



HARVEST IN SPAIN



To the people of Spain, whose country was devastated by the Civil War and is now cut off from overseas supplies by the blockade of Europe, the harvest of their daily bread has become more important than ever.

The rich, golden wheat has been ripening for months under the hot summer sun of Castile. And then the harvesters come, working on the dry, rolling plains, dusty and hot, cutting the corn, tying it into sheaves, and throwing it onto the harvest wagons. When the wagons are piled high, they are drawn away by plodding mules to the village threshing floor. There the grain is threshed by hand by two rows of men swinging their flails in powerful rhythm. The ancient threshing floors are made of pounded cow dung and are harder than cement. Sometimes an even older method of threshing is used; cattle are driven round and round on the corn, separating the grain from the chaff with their hooves.

The harvest workers are rugged peasant boys from Galicia and Asturias whose scanty farms do not produce enough to feed them. For a pittance, they work from dawn to dusk, living on bread and oil and perhaps one warm dish a day.





The grain is separated from the chaff by men who toss it up into the wind with pitchforks



Time off for a cool drink of water

A picture to be seen all over Castile during harvest time: women outside a village removing the last particles of chaff from the grain by pouring it through the air



When all the corn has been cut, the peasants plow up the fields with primitive plows whose appearance has not changed since the days before the Moorish invasion