H.M.S. ILLUSTRIUS, one of Britain's most famous aircraft-carriers, has taken a leading part in many thrilling actions, notably at Taranto in 1940. In 1941 she shot down nearly 100 enemy planes which attacked her in the Sicilian Channel (see Vol. 4, p. 108). This photograph shows Capt. R. R. Cunliffe, R.N., taking the salute during Sunday divisions on the flight deck. In the centre is the lift trap through which aircraft are hoisted from their hangars.

Photo: British Official; Crown Copyright

NO. 151 WILL BE PUBLISHED FRIDAY, APRIL 2
THE BATTLE FRONTS


The period under review (the second half of February) was marked by fluctuations of fortune rather than by steady progress; and, writing on the last day of the month, it is impossible to assess positively the effect of gains and losses. In Russia the period opened with the brilliant capture of Kharkov, and it was followed by the renewal of the advance from Lwowaya towards Dnepropetrovsk. These successes, coming on top of the great victories earlier in the month, tended to excite undue expectations of further rapid progress. When, therefore, towards the end of the month, German resistance stiffened and Moscow had no sensational advances to announce, some disappointment was felt—no doubt accentuated by Rommel's initial success in Tunisia.

Actually, the Russian situation, though in places somewhat obscure, seems at the time of writing as satisfactory as could be expected, making due allowance for unfavourable weather and for the difficulty of maintaining uniformly the impetus of a defensive movement. The factors that must be considered are analysed in more detail below.

In Tunisia it cannot be denied that Rommel, taking advantage of his interior lines position, inflicted a heavy reverse on the Allies. Fortunately, he was defeated again to have been lured by success into attempting more than his resources justified, and he has paid a heavy penalty for vaulting ambition. It remains to be seen, however, which side has gained most in the exchanges. Below I have given my reasons for believing that on the balance the advantage rests with the Allies, although it would certainly be premature to claim an outstanding success.

TUNISIA Some readers may remember that in page 547 I suggested that Rommel, while delaying Montgomery's advance to the Mareth Line, might receive reinforcements which would enable him to make a characteristic counter-stroke against the Americans who were a menace to his rear. The delaying potentialities of the Mareth position and the mobility of Rommel's forces seemed to offer opportunities for exploiting an interior lines situation. I did not expect, however, that he would attempt a major operation against the communications of the 1st Army and that his object would be limited to forcing the Americans back and depriving them of capacity to cooperate with Montgomery.

This view is confirmed by what Sertorius, the German radio spokesman, is reported in The Daily Telegraph of February 27, to have said in speaking of Rommel's retreat; it reads, "with his successes, which went far beyond his original estimates, Marshal Rommel can be content. Any attempt to expand further would have required a larger force than had been foreseen for these operations in the general plan for the defence of the Axis Tunisian bridgehead."

The American troops appear to have been holding a wide front in no great strength; and it is not surprising that their positions were penetrated by Rommel's formidable assault. Through lack of supporting air force, and also because of the necessity of protecting advanced air-fields, their defence may have been over-rigid and counter-attacks fell into traps. It was a difficult situation for untrained troops, particularly as they were under concentrated air attack without having much air support or strong A.A. protection. The men evidently disciplined and have acquired valuable experience, but at a heavy price, as has happened before with British troops.

Having captured or destroyed much material and temporarily broken the cohesion of the Americans, Rommel had certainly achieved his primary object, even to the extent of depriving the Allies of important reserves. But he was tempted by the magnitude of his success to exploit it beyond the limitations of his resources. It was repetition of his attempt to reach Alexandria in his pursuit of the 8th Army, but this time possibly with less justification. For if he really tried to attack the main communications of the 1st Army, General Anderson had stronger reserves to meet him at Achinilechad at Alexandria. Moreover, the 8th Army remained a menace to his defensive force on the Mareth position. I can hardly believe that he hoped to do more than to disturb the dispositions of the 1st Army and to extend the area of destruction of its advanced depots. Nevertheless, to overtake him at El Alamein; this time it came quicker, but probably less decisively.

An American correspondent (Mr. William Stoneman, in The Daily Telegraph of Feb. 27) gives General Alexander the credit for the speed and vigour of the counter-stroke at Thala. He writes, "The position of our forces was at danger-point when General Alexander instilled 'attack' rather than 'retreat' spirit into them. It is that as it may, there was evidently for two days a dangerous situation with fierce fighting in which both sides had heavy losses. As I read the information that has come to hand, neither side succeeded in establishing a clear mastery, but Rommel, realizing that his weakened and tired force had no chance of achieving further success, decided on retreat—which apparently was carried out in good order, though it probably suffered considerable losses from vigorous air pursuit.

The question of the moment is, How far will Rommel retreat? Personally I believe he will withdraw the bulk of his striking force right back to reorganize and to re-form in readiness to deal with Montgomery's advance; and, trusting to having robbed the Americans for the time being of much of their offensive power, will leave only rearguards to hold them in check, probably on the line from which his offensive started.

Rommel has been roughly handled, but it may well take him longer to make good his losses. Losses of personnel can probably be replaced quickly by air transport; but much depends on how far the Axis have been able to build up a reserve of tanks and motor vehicles. Captured vehicles might be used to make good temporary deficiencies. It would be a mistake, therefore, to assume from the speed of his withdrawal that Rommel has suffered a crushing defeat.

