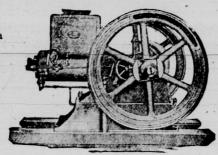
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land, who again sold it to the retailer who sold it to the public, by which time the egg afforded no carnal pleasure to the eater. With organization this old, bad method, causing delays and deterioration of quality, is being superseded. Poultry and eggs are the great industries of the small farmer and cottager. There is an unlimited market for them, and Ireland could produce three times her present output without glutting the market. If she marketed her poultry and eggs properly she could displace the stale eggs from Russia and other distant countries. The I.A.O.S. is teaching farmers how to market their eggs in a businesslike way.

Miscellaneous Societies

While the I.A.O.S. up to now has chiefly devoted itself to the organization of dairy, agricultural, poultry, and credit societies, it has also brought fifteen flax societies into existence, with the object of keeping the scutching and marketing of the flax more directly under the control of the farmer, and while a fair measure of success has been attained already, much more is possible. Eventually these societies may introduce into Ireland the practice which works so satisfactorily in Belgium-the sale of the flax crop on foot with the subsequent operations of pulling, retting, and scutching carried out by a staff of trained and expert workers, who could, by this means be kept fairly well employed all the year round. Home industries societies have also been started by the I.A.O.S. for various purposes, such as the making of lace, embroidery, crochet and rugs. Unions of societies for various purposes have been promoted. These federations undertake the marketing of butter for the societies, guarantee them against bad debts, and supply dairy requirements, or purchase wholesale for individual agricultural societies throughout Ireland seeds, artificial fertilizers, and feeding stuffs, and by careful analysis and selection provide a source of safe supply for their affiliated societies. The Irish Co-operative Agency Society is a selling federation for dairy societies, and the Irish Agricultural Wholesale Society is the wholesale purchaser. The latter also acts as a selling agency for poultry societies, markets honey, and performs many other services for its members. Both are increasing their trade. The capital in both belongs to the farmers, the business is under the direction of committees appointed by the farmers, and the only interests con-sulted by them are the farmers' inter-

Self-Help

The I.A.O.S. does not pretend that its work is above criticism. The Irish farmers to a great extent are raw material and have not got, like the German farmers or Danish farmers, a generation of co-operators behind them. But it submits that its work is absolutely necessary and is deserving of the support of all who wish to see Ireland prosperous. When we remember that in Ireland there are 84,869 holdings not exceeding one acre and 61,730 holdings over that but not exceeding five acres in extent, and 153,299 holdings not exceeding fifteen acres, and 136,058 holdings not exceeding thirty acres, it will appear that two-thirds of our agricultural population must be deemed very small farmers who individually are altogether unable to market their produce, and who can only meet foreign competition by ganization for business purposes. How is their weakness to be made strength? How are they to be protected from fraud or extortion? How are they to secure the best business advice? How are they to manufacture on modern lines? How are they to influence legislation? How are they to do any of these things unless they are organized? It may be urged-it has been urged in some quarters—that this organizing should be done by the State. But if the State undertook this work it would be impossible to relieve it from the responsibility of failure from adoption of its advice. The I.A.O.S. throws the weight of responsibility on the individuals forming the society, and this responsibility provides an effective guarantee of the activity necessary to success. Again, if the State undertook organization it would be constantly led into conflict with the agencies of the old, bad methods, which the organization of the farm-

Continued on Page 22



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