

gion should have been depopulated to furnish the throng.

Nor is the interest created by the sudden motion imparted to the migratory world confined to the great thoroughfares. The lone occupant of the woods has his share of the pleasure imparted by the season. He welcomes the new comer, and rejoices in the diminishing solitude. What topics of conversation, (precious things here as elsewhere;) what questions as to the perils of the way; the condition of friends left behind; the comparative hardness of the times; the numbers of those about to "start west," and the prospect of the crops "out east." Then, on the other hand, who can doubt that the new comer has at least as much to ask of him who has already gone over the course on which he is about to enter, and whose experience on many points must be so valuable. The actual settler always gets all the information he desires as to these matters. It was on the speculator in land that such enormous hoaxes used to be played. One of our neighbours boasts that he had told the landsharks lies enough to sink a seventy-four, and it had not hurt his conscience a bit neither! Any imposition was considered justifiable if it hindered the buying up of land in large masses with the purpose of raising the price upon the emigrant.

Sometimes the new comer chances to be a friend or former neighbour—and who shall measure the tide of talk that such a meeting calls forth! What questions of births, deaths and marriages, good and ill fortune, hazards and changes! What smiles and what tears, what surprise and regret, attend these encounters! What a change of existence is this for those, who, living far from any neighbour, do not see what Mrs. Trollope (but nobody else) calls "a human," for weeks—thus to have sympathy and interest awakened, and that "electric chain wherewith we are darkly bound," touched with more than magic power! It is almost worth living in the wilderness to feel this awakening a few times in the course of one's life.

And not unfrequently does such a meeting take

place between those whose reminiscences refer to lands beyond the sea—who ask and tell of the old world with an interest which may be fully comprehended only by those who have seen an ocean roll between them and the home which they could not even hope to revisit. This feeling, like most others, is strongest among the warm-hearted Irish; and it is wonderful how often they encounter those of whom they have known something at home. "He was born not *twinty mile* from my own place!" is considered quite reason enough for taking a man with his wife and half a dozen children into a log-house with one room, already occupied by a family of equal numbers. "Sure they couldn't lie in the woods, the *craychurs!*" says the good woman, as she huddles her own cradle into a corner to make room for that which generally forms part of the luggage of the new comers. "Run and fetch some kindlin's, Barney, and I'll be hangin' on the kettle; for it's a cup o' *tay* they'll be wantin', surely, after such a wariosome journey." And then the talk! Away with the feast of reason! The flow of soul, under the genial influences of the tea-pot, is worth all the reason in the world. And such hospitality! If any thing like it could be found in the palaces of the rich, what a blessed world this would be! The Irish heart needs not the warming, softening influences of spring to make it all alive to the claims of human or kindred sympathy. It enjoys a perennial spring, rich at once in blossoms and fruit. Not only is the newly-landed fellow countryman greeted with the kindness of a brother, but a share of the hard earnings is constantly finding its way back to the beloved bog—a "token" for the "ould people." And if fate and the potato-crop prove favourable for a few years, some fine spring morning shows us the "ould people" in person, come over by invitation to share the prosperity of the settler, whose day-dream has, from the first, shown him the warm corner by the fire or the shady bench beneath the big tree graced by these objects of his love and reverence.

THE LAST GUEST.

A SONNET.

BY MRS. E. OAKES SMITH, AUTHOR OF "THE SINLESS CHILD."

GUEST after guest departs; the heart that erst
Seemed a bright portal all in garlands dressed,
To which the rosy-crowned, and joyous pressed,
Findeth ere long that each a thorn had nursed,
With which to pierce the too unwary breast.
Vainly we fold a mantle o'er each guest,
Willing to 'bide the thorn, if through it may

A nobler gladness in the soul arise—
Vainly we hope their footsteps to delay;
They leave the pang, and one by one depart,
Till cold and desolate the portal lies—
Yet not all desolate—a calm, pale face
Looks in, then enters the despoiled heart,
And all is hushed and still—for Duty fills the place.