

sure to be a maritime nation. I formerly imagined that Australia would rise to be as grand and powerful a country as North America, but now it appears to me that such future grandeur is rather problematical.

With respect to the state of the convicts, I had still fewer opportunities of judging than on the other points. The first question is, whether their condition is at all one of punishment: no one will maintain that it is a very severe one. This, however, I suppose, is of little consequence as long as it continues to be an object of dread to criminals at home. The corporeal wants of the convicts are tolerably well supplied: their prospect of future liberty and comfort is not distant, and after good conduct certain. A "ticket of leave," which, as long as a man keeps clear of suspicion as well as of crime, makes him free within a certain district, is given upon good conduct, after years proportional to the length of the sentence; yet with all this, and overlooking the previous imprisonment and wretched passage out, I believe the years of assignment are passed away with discontent and unhappiness. As an intelligent man remarked to me, the convicts know no pleasure beyond sensuality, and in this they are not gratified. The enormous bribe which Government possesses in offering free pardons, together with the deep horror of the secluded penal settlements, destroys confidence between the convicts, and so prevents crime. As to a sense of shame, such a feeling does not appear to be known, and of this I witnessed some very singular proofs. Though it is a curious fact, I was universally told that the character of the convict population is one of arrant cowardice: not infrequently some become desperate and quite indifferent as to life, yet a plan requiring cool or continued courage is seldom put into execution. The worst feature in the whole case is, that although there exists what may be called a legal reform, and comparatively little is committed which the law can touch, yet that any moral reform should take place appears to be quite out of the question. I was assured by well-informed people that a man who should try to improve