

could not while living with other assigned servants; his life would be one of intolerable misery and persecution. Nor must the contamination of the convict-ships and prisons, both here and in England, be forgotten. On the whole, as a place of punishment, the object is scarcely gained; as a real system of reform it has failed, as perhaps would every other plan; but as a means of making men outwardly honest—of converting vagabonds, most useless in one hemisphere, into active citizens of another, and thus giving birth to a new and splendid country—a grand centre of civilization—it has succeeded to a degree perhaps unparalleled in history.

30th.—The “Beagle” sailed for Hobart Town in Van Diemen’s Land. On the 5th of February, after a six days’ passage, of which the first part was fine, and the latter very cold and squally, we entered the mouth of Storm Bay: the weather justified this awful name. The bay should rather be called an estuary, for it receives at its head the waters of the Derwent. Near the mouth, there are some extensive basaltic platforms; but higher up the land becomes mountainous, and is covered by a light wood. The lower parts of the hills which skirt the bay are cleared; and the bright yellow fields of corn, and dark green ones of potatoes, appeared very luxuriant. Late in the evening we anchored in the snug cove on the shores of which stands the capital of Tasmania. The first aspect of the place was very inferior to that of Sydney; the latter might be called a city, this only a town. It stands at the base of Mount Wellington, a mountain 3,100 feet high, but of little picturesque beauty: from this source, however, it receives a good supply of water. Round the cove there are some fine warehouses, and on one side a small fort. Coming from the Spanish settlements, where such magnificent care has generally been paid to the fortifications, the means of defence in these colonies appeared very contemptible. Comparing the town with Sydney, I was chiefly struck with the comparative fewness of the large houses, either built or building. Hobart Town, from the