

general character, good beef is to be occasionally met, and sometimes even finely-flavoured beef, which in England might be reckoned prime. Good pasturage is produced only in rare patches, and the cattle which have the luck of browsing upon these oases, are often in excellent condition when they are driven to the Matadero for slaughter.

It is unfortunately too generally the practice to overwork the ox, in the multifarious avocations to which the patient beast is here submitted; and when he begins to get a little old and tough, and to suffer from lameness or incipient disease, he is immediately converted into beef. Honest stall-feeding would get rid of this pernicious practice. The immense difference of climate between Galicia and Cadiz, between the Asturias and Tarifa, causes all the advantage to be in favour of the northern provinces; and if beef from Galicia has found so little favour in Smithfield, the chance for Andalucía would be still smaller. But in point of fact, through extraordinary mismanagement, Andalucía does not produce enough for its own uses. The supplies of most of the southern ports in meat, poultry, eggs, and a variety of other provisions, come for the most part from the north of Spain, from Portugal and Barbary. How extraordinary that from the burning soil of Africa, from the borders of a boundless desert, should come a portion of the food of this earthly paradise—for it is the negligence of man which makes Andalucía look other than a paradise.

It is only in winter that the thinly scattered pasture lands of Andalucía are to any extent pro-

ductive, the arid and sandy aspect of the interior of the country in summer reminding the traveller of the Sahara. Under these circumstances the labour of the ox in raising water becomes invaluable—the race should be protected, the breed improved, and instead of slaughtering skin-and-bone, *twice the weight of beef* under the same number of heads should be sent to market. The first requisite to all agricultural labour here is water, and without oxen it cannot be raised—hard-labour, with whatever assistance from machinery, being unadapted to the genius of the people, and calculated to prove inefficacious. They should, therefore, if I may be pardoned for using foreign terms, exploit and utilize the ox to the utmost; and for one crazy and creaking draw-well at present in motion, there should be at least five—with the carpentry, however, more carefully looked to, and grease occasionally applied to subdue the odious noise. We must not expect to introduce novel processes here, but must make the most of existing materials. By this means every rood of the soil might be cultivated, and the scandalous desert which exists between Cadiz and Tarifa converted into a succession of smiling gardens. Human food may be produced to any extent, and food for cattle likewise—no browsing in fields thinly sprinkled with coarse grass, wild corn, gorse, thistles, and rushes, comically called pasture; but the cattle stalled—mangel-wurzel, turnips, and the various indigenious growths produced plentifully in irrigated fields, cut and laid before them, and the fields again enriched by their copious manure. Indeed the soil will of itself produce anything beneath this

sol criador, and nothing more than water and a little labour is required.

An extensive Labrador of my acquaintance here has followed my advice in this respect, and his stall-feeding bids fair to cut down all competitors. There are few parts of Europe in which pasturage is dearer, owing to the thinness of the herbage, by which, though rents are small, fattening is made excessively expensive. It is only to be found in any quantity in the valleys between the numerous sierras of the district. In summer even these are commonly parched up and burnt, and in winter (all things in this *intemperate* climate being in extreme), the mountain floods often carry off cattle, flocks, pasture and all, leaving the former suffocated in the distant valleys, and the latter mixed *pêle-mêle* with boulders and rubble. Wolves and robbers likewise thin the Labrador's live-stock; and it is a frequent complaint, that the produce of their horned cattle and sheep does not cover the expense of keepers and pasturage. The weight of testimony is in short overwhelming in favour of the practice of stall-feeding; grazing, properly so called, and the rearing of fine wools, being applicable only to Estremadura, New Castile, and La Mancha. Good mutton will, I fear, be at all times a rarity in Andalucía, owing to the infrequency and inferiority of pasturage, but excellent beef may be produced in abundance. To make all the land productive, no extraordinary energy is required of the inhabitants, no Roman nor Egyptian activity, no mighty aqueduct nor gigantic Lake Moeris, 360 miles in circumference. No such energy is required of them, because most

likely they will not display it, nor are they required to imitate the monumental grandeur of their Moorish ancestors, who have left behind them in many an Alcazar, fort, and tower, such proofs of their indomitable industry. All that is demanded of them is to sink a few wells, and set a few oxen more in motion.

CHAPTER XXI.

AGRICULTURE.

