

EFFECT ON THE STRUCTURE OF SOCIETY

that mechanization has achieved its most striking triumphs. But it is only in the United States, the Argentine, Canada, Australia, and Russia that it has so far been pushed very far; and it would be unwise to infer any similar development in other countries where the conditions are much less favourable. In the Argentine 30 per cent. of the wheat area is reaped by combines, in Canada about half that proportion. An increase is to be expected in Canada and Russia, where the severity of the winter makes the maintenance of horses expensive, and where oil fuel is cheap as it is in Russia. But in the Argentine and Australia the present tendency is to revert to horse-power, or at all events not to extend the use of mechanical traction. Outside grain harvesting mechanization has no comparable successes, except on a limited scale in some of the processes of dairy farming. It is at present inapplicable to the lifting of roots, the picking of cotton, the pulling of flax, the cutting of sugar-cane, weeding, the planting of rice, the gathering of fruit. Even in countries where the climate, high costs of labour, and the character and tenure of the land are all favourable to mechanization, there will still be much work for the peripatetic, odd-jobbing individual which no machine can take over.