, and insisted on strict economy. He made honesty the qualification for all public officials, and set a great example of disinterestedness by giving back one half of his salary to the impoverished exchequer and the other to public charities. An indefatigable worker, he set himself the ungrateful task of verifying the debts contracted by the State from the beginning of the Republic, before instituting a new and judicious financial system. The Army next occupied his attention, and he

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

restored military discipline, which was sadly lacking, by stringent measures without respect to persons.¹

Once Moreno felt he had behind him the triple force of an efficient army, a body of honourable and upright official colleagues, and a country placed on a sound financial basis, he turned his efforts to the still greater benefit he hoped to bring to his countrymen. Of these he felt primary education to be the foundation. Revolution and freemasonry, wise in their generation, always seek to undermine religion through the children; in South America this spirit, which takes the form of secularizing schools, is termed "educational neutrality." To meet this danger the President made an appeal to the charity of France which was nobly responded to, and bands of Christian Brothers, Nuns of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, and

¹ He condemned a certain General, who had collected some malcontents around him to plot against the Government, to be flogged, an order which aroused much indignation and which, with Moreno's biographer, we too regret.

EFFORTS AT REFORM

Sisters of Charity hastened to Ecuador, and established primary schools and boarding schools in all the large towns. The Jesuits, whom Moreno had invited to the country as we know years before, now returned once more to their former House of St. Louis in Quito, and later to a second House for Secondary Education, in which professors were trained for the new colleges in Guayaquil and Cuença.

These measures were most distasteful to the radicals, and they did not fail to call Moreno "a Jesuit inclined to turn Ecuador into an immense Convent," more especially as he did not stop at education but confided the hospitals to the care of Sisters of Charity, and the prisons to men imbued with his own spirit of charity and justice.

In material matters the President also soon realized an immense project—not imagined even by Incas, Spaniards, or the modern radicals themselves—namely, the inauguration of an immense system of carriage roads which should unite one town with another, and the plateau of the Cordilleras with the

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

Pacific Ocean. Paying no heed to the chorus of wonder and opposition, he himself calmly traced the plan of route for the road from Quito to Guayaquil, and set the work going. This gigantic undertaking, commenced in the early days of his Presidency, was still progressing at the time of Moreno's death, and, we may truly say, would in itself be sufficient to immortalize his name.

Hitherto literally no roads worthy of the name existed in Ecuador, owing to the topography of the country—a veritable labyrinth of mountains and deep valleys. Trains and even diligences were spoken of as strange and unattainable objects which people must resign themselves to do without. Communication with the Coast was maintained by a weekly courier who had the hard task of climbing precipices and crossing torrents to reach Guayaquil. An English tourist when asked by what road he had managed to reach Quito, replied, “But there is no question of roads in this country,” and an adventurous lady traveller remarks in her book that “on leaving the Capital of Ecuador,

EFFORTS AT REFORM

one does not drive, one only paddles through a morass."

It is easy to understand that under these circumstances commerce and agriculture were at a standstill for want of the means of transport, yet when Moreno determined to make a road from Quito to Guayaquil he was met by a storm of censure. "As Columbus when he announced the discovery of the New World, he was treated as a Utopian, a maniac, whose foolish enterprises would swallow up the last resources of the country." As we can well believe, knowing Moreno's character, all these murmurs left him unmoved, and he himself traced the line of route; but when the work had been commenced he met with even greater difficulties from the opposition of the proprietors through whose lands the new road must pass.

One gentleman, a native of Granada but who had lived in Ecuador for thirty years, showed great indignation and threatened to appeal to his own country and asking, at the same time, to be repaid the total price of

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

his *Hacienda*. Moreno vainly tried to make him see that Granada had no part in the affairs of Ecuador, and that this demand was absurd. "You ask for the full price of your property," he said, "at how much do you value it?" "Five hundred thousand piastres." "Very well, as you have set your heart on it I will buy it and will pay you that down. When it was a question of fixing the amount of your taxes, however, you valued your property at fifty thousand piastres, whereas according to your present avowal it is worth five hundred thousand, you have therefore for thirty years been defrauding the Government of an immense sum which you shall now pay with its interest. Upon that my Minister of Finance will allow you five hundred thousand piastres for your *Hacienda*." Taken in his own toils the proprietor withdrew his opposition.

This, and other hindrances of the kind, were as nothing however to those offered by the nature of the country. For years thousands of workmen, divided in groups forming "travelling parishes" of them-

EFFORTS AT REFORM

selves, and each accompanied by a Priest and a Doctor, were employed in cutting down forests and scaling mountains. This first great Road, with its branch to Sibambe and another from Guayaquil to Milagre, took ten years to make, and was inaugurated with great pomp at Quito, on April 23rd, 1873. Two diligences, named the *Sanguí* and the *Tunguragua*, were solemnly blessed on the Plaza Mayor. The Archbishop, who was accompanied by the President and his Ministers, gave the blessing from the balcony of his Palace, and the illustrious party made the first tour in the carriages amid the acclamations of the crowd.

CHAPTER V

THE RE-UNION OF ECUADOR WITH THE HOLY SEE

THE moment had now come for the President's supreme task—that of endeavouring, after thirty years of Revolution, to unite Ecuador to the Holy See. In the early days the Spanish Kings—in view of the great distance and the difficulty of communication—had obtained numberless ecclesiastical privileges from the Sovereign Pontiffs relative to Church property and the appointment of Bishops, etc. Little by little the power of the King was substituted for that of the Pope and of Canon law, which resulted in some abuses and conflicts, but as the Kings sincerely desired the good of their subjects not much harm ensued.

It was, however, quite different when revolution and anarchy took the place of rightful authority. As we have seen, religion was

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

openly persecuted, all previous laws were trampled underfoot, with the result that the State ruled the Church as despot, disposing as it wished of Church patronage and property, interfering in the most sacred matters, and practising in short the favourite freemason dogma, "the subordination of the Church to the State."

It was to remedy this deplorable state of affairs that Moreno had solicited the authorization of Congress to conclude a Concordat with the Holy See. Without entering into all the details of his plan, he sketched briefly for the Assembly the main objects desired. "In order," he said, "that religion with all its blessings should exercise its influence over social life, it is necessary that the Church should march side by side with the Civil Power under conditions of true independence. Instead of absorbing or contradicting her, the State should limit itself to protecting her in a just and efficacious manner. Therefore, let there be no further interference by the Civil Power in the nomination of Priests, secular or religious, and you will

RE-UNION WITH THE HOLY SEE

cease to see unworthy Priests taking the place of really apostolic men to the great prejudice of Religion and Society. Appeals from Ecclesiastical Tribunals to secular judges will likewise cease; then let us organize Colleges, Seminaries, Missions, so that the social influence of the Clergy may respond to their high calling."

To attain the great end before him, it was necessary to find a suitable person to negotiate with the Holy See, and in Don Ignacio Ordonez, Archdeacon of Cuenca, Moreno found the man he sought. This admirable young priest had been sent to France towards the close of 1861 to bring over some of the Religious who were to found the new schools. From France he had passed on to Rome, where, to his great surprise, he received from his Government a missive naming him Minister Plenipotentiary of Ecuador to the Holy See, with mission to negotiate the proposed *Concordat*. His first thought was to decline a responsibility for which he felt insufficiently prepared, but in an interview with Pius IX the latter encouraged

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

him with the greatest kindness. "As a Priest," he said, "you must know what are the rights of the Church; and as an Ecuadorian, the needs of your country; besides, you are provided with the instructions of your President, what more do you need?" adding, with a charming smile, "Must one then be a Metternich to treat with Pius IX?"

Moreno's instructions were absolutely simple and straightforward. He began by stating that the Government of Ecuador had not the temerity to petition for Concessions from the Holy Father, but humbly begged him to bring to an end, by the measures he thought most efficacious, the evils which devastated the country. "Our Plenipotentiary will manifest the state of our ecclesiastical affairs to the Holy See, as a sick person describes his sufferings to the physician from whom he hopes for cure"; and then follows a statement of the evils which oppressed Ecuador.

After six months of discussion, the preparatory *Concordat ad referendum* was signed, on October 26th, 1862, by Cardinal Anto-

RE-UNION WITH THE HOLY SEE

nelli, the Pope's Secretary of State, and by Don Ignacio Ordonez as representing Ecuador. The chief points were as follow:

“Education in every branch will be modelled on the principles of the Catholic Church.

“The Church will exercise without let or hindrance full power to possess and administer her property.

“The Sovereign Pontiff will have power to communicate with his bishops and the faithful without State interference.

“The Church grants to the President of the Republic the right of presentation to vacant bishoprics.”

The plan of the *Concordat* being thus decided, it was arranged that the solemn exchange of signatures should take place at Quito, and Pius IX sent thither as Apostolic Delegate Mgr. Tavani, who bore an autograph letter from His Holiness to the President congratulating him “on his profound devotion to the Holy See, his ardent zeal for the interests of the Catholic Church, and exhorting him to uphold with all his strength

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

her full liberty and the diffusion of her divine teaching on which depends the peace and happiness of nations.”

Moreno had for Pius IX not only the affection of a loyal son of the Church, but also a personal devotion and deep sympathy for the trials he was now undergoing. When he received the papal Ambassador he could not restrain the expression of his indignation against the enemies of the Church. After declaring his thankfulness to Almighty God, and to the Pope for the singular blessing conferred by the granting of the *Concordat*, he continued, “I beg you to transmit to the Holy Father our sentiments of gratitude, and tell him that we Ecuadorians, as Catholics in soul and heart, are not, and cannot be, insensible to the attacks made on the Holy See and its Temporal Sovereignty, that indispensable condition of its liberty and independence as it is also of the peace and civilization of the world. Tell him that if we are unable to raise a rampart against the impiety and ingratitude of some, the cowardice and indif-

RE-UNION WITH THE HOLY SEE

ference of others, it is our privilege at least to raise our voice in condemnation of the crime and to point out the criminal. Tell him in conclusion that, united to him still more closely in these stormy times, we who live on the summit of the Andes and by the shores of the ocean, ever pray for our Father. We beg that God will bring to an end the sorrows that afflict him, and feel the consoling conviction that these days of trial will soon pass, for if for the present evil triumphs, God reserves the future to Himself.”

On April 22nd, 1863, the *Concordat* was solemnly promulgated in Quito, and in all the cities of Ecuador. In the Capital the great ceremony took place in the Cathedral. After the Pontifical High Mass the President and Mgr. Tavani signed the Concordat, which was read aloud to the people. During the singing of the Te Deum, which was accompanied by salvos of artillery, the Papal flag and that of Ecuador were placed side by side, thus symbolizing to the eyes of all present the union which should in future exist between Church and State.

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

This occasion may be regarded, perhaps, as the happiest in Moreno's chequered career. He saw realized at last the great and noble wish of his life, and before the storms broke afresh he must have had a moment of peace and of hope for his country's future. "By this act of Christian polity," says his biographer, "an act unique in the history of modern nations, Moreno stands above all statesmen since St. Louis . . . alone amidst the fatal current of Liberalism which sweeps kings and peoples into the abyss, he gave back to his country true liberty by placing her once more under the guidance of Almighty God."

Soon after the promulgation of the *Concordat* a National Council met at Quito to prescribe the necessary ecclesiastical reforms, and the President strongly urged upon the bishops to see that the rules laid down by it were fully carried out. "On my part," he said, "I will do all in my power to assist you. Your decisions shall be respected, but it is for you to judge and punish the guilty"; and when the good Archbishop expressed

RE-UNION WITH THE HOLY SEE

some alarm on the subject of the repression of abuses, "what does it matter," exclaimed Moreno, "one must sacrifice one's life if God wishes it, for the honour of His Church. I will not suffer it, be sure, that anyone shall be wanting in his duty."

Amidst the proposed reforms, the increase of bishoprics was specially desired. Pius IX, when a young priest, had visited several parts of South America, where the immense extent of the Republics and the distance between the cities had convinced him that the number of Dioceses was far too small: speaking one day on this subject to Don Ignacio Ordonez he remarked, "your zealous President desires to regenerate his country, and also to multiply its population by recalling emigrants from different European countries: Tell him that to succeed he must erect Crosses. Wherever a Cross is set up a small population gathers round it, were it even on the summit of Chimborazo. Your dioceses are too large for one man to administer. We will create three new bishoprics, and we will make

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

mention of this project in an Article of the *Concordat*. You have no power in this matter, but I know Garcia Moreno; tell him that the Pope wishes it, and that will suffice.”