(Continued.)

THE interminable quarrels about the right of unappropriated lands led to some efforts at regulation by the Provincial Deputations in 1841, and several distributions of waste lands and commonage were traced out. A circular was issued by them on the subject on the 1st of May of that year, and in the month of August following it was revised and corrected by the Government. The distributions purported to be made in accordance with this revised and authorised plan; but the caprice of Deputations and the favour of Ayuntamiéntos caused private wishes and interests to predominate in this partition, to a degree that entirely prevented its being received as satisfactory, which condition alone could cause it to be final. Litigation ensued, several awards were annulled, and complaints without number, carried by appeal from the Ayuntamiéntos to the Provincial Deputations, were decided by the latter too often to the prejudice of the occupying tenants, from which bloody feuds ensued. In many instances these tenants had an occupation of more than half a century, constituting, by the principles of common law universally recognised throughout Europe, a legitimate right of possession.

The Deputations, by their injudicious manage-

ments, flung an apple of discord between the proprietors and the *proletarios*, or humbler classes. In accordance with the views of Progress and extreme Liberalism, then in the ascendant at Madrid, the rights of proprietors were but little respected, and their interests less consulted in each territorial distribution, than the acquirement of popularity amongst the universal majority. These were the views most congenial to the Progresista Deputations themselves, and they were likewise strongly enforced upon their adoption by the Government. The strength of Progresista support was entirely in the mob, and the adherents of Espartero were almost exclusively amongst the lower orders, the higher and middle classes being, with few exceptions, Moderados, and entirely opposed to the policy which excluded Cristina from the kingdom. Under these circumstances, it is not to be wondered at, that, in partitioning these lands, the Deputations and Ayuntamiéntos leaned towards the class of small farmers and labourers, aimed at realising upon a limited scale the policy which has transferred the bulk of the soil of France to the hands of small proprietors, and sought in practice to establish an Agrarian law. Like the old Roman legislation, their efforts were only productive of fresh sedition, there were no tribunes to control and allay the commotion, but there were hundreds of robbers, contrabandists, and lawless men, whose guns were at the service of the discontented. Numerous outrages were committed, and many still retain possession, by force, of lands, the title to which was awarded by the Deputations to half a dozen others.

Their policy was to Fourierise the provinces, disregarding long-acquired rights and rural "usufructs," and giving farms, in many instances, to artisans and mechanics, residing in the petty municipal towns and villages, who knew nothing whatever of agriculture. They designed to break up the country into very small farms, contrary to the opinion of Jovellanos, that this can never be advantageously practised in Spain, and in direct variance with the experience of more advanced European countries. The question was not one of *great landed accumulation*, an evil which does not here exist, but of moderate-sized farms, or of very minute subdivisions. They likewise aimed at breaking up extensive pasturages, and in effect destroying the breed of horned cattle, which is here indispensable to all descriptions of agricultural labour.

Well may Buffon call the ox "the farmer's help;" he might call him here the farmer!

All the ploughing, all the harrowing, all the carriage in fields or on the road, all the raising of water, all the heavy transit to fair or market, all the preparations of the grain—for the ox first draws it to the *area*, or barn-floor, open to the sky, then treads out the grain, then carries it to the mill and then to the purchaser—all is the work of the patient ox; and in a country too where the bull is so cruelly dealt with. They first enslave him like a Roman gladiator, and then they stab him in the Circus. In a land so pastoral as Spain is evidently designed to be, these rash legislators determined all at once to change the face of the country, forgetful that nature will return,

though expelled with a fork, and not having it in their power to slay off all the living population, and call up at will some millions of Fourierists and Owenites. Our northern notions of advancement are far less suited for this latitude than even the now antiquated and absurd ideas of Fontenelle, who deemed ox labour so indispensable to good farming, that he roundly condemned every description of agricultural machine which tended to diminish it. We can smile at this in England, but in the south of Europe, where the plough of the Georgics is still dragged by ox and goad in the aboriginal form, all rapid improvement is impossible, and all advancement slow; and the rudiments of political science teach us to make the most of existing materials. If the race of the ox became extinct here, there would probably be no tillage at all, for the horses are generally too weak for the work, and the peasants too lazy to dig.

