

politeness. This visit was particularly gratifying, as affording a view of one of the most important features of this great penal establishment.

Around Paramatta and Sydney, another such feature is to be seen in the iron-gangs. These consist of the men who have not been assigned, and likewise of all those who are returned by their masters. They are met with upon the roads, working in pairs, chained together. Their dress is peculiar, and they, in consequence, cannot readily escape detection in case of absconding. On the back of the jacket is marked, in conspicuous letters, "chain-gang." They wear a canvass jacket and trousers, and a jockey-cap. They were a rough-looking set, with bad countenances, and, like all other prisoners, stared us broadly in the face. Sentinels or guards constantly accompanied them.

The English are very partial to this mode of treating criminals, and cannot be persuaded that any better course can be devised; yet it is attended with obvious evils.

For a trifling and first offence, a perpetual brand of infamy is set upon a fellow-mortal, his family, and connexions. The natural consequence has been to foster and keep alive a public opinion which tends to the disorganization of society, and to obliterate all that remains of principle in the criminal.

The convict who has just arrived, is regarded by the others as a simpleton and a mere novice; and they undertake to complete his education.

The exploits and crimes performed and committed by these hardened offenders in Australia, New Zealand, and the islands of Polynesia, exhibit a dark picture; and the annoyance thus inflicted upon their inhabitants would not be borne, had they the strength to resist it. Power is the only right that can be urged by Great Britain as a justification of this infliction, and that it would be useless to question.

The majority of convicts are either assigned servants or ticket-of-leave men, and their condition is not unlike that of the slaves in our Southern States. They form a distinct class, and may be considered as the original groundwork of the colony. At present they constitute about a third of the population, but when transportation ceases, their relative numbers will rapidly decrease.

This colony, take it all in all, is in spite of these drawbacks a noble one, and is a new proof of the superiority of the Anglo-Saxon race, and of its enterprise and perseverance in overcoming difficulties.

I understood that Sir George Gipps had determined to adopt Captain Maconochie's system in the management of the road-gangs, and shall therefore proceed to examine it.