ROYAL DUBLIN SOCIETY.

OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

REFERENCES IN THE RECESS COMMITTEE'S REPORT

TO THE

ROYAL DUBLIN SOCIETY,

ITS WORK, AND POSITION IN IRELAND.

DUBLIN:
PRINTED FOR HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE,
BY ALEX. THOM & CO. (LIMITED), 87, 88, & 89, ABBEY-ST.,
THE QUEEN'S PRINTING OFFICE

1896.

Houses of the Oireachtas

Houses of the Oireachtas

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ROYAL DUBLIN SOCIETY.

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Royal Dublin Society.

OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

REFERENCES IN THE RECESS COMMITTEE'S REPORT TO THE ROYAL DUBLIN SOCIETY—ITS WORK, AND POSITION IN IRELAND.

THE Council of the Royal Dublin Society having had their attention directed to the report of the Recess Committee, and more particularly to that portion of it which deals with the Royal Dublin Society, its work, and position in Ireland, desire to place on record certain facts bearing upon the case. These facts will show that the Recess Committee were not justified in the comments they have made.

The Council have every desire to give credit to the gentlemen of the Recess Committee who have collected a mass of interesting information, and have taken great pains to elaborate a scheme for the establishment of a Department of Agriculture and Industries for Ireland. At the same time the Council feel bound to take the gravest exception to the way in which the Royal Dublin Society, its work, and its position in Ireland are dealt with, and to point out that the conclusions arrived at are based upon insufficient and inaccurate information.

They must express their surprise that whilst Europe was traversed almost from end to end in quest of information, the Recess Committee, meeting in Dublin, did not see fit to make inquiry from the Royal Dublin Society, which occupies so prominent a position in Ireland.

On page 68 of the Report, dealing with the general

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a subvention of £5,000 a year for promoting horse-breeding. That sum is paid annually to the Society under the Probate Duties (Scotland and Ireland) Act, 1888, for the improvement of the breed of cattle as well as horses. The sum annually appropriated to horses is £3,550, the balance, £1,450, is devoted to cattle, The work that the Society admittedly does well is not done at the expense of the State, as the passage quoted would lead one to suppose. A separate account of the fund is kept in the books of the Bank of Ireland, and the expense of administration is defrayed, not out of State funds, but out of the private funds of the Royal Dublin Society. The subvention instead of being a pecuniary benefit to the Royal Dublin Society, is a source of expense. The work is undertaken by the Society in the interests of the public. If the fund were administered by the State, the cost of administration would be greatly increased, a large proportion of the fund would be absorbed by an expensive executive, and thus diverted from the farming class, who at present receive the full benefit of the money. It would be impossible to devise a system of administration more advantageous to the country. The Recess Committee are obliged to admit that the Royal Dublin Society does this work well. But the very work which the Recess Committee commend is under their scheme to be taken from the Royal Dublin Society. Their proposed Third Bureau, "Veterinary Administration," is to undertake "a better considered and more scientific scheme than that which at present prevails for the improvement of the breed of horses in Ireland."*

The reference to the Horse Show above quoted conveys a suggestion of serious import to the Society. The whole tendency of the Recess Committee's Report is to show that the promotion of agriculture and other industries should no longer be left to private enterprise and to voluntary associations unaided by the State; and that the time has come for transferring this work to a Government Department. That the Horse Show of the Royal Dublin Society, the largest and most successful undertaking of the kind in the world, is the work of a voluntary association, the result of private enterprise, without State aid, is a fact the Recess Committee find it convenient to ignore. The reader of the Report is led to infer that the success of the Horse Show is

* Recess Committee's Report, page 107.

a result of State aid. The facts are, however, diametrically opposed to any such inference. During the twenty-four years that the Royal Dublin Society has laboured in the development of the Horse Show not one penny of Government money has been spent upon the Show. Instead of the £5,000 a year administered by the Society contributing to the success of the Horse Show, special prizes are offered at the Show, out of the Society's private funds, to promote the success of the scheme for the administration of the public fund.

It is difficult to understand why the Recess Committee should have devoted so much as two sentences of their Report to the Horse Show, and the work of the Royal Dublin Society in promoting horse-breeding, while they omit even to mention work of far greater importance to the Irish farmer, viz., the Society's Spring Cattle Shows and the scheme for improving the breed of cattle.

Remarkable as has been the development of the Horse Show, it is not more remarkable than the growth of the Cattle Show. As an exhibition of breeding stock and a medium for the distribution of pure-bred cattle of the best type, the Spring Cattle Shows of the Royal Dublin Society rank amongst the first in the United Kingdom. These Shows are also the chief agency in operation for the introduction of new and improved agricultural implements and machinery into Ireland. Notwithstanding the opinion of the Recess Committee that the "greatest admirers" of the Royal Dublin Society "will not claim for it that it has succeeded in effecting any marked or permanent improvement in the methods of the Irish farmer;" it must be admitted by anybody who takes the trouble to make himself acquainted with the facts, that the Spring Cattle Shows of the Royal Dublin Society, to say nothing of its other agricultural work, have been the means of effecting most marked and permanent improvement in the methods of the Irish farmer. A matter of supreme, almost vital, importance to him is the method of producing superior animals for the English market. There is probably not a farmer in Ireland whose farm stock does not show the influence of the distribution of improved breeds effected by means of the Society's Shows during the sixty-five years these Shows have been in operation. During the past eight years that the service premium scheme has been in operation the Society has kept statistics

of the bulls distributed under the service premium scheme. The returns show that 888 pure-bred bulls selected by the best judges in the United Kingdom, have been purchased by persons residing in every county in Ireland. It is difficult to estimate what the produce of those animals has been, it may safely be assumed that they have produced upwards of 100,000 calves of improved breed, the property of Irish farmers. The premium bulls, however, represent a mere fraction of the pure-bred live stock distributed through the instrumentality of the Society's Shows. If statistics were available of the animals distributed outside the premium system the results would be still more striking.

On page 69, the report states that the Society "has carried out some useful inquiries and experiments from time to time in the country," and adds that "as a learned and educational body in Dublin its situation is enviable." To enter into any detail as regards the "useful inquiries and experiments" carried out by the Society in the 165 years of its existence would occupy many volumes each equal in size to the entire report of the Recess Committee with its appendices. Some idea of the extent of the work of the Society may be gathered from the fact that it is recorded in seven MS. volumes, dating from 1731 to 1763; six volumes of Transactions published in the years 1800 to 1810; Statistical Surveys of Queen's County, King's County, Wicklow, Monaghan, Dublin, Leitrim, Down, Cavan, Mayo, Kilkenny, Sligo, Donegal, Meath, Londonderry, Tyrone, Armagh, Wexford, Kildare, Clare, Cork, Antrim, Galway, Roscommon, comprising 25 volumes, published between the years 1801 and 1832; seven volumes of the Journal of the Society published from 1856 to 1876. These records are largely Agricultural and Industrial in character. The published minutes of the Society, which embrace all departments and include a vast amount of Agricultural work, are contained in 131 8vo volumes, dating from 1764 to 1895. Volume 132 for the current year is now in press. To the foregoing should be added the current series of Scientific Transactions and Proceedings, comprising at present six quarto and eight octavo volumes (1877 to 1896). It is scarcely accurate to describe the mass of important work contained in these voluminous records as "some useful inquiries and experiments" carried out from time to time.

