

FEMALE IMMIGRANTS.

THE *Duchess of Northumberland* has at length arrived bringing a freight of 300 female emigrants from the "Emerald Isle;" and devoutly is it to be hoped that these damsels will prove a more valuable acquisition to our emigrant population than many preceding importations.

So far as our personal observation has gone, we are bound to admit, that in their shipments of female emigrants from Ireland, the Commissioners have been decidedly more successful than in other parts of the United Kingdom, the individuals having, for the greater part, approved themselves virtuous and industrious characters. Whether this has arisen from the exercise of a more vigilant circumspection on the part of the Irish Agents, or Committees, or from their having resorted less, than those of England, to large cities and towns, and more to the rural districts, we have not the means of determining. The probability is, however, that both these causes have been in operation, the latter especially. And it is easy to suppose, that the peasantry of Ireland are much more predisposed than the same class in Britain to leave their native soil, in hope of bettering their circumstances; for their means of subsistence are more precarious, and their scale of domestic comfort, generally speaking, incomparably lower.

But the Irish emigrants, not less than the English, have hitherto debarked upon our shores under those strong delusions which poison their own happiness, and lamentably deteriorate their value as members of the industrious classes. By a system of false representations which would seem to have been regularly organised among those entrusted with this great branch of national economy, and against which every lover of his species ought to lift up the voice of denunciation, these voluntary exiles have been taught to attach to themselves an overweening importance, which, on their arrival, has exhibited itself in forms both ludicrous and pitiable, drawing from the spectators now a smile, and now a tear.

The disparity of the sexes in the Australian community has been so dinned into their ears, and so thoroughly interwoven with all their anticipations, that the idea of supporting themselves by their own exertions has seldom entered their thoughts. They have been taught to dream of these colonies as a land of sighing swains, all eagerly waiting their arrival, and ready to throw themselves and all their possessions at their feet. The only hardship they have foreseen, is that of being harassed with the importunities of rival lovers; the only difficulty, that of choosing among so dense a crowd of aspirants to their hands. These trials of their patience overcome, nothing remains for them but to proceed direct from the vessel to take upon themselves the easy yoke of HUSBAND, and to enter upon all the comforts of a permanent and well-provided home!

But if the ardour of these poetic imaginings happens to have been checked by their own sober reflection, or by the counsels of judicious friendship, the delusion has only taken another turn. The demand, among the opulent colonists, for free female servants, is so extensive and so urgent, that if husbands are not to be met with at the very outset, and they must needs submit for a season to household drudgery, why, then, there is this consolation—they may ask almost any rate of wages, and it will be given: and out of their superabundant earn-

consolation—they may ask almost any rate of wages, and it will be given; and out of their superabundant earnings, they can easily lay by a sum that will prove a useful help on the forthcoming wedding-day!

Now, that this is not a picture sketched from imaginations, but one of which the outlines and the colours are taken from matters of fact, we appeal to all those heads of families, ladies and gentlemen both, who have been in the habit of visiting the Bazaar, or other place, in which the emigrants are assembled upon their first landing; and more particularly to those who have engaged any of them as house servants, nurses, governesses, &c. The high rate of wages they propose on first being spoken to by persons in quest of domestics—their manifest indifference, during the first few days after arrival, to the accepting of any engagement at all—the affectation of fine dress but too conspicuous throughout their ranks—and the disappointment and discontent evinced by a large proportion of them in the places for which they ultimately engage;—these are realities familiar to us all, and sufficiently indicate the mistaken views under which they have been seduced from their native shores.

The blame of all this is chargeable, not upon the poor young women themselves, for they are more entitled to pity than to censure; but upon those who have been entrusted by the British Government with the arduous, delicate, and highly responsible task of promoting emigration in the humble walks of life. And until these official gentlemen shall learn to distinguish, in their representations of the Australian colonies, between *encouragement* and *excitement*—between a temperate display of actual advantages, which shall inspire rational hopes not likely to be disappointed, and that exaggerated painting, which bears but a faint, if any, semblance of the truth, and which, while it dazzles the imagination, woefully misleads the judgment, and prepares the way for the bitterest disappointment and mortification—they must be regarded as little better than kidnappers, and be held responsible for all the miseries they entail upon their credulous victims, and for the general mischiefs they inflict upon the colonies.—*Sydney Colonist*, Oct. 6.