

## MODERN MECHANIZATION AND ITS EFFECT ON THE STRUCTURE OF SOCIETY

A YEAR ago Lord Irwin took as the subject of his inaugural lecture on this Foundation the political problem of India. It is my privilege to follow him to-day by speaking of one of the most fundamental of our economic problems, the effects upon the structure of society of modern mechanization.

In the history of man, mechanization is a thing of yesterday. For it depends upon the use of the stored energy of inanimate nature to supplement the feeble muscles of living creatures. And only with the invention of the steam-engine did man begin to enter into his present illimitable treasury of new power. Till a hundred and fifty years ago the principal machine in the world was man himself. He harnessed horses and other animals to his service; he caught the power of falling water in water-wheels, or the winds of heaven in his sails and windmills; he devised tools and skilful instruments to weave and spin; he invented the wheel to reduce the energy needed for him to travel or transport his goods. But the forces of nature were only trapped and used where and when they could