It will be observed that a quotation is given in the Report from the *Fortnightly Review* of March, 1894 (see above extract), setting forth the great advantages and opportunities possessed by the Society, and winding up with most depreciatory observations, stating that the Society has not, with all its advantages, "succeeded in effecting any marked or permanent improvement in the methods of the Irish farmer." It will, perhaps, surprise many readers of the Report to learn that the article thus anonymously quoted by the Recess Committee, as if it were the opinion of an independent authority, was written by the Hon. Horace Plunkett, M.P., the Chairman of the Recess Committee and the President of the Agricultural Organization Society.

In the paragraph quoted from the article in the *Fortnightly Review*, it is stated that the Society has "ample funds and a Government subsidy." At the time this article appeared, the last published accounts of the Society showed an income of £18,679, and an expenditure of £19,302—deficit £623. The income included members' and associates' subscriptions, and receipts from investments—total, £4,587; receipts arising out of the operations of the Society in Agriculture, Science, Art, and Industries, amounting to £14,092. The entire income may be regarded as earnings, money paid to the Society for value received; it does not include anything of the nature of a grant. The expenditure for the year consisted of £3,865 on administration and general purposes; £2,294 on Science, Art, and Industries; and £13,143 on Agriculture. In considering the funds available for any specific purpose it is impossible to dissociate the income from the expenditure, the two sides of the account are mutually dependent. The income is a result of certain expenditure, and the expenditure is limited only by the income the Society succeeds in earning from year to year.

The Recess Committee refer to Denmark as an example for Ireland, and point out that the Danish Government place at the disposal of the Royal Danish Agricultural Society a grant of £108,000 per annum. The Danish Society is not put to the expense of earning this money, so that the entire sum is available for expenditure, in whatever way is thought fit. This sum is equal to one shilling per head of the population of the country. Now, the population of Denmark is about half that of Ireland, and in superficial area the two countries

bear a similar relation to one another. A corresponding expenditure in Ireland, if made at the rate of one shilling per head, taking the Census Return of 1891 as the basis, would amount to £235,237 per annum. In comparison with such a sum the entire funds of the Royal Dublin Society, which must be applied to Science, Art, and Industries, as well as to Agriculture, and the public funds it administers for improving the breed of horses and cattle, are quite insignificant. Yet the writer in the *Fortnightly Review* considers the Society's funds ample, and the Recess Committee endorse his opinion. Seeing that the improvements effected in the methods of the Danish farmer have cost the State such a vast sum, it ought to be regarded as a matter of surprise that the Royal Dublin Society has accomplished so much with its very limited resources.

In censuring the Royal Dublin Society for having accomplished so little throughout Ireland, the Recess Committee overlooked the fact that it was upon the late Royal Agricultural Society of Ireland that the responsibility of promoting agriculture in the Provinces mainly devolved, from the year 1842 to the year 1888, when the latter Society came to an end, and its work was taken over by the Royal Dublin Society.

In the following Memorandum is set forth some of the work undertaken and carried out by the Royal Dublin Society within the last few years, since the work of the Royal Agricultural Society was taken over. It should be borne in mind that the objects for which the Royal Dublin Society is chartered are "the advancement of Agriculture and other branches of Industry, and the advancement of Science and Art."

MEMORANDUM.

(1.) In 1884 the Society originated and joined in the carrying out of a scheme for the establishment of the dairy school at Glasnevin—outlay, 1884–1894, £942; subscribed to the funds of the Munster Dairy School, 1886–1893, £350.

1887–8.

(2.) Carried out in conjunction with Committees in Belfast and in Cork the management of the Irish Section of the great Manchester Jubilee Exhibition—Society's subscription, £500.

1887–8.—*continued.*

(3.) Undertook the administration, at the expense of the Society, of the annual sum of £5,000 for the improvement of the breed of horses and cattle in Ireland, divided as follows :—

For horses, .	. £3,550.
For cattle,	. 1,450.

(4.) Established a system of annual Exhibitions in aid of poor and deserving Students of the Metropolitan School of Art—yearly subscription, £50.

(5.) Established an annual Exhibition of Art Industries, which now include lace, wood-carving, metal work, and leather work, together with designs for lace and for wood-carving, &c.—expenditure (now) annually, £250.

(6.) Adopted, when the Royal Agricultural Society ceased to exist, a system of annual grants to Affiliated Local Farming Societies. A show of stock, etc., being held annually by each, annual grant (1896), £300. See Appendix A., page 17.

1889.

(7.) Established a Herd Book for the registration of pure bred Kerry and Dexter Cattle, the two native breeds in Ireland; the number registered now is 3,752.

(8.) Joined in the Railway Rates Inquiry—subscription, 1889–90, £135.

1890.

(9.) Organized and carried out, 1890-91, a Fishery Survey of the Western Coast of Ireland, the expense to the Society, including the publication of reports, &c., being £1,734. The Government adding £1,200.*

(10.) Subscribed in aid of the Dublin Technical Schools in five years £250.

(11.) Established a system of "Farm Prize Competitions" in the provinces in succession—yearly payment about £150.

* The early Spring mackerel fishery, now being developed by the Congested Districts Board, is one of the results of the Society's survey. (See pages 78 and 85 of the Recess Committee's Report).

House of Lords Library

1891.

(12.) Established a system of Boar Premiums, under which boars are distributed to farmers on the same conditions relatively as bull premiums under the Government subsidy scheme—yearly vote, £100.

(13.) Carried out in this and the following year, at seventy stations in twenty-nine counties, a series of Experiments with a view of determining what new variety of potato would be best suited for general cultivation in Ireland.

1892.

(14.) Contributed towards cost of the Lecture Theatre, now in course of erection, to which is attached an enlarged chemical laboratory for the analysis of feeding stuffs and artificial manures, &c., £5,000.

(15.) Established a "Register of Thoroughbred Stallions certified to be free from hereditary disease, and suitable for improving the breed of horses."

1893.

(16.) For the greater convenience of exhibitors, and the security of cattle and horses from injury, and from the risk of infection, the Society constructed the Branch Line of Railway connecting the show grounds at Ball's Bridge with the railway system of Ireland. No charge has been made by the Society for the use of this line. Outlay by the Society for land, £1,888; cost of construction of the railway, £3,622; total, £5,510.