Meantime, Montgomery is evidently faced with a formidable task on the Mareth Line if the Italians (who are reported to form the bulk of its garrison) fight with the determination they are sometimes capable of displaying. Italian artillery has generally fought well, and the defences were constructed on an artillery framework. We can be sure, too, that Rommel has made liberal use of mines and wire.

I still believe that Rommel will use the Mareth Line essentially as a delaying position, and would be unwilling to risk decisive action with the Gabès defile in his rear on which his line of retreat would converge. If he risks decisive action at all it will be, I think, at the Gabès position, where a powerful armoured reserve might have exceptional opportunities of counter-attacking a force that broke through. Moreover, retreat to
join Von Arnim in the north would be very much easier from Gables than from the Mareth position; and that the line could hardly be doubted, is Rommel’s ultimate intention.

The attacks which have been made on the 1st Army in the north do not seem to have been part of an original far-reaching plan, since they were not launched till Rommel’s operation broke down. It is more probable that Von Arnim either intended to relieve pressure on Rommel or to take advantage of the situation to improve his own position.

RUSSIA The capture of Kharkov on February 16, at the beginning of the period under review, especially as it involved the defeat of picked troops just arrived from Germany, made the situation of the Germans both in the Donetz basin and at Orel more than ever precarious. When it was followed by a renewal of the advance from the Lgovskaya region towards the Dnieper bend, and a widening of this thrust towards Poltava, an outer ring of encirclement of the Donetz basin threatened to develop. Under these circumstances, and while snow conditions gave the Russian superiority, the Germans seem to have decided that retreat to the Dnieper was too dangerous to attempt. Material may have been evacuated by the one railway still open, but there have been no indications of a general retreat. There is a large army in the basin; with the contraction of the front it has probably built up considerable reserves, and with its many industrial towns the area it holds is highly defensible.

It seems therefore to be the Germans’ intention to hold their ground in the Donetz basin, at Novorossisk and the Taman peninsula, and at Orel, counter-attacking vigorously in order to check and exhaust the Russian attack, in the hopes that the spring thaw will finally bring it to a standstill. The fact that in the south this year began exceptionally early has probably influenced German policy, and has accounted for some slowing down of Russian progress. The Russians, however, maintaining pressure and are reported to have made preparations to continue to do so even in the height of the thaw.

The German bridgehead covering approaches to the Kerch Strait is growing smaller, as Novorossisk is isolated. At Orel, too, the ring is closing; and the railway to Brainsk, the sole avenue of communications still open, is threatened. In the Donetz basin the struggle is at its height. German counter-attacks have been strong and fierce, directed chiefly towards the north-west against the flank of the Russian thrust which had penetrated to Krasnoarmeisk, cutting the main railway to the Dnieper and threatening to isolate the vital centre of Stalino completely. The situation is obscure. The Germans claim to have recaptured Krasnoarmeisk and some important towns on the railway to Poltava—claims probably to some extent true since they have not been specifically denied by the Russians. Meanwhile the Russian attack from Rostov and the east slowly advances. The closely built-up industrial area of the Donetz gives both sides such exceptional defensive opportunities that the battle which is raging is unlikely to produce a rapid decision; but it will make great demands on reserves of which Germany is short. If, in order to form an offensive reserve, the Germans intend to hold the shortest possible front, retreat from the Donetz sooner or later would be necessary. With the double purpose of preventing complete encirclement of the Donetz army, and of retaining the line of the Dnieper as a position to which it could withdraw, should more favourable conditions for retreat occur, the Germans are employing reserves brought from the west to counter-attack the Russian thrust towards Dnepropetrovsk. They have slowed down its progress, but have failed to remove the menace.

Will the Germans have sufficient reserves to withstand unremitting pressure? Constant local counter-attacks are liable to lead to wasteful expenditure of fresh troops with only temporary results. It may be remembered that when they employed similar methods to hold the line of the lower Donetz the Russian advance was for a time checked, but eventually surged forward.

Meanwhile, the Russians have made marked progress north-west of Kharkov in the general direction of Kiev, and threaten to interrupt all direct communications between the German armies of the centre and south.

Russian offensives, about which little information has been given, are also, according to German accounts, developing on the Central and Northern fronts, where winter conditions still favour Russian tactics.

It is not surprising, under such continuous attacks, that shortage of fighting reserves, and of man-power to maintain industrial production, is causing alarm, approaching to consternation, at Hitler’s H.Q.

The Germans may still pin their hopes on being able to fight more effectively when summer hardens the ground, but I see no reason why the Russians should not in summer display the same new-found tactical and strategical skill that has been so marked this winter and to which their amazing successes must be largely attributed.
Montgomery's Men Nearing the Mareth Line

8th Army's Advance into Tunisia began on Jan. 29, 1943, when forward units crossed the border from Tripolitania. 1. R.A.F. and R.A.A.F. ground crews prepare a trackless stretch of desert for an airfield. 2. An airman walks a gangway plank from a waterlogged lorry at Allied Air H.Q. during the rainy season. 3. Lorries of the 51st (Highland) Division cross the frontier into Tunisia. 4. Gen. Montgomery, commander of the 8th Army, photographed with Gen. Leclerc in Tripoli. To reach the latter city Gen. Leclerc's Fighting French column trampled 2,700 miles from Chad Territory in the Sahara.

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In North Africa the R.A.F. Has Its Commandos

AERODROMES CAPTURED IN THE N. AFRICAN FIGHTING are speedily put into operation by R.A.F. Servicing Commandos—men specially trained by Combined Operations Command to carry out dangerous tasks likely to be met with in the early stages of assault landing operations.