When Moreno heard of the Holy Father's intention, he was enchanted and, calling his ministers together, he said to them: “It is Almighty God who suggests this idea to us through His Vicar—we must realize it without delay.”

The municipalities of Ibarra, Riobamba, and Loja, the towns selected for the proposed bishoprics, received the news with enthusiasm, and a few days later Moreno, who never lost time, sent off the topographical plans of the new dioceses to the Holy Father. Measures such as these were hailed with joy by the good Catholics of Ecuador, but, as was to be expected, the President was the victim of a perfect torrent of abuse from the Liberals and Radicals. Moreno let them talk and calmly continued to support the work of regeneration to the utmost of his power.

CHAPTER VI

MOSQUERA AND MALDANO

WHILE these reforms, resented by Moreno's opponents, were taking place, an incident which illustrates his naturally fiery and chivalrous nature, and which had disastrous results, awoke still further comment.

In 1862 civil war broke out in the neighbouring states of Colombia, provoked by General Mosquera, an old soldier of the Wars of Independence, who now placed himself at the head of a Radical party to trouble the Government in the State of Granada. To oppose him Señor Julio Arboleda, a gentleman of Granada who had settled in Paris, was recalled by the President Ospina. Arboleda, who belonged to an ancient family, was a famous soldier, a brilliant orator, and resembled in some

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

ways Garcia Moreno. The two men indeed seemed destined to be friends. After a vain attempt to defend the town of Sanmarta, Arboleda hurried to the province of Cauca to encourage the inhabitants in their opposition to Mosquera, who now, master of Bogōta, was cruelly persecuting Religion. So far Moreno and all Ecuador sympathized with his undertaking, when an unfortunate accident occurred.

A body of Arboleda's troops, having crossed the Rio Carcli while pursuing some of Mosquera's men, wounded the Representative of Ecuador who was about to protest against the violation of the frontier, and charged the Ecuadorian guard who opposed their advance. Moreno, ever ready to support the honour of his country, and resenting too keenly this involuntary insult, sent a peremptory message to Arboleda demanding reparation, and dispatched a small body of veterans to the spot, merely "to assure the respect and integrity of the frontier." Arboleda in reply pleaded the extenuating circumstances and want of evil



The Signing of the Concordat.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
61
62
63
64
65
66
67
68
69
70
71
72
73
74
75
76
77
78
79
80
81
82
83
84
85
86
87
88
89
90
91
92
93
94
95
96
97
98
99
100

MOSQUERA AND MALDANO

intention on the part of his men—and refused the satisfaction demanded.

Moreno, indignant at what he considered a slight to the honour of his country, and disregarding the disapproval of some of his countrymen and friends, resolved to go in person to exact reparation from Arboleda, who, he persuaded himself, would not refuse it to him. It required even more than the President's usual courage to start on such an expedition at this moment, as he was suffering from a serious wound. While directing the making of a new road he had given himself a severe blow on the leg with an axe; the wound had festered, and the doctors, who were alarmed at its condition, ordered complete rest. An expedition on horseback was therefore deemed impossible, but Moreno, who was well versed in surgery, suggested that the wound should be cauterized, and as the doctors were unwilling to take the responsibility of so risky an operation, he himself got a red-hot bar of iron, and calmly applied it to the wound. A few days later the place was healed, and Moreno

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

made the three days' journey to Cencli on horseback.

In undertaking this expedition he had little intention of fighting, but wished to make a demonstration to show his serious intention of demanding satisfaction. Arboleda, however, who intended to give none, advanced to the frontier with a considerable body of men, and, refusing Moreno's attempts to come to a peaceful arrangement, ~~he attacked the small Ecuadorian force~~, who after a gallant resistance were forced to yield to superior numbers. At the moment of attack Moreno had charged through the enemy, followed by a few of his men, striking right and left, unheeding of their bullets which fell round him and riddled his clothes. He reached the limit of Arboleda's force and then retraced his steps, no one venturing to oppose him, and he could easily have made his escape, but with the chivalry which characterized him he returned and yielded himself prisoner to an officer, saying, "Take me to your commander, it is to him I wish to give up my sword."

MOSQUERA AND MALDANO

Arboleda was disconcerted at this magnanimous conduct, he treated Moreno with deep respect, gave him back his sword, and declared himself ready to enter at once into negotiations for peace. The two great leaders, sincerely reconciled at their first interview deplored the circumstances which had caused them to differ, when they should have united against the common foe of their countries, the Revolution. They concluded an amicable alliance, after which Moreno returned to his capital.

The Revolutionary party, never long idle, was preparing a fresh campaign against the President, aided, from his exile, by the wretched Urbina, and fortified by a new confederate in Mosquera. The latter was now tyrannizing over Granada and fiercely persecuting the Church, even banishing his relative, the Venerable Archbishop Herrau from Bogota, for which crimes he had been excommunicated by Pius IX. Mosquera's plan was, if possible, to create a new Republic under his rule, which should comprise New Granada, Venezuela and Ecuador.

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

When he made this proposal to Moreno, he was, as we may imagine, indignantly repulsed; but Mosquera bided his time, and the Meeting of the Parliament of Ecuador in 1863 gave him his opportunity. The subject of the *Concordat* would give rise, it was known, to fierce discussion; the greater part of Congress was now opposed to it, and some even well-meaning people, influenced by Moreno's enemies, began to regard it as a mistake.

Moreno's Presidential Message, however, bore the character of an Ultimatum. In it he enumerated the works he had successfully carried out during the two years of his Presidency, and fully justified the necessity of the *Concordat* to restore liberty to the Church, concluding with these words: "If the majority of this house should censure the acts of my administration, I will immediately resign my powers, praying Divine Providence to replace me by a Magistrate fortunate enough to ensure the repose and the future well-being of the Republic." The Congress began by vigorously attacking the

MOSQUERA AND MALDANO

Concordat, but when the crisis seemed at hand Mosquera suddenly declared war on Ecuador. Seeing that their only hope lay in Garcia Moreno, even the members most opposed to his views once more turned to him as their leader, and the *Concordat* was saved.

This fresh war opened adversely for Ecuador. To the consternation of the country, General Flores was defeated at the Battle of Cuaspad. In a stirring Proclamation Moreno summoned his countrymen to arms, and responding to the appeal a new army of 8,000 men was quickly raised, ready to fight for their Faith, country, and homes. At the sight of this patriotic zeal Mosquera lost heart, and proposed peace. An attempt made by Urbina for a fresh insurrection was also crushed, and the danger was over. Mosquera himself returned to New Granada, but was soon afterwards chased from the country by the indignant people.

Worn out by the struggle against enemies abroad and opposition at home, Moreno began to ask himself whether it was humanly

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

possible to continue the fight, and in January, 1864, the outlook seemed so hopeless that he announced his intention of retiring into private life. Such a storm of protests and entreaties arose, however, that he had to give up the idea, but he had scarcely done so when a fresh difficulty arose. This was a scandalous decision of the High Court of Justice by which the conspirators who had tried to foment rebellion in Ecuador in order to aid Mosquera were declared not guilty of treason. Moreno, with just indignation, sent in his resignation to Congress, declaring that "after the Court had trampled all law and justice under foot by declaring known traitors to be innocent," he could only give up the task of government. "Patriotism and honour compelled me to remain at my post when our country was menaced by the enemy. Now that peace is established you cannot prevent me seeking a little rest in the calm of private life. If I have committed any faults in the exercise of my powers, you will be my judges. If you feel that I have not neglected anything which could develop

MOSQUERA AND MALDANO

the prosperity of the Republic, the satisfaction of having fulfilled my duty will remain to me and it is the only one which I seek.”

Moreno's words produced a great effect on Congress, and it unanimously refused to accept his resignation, and voted the changes in the Constitution which he desired. Ecuador would not hear of a change of President, but the Masonic and Socialist party, failing all other means, resolved to assassinate the man whom they could not otherwise get rid of, and a plot was formed for the purpose, of whom the ringleader was General Thomas Maldano; but Moreno heard of the project and went himself to Guayaquil, where he fearlessly arrested the conspirators. This time the judges promptly condemned the traitors, but Moreno pardoned them, only exacting an oath of fidelity for the future. Three months later the wretches again plotted his death, but on the very day fixed for the crime one of their friends, seized with remorse, revealed the whole affair to the President. Maldano escaped

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

for the time, and a horde of Revolutionists took the opportunity of entering the country from every side, while Urbina, with the aid of Peru, landed at Payta and ravaged the coast. During this storm Moreno remained calm, organizing defence and raising troops, resolving rather to die with his people than to yield.

On August 24th Maldano was at last captured and brought in chains to Quito, where six days later he was hung, having first made his peace with Almighty God at the earnest entreaty of the man whose death he had plotted. After the death of Maldano Urbina once more claimed the attention of the Government. Accompanied by five or six hundred men, he took possession of the town of Machala, and announced himself as a Liberator. Supported by his three comrades, Roblez, Franco, and Leon, he proposed to propagate his revolutionary campaign from city to city till he should reach Quito. Terrified by the lawless action of his troops, the people, however, fled from his presence, and very few persons remained

MOSQUERA AND MALDANO

to make common cause with him. At this juncture also a proclamation issued by the President, in which Urbina and his accomplices were declared to be outside the law, and would, in case of capture, be treated not as belligerents, but as bandits, contributed to discourage Urbina, and he and Roblez fled the country. Franco and Leon remained for a time, but being entirely defeated at Santarosa, they too followed the others to exile.¹

¹ General Flores died during this campaign. Although in failing health, he had presided over the preparations for it, and had gone on board a vessel to direct matters from the sea, when he felt he was dying—"Is it true we have retaken Santarosa?" he inquired. "Yes, General," was the reply, "after dislodging the enemy." "And have the men fought well?" he asked. "Admirably." "And the inhabitants?" "They are now free and happy" was the answer. "Then I can die," said the old soldier. His last words were, "O good Mother of Mercy, I am your child." Thus died the old Warrior of the Independence and the Victor of Guayaquil.

CHAPTER VII

URBINA ONCE MORE

AFTER four years of strife the country was at peace for a time, but the coming elections caused Moreno much anxiety. His time of office, according to the Constitution, would be at an end, and he might look for a well-earned repose, but he could not disguise from himself that the future was full of danger. "A captain who has navigated his ship in the midst of tempests, and who has saved her over and over again from shipwreck, cannot leave her to inexperienced hands without trembling."

Writing to an intimate friend at this time Moreno thus refers to his anxieties: "Even if the Constitution permitted my re-election I would not consent—this fatal Constitution of 1861 provokes disorders without giving the Government power to repress them. It follows that when in imminent peril, the

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

Government is forced, in order to save the country, to place itself above the laws, and in smaller dangers to bear with everything, thus leaving society to descend gradually into the abyss. I foresaw those evils in 1861, and shall always repent of having accepted powers which are so hampered. Because I have confidence in God I think that Ecuador will one day recover from this state of things, but only after a period, longer or shorter, of blood and ruin, when the legislators, tired of their Utopian follies and of their guilty attempts upon the dying body of the nation, shall take reason for their guide. The logic of evil is inexorable. Every fault brings punishment. We are about to expiate the faults of the Constituents of 1861." To give up his office cost nothing to the President, but he was resolved to do all in his power to direct his countrymen to make a wise choice in his successor.

He was far from thinking that the Government should look calmly on at elections; he considered that it was its duty to enlighten the people and to propose suitable candi-

URBINA ONCE MORE

dates. Following these principles Moreno proposed to the electors Don Jeronimo Carrion, a simple and religious man, a hard worker, a friend of order, and an implacable enemy to Anarchists.

The Opposition took for their candidate Don Manuel Gomez de la Torre, a gentleman of such wavering political opinions that he had successively been Minister under Rocca and Urbina, and had formed one of the Provisional Government with Moreno himself. The result of the elections which took place on May 19th was a triumph for Moreno and the cause of order, Carrion obtaining an overwhelming majority of 25,000 votes against 8,000 given to de la Torre.

The new President was elected but could not, according to the law, take office until the following year, and meanwhile Moreno had once more to defend the country against General Urbina's machinations. This last and thrilling incident occurred just after the elections. On the evening of May 31st fifteen of Urbina's followers, led by a brigand named José Marcos, concealed themselves

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

on an island of the river Guayas, near Camborrodden; from there they boarded the steamer *Washington* which had been commissioned by Urbina. When night fell they steamed down the stream to Guayaquil and ran alongside the *Guayas* (the only man-of-war belonging to Ecuador), boarded her, murdered her captain and crew, and continued their course to the sea, taking their prize with them.

