

wrong, after listening to a few of my messages, at any rate, it will not be my fault. . . ."

STARVATION IN ANDALUSIA.

The stories which have recently come from Andalusia have probably shocked many people who have long looked upon that allegedly favored spot in Spain as being the most comfortable and the most desirable place in all the world to live. A land of dreams, ease and plenty, where the soil was fertile, the sun shed a grateful warmth the year round, and the earth yielded of its fatness with the minimum of effort on the part of man. Now we hear of famine, riot and terrible suffering among the thousands of inhabitants of Andalusia, and learn something of the evils which can arise from the holding of vast estates by single men who pose as feudal lords.

The beauty of the chateau, the loveliness of the garden, the picturesqueness of the vineyards, the quaint charms of Spanish peasant life which have been pictured in poetry and prose almost for centuries, lose much of their glamour and attractiveness when we learn that they have been secured at the cost of a nation's welfare and happiness. A reign of terror now seems to prevail in this favored region. A failure of crops, caused by a drought through the winter and early spring, has swept away the slight barrier which existed between the working people and abject poverty. Hundreds of thousands are reduced to misery. In a single city, that of Cadiz, with a population of 70,000, over 20,000 people were asking for public assistance. Naturally this condition of affairs reacts upon those who are in a measure responsible. The rich landholders are fleeing from their homes in dread of violence from an enraged and starving people. While the people are living upon wild roots, those who have profited from their labor are living in the comfort afforded by the great cities of the continent and waiting for the storm to blow over.

This is a vain hope, for while the rains may come again and peace prevail once more over the smiling valleys of Andalusia, the terrible economic wrongs which are at the bottom of these troubles remain still unrighted and there can be no permanent improvement until far-reaching changes take place in the system of labor which has so long prevailed and which is responsible for the conditions of to-day.

The government of Spain has awakened to the needs, not only of the moment, but of the future; for while the starving are being fed and public works

are inaugurated to supply temporary needs, steps are being taken to bring the landlords to a realization of their responsibilities. In a recent interview, Senor Romanones, the minister of agriculture, made the following statement: "As minister, I am bound to declare that public order must be maintained; but if I were a laborer, I should talk differently. The fact is; the government is systematically opposed by the landlords whenever it tries to carry out a work of general utility."

The great need of this region in Spain is a subdivision of the vast estates which have been accumulated by the Spanish nobles through inheritance and oppression, the introduction of scientific agriculture, and the building of great irrigation works. Much of this land lies in a region bordering upon aridity, where crop failures are a matter of frequent occurrence, owing to a deficiency in rainfall. With a climate unsurpassed, fertile soil, good markets for all produce, and an ample supply of labor at most moderate wages, there is no reason why Andalusia, Estramadura and Aragon should not become what all the world has thought them to be in the past.

An interesting contrast to the conditions now prevailing in Andalusia and that region is found in northwestern Spain, near Vigo. Conditions there have been favorable to the transfer of land. It has been made possible for the peasant with small capital to either buy outright or lease for a long term of years such an amount of ground as he was able to care for. Thousands of Spaniards have gone from this region every year into the neighboring countries of Europe, and even to the United States, for the purpose of earning money to be later invested in land. This process has been going on for some years past, and a community of small homes, individually prosperous, has been built up which might well serve not only as an object lesson to the Spanish land owners and their government, but as a model for the reconstruction of the vast areas of fertile Spain which have been devastated by men who have been blind not only to their own interests but to the general interest and welfare of their country.

Due allowance must be made, of course, in these old world countries for centuries of inherited customs and prejudices, and in many instances it requires dire calamity to bring about an awakening. These landlords are not more cruel, selfish, or ignorant than other people of the same degree of civilization and intelligence. When they come into their estates, they accept conditions as they find them. The responsi-

bility of administering a great landed property is a serious burden to a conscientious man, especially where the working population of such an estate looks upon the proprietor as a superior being, upon whose will their happiness is dependent. It takes a man of extraordinary originality and courage to break from family and national traditions, and inaugurate any such radical reforms as are necessary to change for the better that which he finds given into his care.

The great land owners of Europe generally regard themselves merely in the light of trustees for these vast properties, and it is safe to say that most of them attempt to prevent any deterioration at least in the property while it lies in their hands, and take pride in any increase of revenue produced by their management. There is no doubt but that in many places such as Spain, radical attempts to make small land-holdings general would be looked upon as a dangerous innovation, and would not be viewed with entire confidence or satisfaction even by the people whom it was intended to benefit.

A severe shock, such as has been caused by the present troubles in Spain, is necessary to arouse public sentiment, to bring home the responsibilities of government, and to convince the landed proprietors that in their own selfish interests something else would be better than the policy they have been following from time immemorial.

Even following such a shock, however, reforms are not immediate, for present conditions are reflected in the legal machinery, governmental system and political and social customs; but there is hope, when a country has once been aroused to an evil, that progress will be made for the better in the future.

It is said that history repeats itself, and in no particular direction does this seem to be truer than in the history of land tenure in every civilized nation. First comes the seizing of the land, then its gradual organization into holdings large and small, the absorption of the small holdings by the large, and the consequent creation of vast estates. These exist for such a time as the resisting power of the nation allows, then they are forced into fragments under pressure from the thiling millions who awake to the injustice of this monopoly of what in the beginning belonged to all.—James Davenport Whelpley, in Maxwell's Talisman for Oct., 1905.

Mr. Bryan's revenue from his letters of travel is said to bring an income of \$50,000 a year. It may be a perplexing question as to what shall be done