1. Servicing Commando airmen prepare a fighter to take the air.  2. Arrival by lorry of a fresh squad to support that already at work.  3. Unrolling tool-kits, with Sten guns handy.  4. Bisleys light bombers, one of a squadron recently operating with the R.A.F. in N. Africa, lands at an advanced airstrip.

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Tunisian Towns the Communiqués Have Mentioned

STRATEGIC POINTS OF SOUTHERN TUNISIA: 1. Medenine, occupied by the 8th Army on Feb. 20, 1943, is situated 40 miles N.W. of Ben Gardane, and forms a major outpost of the Mareth Line. 2. Native market at Gabes. This oasis port, situated just over 100 miles from the Tripolitanian border, has received shattering attacks from our bombers. 3. Gafsa, evacuated by American troops by Feb. 14, saw a fierce battle between our Allies and a force of some 130 German tanks. (See map, p. 626.)
Ancient Ruins the Background to Modern Battle

RECENT FIGHTING IN TUNISIA has raged around towns rich in Roman remains. 1. Street scene in the native quarter of Sfax, the port in the Gulf of Gabès which is the export centre of the world's largest phosphate region. 2. Ruins of the Byzantine Basilica at Tébessa—an important Allied base near the Algerian border, W. of the Kasserine Pass from which the Germans were pushed back in mid-February 1943. 3. Remains of Roman temples at Sbeitla—recaptured by U.S. troops on March 1.
THE WAR AT SEA

by Francis E. McMurtrie

There has been a complete reorganization of naval commands in the Mediterranean, as the result of Allied landings in French North Africa and the complete conquest of Libya by the Eighth Army.

Admiral of the Fleet Sir Andrew Cunningham, hitherto in command of Allied sea forces in the North African expedition, has now been appointed Commander-in-Chief in all that part of the Mediterranean coming within the scope of present operations against the enemy in Tunisia and Italy. This approximately corresponds to the Western basin of the Mediterranean and the Central area to a point beyond Malta.

Admiral Sir Henry Harwood, who relieved Sir Andrew Cunningham as C-in-C., Mediterranean Fleet, when the latter went to Washington as Chief of the Admiralty Delegation last year, now becomes Commander-in-Chief, Levant and Red Sea, with headquarters at Alexandria.

Vice-Admiral Sir Stuart Bonham-Carter has relieved Vice-Admiral Sir Ralph Leatham as Flag Officer in charge at Malta. The latter has had a very strenuous time of it under Axis air attacks since he took up this post a year ago. For some months past he has been acting as Governor in the absence in this country on sick leave of Viscount Gort.

Bonham-Carter is a name already well known in Malta. A kinsman of the new Flag Officer in charge, General Sir Charles Bonham-Carter, was Governor and C-in-C. of the island from 1936 to 1940.

French Warships to Join the Allies’ Battle Line

The French battleship Richelieu, of 35,000 tons, has arrived at the United States Navy Yard, New York, to have repaired the damage received at Dakar in July 1940. She was attacked first by a British motor-boat which blew off one of her propellers by dropping depth charges at the stern, and then by a German aircraft, which torpedoed her. She was thus immobilized until French West Africa threw in its lot with the Allies recently. Patched up sufficiently to cross the Atlantic under escort, she will now be completely refitted in order to take her place in the line against Axis battleships, should those elusive vessels ever elect to come out and fight. She should be a good match for one of the contemporary Italian battleships of the Littorio class, each being armed with eight 15-inch guns.

The cruiser Montcalm also made the passage from Dakar, proceeding to a Virginia yard for repair. The two destroyers have gone to another port. These, of course, are not by any means the only available French warships in Allied ports. There are besides the Richelieu’s disabled sister ship, the Jean Bart, two or three more cruisers (one of them, the Primaguet, may be too badly damaged to be worth repairing)—four destroyers and at least a dozen submarines—all of which can be most usefully employed as a reinforcement, the cruisers and destroyers in ocean patrol and escort duties, and the submarines in attacking Axis communications with Tunisia.

It is stated by Col. Knox, Secretary of the U.S. Navy Department, that negotiations are proceeding with Vice-Admiral Godfroi for the addition of the ships demilitarized at Alexandria. These comprise the old battleship Lorraine, four cruisers, three destroyers, and a submarine. Other ships that may be affected are the aircraft carrier Bearn and the cruisers Emile Bertin and Jeanne d’Arc, immobilized at Martinique and Guadeloupe, in the West Indies.

In a recent R.A.F. attack on the German naval base at Wilhelmshaven, the main explosive depot of the dockyard, containing ammunition for guns of various calibres, torpedo warheads, mines and depth charges, received a hit which destroyed 40 out of the 50 sheds in the depot, with an explosion which is described as “terrific.” This is probably the most severe blow that has yet been dealt to Wilhelmshaven, one of the two principal naval bases in Germany. It is remarkable that this is the first time in several raids that such an important target has been found.

In the mine-laying submarine Argonaut, of 2,710 tons displacement, reported overdue and presumed lost, the United States Navy has lost its largest under-water unit. The Argonaut has also been the biggest submarine in the world since the Surcouf, of 2,880 tons, manned by the Fighting French, was reported missing in April 1942.