(17.) Originated a system of example holdings at Swineford, Co. Mayo—cost, 1893-95, £483. (Since taken up by the Congested Districts Board.)

(18.) Organized a further series of Experiments in Potato Culture and Potato Spraying, 1893–5—outlay, £275.

1894

(19.) Took part in obtaining the Charter incorporating the Veterinary College, the Society nominating 12 out of 32 members of the Board of Governors, and undertaking to contribute by five annual instalments the sum of £1,000.

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1895

(20.) Aided in the Establishment of the Irish Tourist Association, voted £50.

(21.) Subscribed to the Pembroke Technical Schools £100.

(22.) Organized in conjunction with 62 Boards of Guardians a system for the distribution of potato spraying machines, with the requisite chemicals—sum administered, £458 (202 machines distributed).

1896.

(23.) Voted towards the establishment of a model apiary under the auspices of the Bee-keepers' Association, £50, together with a subscription of £25 per annum for two years if working successfully, £50.

There is set forth in the above Memorandum some of the work carried out by the Royal Dublin Society within the last few years, in addition to a large amount of routine work, which includes the Spring Show of breeding Stock and Farm Implements, as well as the Horse and Sheep Show in the month of August.

It may be added that the expenditure of the Society upon the development of the Ball's Bridge premises during the last fifteen years has been at the rate of £4,000 per annum, and the entire work has been carried out without Government aid.

The amount of the prizes paid at the Shows of the Society held at Ball's Bridge (excluding the Dog Show) in the period included in the above Memorandum, viz., the years 1886-1896, affords evidence of the progress that has taken place, and of the growing importance of the Shows. The payments have been as follows:—

—	1886.	1896.	Increase per cent.
	£	£	
Horse Show, . .	1,404	1,924	37
Cattle ,, . .	848	1,212	42
Sheep ,, . .	74	344	450

The above statement may be taken as a proof that since the withdrawal of the Royal Agricultural Society, the Royal Dublin Society has largely extended its operations with a view "to improve the methods of the Irish farmer," as well as to develop the industries of the country. The facts are, that the same year that the Royal Agricultural Society came to an end for want of support, the Royal Dublin Society pressed on its work, and through a period of great political excitement and unrest, attended to its duties in the full assurance that effort well directed would meet its reward.

The Council feel that some notice should be taken of the statement in the Report which deals with the mode of government of the Society. The sentence relative to this matter runs as follows :—"It is a quasi-academic body, directed mainly by scientific men and representative landowners." This statement is not correct. A glance at the yearly report of the Society would have been sufficient to show the Committee that the Council of the Royal Dublin Society has a triple constitution, and that while agriculture and science share equally in the representation on the Council, there is also a third contingent of equal strength, composed of men noted for their business capacity and public spirit. If any one section of the Council predominates in the conduct of the business of the Society it is, as might naturally be expected from its constitution, the last mentioned. The combination of science and agriculture is one which has added greatly to the strength and capabilities of the Society, and each of these two sections of the Society would willingly testify to the mutual advantage which has arisen thereby. It is needless to point out that the agriculture of the present day rests entirely on a scientific basis and that any advance in this direction can only be looked for by a still further application of scientific methods, and by bringing practical agriculturists into closer touch with the chemist and the biologist. Such being the case the intimate and cordial connection which exists between the Agricultural and Science Sections of the Royal Dublin Society has always been regarded by the Council as an exceedingly happy and useful combination of two of the main working forces of the Society.

The Recess Committee state that the Royal Dublin Society "stands alone in Dublin without any system of affiliated branch societies throughout the country."

This is a complete misapprehension. A system of affiliation of Local Farming Societies was adopted in 1888, the year in which the work of the Royal Agricultural Society was taken over. The Rules under which these Societies are affiliated will be found in Appendix A, page 17.

In the year 1895 there had been affiliated 15 Societies, and in 1896 there were added 5, making a total of 20. The 20 Local Societies include 2,980 Members; and applications for affiliation from other Societies are under consideration for the coming year. The Society has always been most desirous of encouraging the increase and affiliation of local societies, so far as its funds will admit.

The Council have at present under consideration a suggestion of the Committee of Agriculture for extending the system under which Local Societies are affiliated. (See Appendix D, page 33).

Under the Horse Breeding Scheme there are 33 County Committees, two in Cork, and one in every other county in Ireland. These Committees are in touch with the Society, and working with it.

In 1895 the Society sought the co-operation of the Boards of Guardians throughout Ireland. Aided by, and in touch with, 62 Boards, the Society distributed 202 Potato Sprayers and the necessary spraying material to persons nominated by the Boards of Guardians and appointed by the Society.

In the years 1892–1895, the Society, aided by a Local Committee at Swinford, originated and carried out a system of Example Holdings. Since the Congested Districts Board was established, it has carried on a similar system.*

In the administration of the Anne Hall Endowments there are two Local Committees in the Counties of Fermanagh and Londonderry working with the Society.

There are also at the present time working in various parts of the country 29 Woodcarving Classes affiliated to, and actively assisted by, the Royal Dublin Society.

It will thus be seen how widespread is the system of local bodies with which the Royal Dublin Society is in co-operation. In no case has the Society experienced a

* See page 396 of Recess Committee's Report.

difficulty in obtaining local aid and sympathy in the furtherance of any project it has undertaken for the amelioration of the condition of the people.

The position of the Society in Dublin is remarkable. It would be difficult to find a parallel case of a voluntary Society so intimately associated with a number of important public institutions. Leinster House, the Society's historic home, stands central in the midst of a group of flourishing Institutions *founded by the Society*, namely :— The Science and Art Museum, including the Natural History Collections; the National Library, and the Metropolitan School of Art.

The Royal Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin, were also founded by the Royal Dublin Society; while the Royal College of Science, Stephen's Green, originated in the transfer to a Government Department of a system of science teaching which the Society had for many years carried on. The National Gallery, too, is the outcome of the triennial Art and Industrial Exhibitions which the Society formerly held.

The Society, moreover, preserves a close connection with the Institutions by which it is surrounded. When, under the Science and Art Museums Act, 1877, the Society consented to transfer its collections and property to the State, numerous rights and privileges were reserved to the Society. Amongst these there is the provision that, as regards the Council of Trustees, the Governing Body of the National Library, twelve in number, eight should be annually appointed by the Society, and four by the Crown;* and that, of the twelve members of the Board of Visitors of the Science and Art Museum, the Natural History Collections, and the Botanic Gardens, five should be appointed annually by the Society, four by the Crown, and three by the Royal Irish Academy. In recognition of the important position held by the Society, the Act further provides that all the books and collections transferred to the Crown by the Act are to be "retained in Ireland for the benefit of the public *and of the Society.*' Of the Board of Governors of the National Gallery, the President of the Royal Dublin Society, and the Senior Vice-President, are both *ex-officio* Members. In the Charter

* In the Recess Committee's Report, page 136, it is erroneously stated that the Council of Trustees are appointed by the Crown

recently granted for the founding of a Veterinary College, twelve out of thirty-two members of the governing body are appointed by the Society.

