

## THE PRESENT STATE OF AGRICULTURE IN MID-LIMERICK.

During the past week I travelled through the districts of Rathkeale, Ballingarry, Croom, Granagh, Kilfinny, Knockaderry, Croagh, Ballygran, etc., and interviewed several persons who may be accredited with having a thorough knowledge of the state of the crops, both growing and reaped. On every side the cry as regards the potato crop is, "a complete failure," and almost certain starvation for the poorer classes in the coming winter and spring. "Not for the past thirty years have I seen such a wretched state of affairs," said an old gentleman whom I interviewed. At present the greater portion—in fact all of the corn crops have been reaped—and a fairly good grain is expected, together with good, sound straw. Wheat, however, is not the crop supposed earlier in the season. The produce will not be recorded of past years, but the straw is up to the average in soundness and length. Hay would have been a record crop, were it but for the terrible state of the weather, which has rendered almost half of the yield unfit for fodder. A good deal of the late sort is now being saved, and will be far better, owing to the ideal summer weather which we are having, for winter fodder than hay cut and saved in an inferior manner prior to this.

The potato crop, even in the limestone districts, is a complete failure. Almost everyone whom we have spoken to on the matter informs us that the tubers are entirely diseased, and not worth the trouble of digging out. We witnessed the digging of a breadth in a labourer's plot near Ballingarry, and a man would scarcely get a respectable meal for ten persons in a day's work. The tubers—what were there of them—were a mass, small as they were, of excrescences. The turnip and mangold crops are not what some suppose, as the terrible nature of the weather only caused a leaf growth. The root is not very promising of a heavy crop, and "finger and toe" have destroyed several fields. Mangolds promise a better crop, but owing to the heavy rains in early spring, the crop is patchy. Very little barley and rye are grown. Cabbages and the other minor crops are fairly good.