

consequent accumulation of our criminals within the country, as the main causes of that increase of serious crime against both the person and property which has taken place during the last eight or ten years, we must not undervalue the influence of the other cause,—that ticket-of-leave system which has let loose so many dangerous felons on society ere half their terms of punishment had expired. The principle of the system is utterly false and unsolid in all its circumstances and details. A fond mother was once heard addressing her son as follows :—“ Be a good, religious boy, my little Johnnie ; fear God, and honour your parents ; and I will give you two pretty red-cheeked apples.” Nor is it difficult to say what sort of a religion would be the effect of such a promise. Little Johnnie’s two apples’-worth of the fear of God and the honour of parents would be a very hypocritical fear, and a very fictitious honour. And the ticket-of-leave system proceeds wholly on the same principle. Be religious and moral, it virtually says to the convict, for a given time, and you will get, when it has expired, the two red-cheeked apples. It has a grand disadvantage, too, over the scheme of the fond mother. She might no doubt succeed in making little Johnnie a little hypocrite ; but the two apples, when made over to him, if really good ones, might be productive of farther hurt to neither himself nor the family. Not so the premium or behaviour held out to the convict. The proffered reward bears simply to the effect that he is to be set loose on society, to prey upon it anew. There is in reality no scheme in existence by which convicts in the mass can be dealt with as our paper-makers deal with their filth-begrimmed rags. We cannot put them in at the one end of a penitentiary in the soiled state, and take them out white and pure at the other. True, we must not limit the grace of God. It is just possible, however improbable, that little Johnnie, notwithstanding the sad stumbling-block of the two apples, or that a convict