The Report goes on to say that the Royal Dublin Society "is not elective, its members being admitted by ballot as to a club." The fact is, that the Society is more openly elective than any similar institution in the United Kingdom. Any person desirous of becoming a member may be proposed by any two Members of the Society, and a bare majority of the votes of the Members elects. Whereas in the North-East Agricultural Association, and in the Royal Agricultural Society of England, the election of Members is solely in the hands of the Council; and in the Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland, the election of Members is held by ballot, and a majority of four votes in five of those balloting is required to elect a Member.

The members of the Royal Danish Agricultural Society, referred to with so much approval by the Recess Committee, are admitted by a plurality of votes of the governing Committee, which consists of only thirty-six members.

Again, referring to Agricultural Societies in the Provinces, the Report states that "there are a number of Farming Societies which sometimes get up cattle shows"; and adds "but they have no common bond, and acting in isolation, and without any State contribution, they necessarily make but a very feeble impression upon the great industry whose interests they seek to promote." The one statement that is correct in this quotation is that those Societies are "without any State contribution." It is believed that it would be accurate to say that practically every Agricultural Society in Ireland, with the one exception of the North-East Society, is affiliated to the Royal Dublin Society, and receives an annual grant from its private funds. A fundamental condition attached to this grant is that the Local Society shall hold a Show each year.

From the reference that is made to the Chemico-Agricultural Society of Ulster, founded in 1845, it might be inferred that the merit of possessing a chemical laboratory "to protect its members against imposition in the purchase of seeds and manures," is peculiar to that Society. The Royal Dublin Society has the honour of being the first society in

the United Kingdom to establish a chemical laboratory. The Society's laboratory has been in active operation for more than a century. At the present time the services of the Society's Analyst are utilized by Members of the Society, by Government departments, and by the public generally. A new and greatly enlarged laboratory has just been erected, it will be furnished with the most approved modern appliances, and thoroughly equipped for analytical work and research. The Royal Dublin Society also retains the services of a Consulting Botanist, and a Consulting Entomologist, who furnish reports on plants, seeds, injurious insects, etc.

The question of creating an Irish Board or Department of Agriculture has occupied the attention of the Council from time to time. So far back as March, 1890, a Special Committee was appointed to consider the matter. At that time it seemed impracticable to make any useful effort in this direction. In November, 1895, the Committee of Agriculture adopted a resolution (see Appendix B, page 18) strongly supporting the formation of an Irish Board of Agriculture, and the Council appointed a Committee to formulate suggestions. The Report of the Sub-Committee, having been approved by the Committee of Agriculture, was adopted by the Council on April 23rd, 1896 (see Appendix C, page 19), several months before the Recess Committee published their Report. The resolution of November, 1895, and the Report on the proposed Board of Agriculture for Ireland were in due course submitted to the Government.

Adopted by the Council, December 24th, 1896

Houses of the Oireachtas

APPENDIX A.

Regulations respecting Grants to Provincial Agricultural Societies.

1. The Society must have been in existence for two years, and have held at least one Show.

> Note.—This Rule may be waived in the case of the revival of a Provincial Farming Society which had formerly been affiliated by the Royal Agricultural Society of Ireland.

2. No Provincial Society shall be affiliated by the Royal Dublin Society, or entitled to a Grant, which shall not distinctly specify its boundaries, which must be either those of a County or Counties, a Poor Law Union, Barony, or Baronies; and no Premium offered by the Royal Dublin Society shall be paid unless such Premium had been open to competition to all farmers within its District, conforming to its Rules and Regulations.

3. No Provincial Society shall be entitled to a Grant unless at least three members of such Society are also members of the Royal Dublin Society; and no Provincial Farming Society shall be entitled to a Grant unless a *bona fide* paid-up fund of at least £50 shall be annually subscribed by such Society towards the payment of its Premiums and the general object of the Society.

4. No Provincial Society shall receive aid from the Royal Dublin Society whose District, or any part of it, is included within the limits of any other Society already receiving aid from the Royal Dublin Society.

5. The Grant shall be given on the condition that a sum not less than the amount of the Grant shall be offered in Premiums for Pure Bred Farm Stock.

6. The Provincial Society shall, as soon as it is prepared, submit to the Royal Dublin Society copy of the List of Premiums offered, and subsequently furnish the Royal Dublin Society with a complete statement of accounts for the year, giving full details of income and expenditure upon all heads.

7. With the view of showing the local interest taken, it is necessary that the names of subscribers with amounts subscribed accompany the accounts.

8. The amount of Grant will, as a general rule, be based upon the total sum of the local subscriptions and the amount of Premiums paid in the previous year. In no case will the amount of Grant exceed £40.

9. The Society will announce in the List of Premiums offered that a Grant of (such sum as may be voted) is made by the Royal Dublin Society towards Premiums for Pure Bred Farm Stock.

10. In the event of the Grant, or any portion of it, not being duly expended within the current year, the Grant, or such unexpended portion, shall lapse, and shall be repaid to the Royal Dublin Society.

11. The Owners of Stallions, Bulls, Rams, or Boars obtaining the Royal Dublin Society's Premiums shall comply with such rules and regulations as the Provincial Society shall agree to adopt.

NOTE.—It may be desirable that Provincial Societies frame such rules regarding the services of male animals winning Premiums as may tend to provide advantages to small farmers, cottiers, and others. This can be done by making it conditional that such male animals must be retained in the district for a certain period, serving, if required, a limited number of animals belonging to members of the Provincial Society at a fixed fee.

12. Such Premiums as are provided by the Royal Dublin Society can only be competed for by *bona fide* farmers or cottiers whose tenement valuation within the district or boundaries of such a Society does not exceed £300.

13. The Provincial Society shall arrange that at least one Member of the Agricultural Committee of the Royal Dublin Society, or its Agricultural Superintendent, be present at the Show and report upon it.

APPENDIX B.

RESOLUTION OF COMMITTEE OF AGRICULTURE, 7TH NOVEMBER, 1895.

Resolved.—That the Committee desires to place on record its sense of the importance of establishing a Board of Agriculture for Ireland. That the Council be requested to take such steps in this matter as they shall think fit.

Houses of the Oireachtas

APPENDIX C.

Report on the Proposed Board of Agriculture for Ireland.

At a meeting of the Council held on November 7th, 1895, a Committee was appointed "to collect information and formulate suggestions as to the formation of a Board of Agriculture for Ireland."