Next morning the *Washington* and *Guayas*, and a third vessel, the *Bernardino*, were discovered anchored in the roadstead of Tambelli some miles from Guayaquil, with Urbina and Roblez, and some hundred Peruvians, at the head of the expedition. Moreno was at Chillo, his *Hacienda* near Quito, seeking a few days' rest, but when the news reached him he set off at once for the scene of action. Traversing in three days the eighty miles which separates the capital from Guayaquil, he arrived like a thunderbolt before the enemy, with the intention of driving them to sea—but he had no vessels. The opportune arrival of an

URBINA ONCE MORE

English steamer, the *Talca*, supplied his need. He at once purchased her for the immense sum of £50,000, and armed her with five large guns and ammunition. Selecting two hundred and seventy men, and taking command himself, he set out from Guayaquil in the evening of June 25th. Next morning the President's ship sighted the enemy, and was greeted by a tremendous fire from their guns. The little *Talca* steamed straight ahead and, only opening fire when close by, ran alongside the *Guayas*; Moreno's men boarded her and quickly drove the crew from her decks. The *Bernardino* and another schooner yielded without much resistance, and there remained only the *Washington*, on board of which Urbina, Roblez, and their officers and men were in a semi-drunken condition. The *Washington* lay near shore, and all on board, alarmed at the capture of the other vessels, threw themselves overboard, headed by Urbina, and took shelter in the woods. Three days later the last of this company of brigands had found refuge in Peru, and during Moreno's

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

lifetime Ecuador was no more troubled by them. The return to Guayaquil created much excitement. The inhabitants assembled, eager to see who were the conquerors, and some even believed that Urbina was returning in triumph. The excitement was at its height when Moreno was seen standing on the bridge of the *Talca*. At once a great cry of joy arose from the people, and all the church bells rang out joyously.

A shadow was thrown over the victory by the necessity of punishing some of those who had taken part in the late rebellion. And unfortunately, also, letters had been found on the *Washington* which convicted of treason a prominent personage of Guayaquil. Another had been aware of the conspiracy and kept silence, and it was the President's stern duty to bring these to justice before quitting the city. It is said that Moreno's aged mother tried to intercede for one of the accused, but her son replied with much emotion, "Mother, beg of me anything you like, but not an act of weakness which would be fatal to the country."

URBINA ONCE MORE

After this fresh victory, the return of the President to the capital was a triumph. Giving an account of his expedition in the Senate in a few words, he said: "I have saved my country in spite of your Congress."

And now, retiring from office, Moreno asked for the leave which is necessary for an Ex-President to quit the country within a year of his giving up office, but so strong was the feeling against this that the deputies voted by a huge majority a prohibition to his departure, declaring that he was "necessary to the safety of the Republic." Such was the tribute of his countrymen to Moreno's self-sacrificing career.

The new President, Carrion, though excellent and well meaning, did not possess the determination necessary to deal with the conflicting elements of Ecuador, or to balance the opposing parties. Disregarding the prohibition given six months earlier to Moreno's leaving the country, Carrion, to satisfy the Radicals by withdrawing him from the scene, determined to send him as Minister Plenipotentiary to Chile, to arrange

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

a treaty of commerce. The freemasons and revolutionaries were enchanted by this decision—not only would the Ex-President be out of the country, but they were fully resolved that he should never return. Some time before a plot to assassinate him at his *Hacienda* had fallen through, but the long journey now before him offered, as they thought, a certain opportunity for his destruction. Moreno was to embark at Guayaquil, and make a short stay at Lima to confer with the President, Señor Prado, on his road to the capital. During the week before he started he received warnings from all sides that his life would be attempted. A good lady from Lima assured him that the Ecuador refugees in Peru had sworn to destroy him, either at Callao or at Valparaiso. At Guayaquil he was shown a letter from one of Urbina's followers which declared that Garcia Moreno was setting out on his last journey, and that once he had disappeared a new order of things would commence; while at Lima the refugees announced publicly that he would be met there with revolvers.

URBINA ONCE MORE

This last prediction came true. Moreno, unmoved as usual by threats, had continued his journey so far with Don Herrera, his secretary, and Don Ignacio de Alcazar, one of the Secretaries of Legation. Don Herrera had his young son with him, and Moreno his little niece, whom he was escorting to Valparaiso. The party reached Lima by train on July 2nd. Alcazar was the first to get out of the carriage, and Moreno followed. The latter had turned to assist his niece when a man called Viteri, a relation of Urbina's, rushed up to him and, calling him "a robber and assassin," fired twice at his head. The bullets pierced Moreno's hat, but turning quickly upon his assailant he caught his arm and thrust aside the last shot. The would-be murderer was seized by the bystanders and handed over to the police. The news of the base attack had spread rapidly through Lima, and President Prado sent his carriage with orders to bring Moreno at once to the Palace, for he had been wounded slightly in the forehead and hand. He drove thither through a sympathizing crowd.

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

In spite of this miserable beginning Moreno's mission was most successful. He continued his journey to Valparaiso where he spent six months, during which time he concluded a commercial treaty with Chile, and placed the union of the two countries on a sound basis, while his personal talents and character deeply impressed the Chilians. "Everyone admired his profound learning, his noble character. . . . At the scientific meetings in which he took part he astonished everyone by his vast knowledge, and especially by his system of social regeneration, founded on the laws of the Church. Chilian society became enthusiastic in its opinion of Moreno who, on his side, was happy to meet Christian hearts who could understand and like him, the more so that the Liberalism of his own country had little accustomed him to this pleasure. Later on he could never speak without emotion of his visit to Chile.¹"

On his return to Ecuador Moreno spent a few days at Quito to render a report of

¹ *Vie*, p. 237.

URBINA ONCE MORE

his mission to Señor Carrion, and then went to stay with his brother, Don Pablo, at Guayaquil. The Ex-President, having no fortune, and having carefully deprived himself, as we have said, of his presidential salary, was a poor man, and wished to enter his brother's business. Moreover, there was nothing for a man of his temperament to do in the Capital until the moment should again come in which his services would be needed once more to stem the revolution. This time, unfortunately, was already at hand. The Radical papers were making open war on Religion and the State—Montallio, in the *Cosmopolita*, actually preaching the superiority of Paganism over Christian ideas, while another party in the country clamoured against Carrion, and cried aloud for the return of Urbina. During the electoral campaign of 1868 the Radicals became so strong that they had the hardihood to propose their most advanced candidate, and the Conservatives of Quito, seeing that their salvation lay with Moreno, chose him once more to represent them in the Senate.

CHAPTER VIII

HOME LIFE

MORENO was elected for Quito in spite of the intrigues of his opponents, but they managed to invalidate his nomination, and to rebel against President Carrion, who, although a victim, as usual, to the Radicals, showed an unworthy weakness at this crisis by offering for personal reasons to throw over some of his party. He was solemnly censured by Congress, and Moreno, brought unexpectedly to the Capital at this moment by the illness of his little daughter, was called upon to save the situation, and might have himself taken office had he wished.

Being charged with the unpleasant duty of signifying to Carrion that his resignation was desired, and finding him unwilling to take the step, he sent this laconic message: "Remember that the welfare of the Re-

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

public must be considered of more importance than the life of the man who is leading her to the abyss." Carrion at last sent in his resignation, and was succeeded by Don Javier Espinosa. We find a letter written by Moreno from Guayaquil, after these events, which shows how he regarded them: "I am just back from Quito," he writes to a friend, "where I had been to see my little daughter, who was dying. You know already why Providence took me there. The candidate whom I proposed, the virtuous and catholic Javier Espinosa, was accepted with enthusiasm, even by some of the Reds. . . . We can flatter ourselves on having the best of Presidents. . . . Our poor Ecuador has come through a crisis which might have ended in a disastrous civil war."

We may now leave the political arena for a moment, and consider Moreno under another aspect. The mention of his little daughter brings us to the subject of his domestic life, which his arduous work for the nation unfortunately quite overshadows

HOME LIFE

in the history of his life, so that we only know a few brief facts.

Moreno's charming wife, Doña Rosa, had died some years before this period of his life, and he had married, for the second time, Doña Mariana de Alcazar. When he first asked her mother for her hand Madame de Alcazar wept, and answered that she could not grant his request, as she feared that her child's life would be shortened, as Doña Rosa's had been, by days and nights of anxiety. But Mariana loved him; he was accepted, and their marriage was a most happy one, although Madame Moreno's anxieties, we may say, never ceased; while the attempts to assassinate her husband at Lima, and the illness and death of their little girl, initiated her into the great sorrows before her.

Under his naturally reserved and somewhat stern exterior Moreno concealed a most tender heart, and he was never happier than when alone with his family. He was devoted to his children, and when his daughter was taken from him he wept bit-

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

terly, exclaiming: "Oh, how weak I am, I, who thought myself so strong." After this sorrow he centred his hopes in his little son. In 1874 he took him to the Superior of the Christian Brothers to be educated, saying simply: "Here is my son. He is six years old, and what I beg of you is to make him a good Christian. Knowledge and virtue will make him a good citizen. Do not spoil him, please, and if he deserves correction do not see in him the son of the President of the Republic, but an ordinary scholar who must be admonished."

Moreno was also passionately attached to his venerable mother, who lived to the great age of ninety-five, dying in 1873. When his cousin, the Archbishop of Toledo, wrote to condole with him on her death, he replied by a beautiful letter worthy both of mother and son.

After thanking the Archbishop for saying Mass for his mother, he says: "I feel sure that God has already rewarded her admirable virtues. Above all, her beautiful soul was enlightened by the most lively faith I

HOME LIFE

have ever known, a faith capable, really, of moving mountains. Although by nature excessively timid, she was courageous to heroism in facing any humiliation or danger when a duty had to be performed. How often in my childhood, and with what zeal, she tried to make me understand that the only evil to dread here below is Sin. She would tell me that I should be always happy if I knew how to sacrifice material possessions—honours, life itself—rather than offend Almighty God. This letter would never end if I tried to repeat what my saintly mother was, and what I owe her. The greatest favour you can do me is to pray for her, and to recommend her to all the members of our family.”

After the death of the little girl Moreno took his wife to his *Hacienda* at Gualacha, hoping that a quiet life in this beautiful spot, surrounded by woods and meadows, would restore her to health. He himself greatly needed repose, and they hoped for a time of peace and quiet in their own home.

But it seemed as if Providence did not

Carrion. Espinosa.

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

intend him to enjoy peace in this world. On August 13th, 1868, terrible earthquakes and volcanic eruptions convulsed the province of Ibarra. Houses and churches were destroyed, and more than half the population perished, the rest being left homeless, while brigands and half-savage Indians from the mountains appeared on the scene to pillage, murder, and rob. The Government, appalled at the distress, sent—as usual—for Moreno, and appointed him Military and Civil Governor of the devastated country. “All Ecuador thrilled with new hope when this nomination appeared in the Official Gazette,” we are told; and he set out, without losing a moment, for the sad scene, accompanied by troops who were to restore order, and to undertake the work of rescue and reconstruction under his guidance. Moreno appealed to the whole country for assistance in the work of charity, and, poor as he was, himself gave a thousand piastres. He personally superintended the distribution of provisions and the maintenance of the law, and soon the disturbers of the peace disappeared and

HOME LIFE

order reigned, bringing hope and confidence once more to the inhabitants. They were placed in tents, and Moreno drew the plans for a new city to be built on the site of the old town of Ibarra. When all was completed the people came in a body to say farewell to their preserver, whom they looked upon as a father. After receiving the thanks of the Government at Quito he returned home for a brief space—but a Presidential Election was again at hand, and the Conservative Party once more called upon him to take office.

At first Moreno remained silent. In his own mind he had fixed upon General Darquea as the successor of Señor Espinosa. “I do not desire office,” he wrote at this time. “If the Reds, however, force me to take it, I undertake, with the grace of God, to save the country in a few months; that done, I will give place to him whom the people shall elect, and who will be, without doubt, General Darquea.” The Conservatives, however, did not see the matter in the same light. To them no one could take the place

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

of Moreno, and they continued to press on his candidature. He therefore drew up an electoral address, and then retired tranquilly to Gualacha to await the event.

