

bodies, as it has done more to call attention to the grievances under which the people laboured than any other of these organisations, and many men of position and wealth have given it their support on that account. Some two years ago the council at Leamington determined to send a couple of

DELEGATES TO IRELAND,

to endeavour to form a union in that country, as well as to report on the general condition of the labourers. Myself and Mr. Gardiner were selected for that purpose. Accordingly, we landed in Dublin in May, 1873, and during the summer we travelled through the counties of Limerick, Cork, Kerry, Tipperary, and Waterford; numerous meetings were held, and a deal of information given to the public on the wretched condition of a class, the worst fed, the worst-clad and worst housed probably in Europe. The cabins or houses in which the labourers live are entirely unfit for human habitation, the walls made of mud or clay, about six feet high and often not so much; the roof, of rotten thatch; no windows, except one or two immoveable panes of glass fixed in the wall to admit light; the floor of earth, moist and unwholesome, no sanitary arrangements; no rooms or separate sleeping places for the different members of the family; no plastering or whitewash on the walls or roof, scarcely any furniture, except a few basins, a pot, and some stools; the bed, a heap of straw in a corner, and the covering of the scantiest kind; the above is no fancy description of

AN IRISH PEASANT'S HOME

in the nineteenth century, their being 95,000 of such homes in Ireland. Their food is also of a corresponding nature, being either potatoes or Indian corn-meal, boiled into stir-about—without milk, butter or sugar—and frequently not enough, even of that. In evidence of this fact I will quote a passage from a leading article of the "Flag of Ireland" newspaper, of the 23rd of August, 1873, which says, "The condition of this class of our people is admittedly wretched, perhaps in no country is there to be found a more famished and forlorn human being than the farm labourer of Ireland, he is ill-paid, half-starved and