Experience shows that very large submarines are seldom much of a success. The biggest British submarine ever built was the XI, of 2,425 tons, which was scrapped some years ago after a comparatively short life, of which an undue proportion was spent in modifying and refitting the vessel. Our largest submarines today are the Severn and Clyde, of 1,850 tons; the Porpoise and Rorqual, of 1,500 and 1,520 tons respectively; and the numerous Thunderbolt class, of 1,490 tons.

So far as is known, none of the U-boats greatly exceed 1,000 tons, and the majority of those now at sea range from 500 to 750 tons. It is evident, therefore, that there is a limit to the useful size of the submarine as at present designed.

Allied Vessels by the Hundred Cross the Atlantic in Safety

According to some figures recently supplied to the Press by Admiral of the Fleet Sir Andrew Cunningham, from the date of the first landings in North Africa on November 8 until the middle of February no fewer than 780 Allied ships, totalling 6,500,000 tons gross, arrived safely in Algerian and Moroccan ports. These included cargo ships from America which were under escort of the United States Navy, besides British convoys.

By no means such a cheering picture presents itself to our enemies, who have only succeeded in keeping their troops in Tunisia supplied at heavy cost. Week after week the Admiralty regularly reports lists of Axis supply vessels, ranging from big tankers and transports to schooners, which have been sunk or disabled by our submarines. In addition our light surface forces, including cruisers, destroyers, and motor torpedo-boats, and aircraft of the Royal Navy and the R.A.F., inflict quite a considerable amount of damage. No prudent underwriter would be eager to insure the ships which ply on this hazardous route.

Undoubtedly, the time will come when the Axis armies in Tunisia will find themselves forced to surrender or attempt an evacuation along the Dunkirk lines. When that situation develops, it is very improbable that the Luftwaffe will be able to afford anything approaching an adequate “umbrella” to the evacuating ships. Nor is it probable that the Italians will be ready to volunteer to man small craft to fill the gap as our own amateur sailors did in May 1940.
France's Mighty Richelieu Arrives in New York

**Past New York's skyscrapers glides the great French battleship Richelieu.** She left Dakar in French West Africa on Jan. 30, 1943 and arrived in America 12 days later, having been escorted in company with other French warships across the Atlantic by a number of U.S. destroyers. This 35,000-ton giant had been at Dakar since June 1940, when she was transferred there uncompleted from Brest. In this photo she has just passed under Brooklyn Bridge (see Vol. III, pages 33, 342).
A British Trawler Met an Italian Submarine

H.M.S. LORD NUFFIELD, one of the Royal Navy's trawler fleet, has fought and destroyed an Italian submarine off the N. African coast (it was announced on Jan. 5, 1943). On sighting the enemy vessel—later identified as the Emo—the trawler fired depth charges, inflicting severe damage and forcing the submarine to surface. A fierce duel ensued, during which the Emo's conning tower was hit; her crew then abandoned their rapidly sinking ship. They are shown (top) preparing to jump overboard. Below, survivors are swimming towards a rubber dinghy before being rescued by the Lord Nuffield. Only one man was wounded aboard the trawler as a result of this spirited action. The Emo had a surface displacement of 94 tons; her main armament was two 37 in. guns.
American Troops Amid the Alaskan Snows

WITH THE U.S. FORCES IN THE FAR NORTH. 1. Supplies being unloaded at Skagway for dispatch by rail to the American troops. From this port a railway joins the Alaska-Canadian highway at Whitehorse in the Yukon (see page 222). 2. U.S. Marine stands guard at a naval operating base. 3. Wading through ice-blocked waters, members of a U.S. Navy ground crew guide a PBY patrol flying-boat to its base. 4. After the day's work, these men listen-in to the latest war news.
When the Red Army was born twenty-five years ago they were putting up the shitters in Russia. The Tsar had fallen in bloody ruin, and it seemed certain that the Bolsheviks, too, would shortly fall in a conglomeration. Yet page after page of history has been turned, each has borne the record of some new enterprise by the people who, only a generation ago, had to be amongst the mostbackward, the most dull-witted and stolid in their subjection. In Russia we have the spectacle of a hundred and ninety millions of the human race engaged in the greatest experiment of all time—not less than the achievement in a few decades of all that Britain and America and the western world as a whole have taken centuries to attain, even now are still attempting. In that great experiment the Red Army has played, and will continue to play, its part as its sure shield and buckler.

Originally the Red Army was formed out of detachments of workers and peasants (the original Red Guards), with some broken remnants of the Tsarist forces, who fought for

Another of the Russian soldier's outstanding characteristics is his intense patriotism. Patriotic motives (we learn from The Times correspondent) are probably more outspokenly expressed in the songs and literature of the Red Army than anywhere else in the world. Some of their rousing marching songs have the stirring quality of Hearts of Oak and John Brown's Body, and of all the Brahms' recitation and Kipling's has most readers in the Red Army. Very remarkable has been the growth of patriotic fervour during late years, a growth deliberately and actively co-operated with by Mr. Stalin and his colleagues, but it is not patriotism of the "flag-wagging" variety. To quote another passage from the dispatch:

Rather has it been a discovery of all that is valuable and significant for the present time in Russia's heroic past; and the men who are fighting for the federation of Socialist republics to-day have been made conscious of the fact, as they take their places in the trenches and gun emplacements, lie not only the great factories and the mines of the world, but the submarineientos in Siberia, Moscow with its still incomplete planning, a host of new cities beside the rivers

Stalin a few weeks ago—are young men in their twenties or early thirties. Mr. Stalin is 60, Timoshenko 47, and Zhukov 46; but Chuykov, whose 62nd Army held Stalingrad, is 42, and Krylov, his chief-of-staff, two years younger. General Golikov, whose Guards played so fine a part in the Stalingrad battle, is 38—from a peasant's hut he joined as a private in 1927; while General Rokossovsky, commander of the Red Army and youngest of the chief commanders, is about the same age. General Golikov, whose troops stormed Voronezh and Kharkov, is 42; Gen. Malinovsky, who has twice captured Voronezh and Air. Force Guards, whose most recent achievement has been the raising of the siege of Leningrad, is 46.