Moreno's address is long and interesting, and we must quote a brief portion which sums up his never-changing policy. "To conclude," he says, "I ought to make known to the nation the principles which will direct my conduct should I be called to the honour of governing her:—Respect and protection to the Catholic Church: Inalienable adhesion to the Holy See: Education based on faith and morals, and its diffusion among all classes: the completion of the roads commenced, and the making of new ones according to necessity and the means of the country: safety for people, properties, commerce, agriculture, manufactures—*Liberty for every one and every thing save for crime and criminals.*" These last words were the watchwords of his policy, and it would have been well for Ecuador had they been that of the nation.

The moment for action came sooner than

HOME LIFE

was expected, for when it was found that Urbina was once more meditating a coup d'état by invasion, Moreno could no longer hold back, and he was appointed temporary President during the crisis. This he accepted, stating, however, publicly that he would, in consequence of this, not go forward for the Presidency, but would resign when Congress met. He at once rallied the Army to the Government, frustrated Urbina's plans, and Ecuador could rejoice that owing to his firmness the counter-revolution took place without a shot being fired. After this fresh proof of his zeal and influence he was, of course, again pressed to accept office, but he absolutely refused, and after giving, on May 16th, an account of his short administration, he returned home and instantly sent in his resignation.

L'homme propose et Dieu dispose, however. On July 29th the Convention met in the Jesuit Church at Quito, where, after a solemn Mass, they proceeded to the election of a President, and by a unanimous vote chose Moreno. Even this did not shake his reso-

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

lution. He implored the Deputies to consider the motives he had urged and to accept his refusal, but this they flatly refused, "considering that his services were absolutely indispensable to consolidate order and peace, and to place the Republic on a safe and constitutional basis." Thus Moreno had now no choice, and was obliged once more to accept the honour which he had declined for six months, a unique fact, perhaps, in these days of self-seeking and self-interest. Once more the reins of government were placed in his strong hands, and this time he was to bear the burden to the end.

The next day—July 30th—the new President took the oath of office in the cathedral, surrounded by all the civil and military authorities. The oath was as follows: "I swear by God our Lord, and by these holy Gospels, faithfully to fulfil my charge as President of the Republic: to profess the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman Religion: to preserve the integrity and independence of the State: to observe and cause to be observed the constitution and the laws. If I keep my word,

HOME LIFE

may God be my help and my defence: if not, may God and my country be my Judges.”

Señor Carvajal, an old friend of Moreno's, was the interpreter of the feelings of the nation in his address of congratulation. “Eight years ago,” he said, “you took the same oath on the same spot, and nobly did you keep your word. But to-day the obstacles which met you then at every turn have virtually disappeared. You have now full power to carry on the reforms required by the Constitution. You are at the head of a faithful army, and can reckon on the patriotism and morality of a people who, having confided to you their destinies for the second time, have eloquently proved to you their gratitude and appreciation. Above all you can reckon upon the help of that all-powerful God who is always ready to grant the petition of one who has no other aim than the good of religion and his country.” Moreno replied in the following noble and prophetic words:—“Submitting to the will of the people represented by the National

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

Assembly, which, paying no heed to my repeated refusals, forces me to take office in view of ever-menacing possibilities, I have taken before the altar the oath demanded by the Constitution. This oath binds me to sacrifice myself, without fear of death, for religion and my country, happy if I were to seal, with my blood, these two great causes. I count on the people, I count on the army—but above all on Almighty God, who will not abandon us in the day of danger.”

CHAPTER IX

THE PRESIDENT

BY the return of Moreno to office the power of the Revolution was crushed; but before the six years' peace which crowned his efforts had settled upon the country, the Sects made a despairing effort. A plot was formed once more to assassinate Moreno, and once again the remorse of a certain Sanchez revealed the intended crime in time. The conspirators were arrested and condemned to death, but were pardoned by Moreno at the intercession of a friend, and their sentence commuted to eight years' banishment. The ringleader, the wretched Cornejo, after making a scene and imploring forgiveness, had no sooner reached the frontier than he published an odious pamphlet against his benefactor declaring "that the assassination of such a monster was only an act of legitimate defence." While

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

Cornejo's band were attempting the death of the President, another group of Revolutionary youths was attacking Señor Ordonez, the Governor of Cuença, and their leader, Jeronimo Torres, piercing the portrait of Moreno with his lance, declared that on that very day the President would cease to live. This *émeute* was likewise crushed, and Ecuador remained at peace.

The President could now turn his thoughts to the welfare of the nation. His first and greatest work was to consolidate the new and Christian Constitution which had been prepared by himself before his election, and which had been almost unanimously ratified by the nation.

It bore this Inscription: "In the Name of Almighty God, One and Three, Creator, Preserver, Legislator of the World"; and its chief provisions were as follows: The Catholic Religion to be the religion of the State (this did not mean intolerance, as no other religion had followers in Ecuador); secret societies were forbidden; a power of vetoing dangerous laws was given to the

THE PRESIDENT

Government, and they were empowered to place any province in which rebellion arose in a state of siege. The President was to be assisted by a Council of State, without whose consent he could not take any important step; and finally, the President was to hold office for six years and to be eligible for re-election once.

It would take a volume to relate all that Moreno achieved for Education and Science, especially when we consider the difficulties of race and climate to be encountered. "How were these people, apathetic by temperament, and who considered their climate, their sun, and their mountains sufficient excuse for inertion, to be persuaded to study?" asks Moreno's biographer. "Where find money to build colleges and schools? Where find professors to teach?" But Moreno was not discouraged. He had, as we know, during his first term of office planted many schools and established religious in many places.

In 1871 a new law came into force by which primary education was made obliga-

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

tory on all except the very poor, and in a few years five hundred new schools were created. Passing to higher education, Moreno built a magnificent new Jesuit College at Quito, which he wished to dedicate to St. Joseph, but which the Archbishop christened St. Gabriel in memory of its founder. Not satisfied with this, the President was most anxious to reconstruct the University on a truly Catholic and scientific basis. According to the *Concordat* the Bishops were to have full authority over Education in all its branches. Books on Religion and Sacred History were to be chosen by them, and literary or scientific works were to receive their approbation. As for the professors, Moreno nominated learned men, but, above all, good Christians. In Theology the teaching of the Angelic Doctor reigned supreme. Even before Leo XIII had reinstated in honour the *Summa* of St. Thomas, the Dominicans of Quito were wont to discuss this thesis: "To extirpate from modern society the errors which infest it, nothing is more necessary

THE PRESIDENT

in the present day, as in past centuries, than to teach the doctrines of St. Thomas in the Theological Courses." The new University embraced schools of Medicine and Fine Arts, while the latest instruments for scientific research were procured from Europe regardless of expense — on one occasion when the President's representative in Paris observed to him that one of the purchases cost 100,000f., he only replied, "Buy the very best, and do not disturb yourself."

The capital was also entirely transformed during his term of office by the restoration of public buildings and well-paved streets: and if we ask ourselves how all this was achieved, for the President borrowed no money and levied no new taxes, we must reply again that this was a period of peace for the country, and a great economist has said, "Be wise in your politics, and your finances will be in good order."

Finally, he erected near Quito a magnificent Observatory. In company with scientific men such as Humboldt and Secchi, he considered that the position offered special

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

advantages for an International Observatory, which might become the first in the world, "by its position at 3,000 metres above the sea, the admirable clearness of the sky and transparence of the air, its situation on the line of the Equator in a healthy and delightful climate which enjoys a perpetual spring." Moreno made overtures to several of the great powers, to France, England, and America, inviting their collaboration, but none responded, so he determined himself to undertake this great work in the interests of science. In five years the Observatory was completed, and Padre Menton, Padre Secchi's illustrious companion at the Roman Observatory, was about to be installed as its head, when the tragic death of its founder intervened, and the Revolutionaries before long closed the edifice. "The key of the arch was gone, and the building crumbled to pieces."

In the course of fifty years the Revolutionaries and Freemasons had created nothing in Ecuador, whereas during his six

THE PRESIDENT

years' administration Moreno succeeded in bringing his country from a state of profound ignorance into one of advanced progress in science and learning. In addition to the works for the mental progress of the nation, which I have only too briefly indicated, Moreno turned his attention to other reforms. He reduced the strength of the Army, but made it more efficient by instituting constant manœuvres and establishing a school for Cadets. He secured a Chaplain for each Regiment, who likewise gave the men religious instruction and advice. The Criminal Code was thoroughly revised and made more stringent, and any judge or magistrate who acted corruptly was removed from office.

The prison system was based on humane and charitable lines, and in 1875 Moreno had the consolation of announcing to Congress that only fifty condemned prisoners remained in gaol. But while showing great mercy to prisoners, and encouraging them to amend their lives, Moreno was very severe towards any one he found wantonly

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

oppressing the poor and unfortunate. During his journeys through the provinces, he was often approached by the poor people with their grievances. He would greet them kindly; then, seated under a tree, like St. Louis, he would listen to their complaints and give judgement.

One day some Indians related that a rich proprietor, wishing to complete and enlarge his property, had included some bits of land belonging to them. Being too poor to have recourse to the law, they had waited for the President's arrival to make their claim. In a case of justice all men were equal in Moreno's eyes, and he condemned the gentleman to make restitution of the lands and removed him from his official position.

Moreno had a great insight into character, and quickly discovered the truth in difficult cases. He possessed likewise a wonderful power of making a wrongdoer render justice to his victim, even when the Law itself was powerless. A poor widow came weeping to him, to complain that ten thousand piastres had been extorted wrongfully from her.

THE PRESIDENT

Moreno at once bade his treasurer give her the money. "And who will repay it?" "So-and-so," he replied, naming the thief. "Place the amount to his account." Sending for the man, the President reproached him for his crime and made him repay the sum.

On another occasion a poor woman came to him and declared that she had been robbed of her all. In order to educate her children she had sold her little property for a sum of one thousand piastres, which the purchaser had promised to pay her in a month's time, but for which he had made her give him a receipt on the spot. At the end of the time, as the money did not come, she had begged for payment, but the wretch merely showed her the receipt duly drawn up and sent her away. Convinced of the truth of the story, Moreno was indignant, but as it was a delicate matter to prove, he considered for some time how he could cause restitution to be made, and, finally, fixed on an ingenious method of rendering justice. Calling the man before him, he asked if it was

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

true that he had bought the land from the poor woman, and was answered in the affirmative. Moreno remarked quietly that the woman complained of his delay in paying the sum agreed, upon which the delinquent swore that he had paid, and had a receipt in due form. Of course, Moreno expected this reply, but, assuming a look of surprise: "My friend," he said, "I was wrong to suspect you, and I owe you reparation. For long I have been looking for an honest man to fill a new post that I am about to create. I appoint you Governor of the Islands of Gallapagos, and as so great a personage cannot travel unescorted, two agents will accompany you to your house, where you will at once make your preparations for departing." With a terrible look he then bade the man go. The latter, half-dead with fright, and picturing to himself with horror the prospects of his life in the desert Islands of Gallapagos, sent for the widow, gave her the money, imploring her on his knees to obtain his pardon. This was quickly done. "I had, however, named

THE PRESIDENT

him Governor," said Moreno, smiling, "but as he does not care for the dignity, tell him I accept his resignation."

To carry out his prison reforms Moreno found two men after his own heart—a Chaplain and a Governor. The latter, a man of intelligence and firmness, was to enforce the rules and to lend his assistance to the Chaplain in his task of softening the rude natures committed to his care. The prison changed its character, and became turn by turn a school and a workshop. Don Abel de Corral, a young Priest devoted to his work, taught his strange pupils Christian doctrine and the laws of the Decalogue, "with which they seemed but little familiar," and all the elements of a Christian life, adding lessons in reading, writing, and arithmetic. After that came instruction in various trades, each prisoner learning that for which he had most aptitude. The Governor, Don Francisco Arellano, seconded the Chaplain with zeal, and although obliged to be severe with the idle and rebellious, he ever showed himself the father and friend of his "dear prisoners"

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

as he called them. To encourage them in their progress, spiritual and temporal, the President promised not only that the terms of imprisonment should be shortened, but that their entire sentence would be remitted to those who deserved it. Nor were his hopes vain, for as they returned to the knowledge of their religion, these poor victims of ignorance and vice became entirely reformed.

At the close of the year, the President, with his Ministry and other great personages, followed by a military escort, went to the prison to preside at the examinations, which comprised Christian Doctrine, Church history, and various branches of secular knowledge. Moreno himself questioned these new-fashioned scholars, who were for the most part of mature age. After having warmly congratulated them on their progress, he rewarded some of them by commuting their sentences, and to one who had distinguished himself above all by his devotion to duty, the President gave his liberty. The prisoners applauded with tears of joy.