Had the Provincial Deputations established model farms, and conducted a series of experiments upon scientific principles, in accordance with climate, chemistry, and the geological conditions of the soil, the results might have then been imparted to the old Labrador and to their new-made agriculturists with beneficial effects. But general principles were peremptorily laid down without the sanction of experience or recognised authority, and the consequence was general failure. The Ayuntamiéntos all through Spain were required by a general order to plant chesnuts, pines, and mulberries, without consideration of the properties of various soils, or of

peculiar fitness or unfitness. These trees were planted at the public expense, and in administering limited and sacred funds some previous inquiry should surely have been made. The bulk of the trees thus planted failed. Though the chesnuts were put in at Todos-Santos,* they were planted in sand, where there were no nutritious juices; and accordingly perished. The mulberries too were planted in dry soils from which no sap could be extracted, while the heavy soils were often pertinaciously chosen for the hardy olives and pines. They would have forced plantations as you do cucumbers, but the trees would not be forced. The constitutional Alcaldes stared, but the village Domines,† with a shake of the head, quoted Virgil, to confound them;—"Before ye open the virgin soil be assured of the influence of air and sky."

From the earliest ages of the world it appears to have been customary to leave the ground around fruit-trees untouched by husbandry, in the natural belief that, drawing their nutriment from the earth around them, to divide their empire over the soil, must be to weaken their dominion and impair their vigour.

The Provincial Deputations and Municipalities reformed all this, remodelled the essence of things, and put Nature on her better behaviour. They argued that it was by no means requisite to make a wilderness round a few olive, almond, or chesnut-trees—and to some extent they were right; the learned Doctor Moncada, whose doctorate decides

* All Saints.

† The name given by schoolboys to classical masters.

the question, pronouncing this practice of non-cultivation, where fruit-trees are planted, to be a remnant of Gothic barbarism. But they carried their principles into prodigiously vigorous execution, running the plough right up into the stems of the invaded fruit-trees, and tearing up the rich soil from about their roots. The reward of this rapid progress was, that the plum-like olive of Andalucía became reduced to the dimensions of the olive of Galicia, being now no bigger than a gooseberry; the walnut was compressed to the girth of a filbert, and the almond to the size of a sickly pea. The immemorial practice of trenching around the orange-tree, and allotting to it its own circle of manured and watered soil, was treated with high contempt by these vigorous reformers; and to reward their pioneering industry, the large, smooth-skinned, beautifully-coloured and succulent Seville orange, was pinched and contracted to the span of a stunted Tangerina, with none of the delicious flavour of that exquisite miniature orange, but with a rough and blotched coat, and with abundant pith instead of sap. These splendid improvements awake even Spaniards from their listlessness. If the cherished fruit became so small in a year or two, it seemed probable enough that it would soon be entirely invisible, and that they would have no *bad* harvests—in fact, no harvests at all. The preponderance of opinion was, however, in favour of average crops as before; and their unanimous sentiment was, that though “*la teoría*” was a particularly fine thing, “*la experiencia*” had been invented by the devil, to give it the lie in practice.

The authorities being thus thrown off their high-trotting horse, and theorists being permitted to bestride their hobbies no longer, things soon returned to their primitive state of negligence; the plough was not suffered to approach within a rood of the humblest fruit-tree, and the spaces around them were converted again into deserts. Thus do we jump from extreme to extreme, for popular prejudice has no *juste milieu*. Yet there does seem to be a reasonable medium between leaving a couple of hundred *fanegas** of uncultivated ground in the vicinity of every knot of fruit-trees, and ploughing up all the pasture-land of a district; and the rearing of cattle appears not less worthy than husbandry to receive some portion of the tutelary Deputation's care. Instead of cutting up districts into arbitrary lots of a few acres each, the more judicious course would be to leave them open to the adjusting influences which operate upon ordinary markets; to sell by auction or make subject to a reasonable annual rent, and let each purchaser buy and cultivate that quantity of land which suits his agricultural capacity and his purse; and finally, to let pasture alternate with husbandry. Where the intelligent guardianship of a truly patriotic body might make itself judiciously manifest, would be in the establishment of model farms, in providing the best and newest agricultural implements, in selecting seeds, in adopting the most effectual system of irrigation, and in teaching by the powerful agency of example.

* The quantity of ground requisite to sow a bushel of corn.

CHAPTER XXII.

FARMING IN SOUTHERN SPAIN.