That the Russian commanding personnel were better trained than the number of other armies, in particular the British, was favourably commented upon by Field-Marshal Wavell as long ago as 1936.

Since the outbreak of war several highly significant changes have been made in the Red Army. In November 1941 infantry divisions which had particularly distinguished themselves in battle were renamed Guards, with special uniform and The Order of the Red Star, rank-and-file and 50 per cent more for higher officers, Tank Guards were established in the following month, followed by Cavalry Guards and Air Forces. Epaulettes, once denounced as Tsarist foppery, are now permitted to the officers; and officers' rank is indicated by metal stars and braided stripes on the shoulder-straps, instead of by discreet collar-tab identifications. Such terms as officer and soldier have returned into military parlance, replaced by some extent the old tsarist Army man. Then the Revolutionary decorations, the Order of the Red Banner and the Order of the Red Star, have been supplemented by new military orders for Red Army commanders who have distinguished themselves in the organization and direction of military operations and for success on the field of battle—orders named after heroes of the old eternal Russia, after Suvorov, Kutuzov (familiar to every reader of Tolstoy's War and Peace), and Alexander Nevsky, who saved the northern flank of the Imperial Army against the Prussian Teutonic Knights in the great Russian victory of Lake Peipus in 1242. Among the first to receive the new Order was Suvorov, who also received the Order of Suvorov, and Marshal Zhukov. Here it may be mentioned that one-third of those decorated for valour during this present war have been neither Russians nor Ukrainians—but Mongols and Uzbeks, Georgians, Tartars, Armenians, Yakuts...

One more change must be noted: the clothing of the political commissar, re-introduced into military units a few weeks after the outbreak of war primarily as stiffeners of morale, into regularly commissioned Army officers the Red Army officer does not mean that the political direction of the struggle is less important than before: on the contrary, the Red Army will be even more political, but there is for many of them not the corps of political officers charged with the supervision of every officer to see that he keeps to the Party line... When Oliver Cromwell was raising his New Model Army, the political commissars were the Cavaliers before them like chaff before the wind, he expressed a preference for a plain, russet-coated captain that knows why we fight and an officer that does not...

The Red Army is filled with such, not only captains, but privates and guards too.

R. ROYSTON PIKE
THE RED FLAG FLIES AGAIN in many a Russian city from which the Nazi invaders have been hurled. 1. Joyful inhabitants of Krasnodar crowd round Maj.-Gen. Rosslov, commander of the Soviet force which freed them. 2. In Kharkov soldiers and citizens gather before the City Soviet building from which the Red Flag flies. 3. Russian A.A. gunners install themselves in Kharkov's Central Square, surrounded by the great semi-skyscraper blocks of buildings linked by covered bridges. 4. German troops, rounded up at Rostov, march off to internment. 5. Removing one of the many hated enemy signs in Bystgorod.
It has long been a gibe against War Offices that they always prepare for the last war but one—instead of getting ready for the next.

Certainly, if you look at the "defences" of our coast-line, you will be forced to conclude that those who put up miles of barbed wire (which, as we have learned, they were called in South Africa forty-two years ago) were thinking in terms of the Boer War of 1899 to 1902, and vainly imagining that what a trumped-up,捏造的, and navally chiefs concerned in building that enormously important base that it might be attacked from the land. They anticipated sea attack only. A Maginot Line on the land side of the great naval base, one which would have been short and comparatively cheap to build, might have kept the Japanese at bay.

The use of air-borne troops, which I dealt with in my last article (see page 588), was foreshadowed by General Sikorski. He said it would become possible to transport to great distances small combative units destined for skirmishes or diversions in the rear of the enemy. This was done with all too terrible success at Rotterdam. He also suggested that in order to transport a battalion of infantry (500-600 men) entirely equipped for battle, with provisions sufficient for a few days, some twenty aircraft of strong tonnage will be enough. The truth of that was proved in Crete two years ago by our discomfiture.

WELLINGTON said once that the task of an army commander would be simple if he knew what the enemy was doing on the other side of the hill. So it might have been in his day—if the enemy had not possessed the same advantage. Today both sides have it, the use of reconnaissance aircraft for the army commanders, but the difficulties of the army commander are as great as ever they were. General Sikorski rather overestimates the extent to which secret movements would be made impossible by this new method. He General Molotov was able to surprise the Germans at El Alamein last October; the Russians have over and over again taken them unawares. The day they cause the use of reconnaissance planes in the act of shaving, and eight officers were unearthed from a dug-out drunk!

This Polish general does not write about war in the German manner—with relish and glee. He seems to have lost the taste of it, the misery caused by it. But he is obliged to recognize that from the time when men appear on earth and their history is recorded, the use of arms, of arms on the norms of their existence. He points out the only feasible method of stopping it—the forming of a union of peaceful nations whose military preparation would be organized according to a common plan. Such a union would limit the military means of each member-country, and would be really capable of imposing peace by exercising an incontestable superiority only as a whole. This, he considered, in 1935, when he wrote, was not politically mature.