Another class of criminals had likewise to

THE PRESIDENT

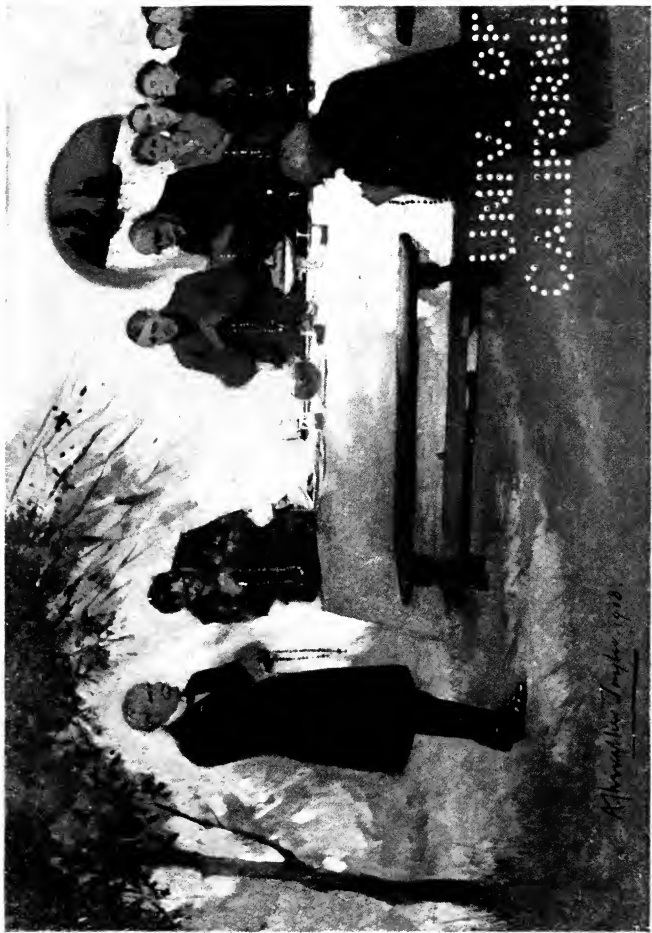
be sought out, these were the brigands and thieves who infested the country, and who in extremity could seek refuge in the mountains. Even close to Quito organized bands with good chiefs and settled points of rally defied the cleverest of the Government officials. The President made choice of one of these, and promised him a great reward if he should bring him the most redoubtable of the brigand chiefs, authorizing him to take policemen or soldiers to assist him. A few days later the chief was captured and brought before Moreno, quite expecting to be sentenced to instant death. What was his surprise when the President received him kindly, made an appeal to his feelings of religion and honour, and finally promised him his protection if he would change his life. The only penalty he imposed was that the prisoner should spend an hour daily with a Religious whom he named, and come to see himself morning and evening. Touched to the heart the brigand was entirely converted. When he was assured of this change, Moreno placed some of the

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

police under his orders, and charged him to bring him his former companions. Some time afterwards the whole company were in the charge of the Governor and Director of the Prison, and the pest of brigandage which had for long desolated the country was at an end.

To understand the result of Moreno's efforts, we must mention the consoling fact that after he had erected at great expense a new and healthy prison to replace the old one, it proved to be no longer needed.

“As,” he told Congress “the building can contain five hundred prisoners in five separate divisions and as, on the other hand, the Municipalities have not means at their disposal to construct a prison in every province, consider in your wisdom whether it would not be desirable to bring hither the convicts and ordinary prisoners. They would be under the eye of the Supreme Court, and we should see disappear the barbarous and filthy cells—very hotbeds of vice, where the criminal suffers without amending, when he does not evade by flight, the punishment



Alfred Taylor 1910.

"Then, my children, let us say the Rosary together."

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
61
62
63
64
65
66
67
68
69
70
71
72
73
74
75
76
77
78
79
80
81
82
83
84
85
86
87
88
89
90
91
92
93
94
95
96
97
98
99
100

THE PRESIDENT

he has merited." Alas, a few days after he uttered these words, the Protector of the prisoners was cruelly murdered and the faithful Arellano was dismissed from his post by the Revolutionary Party, who had no sympathy with the work of regeneration.

The results of his reforms in connection with the army were remarkable, and his care for the young recruits was minute. He "did not consider that he had the right to take young men who had been educated in piety and virtue, and to make sorts of monsters of them, without the knowledge of God or virtue." He obtained the institution of military chaplaincies from the Pope, and each year, besides the usual services of the Church and religious instructions, a Retreat was preached for the soldiers, which bore excellent and consoling fruit.

The following anecdote illustrates the delicacy of feeling shown by one of the young officers trained in Moreno's Cadet school. While making his nightly rounds, a certain lieutenant of infantry found lying in the street a great bundle of banknotes which he

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

took to the President next morning. They proved to belong to a commercial traveller—a stranger. In his delight at recovering his money, the latter offered a hundred piastres to the finder, but, to his surprise, the officer refused to accept them in spite of his reiterated offers, and even of the friendly insistence of the President himself, who said: “You have no reason for refusing a gift which is willingly offered to you in recognition of an honourable action.” “*Señor Presidente,*” replied the young man, “it is precisely my honour which makes me refuse. I have only done my duty and I merit no recompense.” “Very well,” returned Moreno, much touched, “but I also have the right to bestow something upon you which you cannot refuse”—and he raised him to the rank of captain.

Another incident of a sadder nature is related, in which we recognize Moreno’s sense of responsibility and his just severity, united to his natural compassion of heart. One of his former servants, in whom he took a great interest, became a soldier, and in a

THE PRESIDENT

moment of anger struck his commanding officer. An attempt was made to prevent his being brought before the Council of War, but the President declared that the law must not be evaded, and the man was condemned to death. Moreno was then besieged by petitions on behalf of the unfortunate man, but, convinced that it was absolutely necessary for military discipline to support the judgement of the council, he remained inflexible. "I desire to pardon," he said, "but my conscience forbids." On the morning of the execution the President withdrew to a church in the suburbs that he might escape the sound of the firing, and remained there in prayer until all was over.

By one of the ingenious methods he employed for bringing back men to an honest life, Moreno turned a well-known robber into an excellent soldier. This man was in prison expiating his crimes, when he received word from the President that if he would reform his life and acquire habits of industry and honesty his penalty should be shortened. The prisoner was touched and

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

became a different man. On leaving prison he was taken to Moreno, who said to him: "If I give you your liberty you will go back to your old ways; you will fall again into the hands of the law and we shall be obliged to shoot you. As I wish to spare you this disgrace and to make you an honest man, I will enroll you in the army. Be a good soldier, and you will earn promotion." The new recruit proved most satisfactory, and eventually became an officer.

CHAPTER X

WORK FOR SOULS

MORENO'S personal charity was astounding, and of the most humble and self-sacrificing nature. He lived in the simplest way and spent little on himself, although he now accepted his proper salary. People therefore concluded that he was saving money, for which, as he had no private fortune, no one blamed him: but when, after his death, the President's Agent gave a detailed account of his expenditure, it was discovered that he had given the whole of his official income to works of charity. Even the wife of his constant enemy, Urbina, had received a monthly pension from him, a fresh evidence of his spirit of heroic generosity and forgiveness.

We have already seen how Moreno's great faith showed itself in his far-reaching plans for the spiritual welfare of the country,

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

and we must now consider some further features of his zeal. It has been said that if he had been a Priest he would have been a Francis Xavier; as Head of the State his work recalled the old prophecy of his youth, that he would be "a Bishop in the world." At this country place the peasants said of him: "He spared us neither punishments nor corrections, but he was a true Saint. He gave us big wages and great rewards. He would recite the Rosary with us, and the Catechism; explain the New Testament to us; make us go to Mass and prepare us all for Confession and Holy Communion. Peace and plenty reigned in our farms because the mere presence of this excellent *Caballero* banished all evil."

On one occasion the President found himself in the company of some Irish workmen whom he had sent for from the United States to establish a scientific saw-mill. After examining their work and sharing the repast given to them at his desire, he questioned the men about the religious practices of their country and asked them whether they could

WORK FOR SOULS

sing some Hymns to our Lady. The good Irishmen set to work to sing with fervour. "You love our Lady well, then, in your country?" asked the President. "We love her with all our hearts," was the reply. "Then, my children," returned Moreno, "let us kneel down and say the Rosary together that you may persevere in the love and service of God."

When it was the case of helping a friend's soul, Moreno would show the most delicate and ingenious charity. At Quito there lived a gentleman for whose character and excellent qualities he had a great esteem and to whom he felt great gratitude, for he had often advanced the capital for the President's great enterprises. This friend went to Mass and was good to the poor, but had lost the habit of frequenting the Sacraments, and to Moreno's reproaches he only returned vague replies.

It is the custom at Quito, at the close of May, for the faithful to offer their written resolutions to our Lady in the place of flowers. Towards the close of this month,

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

therefore, Moreno once asked his friend if he had offered his bouquet. The latter understood his meaning and tried to evade it. "Wait," said Moreno, "I have myself offered our Lady a beautiful bouquet, and, as usual, it must be you who will bear the expense." "You know my purse is always open to you," replied the gentleman, thinking some money advance was required. "I may count on you, then." "Certainly." "Very well, then, I promised our Lady that you would go to Holy Communion on the last day of her month, so you see that I cannot offer my bouquet without your cooperation." The friend, much embarrassed, replied that such an important act required preparation: but, vanquished by his friend's concern for him, he retired into solitude for a few days, and on the last day of May he and the President received Holy Communion side by side.

One of the most interesting pages in Moreno's life is that which relates his care for the Indians who occupy the vast plains on the western slopes of the Cordilleras. In

WORK FOR SOULS

this territory, situated on the borders of Brazil, and surrounded by virgin forest, live some two hundred thousand Indians, nearly all nomads, most of them simple and pacific, but a few, like the tribe of Jivaros, cruel and warlike. In the eighteenth century they had been evangelized by the Jesuit Fathers and, under their care, had settled down in prosperous townships; but during the years of revolution the Jesuits were banished, and the tribes went back to their wandering life and to their superstitions. Since then the efforts made for their benefit had been unsuccessful, and Moreno determined to give back to these people the Religious who had done so much for them, and he made an arrangement with the Society to this effect. Presently, therefore, he had the joy of seeing the Fathers established at the four principal centres—Macas, Napo, Gualaquiza, and Zamorel, from whence they visited the wandering tribes.

In 1864, when the Vicar Apostolic, Padre Pizarro, and his fellow Religious were evangelizing the natives on the banks of the

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

Napo, Maldano, who, as we know, had been sent into exile, with some of his companions made a sudden incursion into the neighbourhood and attacked the Jesuit House, calling the Fathers the "accomplices of the Tyrant." The Missionaries were chained together and insulted in every way. The wretches determined to carry their victims off with them to Peru, and forced them to enter their canoe. The Indians, horrified at their conduct, lined the bank in tears, and one of them, to console the Religious, called out: "My Fathers, Jesus died on the Cross." As the boats moved away they threw themselves on their knees calling on the Fathers to bless them and uttering cries of despair at the departure of their benefactors. When Moreno returned to office in 1870 he re-established the Missions on a more solid basis; with far-seeing and enlightened policy, and regardless of the intolerance of the Radical party, he invested the Jesuit Vicar Apostolic with extensive civil powers.

"As it is impossible," he declares in the

WORK FOR SOULS

Government Decree relating to this matter, "to organize a Civil Government among savages, and that without some authority social life is impossible, the Jesuit Fathers will establish a Governor in every centre of population, and will invest him with the right of maintaining order and administering justice. The Governors may impose slight punishments for ordinary faults, banish from the Missionary Territory incorrigible disturbers of the peace, and send homicides to Quito to be judged. In every centre a school, built at the expense of Government, and in which Christian Doctrine, arithmetic, and music will be taught, will be obligatory for children under twelve years."

Government also prohibited sales on credit under pain of confiscation of the goods, and banishment from the territory; and promised aid and, if necessary, armed protection to the Missionaries. These last clauses, as it proved, were by no means unnecessary, as the simple Indians were often deceived and despoiled by speculators. The latter,

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

now, vexed at being interfered with, calumniated the Religious to the Indians, who, conceiving that their interests were at stake, set fire to the Jesuit House. Happily, a body of soldiers sent by Government re-established order, sent the merchants across the mountains, and all the tribes submitted to authority with the exception of the Jivaros.

