

they make incursions upon the happiness and common sense of the vicinage. We most sincerely deprecate such an event; but it will excite in us no manner of surprise if a period arrives when the churches of the sober and orthodox part of the English clergy are completely deserted by the middling and lower classes of the community. We do not prophesy any such event, but we contend that it is not impossible—hardly improbable. If such, in future, should be the situation of this country, it is impossible to say what political animosities may not be ingrafted upon this marked and dangerous division of mankind into the *godly* and the *ungodly*. At all events, we are quite sure that happiness will be destroyed, reason degraded, sound religion banished from the world; and that, when fanaticism becomes too foolish and too purulent to be endured (as is at last sure to be the case), it will be succeeded by a long period of the grossest immorality, atheism, and debauchery.—Methodism, however, hardly succeeded to the extent the writer feared, and there seems no particular reason for us now to anticipate that its final extinction will be followed by a grosser state of public morals than that which has all along been co-existent with it—for that such a state has co-existed with it, the acknowledged *raison d'être* of its latest development, and, perhaps, its convulsive stage immediately preceding death, the Salvation Army, affords us sufficient testimony. As for the system itself there is very little cause for us to regret its approaching disappearance.—Of true religion no system not openly atheistic or pagan could possibly be more destitute, and none less calculated to influence the human character for good.—The man who adopted it was left pretty much as he would otherwise have been. If his character was mild and benevolent he shaped his religion to his character, and in his amiability it found an adornment that seemed to make it attractive.—The ideal characters connected with the system have been those presented to us by George Eliot in Mr. Tryan and Dinah Morris, but it is impossible not to see that it was not the religion professed by these creations of genius that gave to them their beauty, and that the influence they exercised over other people was not that of their religion but a personal influence wholly independent of it. If the character, on the other hand, were harsh and unfeeling it remained so, and a divine inspiration was found to excuse every cruel impulse or unkind action. Evangelicalism, then, as we have seen on the evidence of the famous Sydney Smith had not much to recommend it in its rise, and the experience of some three-quarters of a century is on record to show us that its fall is but little to be mourned over.

It is interesting to learn that the French Government have extended the classes of undesirable NEW CALEDONIA citizens who are to be banished to New Caledonia, and possibly other islands in our seas. In addition

to the other incurables we are to have for our neighbours, and in a large degree also perhaps our future fellow-colonists, vagabonds and beggars. Verily our population bids fair to be increased in an extremely charming and profitable manner.—But at least it is an ill wind that blows nobody good, as the saying is, and it will be of some advantage to those colonies associated with transportation that their inhabitants will no longer have the monopoly of doubtful antecedents.—None of us will know before long whom we have got for our friends and acquaintances. It would seem, moreover, that, even as things are, and without waiting for the addition of the *recidivistes*, matters in New Caledonia are far from promising, and that there is a population growing up which of itself will be quite sufficient to send out into all the colonies round about an element of very considerable corruption. The *London Times*, for example, gives as some particulars respecting the convicts who are now in the island alluded to and they are anything rather than reassuring. Under the civilising rule of the Republic in France, we are told there has during the last five years been a yearly average of 300 men tried for murder in various degrees, but so parental is the Government, it seldom happens that the person convicted is executed and in consequence it may be calculated that during the Presidency of M. Grevy over a thousand murderers have been sent to New Caledonia. And there on the whole, they have hardly fared badly; The *Times* translating from an article by M. Denis in the *Nouvelle Revue*, speaks as follows.—“Arriving at Nouméa the convict is sent to the camp of Montravail where he rests for ten days and gets his kit. After that he is told off to some kind of work, and enjoys almost complete liberty. The convicts go to their work in bands of 40 or 50; they may chat, smoke, drink wine and *café*. At night they are locked up in wards, but it is difficult to exercise any surveillance over them. Games of hazard are forbidden, yet a sort of lanquenet called *La Vendôme* is played every night. Sometimes the life of an obnoxious warder or official is the stake of the game, but frequently large sums of money are lost. It came to our knowledge that one night a convict lost 1,200f. which he paid on the following day in gold. There is no discovering where all this gold comes from, but the convicts seem to be abundantly supplied with it. Those who are caught trying to escape to Australia have always plenty of louis in their pockets.” But with plenty of louis in their pockets escape should by no means