The Committee now beg to submit their report. It is divided into the following parts:—I. Information as to the agricultural work of existing Irish Government Departments. The British Board of Agriculture, its constitution and functions. II. Information respecting the steps taken by Colonial and Foreign Governments to advance the interests of Agriculture. III. A consideration of the work to be undertaken by an Irish Board of Agriculture. IV. Suggestions as to the constitution of the proposed Board or Department.

This report is based upon such information as was accessible to the Committee without communication with Government Departments. The design of the Committee has been to suggest to the Council as briefly as possible the considerations that should influence them in arriving at a decision upon a very complex question, and one of extreme importance to this country.

I. Agricultural Work of Irish Government Departments.

At the present time there are several distinct Government Departments in Ireland engaged in the administration of Acts intended to assist agriculturists, or to protect their interests.

The Veterinary Department of the Privy Council administers the Acts relating to the contagious diseases of animals. This Department also collects and publishes certain statistics relating to animals.

The Land Commission is chiefly engaged in the discharge of purely judicial functions, the fixing of fair rents, and the redemption of rent. This body also grants loans for purchase; collects and publishes statistics relating to prices;

conducts agricultural experiments; and supervises the provision of facilities for the weighing of cattle at fairs.

Closely connected with the Land Commission is the Congested Districts Board. The functions of this Board are confined to certain scheduled districts in the west of Ireland; they relate to:—Agricultural development, forestry, the breeding of live stock and poultry, the sale of seed potatoes and seed oats, the amalgamation of small holdings, migration, emigration, fishing and matters subservient to fishing, weaving and spinning, and other suitable industries.

The agricultural functions of the Board of Works relate chiefly to the administration of loans. Under the Board loans are granted for land improvement, arterial drainage, and occasionally for the purchase of seed potatoes. Other work in which the Board is engaged, such as the granting of loans for labourers' dwellings, for the construction of light railways, and certain duties relating to inland navigation, are closely connected with agriculture.

Under the supervision of the Local Government Board rates are levied by local authorities for the supply of seed potatoes and for labourers' dwellings and allotments.

The General Register Office collects and publishes agricultural statistics, including:—Acreage under crops, condition of crops, number and size of holdings, number of occupiers, rates and prices, live stock, cattle diseases, live stock exports and imports, machinery, scutching mills, forestry, bog, fruit, wages, loans for dwellings.

The Board of National Education manages two agricultural schools, and assists by grants, prizes, and inspection agricultural efforts in other schools.

The General Valuation and Boundary Survey of Ireland is indirectly connected with agriculture.

The Ordnance Survey Department is also indirectly connected with agriculture.

The votes for the expenses of the foregoing departments in the Civil Service Estimates for 1895--6, are as follows:—

VETERINARY DEPARTMENT OF THE PRIVY COUNCIL.

	£
Salaries and wages, ...	11,703

LAND COMMISSION.

Agricultural Department, ...	1,955

CONGESTED DISTRICTS BOARD.

	£
Salaries and Wages, ...	6,063

BOARD OF WORKS.

Salaries and Wages, administration of Land Improvement Act, ...	8,100

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD.

No special vote for agricultural work.

GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE.

No special vote for agricultural work.

BOARD OF NATIONAL EDUCATION.

Agricultural Establishments, . . .	9,566

GENERAL VALUATION AND BOUNDARY SURVEY.

No special vote for agricultural work.

ORDNANCE SURVEY.

No special vote for agricultural work.

In addition to the foregoing Government Departments the Royal Dublin Society administers a sum of £5,000 for the improvement of the breed of horses and cattle. This sum is part of Ireland's share of the Probate Duties, and is payable annually to the Society under the Probate Duties (Scotland and Ireland) Act 1888.

BOARD OF AGRICULTURE FOR GREAT BRITAIN.

This Board was established in 1889. It consists of—The Lord President of the Council, the Principal Secretaries of State, the First Commissioner of the Treasury, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, the Secretary for Scotland, and a member of the Privy Council as President.

The Board is intrusted with the administration of Acts relating to the Contagious Diseases of Animals, Destructive Insects, the Duties of the Land Commissioners for England relating to Tithe Rentcharge, Copyhold, Inclosures and Allotments, Metropolitan Commons, Drainage, Land Im-

Property of the Oireachtas

provement, &c., the functions of the Commissioners of Works under the Survey Act of 1870. The Board is empowered to undertake—The collection and publication of Agricultural and Forestry Statistics; the inspection of, and grant in aid to certain schools; the inspection of Agricultural Examinations: grants in aid to systems of lectures, or of instruction in Agriculture and Forestry; inquiries, experiments, and research; and the collection of information for the purpose of promoting Agriculture or Forestry; the regulation of the muzzling of dogs, and to deal with stray dogs.

The provision made for the expenses of the Board in the Estimates for 1895–6, is:—

	£
Salaries and Wages, . . .	33,890
Travelling, ...	2,900
Legal and Incidental, . . .	1,620
Collection of Agricultural Statistics, .	4,100
Agricultural and Dairy Education, . .	8,000
Expenses repayable, . . .	4,500
	55,010
Less Appropriation in aid, . . .	8,500
	46,510
Buildings, fuel, stationery, &c., . .	10,532
Total, . .	57,042

II.—Colonial Agricultural Departments.

In the Colonies the chief aim of the respective Governments has been to develop a trade with Great Britain. In many cases their efforts have been successful, and competition with the Colonies is now one of the difficulties against which home Agriculture has to contend. In the following outline of the work of Colonial Boards, branches of Agriculture with which this country is not concerned are referred to as well as those branches that come in direct competition with Irish Agriculture, the outline would otherwise be very incomplete.

The New South Wales Department of Agriculture has only recently been established. Believing that a trade might be opened up in tobacco an expert has been employed

to travel throughout the Colony giving practical instruction to farmers, and delivering lectures upon the cultivation, curing, classing, and packing of tobacco. A similar attempt is being made to develop silk production by instruction in sericulture and the establishment of mulberry plantations. Experiments are being made on the growth of plants of the citrus tribe for the production of essential oils, perfumes, and flavouring essences. Instruction is given in fruit growing, and an attempt is being made to develop the export of wine and spirit. The Department is endeavouring to place butter exportation on a better footing; and with a view to developing the meat trade an expert who was sent to visit Great Britain, Germany, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, and France, has submitted an exhaustive report. It is proposed to establish produce depots which shall be in touch on the one hand with the farmers, and on the other with the markets in Great Britain and elsewhere. A sum of £50,000 has recently been voted towards the reduction of railway rates on farm produce.