“The day is not far off,” said Moreno in his address to Congress of 1871, “when we shall have to chase this perfidious tribe from the country and scatter them on the frontiers. . . . We will then colonize these fertile lands, as well as others, where there is no population, by making an appeal to Catholic emigrants from Germany, who will come to us in great numbers if you will vote the necessary funds.” After this stormy beginning the Jesuit missions once more prospered exceedingly. In two years that of the Napo counted twenty villages and 6,000 Christians. The work was so advanced that Moreno meant to petition the Holy See for a second Vicariat, and was about to open up

WORK FOR SOULS

these vast territories to commerce when his death brought ruin and desolation here as elsewhere; and in a short time the Jesuits were sent away and the villages broken up by the enmity of the merchants, who now returned to the country; and although a few Missionaries still remained scattered among the tribes, their efforts for the good of the people were rendered almost useless owing to the obstacles placed in their way by these traders.

Knowing that many of his own countrymen were no less in need of pastors, the President arranged for more priests to go to the mountainous regions of the country, and obtained from the Pope the creation of a new Diocese, which should embrace the distant provinces of Esmaraldas and Manabi, where twenty or thirty populous parishes were in spiritual destitution.

Finally, in order to help the many ignorant and lax Catholics in the country, he secured the co-operation of the Redemptionist Fathers, who went two and two among the people, with the most consoling results;

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

often the peasants, on hearing of their approach, would abandon their huts and their work and travel for five, or even ten, leagues to assist at the mission. Where there was no church they would erect one of branches and leaves, and here for a fortnight they would attend the Instructions, say the Rosary, and sing Hymns. After going to Confession and Holy Communion, and consecrating themselves to our Blessed Lady, the poor people would say adieu with tears and lamentations, and implore the "Fathers of their souls" to remain always with them.

In the towns the missionaries met with the same success. In 1873 they preached a mission in the Cathedral of Quito to an immense audience presided over by Moreno. It was concluded by a beautiful and symbolic ceremony, no doubt of Spanish origin, called the *Plantation of the Cross*. The Cathedral was filled to overflowing: the President, in full uniform and surrounded by the military and civil authorities, occupying the place of honour. Before the procession began one of the Redemptionists ascended the pulpit

WORK FOR SOULS

and spoke of devotion to the Cross and of the veneration due to it, recalling the fact that the Emperor Heraclius had had the honour of bearing the True Cross, and "I hope," he added, turning to the men present, "that, despising human respect, you will all envy his privilege." As he finished the President left his place and, with the aid of his Ministers, placed the large Cross on his shoulders, and, laden with the precious burden, he walked through the streets of the capital at the head of his people.

This Retreat bore great fruit, and we may realize the results of this and his other efforts by the following letter written by Moreno at this time: "God blesses us," he says, "for the country progresses really. A moral improvement is manifest everywhere, thanks to the Jesuits, the Dominicans, Redemptionists, Observatines, and other Religious who assist our good priests, who are themselves full of zeal. The number of those who returned to the Sacraments during Lent is incalculable. In our youth we could count those who fulfilled their religious duties;

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

to-day one counts those who neglect them. On the other hand, the material progress is not less admirable. One might really say that God bears us up with His hand, as a tender father supports his child when it first tries to walk.”

One supreme consolation was reserved to Moreno during his second Presidency—that of publicly raising his voice in defence of the Holy See. This privilege, which, it is sad to think, was his alone, brought Ecuador and its President before the eyes of all Europe, and was a great consolation to Pius IX. Moreno had sorrowfully followed all the stages of the war against the Pope, and when the occupation of Rome was accomplished he addressed an energetic protest to the ministry of Victor Emmanuel. From this fine document we will quote some words:

After saying that Ecuador had waited for the great European Powers to lead the way in protesting against the unjust invasion of Rome, Moreno continues:

“But our expectation was vain. The kings

WORK FOR SOULS

of the old Continent continue to keep silence, and Rome still suffers from the oppression of King Victor Emmanuel. It is for this reason, therefore, that the Government of Ecuador, in spite of its weakness and the immense distance which separates it from the Old World, fulfils its duty of protesting, as it does protest, before God and before men, in the name of outraged justice, in the name above all of the Catholic people of Ecuador, against the iniquitous invasion of Rome and the imprisonment of the Sovereign Pontiff, in spite of insidious promises, always repeated and always violated, and notwithstanding the absurd guarantees of independence by means of which it is intended to disguise the ignominious servitude of the Church."

Not content with sending this protest, the President forwarded copies of it to the heads of all the American Governments, urging them to join him in protesting against "the violent and unjust occupation of Rome." He had little hope of success, and unfortunately he alone in the New World also had

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

the courage to affirm publicly his devotion to the Holy See in this moment of danger. All Ecuador, however, shared its President's sentiments; and when the question of succouring the Holy Father in his temporal losses was discussed, Congress voted a sum of ten thousand piastres as a national gift, "a feeble offering from our little Republic," said the members who took it to the Papal Delegate, "which we beg you to offer to the immortal Pius IX, from a people who venerate his virtues and admire his greatness."

When the Holy Father read the Protest sent by Moreno he exclaimed, "Ah, if he was a powerful king the Pope would have someone to rely on in this world," and he wrote to thank him cordially for his support. After receiving the President's message and the offering from the people of Ecuador, the Pope replied in the following letter, which is also of special value, as showing that Moreno's reforms had been known and approved by His Holiness.

"We hardly know if our thanksgivings

WORK FOR SOULS

should have for object the proofs of your singular devotion to us, or the favours with which Almighty God is pleased to reward you. In truth, without a very special divine intervention, it would be very difficult to understand how in so short a time you have re-established peace, paid off a great portion of the National Debt, doubled the revenues, suppressed vexatious taxes, restored education, created roads and hospitals. If We must above all thank Almighty God, the Giver of all good, it is right also to praise your prudence and your zeal, you who know how to keep going at the same time so many other objects of your zeal; the reforms of institutions, of the law, of the Magistracy, and of the Army, omitting nothing which can increase the public prosperity. But above all, we congratulate you on the piety with which you refer all your success to God and the Church, persuaded that without Christian morality, of which the Church alone teaches and maintains the precepts, there cannot be any true progress for the nations. It is with good reason that you

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

have with all your strength stimulated Congress to the propagation of our Holy Religion, and turned all hearts to this Apostolic See, Centre of Unity, against which a terrible tempest rages, asking it very opportunely to assist our necessity. Continue to live in this holy, Christian liberty, to conform your works to your Faith, to respect the rights and the liberty of Holy Church, and God, who does not forget filial piety, will bestow on you, very dear son, blessings even more abundant than those with which He has enriched you up to now."

Moreno felt overwhelmed by this praise from the Holy Father, and wrote to him most humbly. "Very Holy Father," he says, "I cannot express to you the feelings of gratitude with which your Holiness's paternal and affectionate letter inspired me. The approbation which you deign to bestow on my efforts is for me the greatest reward which I could desire on this earth, but it is much above my merits. I confess with strict justice, that we owe all to God; not only the growing prosperity of our little State,

WORK FOR SOULS

but also the means which I employ for its development, and even the desire with which God has inspired me to work for His Glory.

“I therefore merit no reward; I have much more reason to fear that at the last day God may render me responsible for the good that, with the help of His mercy, I might have done and have not done. Deign then, your Holiness, to implore Him to forgive me and to save me in spite of all my faults. May God enlighten me, direct me in all things, and grant me the grace to die for the defence of the Faith and of Holy Church. In these sentiments, Holy Father, I beg a fresh Blessing for the Republic, for my family, and for myself. Your Blessing ever helps me to grow in confidence towards God, the source of all strength and of all valour.”

Moreno never had the consolation of seeing Pius IX in this world, and how greatly he would have esteemed the privilege we may gather from a letter written to one of his friends in Rome. “I envy your happiness in kissing the feet of the Vicar of Christ

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

and in conversing with him—him whom I love more than my father, as for him, for his defence, for his liberty, I would give even the life of my son.” His own life, as we know, he would joyfully have sacrificed at any time in the Pope’s service.

CHAPTER XI

INNER LIFE

BEFORE relating the last tragic scene in our great President's life, it will be interesting to consider him in his daily work, and to try to penetrate some of the secrets of the inner life which bore such rich fruit. St. Teresa, in her *Life*, exclaims: "Oh, if kings were to make half an hour's meditation daily, the face of the earth would be quickly renewed." Moreno put this ideal in practice, and it is true to say that he had the consolation of restoring faith and piety to his country. His life was one of hard labour and austere in its simplicity. He rose every day at five o'clock, and was always in Church at six to make his meditation and hear Mass.

At seven o'clock he would visit the Hospital, and then retire to his library to work hard till ten o'clock. After a frugal break-

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

fast he went to the Government Palace to work till three. At four he dined, and then paid any necessary visits, inspected public works, and settled disputes brought before him. At six he returned home to spend the evening with his family till nine o'clock, when he would go back to his library to write letters and work till eleven or twelve o'clock. This was his home life, but if difficulties arose, and his presence was needed in any part of the country, Moreno would be on horseback from morning till night, his wonderful constitution resisting all fatigue.

In his inspections or campaigns his only rest was taken wrapped in his cloak on the ground. The *Imitation* was his constant companion in all his journeys, and after his death the well-worn copy was found in his pocket. It had been given to him by a friend on September 24th, 1860, the day of the taking of Guayaquil. On the last page was found written the rule he had laid down for himself, and it is very touching to read the humble and simple words of this strong

INNER LIFE

man, who outwardly, no doubt, often appeared somewhat stern and proud.

“Every morning when saying my prayers I will ask specially for humility. Every day I will hear Mass, say the Rosary, and will read, besides a chapter of the *Imitation*, this Rule and the instructions which are added to it. I will endeavour to keep myself as much as possible in the presence of God, especially during conversation, that I may not exceed in words. I will often offer my heart to God, principally before beginning any actions. Every hour I will say to myself: ‘I am worse than a demon, and hell ought to be my dwelling-place.’ In temptations I will add: ‘What should I think of all this in my last agony?’ In my room never to pray sitting when I can do so on my knees or standing. Practise daily little acts of humility, as kissing the ground; to rejoice when I, or my actions, are censured. Never to speak of myself except to avow my faults or defects. To make efforts, by thinking of Jesus and Mary, to restrain my impatience and go against my natural

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

inclinations; to be kind to all, even with the importunate, and never to speak ill of my enemies. Every morning, before beginning my work, I will write down what I have to do, being very careful to distribute my time well, to give myself only to useful and necessary business, and to continue it with zeal and perseverance. I will scrupulously observe the law of justice and truth, and have no intentions in all my actions save the greater glory of God. . . . I will go to confession every week. . . . I will never pass more than an hour in any amusement, and in general never before eight o'clock in the evening."

All who knew him best tell us with what conscientiousness and scrupulous fidelity Moreno acted up to his resolutions. To him difficulties and so-called impossibilities did not exist. To objections of this kind his invariable reply was: "God never dies, God is, and that is enough. What is impossible to God?"

His great devotion was to the Blessed Sacrament, and he was constantly seen

INNER LIFE

kneeling in adoration before the altar. It was his delight to follow the priest when he took Holy Communion to the sick, and in the great processions he would carry the Banner before the Blessed Sacrament. In 1873 he had the consolation of consecrating Ecuador to the Sacred Heart by an official Decree. On this occasion he attended the solemn ceremony in the Cathedral, and after the Archbishop had said the Act of Consecration, the President repeated it in the name of the State.

As we have seen, he was a true son of Our Lady, and had a special devotion to St. Joseph and to Blessed Mariana, who is called the Lily of Quito, the patroness of Ecuador, whose shrine he restored magnificently. He had a horror of availing himself of any exemptions on the ground of his rank, and when he joined the Sodality of Our Lady insisted on belonging to the Band for the working men. On the occasion of a Jubilee, when he was told he might be dispensed from some of the conditions on account of his many occupations,

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

he replied: "God preserve me from that, I am merely a Christian like any other"; and again, when the Superior of a Religious House offered to send his Confessor to him weekly to save him the walk, his only answer was: "My Father, it is for the sinner to go to his judge, not for the judge to run after the sinner."

Moreno was a most interesting and charming companion. With his vast knowledge he was able to "talk medicine with doctors, jurisprudence with lawyers, theology with ecclesiastics, agriculture with peasants." With his friends he was ever simple and cheerful, although his manner was always grave and dignified. His appearance at this time was most striking, with his fine head, white hair, and large dark eyes; and although in his younger days his stern expression gave signs of the storms and stress of his life, as he grew older and the state of the country improved, his face became calm and peaceful. In spite of his extraordinary talents and naturally imperious character, Moreno remained ever humble, and although

INNER LIFE

he was accused by his enemies of pride and ambition, all we know of him shows us that he never coveted power for his own sake, and only used it for God's glory and the welfare of his country.