be difficult to them; indeed it may be suspected that it is not only connived at, but provided for in some very efficient quarters. Of the particular nature of the convicts, again, who it is not impossible may come to favour us with their presence—even leaving the *recidivistes* out of the consideration, we may, for example, take one M. Jugeau, the record of whose life in New Caledonia—for the cause of his transportation is not given—is the following:—“His first conviction was to six years' penal servitude for a murderous assault which caused death. One year of this term was remitted, and he was discharged on the 20th of January, 1881. On the 2nd December, of the same year he murdered at Dumbéa a free convict named Jean-niard, in order to rob him of 130f. The sentence of death passed upon him for this was commuted by the President of the Republic, and soon after this he was condemned to 40 years' penal servitude for robbery with violence and attempt to escape.” The sentence to additional penal servitude passed on a man already undergoing a life-sentence is a mere matter of form, and M. Jugeau, after it had been passed was as free to play *la Vendôme* or to devise plans for escaping to Australia as he had been before. We are told further of an irrepressible male in the Island of Nou “who has been sentenced four times to death, and is none the worse of it.” And yet, again of a certain M. Pierrard, who has been three times sentenced to 27 years penal servitude. It seems, moreover, that so favourably had transportation to New Caledonia been reported of among French criminals at home, a number of convicts in the penitentiaries committed murder for the purpose of being sent out there. But if the Pilgrim Fathers whose descendants are to possess the land be of such a nature the mothers of the future race are hardly unworthy of them. “Periodically the Ministry of Marine and the Home Office call upon the Governors and matrons of female penitentiaries to supply them with a certain number of women willing to marry convicts. The women must be young, so the choice is limited. It is made without any reference to character. On arriving in New Caledonia, the matrimonial candidates are sent to the Josephine Convent at Bourail and there the bachelor ticket-of-leave men may come to see them. The girls are so anxious to get out of prison that they generally choose the first man who proposes; on the other hand, the poor nuns who find it grievous work to manage their houseful of abandoned women have a direct interest in seeing the worst behaved ones married off first. Immediately a woman gets married she is free. Sometimes on the day after her wedding she deserts her husband, and starts off for Noumea to resume her old life of profligacy.” In every respect, then, the future of New Caledonia is fully provided for—and we see how great an advantage the Australian colonies enjoy in being within easy reach of it—even apart from the arrival of the *recidivistes*.

BUT what is the remedy proposed for the evil influences of New Caledonia? It is at least bold, and worthy of a more adventurous age than the

rather humdrum one in which our lots are cast.

A correspondent of the *London Times*, in short, proposes that if things comes to the worst, the Australian colonies shall embark their volunteers on board their swift steamers and sail straight away to destroy the French settlements. He thinks the forces of the colonies could go on their destructive errand and be safe home again before a French fleet would have time to reach our hemisphere in order to interfere with them. Afterwards he believes that, at a pinch, the colonies could resist the French as the American States resisted England.—And as experience in the matter fails us, and in all probability always will continue to fail us, we are unable to contradict him. The conception of an Australian Washington, nevertheless, is difficult to form, for nothing that the exigencies of peaceful times have produced has in any degree appeared to resemble the character in question:—But even if it were paid for at the price of a bloody war the change to such a type from that of a Parker, a Graham Berry or a Grey—the summit to which colonial statesmanship may be maintained so far to have risen might still be found anything but extreme.—The threat contained in the letter of “An Australasian,” however, is that which the most confounds us.—The champion acknowledges in the same breath that his boast of a willingness to sustain the struggle unaided against the power of indignant France is mere emptiness. England, he says, would be compelled to defend her colonies on the pain of losing them—a loss that “would surely be the first scene in the downfall of the British Empire.” This loyal subject, nevertheless, is willing to inflict the loss in question on England should she refuse her aid, and what is more he would cast in the fortunes of the colonies with those of the United States. “As I have shown,” he says, “England would be compelled to join in the struggle; nor if England shrunk from what would be her manifest interest and duty would Australasia necessarily be single-handed. It cannot be doubted that if she threw herself into the arms of the United States, that great and expanding Republic would not fail to grasp an opportunity which would raise America into the first rank among naval Powers, and convert the whole Pacific into an American lake.”—Let our editors