

flourishing of her settlements in foreign lands—in lands likewise which promised to repay abundantly a more careful culture.

But it is hoped that the penal settlement now being formed in North Australia will prove an exception to those at Sydney and Van Diemen's Land. A long experience of the evils of the system adopted in these Colonies may suggest a variety of improvements in that recently established about the 26th degree of south latitude, of which New South Wales forms the northern boundary. It has, however, been complained by some of the authorities of New South Wales that the formation of a penal settlement in that spot is fraught with unmixed evil. Why it should be so does not so distinctly appear, except upon the general principle that the creation of another convict community at no great distance, although it be done to relieve other evils of long standing in their own immediate Colony will only, under any circumstances, perpetuate old and heavily-complained-of grievances; but if an aggregate advantage be gained in the new system, it is worth the trial. It is, indeed, worthy of deep consideration whether our criminals could not be reformed at home. It is for the wisdom of our legislators to deliberate whether a higher expiatory end would not be accomplished by hard, humiliating servitude in our dockyards and prisons at home, under the severe surveillance of proper authorities, than in roaming at large in the infant Colonies of Australia, where they cannot be so closely the objects of penal discipline. The subject has, often, exercised the thoughts and the pens of philanthropists who think, and with no inconsiderable reason, that Colonies of thieves and cut-throats in foreign lands, and fruitful soils, which might otherwise prove flourishing adjuncts to the parent state, is merely shifting the onus to a different quarter, and only relieving the pressure of present evil here, by perpetuating greater, in perspective, elsewhere.

But whether criminals continue to be introduced into our Australian Colonies or not, we incline to think with those native authorities who contend for the expediency of greater legislative care being bestowed upon Colonial government. If our Colonies in Australia are worth the cost of establishing or being nursed up, they are also worth being treated with the same equitable and admirably-poised constitution under which our own island has risen to her present eminence. That the same mild laws, tempered with vigour and firmness, should rule her progeny abroad which is enjoyed at home. That if under their operation the parent has grown great, and free, and happy, her offspring should have the same opportunity afforded them of becoming so. But we imagine our settlements never can become valuable adjuncts of the parent country, while they are being made the common sewer for draining it of the most profligate of its society. They cannot—and it is more than wilful folly to expect it—become great and flourishing, while they are continually subjected to the contamination of the sweepings of all the common prisons of Great Britain, without some more powerful antidote against its effect than has ever yet been adopted. We here quite concur in the sensible and judicious remarks of the author of a pamphlet to Sir Robert Peel, on "Colonial Reform," and which is to the following effect. (It may