The Colony of Victoria voted in 1889 a sum of £233,000 in aid of Agriculture. In July last upwards of £200,000 had been spent, chiefly in bonuses to promote exports to Great Britain, but trade has been sought too in the markets of India, China, Java, and Japan. Exports have been sent by the Colony to those countries to find purchasers for the produce of the Colony. In addition to the bonuses given on exports, bonuses have been given for the introduction of new machinery and new varieties of seeds, and grants have been made for the establishment of technical education in connection with Agriculture, and for the publication of reports on agricultural matters. The sum of £30,000 has been spent on bonuses to 166 butter factories and creameries; though these bonuses are now discontinued the factories and creameries still increase. The government of the colony has contracted with a firm of carriers for the conveyance of frozen produce from Melbourne to London at low rates; for butter and meat the rate is $\frac{3}{4}d.$ per pound. In five years the exports of butter, sent chiefly to the United Kingdom, have increased from 827,000 lbs., value £51,300, to 26,000,000, value £1,081,243.

South Australia has devoted attention chiefly to the development of wine exports, for which purpose the colony has opened a bonded store in London. Bonuses amounting

to £15,000 have been given to start an export trade in butter, and the effort is said to have been most successful.

The Queensland Department of Agriculture disseminates useful information on agricultural subjects by reports and bulletins and through the instrumentality of travelling instructors and experts. The sugar industry has received an immense impetus through the advance of Government money for the erection of central mills, by which the small planters are relieved from the necessity of purchasing expensive machinery. Bonuses are given under certain conditions to the exporters of meat and dairy produce, and great care is taken to ensure a high standard of quality in the goods exported. An effort is being made to foster sericulture, and a trade in tobacco, olive oil, coffee, and maize. The colony has sent timber to London, and parts of the Strand and Wandsworth have been paved with it by way of experiment.

Tasmania affords an illustration of a Colony in which an extensive export trade has been absolutely created under Government direction. A fruit and timber trade have been established with the old country, and Government assistance is no longer necessary.

The New Zealand Government in 1882 offered a bonus of £500 for the first 50 tons of cheese produced on a factory system. The result is that there are now in the Colony 73 cheese factories, 78 butter factories, and 83 creameries. The value of the cheese exported in 1894, chiefly to Great Britain, was £442,000. The Government assumes supervision over the quality of the milk used in the factories, and over the classing and branding of the goods exported. Experts are sent to England, the Continent, and to the United States to procure information, and their reports are distributed amongst the New Zealand farmers for their instruction and guidance.

In Canada the chief assistance the Government of the Dominion has given to Agriculture has been the promotion of facilities of transit. Railways alone have been aided to the extent of forty millions sterling. Cattle are protected from imported diseases by a stringent system of quarantine. There are government experimental farms where researches connected with agriculture are carried out. Bulletins are issued by the Department of Agriculture on such subjects as the poultry and egg industry. The reports of Commis-

sioners sent to the United Kingdom to collect information about agriculture and about the requirements of the markets have been distributed amongst the Canadian farmers. In the last four years the exports from the Dominion to Great Britain have increased from £2,062,000, to £4,158,000.

Agricultural Departments in Foreign Countries.

A review of the work done by Foreign Governments in furtherance of the agricultural interests of their respective states would exceed the limits to which this report must be confined. Such a review is to be found in the Blue Book :—"Reports from Her Majesty's Representatives on the Organization of Departments of Agriculture in Foreign Countries and on the Nature of the Assistance rendered by the State in the Interests of Agriculture" (May 1894, C. 7356). The States with which Ireland is most concerned are those at present competing with her in the supply of the English markets. Foremost amongst these is Denmark, which annually exports to the United Kingdom about £12,000,000 worth of produce, consisting chiefly of butter, pork, and bacon.

There are many points of similarity between Denmark and Ireland. Its population per square mile is about the same as that of Ireland. Denmark with an area of 14,731 square miles, has a population of 1,969,039 persons, while Ireland has 4,730,532 persons to 32,531 square miles. In Denmark there are 223,892 tenancies, or 1 tenancy to 8·8 persons. In Ireland there are 486,865 agricultural tenancies, or 1 to every 9·7 persons, there are 573,718 agricultural holdings, or 1 to every 8·2 persons. There are only 2,000 tenancies in Denmark exceeding 144 acres in extent. The number of holdings in Ireland of 100 acres and upwards is 32,798 ; this includes 9,806 holdings of 200 acres and upwards. The number of small tenancies in Denmark is therefore proportionately greater than in Ireland. Contrasting the live stock statistics of the two countries it will be found that there are proportionally more horses and swine in Denmark than in Ireland, and less cattle and sheep.

In Denmark agricultural interests are entrusted to the Minister of the Interior. The expenditure on Agricultural objects in 1893–4 was £80,000, including £48,222 on the extension of the Royal Veterinary and Agricultural College buildings. £17,000 is annually spent on improving live stock, £11,000 on forestry, £1,300 on horticulture, £4,322

on consulting experts, £266 is given to Agricultural Societies in aid of lectures, £333 for seed culture, £333 for dairy instruction for men and women, and £111 for poultry raising. Considerably more than half the expenditure of the State upon agricultural objects in the year 1893–4 was devoted to education, and the greater part of the balance was spent upon improving the breed of live stock. Since 1814 Denmark has had the advantage of compulsory education.

In France and in Belgium Agriculture is very completely organized; the smallest provincial associations are placed in more or less direct relationship with the central State Department. The position assumed by the State is paternal to an extent that would be wholly foreign to the institutions and to the traditions of this country. In Belgium improvement in facilities for transit has lately received a large amount of attention. The ordinary roads have been utilized in the construction of a system of light railways, "Chemin de Fer Vicinaux." These railways extend from two to thirty-five miles, they now cover a length of 790 miles, being a proportion of 28 per cent. to the 2,820 miles of Belgian railways. The rates charged are very low; a market gardener can travel at the rate of ·04 fr. per kilom., his fare for a distance equal to that from Cork to Dublin would be 3*s.* 4*d.* for second class. The fare charged by the Great Southern and Western Railway Co. is £1 2*s.* 4*d.* Correspondingly low rates are charged for farm produce, there is no charge made for personally carried produce. Free transit is granted on rivers and canals to all cargoes consisting wholly of manures or other fertilizing substances of any description.

In Austria-Hungary the revenues of Crown lands are directed to Agriculture. Although the estimates of the Hungarian Ministry of Agriculture for 1894 amounted to £1,276,760, including £412,000 for horse breeding, the revenue of the year from State forests, studs, and the State silk industry was £1,243,504, including an income of £349,720 derived from the State studs.

The disabilities under which the Irish farmer labours as regards transit are very serious. In a country like Belgium where the Railways and Canals are the property of the state, it is in the power of the Government to assist agriculture in a way that is not practicable in a country where the highways of industry and commerce are private property. In most

parts of England competition reduces the charges of railway companies to as low a rate as is consistent with a fair working profit. In Ireland the carrying companies are, with rare exceptions, complete monopolists, they have the power of imposing high rates, the interests of agriculturists are not the chief considerations that influence them in the exercise of that power. Cheap ocean carriage with the aid of heat abstraction on the most scientific principles, has brought farmers in the most distant parts of the world into direct competition with Irish farmers in the markets of England. The Irish farmer has endeavoured to meet that competition by reducing his rent, to reduce the expenses of transit would have been a more difficult task. Sooner or later this task must in some way be accomplished.