IN this delicious climate, vegetation is never suspended, except by the excessive heats of summer. The genuine spring is usually about Christmas, and the choicest fruit is in bloom when the ground of England is locked up with frost; when vegetation is hoar-nipped, and the snow is heaped on every bough and twig. It is in winter here that the climate is truly lovely, and in summer and autumn only that one might sigh to be elsewhere. From November to May, it is Heaven, or an Elysium. In winter the only drawbacks are the excessive rains; but the alternative of shower and sunbeam is even then extremely frequent, and whenever it occurs, delightful. The sunbeams sparkle out like molten brilliants, with a lustre that happily does not smite, and madden, and pierce the brain (as too often in the depth of summer), and the light, "through purest crystal gleaming," is mild, ethereal, and benignant. Inconvenient as are at times these terrible showers, pouring on, on, like a deluge, for days and without intermission, no milder treatment would soften and prepare the ground, break up the indurated soil of summer, and fit it for the reception of seed. But there are always brilliant intervals of sunshine, and it was in Andalusía that the ancients placed the Elysian Fields.

Alcalá is a romantic and charming village, beautifully situated on the Guadiera, a small river which flows into the Guadalquivir. Here may be witnessed the charms of cultivated scenery, in addition to the wilder beauties of nature; there is wood and water in abundance; and the rich citizens of Seville have here, for the most part, their country-houses. There is another village of the same name, nearer Cadiz, called Alcalá de los Gazidos, of which the extensive woods have unhappily suffered much of late years from the visitations of the pitiless axe; the Provincial Deputation of 1839, to meet temporary expenses, cut down not less than 20,000 dollars' worth of the most valuable trees. The greater part of this amount was said to have been made away with between the Provincial Deputation and the local Ayuntamiento, to cover a deficit in whose accounts was the nominal ground of their "getting change for a few oaks," the real ground being that, like *Sir Charles Cropland* in the play, they "wanted cash consumedly."

The farmer here pays lightly in the shape of direct taxes, and, consuming little but his own produce, is indirectly chargeable to but a trifling extent. His unsophisticated mode of life exempts him from the expensive vanities of towns. His clothes are woven from his own wool; his hempen shoes are grown upon his own soil; his leathern leggings are stripped from his own pigs; his sheepskin jacket (in winter) was the jacket of his own *carnero*; and in summer his jacket is the climate, for he wears no other. He eats his own provisions, drinks his own wine, burns his own oil, and refreshes himself with his own fruits. He is

in short as nearly a child of nature, as it is possible to be, removed from the savage state; and if society were resolved into its original elements, there are some very perfect specimens here, of ready-made savages. The finikin town-bred man may smile, but there is something pleasurable after all, in this sturdy independence. It is upon the proprietors of estates that payment of the bulk of the prædial taxes falls. The Frutos Civiles are levied from all proprietors or administrators of the rents of rustic and urban houses, mills, and factories of whatever description, as well as from all receivers by contract or otherwise of national or jurisdictional taxes, censos, and other imposts on capital yielding annual income. This tax is always suffered to be a year in arrear, and if then left unpaid the goods are liable to be seized in execution. But the irregularity with which the taxes are collected is quite as proverbial here as elsewhere in Spain, saving the presence of Don Manuel Trujillo de la Peña, honorary Intendent of the Province, Knight of the distinguished order of Carlos the Third—decorated with various orders of dignity, Chief of Hacienda of the first class, Administrador of Rentas in the maritime province of Cadiz, &c., &c., &c.

The almost total cessation of the export of barilla to England, in consequence of the discovery of a satisfactory chemical substitute, has of late years a good deal embittered the feelings of the south-eastern Spanish population against us. The Andalusians, Valencians, and Catalans, who formerly enjoyed the benefits of this trade, have no more relish for the scientific progress which has shut them out

from the British market, than the hand-loom-weaver for the power-loom. There was no need for this new topic of exasperation in addition to old prejudices. The small Catalan manufacturer hates our gigantic establishments with a sufficient intensity, and has contrived to impart his feelings to a large class of his countrymen. The smuggler alone regards us without marked disfavour, since he fattens upon our productive resources. But the Andalucian wine-grower begins to hate us cordially, because drinking already seven times as much of his wine as all the rest of the world, we do not drink seven times more.

