

Before stating our reasons for adopting this course, we consider it desirable to republish some of the statements contained in our former reports on the subject of agricultural instruction in our national schools.

"Our grant towards the building of a model agricultural school, upon the plan we originally proposed, did not exceed £200. The remaining proportion required for building and furnishing was required to be raised by local contribution. The expense of providing implements of husbandry, stock, and seeds, was defrayed by the local parties by whom the model schools were to be managed. We paid neither rent nor taxes for the land. The only portion vested in us was the site upon which the farm-buildings have been erected.

"From information subsequently obtained, through our district inspectors and other sources, we deemed it expedient to enlarge our scheme, and came to the following conclusions, which we announced in our report for 1847:—

"That we ought to increase our grant towards the building of model agricultural schools, with a teacher's residence, and the necessary farm-buildings attached to each, from £200 to £300, upon a local expenditure of, at least, £150. We propose that from six to eight acres of land shall be annexed to each of these schools, and the premises vested in us in our corporate capacity, for a term of at least three lives and thirty-one years. To the teachers of the model agricultural schools we propose to give a salary of, at least, £30 a year, besides a suitable residence, and accommodation for a limited number of agricultural pupils. We propose, also, that a portion of the grant shall be applied to assist in the purchase of stock, and the necessary farm implements. It is intended that the advanced boys attending model agricultural schools shall receive instruction, during school hours, in the theory of agriculture, by means of the series of books to be provided, and be required to assist, before or after school-hours, in the labour of the farm."

"In our report for the same year it was stated that, 'although we may become instrumental in promoting the cause of agricultural education in Ireland, we feel bound to state, that we can accomplish little, unless our efforts be cordially sustained by the co-operation of the landed proprietors of the country. The agricultural schools must, in almost all cases, be erected by them, and conducted under their directions. It will be necessary for them to expend much money, and bestow constant care upon them. The salaries, training, and inspection, furnished by the state, are indispensable; but they will be unavailing if local expenditure and exertions do not supply the groundwork upon which the assistance of government is to be brought into operation."

"Referring again to the subject of model

agricultural schools, in our last report, we observed, that the result of our limited experience has convinced us, that the establishment of model agricultural schools will be attended with far greater expense than was at first anticipated, either by ourselves or by local applicants. We are at present engaged in making inquiries upon this important subject, and we have submitted plans for building this description of schools to persons of practical knowledge and experience.

"We have thought it necessary to transcribe these passages from former reports, respecting model agricultural schools, in order that your excellency may be enabled to form a correct opinion of the difficulties with which we have had to contend in carrying our plan into effect, and of the reasons which have induced us, after mature deliberation, to make the important changes which it is now our duty to explain. Having made inquiry as to the description of farm buildings, suitable for farms varying in extent from eight to thirty acres, and uniting the essential requisites of economy with sufficient accommodation, we obtained various plans and specifications, which we submitted to the inspection of several persons qualified to judge of such matters. We have ascertained that the erection of farm buildings, with a literary school for 100 children, and a residence for the teacher, agriculturist, and pupil teachers, will cost from £800 to £1,000, according to the size of the farm. In this sum we do not include the cost of furniture, farm implements, and stock.

"Assuming the expense to be on an average at least £900, the largest sum that could be obtained from the applicant locality would be the half of that sum, £450. As the farm, as well as the building, will henceforth be vested in us, we shall become thereby responsible in each case for the annual repairs, for the furniture, the rent, and taxes, the expense of maintaining the resident pupils, and for the salaries of the teachers during the continuance of the lease. The question which we had to decide upon was, whether, under these circumstances, we ought to undertake the direct management of these schools, or leave it, including as it does the appointment of teachers, the selection of apprentice pupils, and the general arrangement of all the details of school management, to the applicants themselves, as has hitherto been the case. We have resolved, after the fullest consideration, to undertake the management ourselves. Hitherto the original outlay on agricultural schools was comparatively small, and the land was not vested in our corporation. If the school did not succeed, the loss to the public was inconsiderable. We accordingly felt that we were not incurring too great a risk, and that we saved ourselves from much expense and trouble, in leaving the management of the school to the public spirit, and private interest, of the persons locally connected with it. But