III.—The Work to be undertaken by the proposed Board.

The work to be entrusted to an Irish Board of Agriculture is of two classes—(1) the agricultural work of existing Departments in this country; (2) new work not at present undertaken by Irish Government Departments.

It may at first sight appear a comparatively simple matter to amalgamate the agricultural functions of existing Irish Departments and to place them under a single Board. On closer investigation it will be found that there are many difficulties. The Veterinary Department of the Privy Council could readily be transferred to a new Board in Ireland, as the corresponding Department in England was transferred to the British Board. The Land Commission is chiefly engaged in the discharge of purely judicial functions; the transfer of the work of the Agricultural Department of the Commission to a new Board presents no difficulty. The Congested Districts Board is not wholly occupied with agriculture. Out of an expenditure of £75,000 in 1894-5, about £20,00, was upon agricultural objects, and £55,000 was upon fisheries and other industries. Deducting from the expenditure the sum of £10,000 paid for a steamer, the balance of £45,000 that remains as the expenditure on other than agricultural objects is more than double the expenditure upon agriculture. It is not advisable to divide the work of this Board, nor would it seem practicable to transfer the work of the Congested Districts Board to a new Board, unless the new Board is to be entrusted with the interests of industries generally, and not agriculture alone. The Con-

gested Districts Board might be constituted a Department of the new Board, an arrangement which would ensure the co-operation so necessary in the work of administrative bodies having certain functions in common.

The duties of the Board of Works with regard to Agriculture are chiefly connected with the administration of Treasury loans, work that seems eminently that of a Department of the Treasury. It is doubtful whether any advantage would be gained by transferring this work to a Board of Agriculture, assuming that no administrative difficulties stand in the way of such a transfer. Part of the administrative work of the Board might perhaps be transferred to the proposed new Board.

The agricultural functions of the Local Government Board relate to the administration of funds raised by local rates. It is not desirable that any other Board should interfere with local authorities, nor does it appear that anything would be gained by altering the present arrangement.

One of the most important functions of an Irish Board of Agriculture would certainly be the collection and publication of statistics. There would appear to be no difficulty in transferring this work from the Registrar-General's Department to the new Board.

Some of the schools under the Board of National Education are engaged solely in Agricultural Education, others have Agricultural Departments attached to them. It is desirable that all purely Agricultural Schools supported by the State should be under the control and management of the new Board.

Whether the functions of the General Valuation and Boundary Survey of Ireland, so far as they relate to Agriculture, are of such a nature as to admit of their being transferred with advantage to a new Board, would appear to be doubtful, especially when it is considered that valuation and survey in their relation to urban districts must be provided for, and would be clearly foreign to the duties of an Agricultural Board.

The foregoing considerations lead to the conclusion that the Irish Board of Agriculture should undertake all the work of the Veterinary Department of the Privy Council, the work of the Agricultural Department of the Land Commission, certain duties of the Registrar-General's Depart-

ment, and the control and management of the purely Agricultural Schools now under the Board of National Education. Perhaps also the Board should be intrusted with certain duties now discharged by the Board of Works and the Ordnance Department.

In considering the new work that should be intrusted to the proposed new Board, the first question that arises is, What relation is the Board to bear to the private associations that have hitherto been the means of accomplishing almost everything that has been done in fostering Agriculture in this country.

It is characteristic of British progress in every department of industry including Agriculture that it has been the result of private enterprise, either individual or collective. No country can boast of more valuable and important results in the application of science to Agriculture than those obtained by Lawes and Gilbert unaided by Government assistance. The numerous agricultural societies of the United Kingdom have conferred immense benefits upon Agriculture and stock-rearing without the aid of Government. In any scheme for a Government Agricultural Department it is most important that interference with enterprise of this kind should be guarded against. Should the attempt be made to foster and promote such enterprise through the agency of a Government Department there is even a serious risk of the result being injurious rather than helpful. Private enterprise is sensitive. If the idea were once to gain ground that the Government or a Government Department should take the initiative in fostering Agriculture and introducing improvements, few individuals or associations would be found willing to devote their energies and their resources to the work. It is difficult to draw the line between the kind of work that may be successfully undertaken by a Government Department and that which should be left to private enterprise. If we turn to the Colonies and foreign countries for information on this point it will be found that the practice varies widely. In many cases work successfully carried out in this country by private agencies is more or less under Government control in other countries.

It is distinctly the duty of the State to aid education; the promotion of agricultural education should be one of the chief duties of the proposed Irish Board. The term education is here employed in a wide sense. It not only implies

collegiate and school instruction and practical work in the field or plantation; it includes also what may be described as the education of the advanced agriculturist. This latter work has been commenced by the British Board of Agriculture. The quarterly Journal issued by the Board contains carefully compiled statistics, consular reports from foreign countries, and information about agricultural affairs in all parts of the world, new methods and the results of recent investigations, hints about farm pests and the way to deal with them. Information of this kind published with the authority of a Government Department unbiased by any trade interest, is of great educational value. The wide circulation of such a Journal in Ireland is much to be desired.

In addition to education there is such work as arterial drainage, bog and waste land reclamation, forestry, improvement in facilities of transit.

Constitution.

Irish Agriculture is a large and important part of the Agriculture of the United Kingdom; it is undesirable that it should be placed at any disadvantage in comparison with the Agriculture of Great Britain. The British Board of Agriculture consists of Cabinet Ministers. It is represented in Parliament by a President who is a member of the Government, his sole duty is to promote and to safeguard the interests of British Agriculture. He has for his colleagues members of the Government, for the time being, leading statesmen of the party in power. With the exception of the Home Secretary, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and the Secretary for Scotland, all the members of the British Board represent branches of the Government which are concerned with Irish as well as British interests. The creation of a second Board consisting of practically the same Ministers as the British Board, but with a separate President, responsible to Parliament for Irish Agriculture alone, does not commend itself as a practical suggestion.

