

since landing, has been more than twelve thousand weight.

Vegetables and provisions having been frequently stolen in the night, from convicts and others, twelve convicts were chosen as a night watch, and they have actually answered the end proposed, no robbery having been committed for several months; and the convicts, in general, have behaved better than I ever expected. Only two convicts have suffered death in the last year. Four were executed the first year.

As near two years have now passed since we first landed in this country, some judgment may be formed of the climate; and I believe a finer, or more healthy climate, is not to be found in any part of the world. Of one thousand and thirty people, who were landed, many of whom were worn out by old age, the scurvy, and various disorders, only seventy-two have died in twenty-one months; and by the surgeon's return it appears, that twenty-six of those died from disorders, of long standing; and which, it is more than probable, would have carried them off much sooner in England. Fifty-nine children have been born in the above time.

In December the corn at Rose Hill was got in. The corn was exceedingly good; about two hundred bushels of wheat, and sixty of barley, with a small quantity of flax, Indian corn, and oats; all which is preserved for seed. Here I beg leave to observe to your lordship, that, if settlers are sent out, and the convicts divided among them, this settlement will very shortly maintain itself, but without which, this country cannot be cultivated to any advantage. At present I have only one person (who has about one hundred convicts under his direction) who is employed in cultivating the ground for the publick benefit, and he has returned the quantity of corn above-mentioned into the public store. The officers have not raised sufficient to support the little stock they have. Some ground I have had in cultivation, will return about forty bushels of wheat into store; so that the produce of the labour of the convicts employed in cultivation, has been very short of what might have been expected, and which I take the liberty of pointing out to your lordship in this place, to shew as fully as possible, the state of this colony, and the necessity of the convicts being employed by those who have an interest in their labour. The giving convicts to the officers has been hitherto necessary, but it is attended with many inconveniencies, for which the advantages arising to the officers do not make amends: it will not

therefore be continued after this detachment is relieved, unless particularly directed. The numbers employed in cultivation, will, of course, be increased, as the necessary buildings are finished, but which will be a work of time; for there are numbers in this settlement who do nothing towards their own support, except those employed for the public.

In November the Supply sailed for Norfolk Island, with some convicts, and returned, after being absent six weeks. All the people in that island were well; and their crops after all they had suffered from rats, birds, and a worm, which had done them considerable damage, so good, that they had grain sufficient for six months (and bread for every one upon the island) reserving sufficient for their next year's crops.

Early in January, 1790, the Supply again sailed for Norfolk Island with more convicts; and in her passage left a small party on Lord Howe's Island, to hunt turtle; but in fifteen days only three were taken, so that no great advantages will accrue from thence. The Island has fresh water, but no good anchorage ground.

Since the deaths mentioned in a former part of this letter, one woman has suffered for a robbery; five children have died; and twenty-eight children have been born; making in all seventy seven deaths, and eighty-seven births.

NUMBER II.

Sydney Cove, Feb. 13, 1790.

In order to get a knowledge of the country round the settlement, frequent excursions have been made since the ships sailed in November, 1788; soon after which I went to Botany-Bay, and the five days spent in that harbour confirmed me in the opinion I had first formed of it, that it afforded no eligible situation for fixing the settlement, and was a bad harbour, not affording good security for ships against the easterly winds, which frequently blow very hard in the winter; and which has been further proved by Captain Hunter, and the first lieutenant of the *Sirius*, who went there to survey the Bay.

After having been several times with the boats to Broken Bay, in order to examine the different branches in that harbour, a river was found; but the want of provisions obliged us to return without being able to trace its source, which has since been done; and in the sixteen days we were then out, all those branches, which had any depth of water, were traced as far as the boats could proceed.

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