The fruit of Malaga has an immense reputation throughout Spain, and the consumption of it in Cadiz and Seville is very considerable. The Cosecheros, or fruiterers of Malaga, besides their general sale, have their regular agents in both places. Boxes of clustered raisins (*pasas de racimo*), with the delicious purple bloom, vie with baskets of macocas, or rich and early figs of the largest size; basketed raisins, with the smaller description of figs in smaller baskets, and the magnificent muscatel raisin, of perhaps too luscious a flavour, with the rich arrope—likewise of Malaga—a grape-syrup or must of wine. All through the winter, the fruit Aduanilla or little custom-house is crowded with these tempting esculents. Those who are fond of rare and choice onions, will find in this classic land one of the first of vegetables, an article which cannot be too highly prized—the pearly onion of Padron, which may be kept in perfection all the year round. “*Pan y toros!*” exclaims the Sevillano, in his mad enthusiasm for the bull-ring,

typified by this phrase of indifference to all but bread besides; but if you would crown his days with satisfaction, you must add to the bread his clove of garlic, his cigarrillo, and his succulent and pungent onion.

There are many Spaniards exceedingly anxious for the commercial and material amelioration of the country, who are deterred on the one hand by the prevalent Anglophobia, from applying to England, and on the other by the antagonism which Afrancesado notions are sure to arouse in certain quarters from having recourse to France, while the prevailing exaggerated notions of patriotism and *Españolismo* make them generally shun the aid of greater and wealthier nations. In this perplexity they resort to a poor and third-rate country, which has neither the activity of France nor the enterprise and capital of England; and there is at this moment a diplomatic agent commissioned by the Madrid cabinet, Don Ramon de la Sagra, engaged in Belgium in the formation of an Hispano-Belgic Company, upon the following bases:—A series of scientific and practical investigations to be undertaken throughout the various districts of Spain, with the support of the government and of the capitalists forming the company, with a view to develop the mineral, animal, and vegetable wealth of the Spanish soil. The company to supply the pecuniary resources, and the government its protection, supervision, and countenance, which are all that political revolutions and the forms of the Constitution permit it to employ. The company to be composed of capitalists and “indus-

trials" belonging to both countries, and to found, when its preliminary investigations are completed, agricultural, mining, and manufacturing establishments. It is evident that the eyes of the Spaniards are turned in the wrong direction.

The only branch of Spanish agriculture, in which the slightest advance is perceptible, is the vine cultivation of Andalucía. A number of resident British proprietors at Xerez and St. Lucar, have brought the national intelligence and energy to bear upon this profitable branch of industry, and the gains of former years excited a spirit of active industry amongst their Spanish neighbours, unfamiliar to their sluggish natures.

In that same province, and in other parts of the kingdom, there are symptoms of some amelioration in the treatment of the olive, and of a prospect of the removal of that disgraceful stigma which enables the olive oil of the Italian states to fetch 30 per cent. more in the markets of Europe and America, than the growth of Spain, though the tree and fruit in the latter country are inferior to none in the world. Inveterate habits of dirt and carelessness, and supine indifference to amendment, are the sole causes why the *labradores* of Spain present the fruits of their industry in a state less creditable and lucrative than in other European countries; and her statesmen and nobles would be better employed in local experiments, and in the direction of agricultural improvements, than in profitless and discreditable intrigues at Madrid. The extract of the olive may with very little additional trouble and expense be produced in

a state of beautiful purity and clearness; and a recent invention of an Italian ecclesiastic has been introduced into some districts of Andalucía and Aragon, by which the stone is separated with great facility from the pulp, and the bitter taste and foul colouring matter communicated by the former are wholly removed. This invention, if properly extended, promises to be very advantageous to Spain.