Amongst other Government Departments the nearest parallel to the Board of Agriculture is the Board of Trade, and there is but one Board of Trade for the United Kingdom. There is also but one central body for the administration of the Postal and Telegraph service. Of the remaining important

civil administrative departments the chief are Education and Local Government, in both these cases there are separate Boards for Ireland, The Irish Board of National Education consists of a paid Resident Commissioner and nineteen unpaid Commissioners, it is in no sense an equivalent to the British Board. It is not separately represented in Parliament, being one of the many Departments for which the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant is responsible. In England corresponding functions are discharged for that country by a Parliamentry Committee consisting of seven Cabinet Ministers. For Scotland there is a Committee of nine persons either Cabinet Ministers or Members of the Privy Council. The English Committee is represented in the House of Commons by the Vice-President of the Council and the Scottish Committee by the Secretary for Scotland. Both these Committees are for Parliamentary purposes infinitely more influential than the Irish Board, which does not include a single Member of Parliament. The Irish Local Government Board consists of the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, who represents it in Parliament, the Under Secretary, a Vice-President, and two other members. The Irish Board of Works consists of three Commissioners; it is not directly represented in Parliament, being a branch of the Treasury. The Irish Boards referred to may be regarded as typical of existing Government Departments in Ireland. They are wholly different in character from the Departments discharging similar functions for Great Britain. There are many reasons for placing the Agriculture of the United Kingdom under one strong Government Board.

In safeguarding the interests of Agriculture our relations with the Colonies and with foreign countries must be considered. No Board constituted on similar lines to any existing Irish Board would be competent to deal with foreign or colonial questions, whereas the British Board is so constituted as to bring it into close relationship with every Department of the Government.

The protection of the live stock of the United Kingdom from imported disease is not a matter to be dealt with by separate British and Irish Departments. The measures to be adopted to prevent the spread of disease from one part of the British Isles to another should not be under separate administrations.

It may be urged that the circumstances under which Agriculture is pursued in Ireland are so different from those applying to Great Britain that a perfectly distinct Board is required for the former country. For the same reason there should be separate Boards for North Britain and for South Britain. Indeed the climatic and racial differences, and the differences in agricultural methods are even more marked between parts of North and South Britain than they are between Great Britain and Ireland.

It is true that we have in Ireland land laws which are quite peculiar to the country, but it will be necessary to draw a sharp line of demarcation between the administration of these laws and the promotion of Agriculture. At the present time these functions are to some extent mixed together. Whether the interests of Irish Agriculture are entrusted to a purely Irish Board or to a Board acting for the whole of the United Kingdom it is most desirable that Judicial functions, such as are discharged by the Irish Land Commission, should be no part of the duty of that Board.

Under any circumstances the greater part of the administrative work of the Board responsible for Agriculture in Ireland must be entrusted to a local staff. This staff would in reality constitute the Irish Department of the Board of Agriculture for the United Kingdom, and the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant would of course occupy, like the Secretary for Scotland, a seat on the Board.

ROBERT FOWLER,

Chairman.

April 2nd, 1896.

Approved by the Committee of Agriculture, and adopted by the Council, April 23rd, 1896.

Houses of Oireachtas

APPENDIX D.

PROVINCIAL SHOWS IN IRELAND.

Report of the Committee of Agriculture.

Your Committee having considered the reference from the Council of the 14th May, 1896, asking that the Committee of Agriculture should "inquire and report as to the arrangements under which provincial shows were formerly held by the Royal Agricultural Society, giving full details," beg to report as follows :—

The annual show of the Royal Agricultural Society was held in each province in rotation. Proposals for the holding of the show in the following summer were received by the Council in the autumn previous.

When the necessary preliminaries had been arranged, an agreement was entered into embodying the following amongst other conditions.

The show was to be held under the immediate superintendence of the Royal Agricultural Society in conjunction with the Local Committee.

A sum of £500 was in the first instance to be collected by the Local Committee, and paid over to the Council of the Royal Agricultural Society, and all entry fees for stock, implements, horses, &c., were to be received and retained by the Council. Such entry fees averaging nearly £1,000 a year. The way in which these funds were to be applied was in no way referred to in the agreement, but on reference to the accounts of the Royal Agricultural Society we find that the prizes, amounting to about £930, and some travelling and other expenses were paid thereout.

The Local Committee were, in addition, to bear all expenses connected with—

1. The preparation of the plans of offices and shedding, and the erection of the same.
2. Printing and advertising.
3. Accommodation for a banquet.
4. Land not exceeding forty acres for trial of agricultural machinery, &c.

5. Fodder, hay, straw, vetches, free of cost to exhibitors.
6. Staff, caretakers, &c.
7. Hotel and other expenses of the judges and veterinary surgeons.

Towards meeting the above and other expenses, the Local Committee were to retain the receipts at the gates of the showyard.

The Local Committee held the Royal Agricultural Society indemnified and harmless against all claims and losses.

It was agreed that the Royal Agricultural Society were to have full and sole control over the show and show grounds. All of its members, as well as all stewards and judges, had free admission to the show, and all members of the Royal Agricultural Society were entitled to their entries at reduced rates.

The Royal Agricultural Society appointed the judges and veterinary surgeons, and paid their travelling expenses.

On looking through the last volume of the transactions of the Royal Agricultural Society we find that during the period included therein from 1878 to 1886, soon after which date the amalgamation with this Society was carried into effect, the sum paid over by the Local Committee under the agreement previously detailed averaged £1,490 per annum during the nine years, and the average sum contributed by the Royal Agricultural Society from its own resources towards the expenses of the shows during the same period did not exceed £135 for each show.

Under the altered circumstances of the country your Committee is convinced that it would be impossible to collect funds locally to carry out provincial shows under such a system as that of which an outline is given above.

Upon most careful consideration of the matter, your Committee is of opinion that it would be a better application of the money if the Royal Dublin Society were to supplement the annual grant of £300 now made to the Local Farming Societies by an addition, to be made tentatively, and not to exceed, say, £500 per annum—in all, £800 a year.

The Local Farming Societies—of which fifteen were up

to last year affiliated to the Royal Dublin Society—are scattered throughout the provinces as follows:—

Ulster,	7
Munster,	2
Leinster,	4
Connaught,	2

and your Committee is glad to observe that the number is being steadily added to by the revival of old or the establishment of new Societies, five having been affiliated this year (1896).

From the published Reports of the Royal Agricultural Society it appears that in the year 1844 there were 100 Local Farming Societies affiliated to it. The number had shrunk in the year 1886 to nil, the aggregate grant of the Royal Agricultural Society in aid of the funds of these Local Farming Societies during the years 1878 to 1885 inclusive averaged £149 per annum.

We press our suggestion upon the favourable consideration of the Royal Dublin Society, as if acceded to it will be the means of largely increasing the numbers of the Local Farming Societies, and so bring home to the farming classes throughout the country the information and practical experience it is so important for them to acquire.

In the event of our recommendation being adopted, your Committee would suggest that a Special Committee be appointed to frame a scheme for the distribution of the fund, with rules carefully drawn up as to its application; and in such a scheme your Committee is of opinion that where a Local Farming Society is successful, and is showing good results, the poorer the locality the greater consideration it should receive at the hands of the Society.

Adopted by the Committee of Agriculture.

(Chairman). S. U. ROBERTS, *Vice-President.*

November 5, 1896.

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