It is worth recalling that Walter Page, United States Ambassador in London from 1913 to 1918, believed such a union could have been formed in 1913, when he declared his opinion that the only way to preserve peace for all the peaceable nations to say to the Kaiser and his firebrands, "Stop it or we'll all make you!" It could have been done. It was not done because, after the death of the Tsar in 1917, all Page's view, there was no statesman big enough to force the necessity for it on the attention of the world.

Whether it will be done when peace next comes, no one can say. If it is not, then the new General Sikorski's anti-aircraft cities will probably have to be put in operation.

The buildings would be constructed entirely of reinforced concrete and equipped with gun turrets on all floors, in order to diminish their surface and the efficiency of aero-chemical attack. Concrete terraces sufficiently resistant to the action of medium-calibre bombs would replace the present roofs; underground gas-proof, watertight shelters would be under every building; water, gas and electricity would be in armoured pipes.

Underground streets would serve as shelters during raids without interrupting traffic. The buildings would be connected by a city walk, open at present, with large open spaces, so that no closely-packed target would be offered to the bombers. The public buildings and services would either be collapsed or would now, but scattered. The important administrative centres, factories, and power-stations would be outside the city. Collective shelters would be planned, equipped with watertight doors, compressed-air apparatus and gas-masks, and in addition there would be mobile shelters in every house. But, in the General's opinion, "the only truly efficient defence against aero-chemical warfare would be the preventative action of the air force through operations which it might undertake against the enemy air force and its bases."

The reference to chemical attack will have been noticed. General Sikorski was pretty confident that gas would be one of the principal weapons of this war. German professors have dwelt lovingly on the horrors of this method of attack, and predicted that it would shower wars by exterminating the civilian populations. Well, as both sides would use it, the winners would be those who stood up to it most stoutly.

For it is certain that "victory" depends largely on the nerves of the nation, on its courage. We may have to brace ourselves for this ordeal yet.
Old Roads and New in Tunisia

Many an army has marched through the Tunisian valleys, but the roads and tracks that the Romans built, that the Arabs and the Turks and even the modern French have used—such a one, for instance, as is being negotiated by the dispatch-rider in our lower photograph—are altogether out of date in this age of mechanized transport. So the Royal Engineers have gone into action. New roads and bridges have been built, old roads made new (top right), even streams diverted (top left).
War in the Shadow of the Atlas

For the first time in history a British Army is fighting amid the Atlas Mountains of Tunisia, amid the hills covered with plantations of olive trees, the wheatfields and orchards, the vineyards, over the ploughed fields of rich red earth. Something of the landscape is suggested by these photographs recently taken in the 1st Army zone. 1, British paratroops just "come to earth"; 2, a patrol above a colonist's farm; 3, a distant glimpse of the German-occupied village of Matour.

Where the 1st Army Are Engaged

Mud has been not the least of the hindrances to Gen. Auchinleck's progress in Tunisia, and the country shown in this photograph (4) of British infantry moving up under shell-fire to attack Bou Arada, would seem to make heavy going even in the sunshine. Over such a terrain mules have an advantage over trucks, and many are now included in the Allies' transport (5). But the road along which men of the R.A.F. Regiment are marching (6) looks first class—no doubt thanks to the R.E.A.
Mountains cleft by narrow gorges, rolling hills and broad sweeping plains, salt lakes and palm-shaded oases, wadis that are now dry and now swept by tumultuous torrents, the whole enclosed between the Mediterranean and that other sea that is of the illimitable sands—this is Tunisia, now after many a long year the battlefield of warring powers.
What Sort of a Land Is This Tunisia?

Where the massive bulk of North Africa husband the Medes, there is a chasm between Sardinia and Sicily is Tunisia. It is a land of rather less than 50,000 square miles, about the same size as Greece, about a quarter the size of France—enough for the physical variety and abounding contrasts. For the most part it is rugged, but in the north it is definitely mountainous, since two spurs of the Atlas range thread the desert, the sea at Cape Blanc and Cape Bon. Towards the east and south the mountains gradually subside, merging first into a plateau, then into a low, sandy desert separated from the sea by a fringe of palm. The whole of the east coast, from Susa to Gabès, constitutes one big plain, Sahel it is, called, low-lying and fertile.

In all this area, indeed in the whole of Tunisia, there is but one river, the Mejerda; for the rest, Tunisia is watered by mountain streams, torrents in the rainy season, but in the summer their beds are dry-up watids. The Mejerda rises in Algeria and discharges itself into the Gulf of Tunis. On either side of its broad, flat plain, covered with wheatfields, groves of oranges and olives—the plain that has already seen so much hard fighting between Anderson's men and Von Arnim's, and will no doubt see very much more—are ranges of noble hills whose slopes are covered with vineyards, with forests of oak and cork. South of the Mejerda plain (writes Mr. E. A. Montague, The Manchester Guardian correspondent in Tunisia) it is Arab country. Riding from farm to farm one may meet not only the ordinary Arab peasant, muffles in his robe striped with brown and dirty white, shuffling his bare feet in the mud, but grave, courteous men splendidly dressed, riding fine horses with embroidered saddlecloths. Memorable things, Mr. Montague goes on, may happen to you in these hills.