Moreno never desired popularity nor made the slightest concession of principle to obtain it. He was quite unmoved by the abuse which the Revolutionary papers poured forth against him, being quite content, he said, to be treated like Our Lord and the Church. To a Religious who told him of some insults he had received he replied: "I sympathize with your sufferings, but you have had a magnificent occasion of meriting for Eternity. The blows you have received may appear to you less hard if you compare them with those with which they overwhelm me daily. Do like me—place the outrages at the foot of the Cross and beg God to forgive the guilty. Ask Him to give me sufficient strength not only to do good to those who let loose on me, by word or writing, the flood of hatred which fills their hearts, but also to rejoice before God to have something

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

to suffer in union with the Lord. It is for me a real happiness as well as an unmerited honour to endure the insults of the Revolution in company with the Religious Orders, the Bishops, and even the Sovereign Pontiff."

If Moreno occasionally defended his opinion with too much passion and vigour, it was less in order to defeat an adversary than to defend truth. With his great intellectual powers and strong faith and logic he judged modern theories severely, and, with the Church, considered them subversive of society. If some Liberal vaunted such ideas in his presence, the President by a few words—sometimes expressed too strongly—crushed his argument, and then, entering into the heart of the question, he would demonstrate its futility. "In arithmetic," he would say, "no eloquence is needed, only figures; in philosophy and in politics no speechifying, but reasons." On other matters where truth and justice were not involved he was quite ready to be contradicted. "I am mistaken," he would say,

INNER LIFE

“you know this subject better than I do.”

Above all he was ever ready to make amends if he had been in fault. On one occasion when he was very busy and worried an ecclesiastic interrupted him about a matter of so-called importance. Moreno received him brusquely, and as the matter proved insignificant he bade him adieu still more abruptly, saying: “It was not worth your while to trouble yourself, or me either, for such a trifle.” The Priest retired somewhat mortified, but had ceased to think of the matter when, early next morning, the President visited him to ask pardon for his “violent and disrespectful” conduct. An officer, a friend of Moreno’s, had for some trivial reason left off saluting or visiting him. Meeting him one day the President came up to him, saying: “I make you my Aide-de-Camp.” The officer remained silent from surprise. “There,” said Moreno, bowing before him, “if you want my head—there it is,” and they renewed their friendship from that time.

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

Penetrated with the idea of his own worthlessness, he constantly begged for prayers, and in his private letters to the Bishops, his friends, he would press them to tell him of anything they thought reprehensible in his actions and to show him the means of using his power in a more advantageous manner for the cause of God and the Church.

A Professor of botany, having discovered a plant unknown in the flora of the country, asked his leave to call it the *Tacsonia Garcia Moreno*. "If you wish to do me a pleasure," replied the President, "you will put aside my poor personality: if your flower is rare, pretty and unknown to Ecuador, make the homage of your discovery to the Flower of Heaven: call it the *Tacsonia Maria*."

A German Professor of the Polytechnic School draws an interesting picture of Moreno in his country home, where he was privileged to visit him. "He always edified me," he writes, "by his goodness, his earnestness accompanied by a charming amiability, and above all by his profound piety. In the morning, when the time came



At the Altar, August 1908

"The consecration of Ecuador to the Sacred Heart"

INNER LIFE

for Mass, he himself prepared everything in his Chapel and served Mass, which was attended by his family and the village people. If you could have seen him, with his tall stature, his marked features, his white hair and his military bearing; if you could have read in his countenance, as we could, his fear of God, his living faith, the ardent piety with which his heart was filled, you would understand the respect which all felt in the presence of this man of God."

If it be urged that he showed himself too severe on some occasions when the nation's welfare necessitated the punishment of treachery or crime, we would reply in his own words to a Religious who interceded for a young man under sentence of banishment: "We have enough assassins in Ecuador without this one. You lament over the fate of the executioners, but I have pity on the victims."

The work of reforming and bringing up to date the hospitals was one of those he had most at heart. "Our few charitable institutions," he said in Congress, "present

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

a dismal picture unworthy of a Christian and civilized nation, not only on account of the absolute insufficiency of the revenues to support them, but especially from want of charity in those who serve them." He spoke with full knowledge, as from the earliest days of his Presidency he had constituted himself director of the chief Hospital of Quito. He visited it daily in order to see that the officials fulfilled their duties properly. He would go through the wards, inspect the doctors' prescriptions and show the infirmarians how to prepare the medicines or to dress the patients' wounds, and any negligence was severely punished.

There are many stories told of the President's love of justice and very practical care for the ill-used or the sick from which we will select the following instance. One of the Hospitals in Quito was for Lepers, and these poor people having complained of their food Moreno went unexpectedly one day and partook of dinner with them. Finding cause for complaint he ordered a better diet, but returning one day and find-

INNER LIFE

ing that everything was satisfactory, he met the complaint of a still discontented patient with the remark, "Do you know, my friend, that I am not so well served myself though I am President of the Republic." His crowning charity to the sick was to give them Sisters of Charity to care for their bodies and souls, and under their charge the Hospital of St. John of God at Quito became a model hospital. Moreno also established others in different towns, placing them too under the Sisters' care. What would this great man have said to the laicization of hospitals which it is our grief to witness in these days?

After arriving at any town, Moreno's first visit was to the Hospital, and on one occasion, at Guayaquil, he found many of the patients lying on the ground on mats. Much distressed, the President turned to the Governor and asked why they were not given the necessary comforts. "Excellency," replied the governor, "we have no more money." "That does not prevent you who are well from sleeping on a good mattress,

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

while these suffering members of Jesus Christ have only the ground to rest on." "In some weeks we shall provide for all their needs." "Not in some weeks," replied Moreno, "for they cannot wait. You will sleep here to-night by them on a mat, and on the following nights until each sick person has a bed and a mattress." Before night the hospital was filled with beds and the Governor could repose on his own.

It is needless to say that part of the President's income went to his beloved sick, and he rejoiced at giving them any comfort or pleasure possible. During his first Presidency, his wife, Doña Rosa, remarked to him that it was usual to give an official banquet to the Ministers and Diplomats, and when he explained that his means did not permit of this expense, she said she would provide the money, and gave him five hundred piastres, begging him to do the thing well. But the President could not make up his mind to do as she wished, and going to the hospital with his Aide-de-camp he provided, instead, for the most

INNER LIFE

pressing necessities of the invalids, and ordered a magnificent dinner for them, and when Doña Rosa asked if he had found the money sufficient he replied, laughing heartily, "I thought that a good dinner would do more good to the sick than to the Diplomats."



CHAPTER XII

THE HERO'S DEATH

AS the year 1874 drew to its close, the question of the next Presidential Election filled men's thoughts. There was no doubt that Moreno would obtain a great majority of votes from his devoted people, and this exasperated the Radical party. They chose for their candidate Borrero, a Liberal-Catholic, and made use of every sort of trick to ensure his success.

Moreno, who had for so long desired to retire into private life, viewed these devices with indifference, having resolved only to consent to nomination should such be the absolute will of the country, and he forbade all efforts in his own favour. The people, however, were so determined upon re-electing him that Borrero withdrew his candidature before the election. The voting took place in May and in perfect quiet, the 23,000

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

electors spontaneously giving their votes for the man they called the "Saviour of their Country." Defeated once more, his enemies determined to take his life, and this time, alas, they were to realize their wicked project.

For the next three or four months Moreno lived literally in the shadow of death, and it required a man of his heroic faith and courage to go on with his daily duties unmoved by the constant warnings of his impending assassination.

The Freemasons had long sought his ruin. This great Catholic ruler was, they knew, their bitterest opponent in their war against the Church and Society; and in 1873, after his public consecration of Ecuador to the Sacred Heart, he was condemned to die by the Grand Council of the Order. "I am warned from Germany," he writes, "that the Lodges of that country have given orders to those of America to move heaven and earth to overthrow the Government of Ecuador. But if God protects and overshadows us by his mercy, what have we to

THE HERO'S DEATH

fear?" A flood of newspaper articles appeared in Europe and America calumniating the President, and preparing public opinion for his downfall. The Peruvian papers even announced his death as an accomplished fact in October, 1873.

The elections of 1874 brought another crop of sinister rumours and threats, and the plans for his death became more active. The rumours of assassination, indeed, were so insistent that many persons felt obliged to warn the President of his danger, and to beg him to take necessary precautions. But it was impossible to alarm him, or to make him take care.

To a Religious who had been charged to give him notice of a grave communication he only replied, "I am grateful to you for your charitable warning, although it tells me nothing that is new to me. I am perfectly aware that certain men desire my death, but these bad desires engendered by hatred are only prejudicial to those who form them. Tell the persons from whom you have these particulars that I fear God,

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

but God alone. I willingly pardon my enemies, and would do them good if I knew them or if I had the chance." To a friend who wished to point out to him a Freemason's agent who was said to desire his death, he replied, "I pay no heed to these wretched denunciations, and I look with profound contempt on the plans of these wretches. I should have gone mad long ago if I had attached the smallest importance to their intrigues."

Above all, he would not permit any weak pleading on his behalf or that of his Ministry. To the Editor of the *Nacional*, who, in his efforts for the President's cause, had one day published a sort of prophetic vision, describing him as a new Abel about to be murdered by a new Cain, Moreno said, "This tone displeases me. It is not the language of a Government that does good, fearing nothing, whatever it may be . . . God will be our Shield against the darts of the enemy. If we fall, well, there is nothing more desirable nor more glorious for a Catholic—our reward will be eternal."

THE HERO'S DEATH

Meanwhile his enemies' projects were maturing. There were nightly meetings at the house of the Peruvian Minister which caused great anxiety to the President's friends, and it seems incredible to us that strict measures were not taken to verify these suspicions or to arrest the persons implicated. About this time a Prelate who was passing through Quito warned him again, "It is known publicly that the Freemasons have condemned you and that their agents are preparing their daggers: do then take some precautions to save your life." "And what precautions can you suggest to me?" asked Moreno. "Surround yourself with an escort." "And who will save me from the escort?" he returned, "for after all it might be suborned. I prefer to confide myself to God's care. *Nisi Dominus custodieret civitatem frustra vigilat qui custodit eam.*"

It was under these circumstances of dread and expectation that the President wrote what proved to be his last letter to Pius IX: a letter which in part clearly foreshadows

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

his coming fate. "I implore your blessing, Very Holy Father," he writes, "as I have been, without any merit on my part, re-elected to govern this Catholic Republic for another six years. The new period only begins on August 30th, at which date I must take the Constitutional Oath. It will only then become my duty to acquaint your Holiness officially with the fact, but I wish to do so now, so as to obtain from Heaven the strength and light of which I, more than anyone, have need, to remain for ever the devoted son of our Redeemer and the loyal and obedient servant of his infallible Vicar. At this moment, when the Lodges of the neighbouring countries, excited by Germany, pour forth against me all sorts of atrocious insults and horrible calumnies, and endeavour secretly to find means to murder me, I have more than ever need of divine assistance, so as to live and die for the defence of our holy Religion and of this dear Republic, which God calls me again to govern. What greater happiness could befall me, Very Holy Father, than to see myself hated and calum-

THE HERO'S DEATH

niated for love of our Divine Redeemer? But what greater privilege still, if your blessing were to obtain for me the grace of shedding my blood for Him, who, being God, desired to shed His on the Cross for us."

On July 26th, the feast of St. Anne, her Patroness, Madame Moreno received, among her congratulatory letters, a card recommending her to watch over her husband, as the designs against him were on the eve of execution. Several of his friends also took this opportunity of once more urging prudence. "Well," replied Moreno, cheerfully, "what does a traveller desire but the end of his journey—or a sailor but to sight the shores of his own country; I will not have myself guarded. My fate is in the hands of God, Who will take me from the world when and in the manner he wishes."

On August 4th Moreno wrote to Don Juan Aguirre, who, from their college days, had been his constant friend. They had met some months previously, and on this occasion Moreno's calm had for once forsaken him, for he seemed convinced that it was

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

their last meeting. After a long and intimate talk he embraced his friend, exclaiming, "I feel we shall not see each other again, this is our last farewell." Then turning away to hide his tears, he called out again, "We shall not meet again." Now recalling these sad presentiments, he wrote to Don Juan, "I am about to be murdered. I am happy to die for the Faith. We shall see each other again in Heaven."