The ancients, whose agricultural processes were carried on by inexpensive slave labour, subjected only the pulp of the olive to the operation of the press; but since the invasion of the Goths and Vandals, this refinement, together with most other traces of the ancient civilisation, has been swept away, and the method in question is no longer used in Europe. The olive in modern times is placed whole in a stone mortar, in which revolves a wheel traversed by a horizontal axle attached to one that is vertical, and an ox, a horse, or a mule, communicates the movement. The number of these mills in Spain is, by an extremely characteristic incident quite disproportioned to the quantity of oil that is to be made each season, and the olives after being gathered have frequently to be kept for six weeks together before their turn comes to pass through the mill. Meanwhile fermentation inevitably sets in, the oil becomes rancid, bitter, muddy, and ill-flavoured, and can only be employed in soap and other manufactures, at a reduced value of at least 40 per cent. below the finer qualities. But by the aid of the new implement, the pulp, entirely separated from the stone, may be discharged into the mortar from a hand-press with little

pecuniary expense or outlay of strength, and the whole olive harvest, which, in plentiful years has hitherto occupied four or five months, may be concluded within a few days. It is impossible too strongly to urge the universal adoption of the new process.

CHAPTER XXIII.

MENDICANCY.—STATE OF THE LOWER CLASSES.

LET this astonish you, sagacious statesmen—let this fact confound the more polished world's wisdom:—there is no poor-law here, no compulsory relief; the rural society is very barbarous; agriculture is no more advanced than it was a century after the flood; industry there is little, occupation trifling, energy none; the soil is but scratched, manures little used, irrigation, which is, in truth, indispensable, but slightly resorted to—and yet distress there is almost none. Throughout the length and breadth of the Peninsula, the beggars have as pleasant faces as the best-clad members of the community. I challenge contradiction as to the fact that there is no genuine distress. Twice within this century has foreign invasion violated the Spanish soil, and cruelly of late years has it been torn by the burning ploughshare of civil war. Every road and pass is haunted by robbers, and society is little advanced from its elementary state. How comes it that there are not poor here rotting in the ditches, as there were in England, when it was thinly peopled, before the Elizabethan law, and as there are to-day in Ireland? The duty of charity is deeply felt here, but is it not deeply felt in England? Will the Spanish peasant divide his crust, and the English peasant refuse to share it? Surely this cannot be. Or is the

difference entirely owing to the thinness of the Spanish population? Whatever the cause, it may make men sceptical as to the benefit of excessively refined societies and complicated political systems.

You may sojourn long enough in a Spanish town before you will meet with any of those evidences of downright misery which so soon strike the eye at home, and which abound even in London, in the vicinity of its most splendid squares. There may be rags and filth enough, but there is not the squalor of suffering or the gaunt aspect of famine. No one starves in this country; few are in positive distress. Those who seek alms are for the most part of the class of jolly beggars, and how thriving is the trade may be inferred from the independence of its practitioners, from the impudence of their unimploring demands, and the obstinate sturdiness of their persistence. The beggar, having no property of his own, is king and lord of all the properties in the country. His rounds are as regular as those of the land-agent or tax-collector. In no part of the country have I seen uncomfortable poverty, or heard of an individual going without a passable meal. The contrast between this half-barbarous state, and that of refined societies is most striking. We are excessively advanced, but we are likewise excessively peopled. Hence, in spite of all our exertions, and our unexampled energies, we have our thousands starving by the side of luxurious wealth, and glide from the prosperity of one year to the relapse and ruin of another.

In Spain, on the other hand, the same lazy round goes on for centuries, there are no contractions or

expansions of the main spring of society, no irregular acceleration of its wheels, no rapid movement and then stoppage of its works. All is clogged with dust and encrusted with the rust of ages. Your lazy mule will not mend his pace with beating, nor will the Spaniards consent to be objurgated into a brisker motion. With all his aptitude for love, he would seem to be slower even in propagation than his brethren in the north of Europe. The bracing air of less sunny climates is more favourable to the formation and development of the human species, than the relaxing heats and arid gusts of these trying southern summers. The extensive system of conventual seclusion and celibacy, which continued in full vigour until recent years, has contributed its full share in keeping down the population; and foreign invasions and civil wars have successively mowed down no inconsiderable portion of the flower of the youthful males.

But all these causes combined, imperfectly account for the dispeopled state of Spain; and the prevalent lack of energy, the reluctance to encounter the engagements of a family *in posse*, the unenterprising spirit, which refuses to migrate or to colonise, and leaves enormous tracts in an absolute state of nature, the lazy love of lurking in a corner of the paternal farm-house, and working in the season like one of the farm oxen, to snore and rob alternately through all the rest of the year, and the scarcity of marriages which is the consequence of all these considerations combined, keep nearly stationary the existing scantiness of population. Hence a general sufficiency, and at some periods an excess of food; and hence the