You may wake to see the tawny vineyards glowing brown and gold under the sunrise and the far northern hills clothed in all the colours of the opal, with a drift of mist drawn like a veil across their throats as the night's rain smokes upward from the plains. You may watch those same hills at sunset pass from red to royal purple and so into a deepening blue at night closing in on them. You may eat your lunch in a sunny upland glen beside a stream that was made for trout, and listen for a pastoral hour to a little Arab boy playing on his pipe as he watches his herd of sheep and goats.

A lovely and innocent land indeed, but to the south and east the scene changes. Here, to quote fresh from Mr. Montague's brilliant description: "You enter a country of savages huts and lonely plank placers, scarcely less primitive than the scattered Arabs whose squall huts dot the waste; an uncultivated land with no cover for the fighter except the extreme sparseness of its thickets. They have their scattered headquarters in lonely villages, and at night they send out their patrols to range far and wide perhaps for miles. They are armed with knife, dive-bomb, and canteen."

Separating Central Tunisia from the very different south is an almost uninterrupted chain of salt lakes or shotts, swampy depressions from sixty to ninety feet below the level of the sea. This is a grim and gloomy region enough, and it would be even more depressing if it were not for the oases, palm-encircled pools of fresh water which are to be found here and there in the wilderness of mud and salt. To the west and to the south, to the east, too, the rippled dunes of the vast Sahara roll endlessly to the horizon. Here there are no villages, no settlements; the only inhabitants are nomadic Touaregs, wandering with their herds of camels and quantities of pasture land.

It is in this dreary, desolate region that the Ligne Mareth has its being. To call it a line is perhaps a misnomer. It would seem to be far less of a line than the famous Maginot, on whose pattern it is supposed to have been modelled. A line suggests a continuous zone of fortifications, a series of forts with never a gap between. But the Mareth line is (it would seem) a complex of more or less isolated outposts, whose fields of fire, however, were in 1938 that the French, made nervous by the shouts of "Nice, Corsica, Tunis!" of the deputies in the Italian parliament, set about the construction of the Mareth Line; at least Tunisia should be safe from an Italian invasion from Tripolitania. In the early months of this war, before the disasters of 1940, the Mareth Line was reported to be in a state of fighting efficiency, but after the armistice it was demilitarized. At least, the Nazis ordered that it should be demilitarized; how far the Armistice Commission were able to enforce their terms is not known. Of late months there has been a belief that the Line has been considerably strengthened by native labour working under German supervision.

Behind and in front of the Zarzis-Foum Tathouine line are other military posts and other systems of defence. Even a second line is spoken of, from Gabès to the shotts or salt lakes lying some fifteen to fifty (according to the season) miles to the west.

MARETH LINE. With the occupation by the 8th Army of Medenine on Feb. 20, 1943, our troops were within a few miles of the Matmata Hills (seen in the background of this photograph), which constitute the western flank of the Mareth Line. Very different is this country from the flat sandy wastes of the Western Desert; one slip on the rocky ground may cause a landslide, and tracks winding along dried-up river-beds and hugging the sides of mountain slopes put a severe test on drivers.

Mareth, after which the line is named, is an oasis, about twenty miles south of Gabès; it is not even a village, but just a clump of palms beside a pool, with an estaminet, a store, and some shacks. Gabès is described as the base of the Ligne Mareth; it, too, is an oasis, but one far larger—large enough to contain a fair-sized town, on whose outskirts are the military cantonments. It is the station of the Tunis, Tunis, Tunesia railway from Tunis, via Susa and Sfax, and from it an extension is being built to Medenine—a bleak and dusty place composed of an Arab town and a French quarter, situated on an important desert cross-road (see illus., p. 614).

In the Matmata Hills lying to the west numbers of Berber tribesfolk live in pits or caves hollowed out of the easily worked rock. They are amongst the most miserable, the most poverty-stricken, the most squalid and diseased of Tunisia's peoples.

 are the wonders, of these benighted barbarians to the soldiers garrisoned in the forts near by—to the sights and sounds of modern battle now being fought in the dusty plain beneath

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The Balkan Powder-Barrel Awaits the Spark

For generations the Balkan countries have constituted one of Europe's chief storm-centres, and they are living up to their reputation. As Dr. EDGAR STERN-RUBARTH demonstrates below, they are either already in revolt or just waiting their moment.

Russia. Rumania did the same; imprisoning Iron Guards, her variety of Nazis, theickle Conductor Antonescu ordered all Rumanians abroad—and most of them could only have been in Germany—to register for service at home by January 1, 1943. Bulgaria, where a sly and greedy king and a dictatorial government agreed readily enough to compromise with Hitler, and his promise that temporary benefits could be reapèd, mostly at the expense of her neighbours Yugoslavia and Greece, has proved even less inclined to shed blood for Hitler's dream-empire, whether in Russia or in Turkey.

Methods of intimidation have failed just as completely as had previously bribery and cajolery. Old Admiral Horthy, under mystery and circumlocution, milled his son-in-law with Hitler's Air Forces; Antonescu, temporarily eclipsed by his socalled Breakthrough, Milord, Montenegro and Bulgaria in particular, since she has stood out against being involved in the war with Russia are pressed by all possible means into helping with the defence of the Balkan shores. Yet all the while a new menace develops: with the counter-offensive of the Russian armies, supported by their Black Sea Fleet, Rumania's and Bulgaria's coastline is being exposed; and

The Greater German Reich as envisaged in 1934 by Alfred Rosenberg, chief framier of Nazi political mythology. This is the map referred to in the accompanying text: it indicates the scope of the ambitions of the Nazis in Europe soon after Hitler's rise to power.