On August 5th the President and his Council discussed the question of the danger overhanging him, and which occupied everyone's thoughts; but Moreno was persuaded that no precautions could avail against an inveterate enemy, who was prepared to strike at any moment and from any quarter. "The enemies of God and the Church may kill me," he said; "God does not die."

In the evening, wishing to complete the speech which he was preparing for Congress, he told his Aide-de-camp to admit no one. A priest, however, insisted on being taken to the President, saying that his business would brook no delay, and again reiterated

THE HERO'S DEATH

the warnings of his grave and immediate danger from the Freemasons. "I have received many similar messages," replied Moreno, "and after mature consideration I am convinced that the only precaution I can take is to keep myself prepared to appear before God"; and he continued his work as if nothing had occurred, but it was observed that he passed part of the night in prayer.

Next morning, August 6th, the Feast of the Transfiguration and the First Friday of the month, the President went, as was his custom, to the Church of St. Dominic, about six o'clock. Here he heard Mass, and with many others received Holy Communion. It was his Viaticum, and probably he felt it to be so, for he knew that death might come at any moment. He prolonged his Thanksgiving till nearly eight o'clock, and then returned home.

Meanwhile the assassins had actually followed him to the square outside the church, and probably only the crowd, or some other accidental circumstance, prevented them

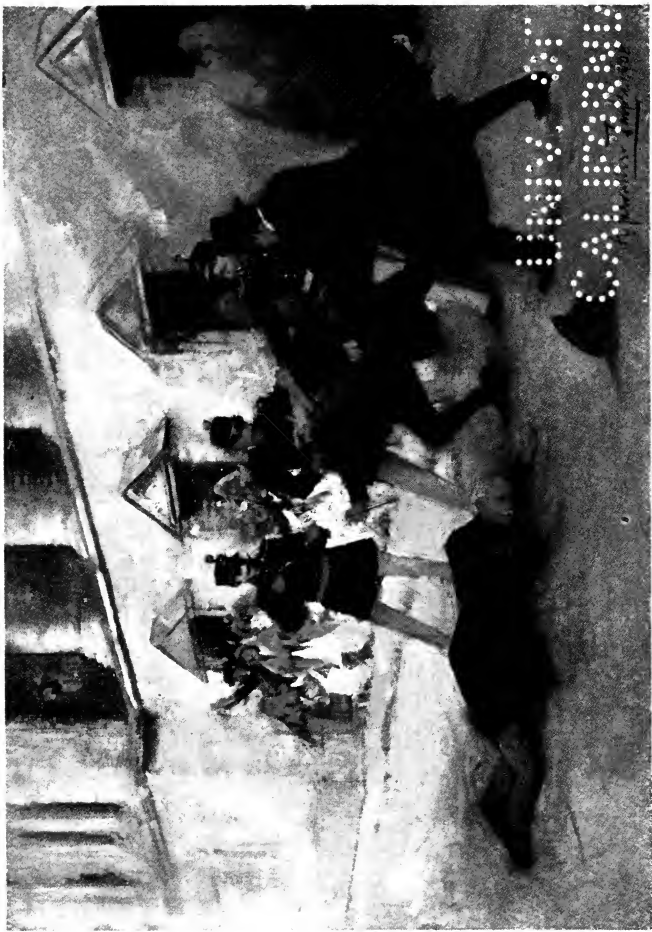
GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

from consummating their crime as he left the church.

After talking for some time with his family, and completing his speech, the President set out for Government House about one o'clock, accompanied by his Aide-de-camp, taking the message he had prepared with him. On his road he stopped to visit his wife's brother, Don Ignatius Salazar, whose house stood close to the *Plaza Mayor*. Don Ignatius, who was much attached to him, observed sadly: "You should not go out, for you must be aware that your enemies watch every step." "Nothing will happen but what God permits," was the reply. "I am entirely in His hands."

As it was a very hot day, Moreno took a cooling drink, which threw him into a perspiration and caused him to button up his coat—a seemingly trivial action, but which had very fatal results.

The conspirators were in a *café*, watching the President's movements, and they now came out and hid between the pillars of the colonnade. Before going to the Palace



The Assassination of Garcia Moreno.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
61
62
63
64
65
66
67
68
69
70
71
72
73
74
75
76
77
78
79
80
81
82
83
84
85
86
87
88
89
90
91
92
93
94
95
96
97
98
99
100

THE HERO'S DEATH

Moreno entered the Cathedral, where there was Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, and he remained for a long time absorbed in prayer, till one of the conspirators, Rayo, growing impatient of delay, sent a messenger to say that he was wanted on pressing business. Moreno rose at once, and had already made a few steps towards the Palace, when Rayo drew a large cutlass, and inflicted a terrible wound on his shoulder. "Vile assassin," cried the President, trying in vain to get his revolver from beneath his buttoned-up coat, as Rayo wounded him again on the head, and the rest fired at him with their revolvers.

A young man tried to seize and disarm Rayo, but was himself wounded, and had to let go. Pierced with bullets, and with his head bleeding, Moreno still endeavoured to defend himself, when Rayo, with a double blow of the cutlass, severed his left arm and cut off his right hand. A second discharge of shot threw the heroic victim to the bottom of the steps, where he lay motionless. The wretched Rayo again assailed him, cry-

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

ing out: "Die, destroyer of liberty!" "God never dies," murmured the Hero. They were his last words.

All this had been the work of a moment. The noise brought people to the spot, and the wretches fled. Moreno was carried into the Cathedral and laid at the feet of Our Lady of Pity, and from thence taken to the priest's house adjoining, where a surgeon tried to dress his wounds, but it was in vain, death was clearly at hand. A priest asked him if he pardoned his enemies. An expressive look showed his forgiveness, and the last Absolution was given, followed by Extreme Unction, which was administered amidst the sobs and tears of those around him. In about a quarter of an hour from the time of the attack Moreno expired, and his great soul went to its reward.

An official examination showed that he had received seven or eight mortal wounds. On his breast was found a relic of the True Cross, the Scapular of the Passion, and that of the Sacred Heart, and round his neck he wore his Rosary. In his pocket was found

THE HERO'S DEATH

a little memorandum in pencil, written that very day. "My Saviour Jesus Christ, give me greater love for Thee, and profound humility, and teach me what I should do this day for Thy greater glory and service."

The whole country was plunged into sorrow and mourning by this terrible crime, and from all the American States, from Pius IX, and from the Catholic States of Europe, came messages of sorrow and of sympathy for the bereaved people. The Pope publicly eulogized his faithful son, calling him "a victim to his Faith and Christian Charity"; and when, some years later, his successor, Leo XIII, was presented with Moreno's last speech, still stained with his blood, he, in his turn, said: "We shall religiously preserve it as a touching remembrance of a man who was the champion of the Catholic Faith, and to whom may be justly applied the words made use of by the Church to celebrate the memory of the holy martyrs St. Thomas of Canterbury and St. Stanislaus of Poland, *Pro Ecclesia gladiis impiorum occubuit.*"

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

The President's body, dressed in his uniform, lay in state for three days in the Cathedral. Crowds of men, women, and children came to pray and weep beside him, exclaiming: "We have lost our father; he has shed his blood for us." At the great funeral service the Dean of the Cathedral, Don Vincent Cuesta, addressing the dead hero, spoke these touching words:

"Your eyes do not see our tears; your ears cannot hear the lamentations of your people; your noble heart no longer beats in your breast; but your soul understands us. Ah, from that happy region to which your heroic virtue has brought you, look down in pity on your children. Do not abandon your country to anarchy and ruin. Ask God to raise up a man worthy to succeed you, one who will carry on your great work, and will know how to say with you, *Adveniat regnum tuum.*"

We may hope that these prayers were heard, for Ecuador, after some slight lapses under Masonic governments, keeps her place as a strong Catholic country—the Republic of the Sacred Heart.

CHAPTER XIII

CONCLUSION

CONGRESS assembled a few days after the funeral, and the Minister of the Interior presented the last message of the dead President, still stained with his blood.

It was received with indescribable emotion, and listened to in deep and reverent silence. "Some years ago," ran the message, "Ecuador daily repeated the sad complaint that Bolivar, the Liberator, made in his last message to Congress in 1830. *I blush to say it: Independence is a boon which we have conquered, but it is at the expense of all others.* Since, placing our hope in God, we have detached ourselves from the current of impiety and apostasy which carries away the world in these days of blindness, and reorganized ourselves in 1879 as a really Catholic Nation, everything changed for the better

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

day by day, and for the prosperity of our dear country. . . . To justify my words it will be sufficient to give you a *résumé* of our progress during these last years, referring to the official reports of each department for all that concerns documents or details. That we may clearly discern the ground covered during this period of regeneration, I will compare the present condition of matters with the state from which they started, not to glorify ourselves, but to give glory to Him to Whom we owe everything, and Whom we adore as our Redeemer and our Father, our Protector, and our God."

Moreno then recapitulated the progress made in all the various branches of administration: in education, public works, finance, missions, good works, proving by the official returns the immense development, moral and material, which had taken place in the country. He concluded with words which greatly moved the meeting: "If I have committed faults I beg your pardon a thousand and a thousand times, and this forgiveness I beg of all my countrymen with very

CONCLUSION

sincere tears, begging them to believe that my desire has ever been for their good. If, on the contrary, you think I have succeeded in anything, attribute it in the first instance to Almighty God, and to the Immaculate Dispensatrice of the treasure of His Mercy, and then to yourselves, to the people, the army, and to all those who in the various branches of government have helped me with so much intelligence and fidelity to fulfil my difficult duties.”

Congress was worthy of this last noble message from the President, and issued a manifesto in honour of him whom they declared to be “great, not only in the eyes of Ecuador but of America, of the whole world—for genius belongs to all peoples and to all centuries.” In the Session of September 16th, it published a decree from which we quote the following passages: “considering that the most Excellent Don Gabriel Garcia Moreno by his vast intelligence, as by his high virtues, deserves to fill the first place among the children of Ecuador; that he consecrated his life and the rare gifts of

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

his mind and heart to the regeneration and to the greatness of the Republic, basing his social institutions on the solid foundation of Catholic principles; that he loved religion and country so deeply as to suffer martyrdom for them, and so has in this manner left to posterity a memory rendered illustrious by the immortal halo with which God crowns heroic virtues, Ecuador, in the name of its representatives, accords to the memory of the illustrious Don Gabriel Garcia Moreno the homage of its eternal gratitude, and to honour him according to his merits awards to him the titles of *Regenerator of his Country* and of *Martyr of Catholic Civilization.*”

It was also decreed that the hero's memory should be honoured in various ways throughout the country. His bust was to be placed in public buildings, and the great road and the railways, which owed their existence to his energy, were to be called by his name, while a statue of the hero was to be erected in the Capital.

This statue of the President now stands in the *Plaza Mayor*, close to the scene of his

CONCLUSION

death, keeping guard over his beloved land. The pedestal bears these words: "*To Garcia Moreno, the noblest of the sons of Ecuador, dying for his Religion and his Country, a grateful Republic.*"

In considering the history of Moreno's life, we see what became apparent to himself during the period of his probation, that one strong man can, with the grace of God, do immense things for his country. If it was not permitted to him to realize in all its perfection the ideal of government which he had formed, he at least succeeded in restoring his country in general to a fervent religious life, and to great material prosperity. This, in the midst of the tragic and revolutionary elements incident to the history of a people whose fiery and excitable nature produces struggles unknown to our calmer northern races, was a great achievement, and an object lesson to the unbelieving world. To use the words of a great Catholic writer regarding our hero, we see in him one who "had the audacity to desire to deliver his people from ignorance, liars, and

GABRIEL GARCIA MORENO

oppressors; who brought them back to Almighty God in the light of faith, in innocence of life and in peace, and who finally gave his life for their salvation.”

THE END

RETURN TO the circulation desk of any
University of California Library
or to the
NORTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY
Bldg. 400, Richmond Field Station
University of California
Richmond, CA 94804-4698

ALL BOOKS MAY BE RECALLED AFTER 7 DAYS

- 2-month loans may be renewed by calling (510) 642-6753
 - 1-year loans may be recharged by bringing books to NRLF
 - Renewals and recharges may be made 4 days prior to due date.
-

DUE AS STAMPED BELOW

MAY 18 2000

SENT ON ILL

AUG 05 2004

U. C. BERKELEY

740939

F 3735

G 3M3

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY

2003