THE GREATER GERMAN REICH as envisaged in 1934 by Alfred Rosenberg, chief framier of Nazi political mythology. This is the map referred to in the accompanying text: it indicates the scope of the ambitions of the Nazis in Europe soon after Hitler's rise to power.

SOMETHING unheard of in the history of any country has now resulted: Bulgarians and Rumanians, Hungarians and even Austrians, often enough in company or battalion formation under their leaders, have joined the ranks of the Yugo and Greek guerrillas. Compared with that and its potential consequences, it is amazing how little importance they attached to their new rulers. The Free Corps are somewhat disunited themselves, carrying regional and linguistic differences of former days into their present adventurism. The Yugoslav Home Army, which is distrustful by his Nazi masters; the Greek Tsolakoglou, recently replaced by Field Marshal List's ambitious nephew and his husband, Logothetopoulos; the Croat Pavletich—hardly one of them who would not be glad to exchange his doubtful glory for a less transient, but more real, fortune—believe that Hitler, willily-nilly, will have done something to forge that unity, to rekindle the Olympic fire from where, once, the flame of our civilization was lighted.
Brave Men of the Army: Some Recent Awards

Sgt. W. H. KIBBY (left), posthumously awarded the V.C. for displaying the utmost bravery on 3 separate occasions in New Guinea last Oct. He silenced enemy posts with hand grenades, and mended platoon-line communications, enabling mortar-fire to be directed against attacks on his Company's front. In wiping out a pocket of resistance behind enemy lines, he was killed by machine-gun fire as success seemed certain.

Pte. BRUCE KINGSBURY (right) of the Australian Army, posthumously awarded the V.C. During fighting in New Guinea last Aug. he cleared a path for his comrades by charging alone, Bren gun firing from the hip, through a network of Jap machine-gun posts. Coming through this ordeal he swept Japanese positions with his fire, but was shot by an enemy sniper.

Capt. Rev. C. W. K. POTTTS, of the Buffs, awarded the M.C. for displaying outstanding bravery and devotion to duty at El Alamein in the Western Desert last year. He showed fine qualities as a fighting officer. Originally an Army chaplain, he resigned to join up in the ranks, but he was soon commissioned again.

Lt-Col. SMITH DORRIEN, of the Buffs, receiving the D.S.O. from Gen. Montgomery during the latter's visit to regiments of an Armoured Brigade in a forward position of the 8th Army. Many another officer and man was decorated at the same time for his share in the defeat of the Afrika Korps.

Sgt. E. J. GRAY, M.M., Royal Artillery, awarded the D.C.M. for saving his whole troop from a dangerous situation in Libya, by capturing 200 Italians in an enemy-held post. As he returned with his prisoners he was wounded. In the captured enemy post were found 3 anti-tank guns, 3 heavy machine-guns and many small arms.

Lt. C. G. ROB, R.A.M.C., awarded the M.C. After a flight of 250 miles he performed 140 surgical operations in Tunisia. He and his surgical team were under fire most of the time. Rob followed our parachutists dropped to capture an airfield during November last year.

Maj. R. G. LODER-SYMONDS, R.H.A., awarded the V.C. for gallantry in the D.S.O. and Bar, also the M.C.—all three being won in Libya. The M.C. was gazetted in 1941, the D.S.O. in Feb. 1942, and the Bar came 6 months later. He displayed great courage at Tobruk in Nov. 1941.

Col. FROST, M.C., awarded the D.S.O. for courageously leading his paratroops under heavy fire in Tunisia and reaching his objective. Although surrounded he extricated a large part of his unit, and regained his lines after a trek of 50 miles. He won the M.C. at Bruneval in Feb. 1942.

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THE WAR IN THE AIR

by Capt. Norman Macmillan, M.C., A.F.C.

On Sunday, February 14, 1943 German forces in Tunisia began a strong drive with armoured forces and lorry-borne infantry against the central front held by American troops who were thinned out lightly over the area.

The German air force in Tunisia had been strengthened by air units previously based in Tripolitania, and Luftwaffe strength was concentrated in support of the German ground thrust. A large proportion of the Luftwaffe’s estimated first-line strength of 300 aircraft in Tunisia was thrown into the battle, and for a time the Germans had local air superiority.

On the first day about sixty dive-bomber sorties were made against the American forces by Junkers 87 Stukas, and about an equal number of fighter-bomber sorties were made by Messerschmitt 109 and Focke-Wulf 190 aircraft. (About 40 Stukas were employed.) On the second and subsequent days of the American side was confined to fighter offensive patrols against the enemy.

Coincidently with the German attack, modifications in the Allied Commands which had been decided at the Casablanca Conference between President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill came into effect. Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur Tedder arrived in North Africa by air from England on February 14, 1943 to take up his appointment as Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Air Forces in the Mediterranean; accompanying him was Air Vice-Marshal Sir Arthur Coningham, who is to be responsible for operations in the Tunisian sector under General Carl Spaatz, U.S.A.F., who is responsible to A.C.M. Tedder for the direction of operations in North-West Africa.

The air forces attached to the British 1st and 8th Armies, the American Army, and those based in Malta, all came under Tedder’s immediate command, and were swiftly con-

attacked; the first-line aircraft, originally organized in five divisions of 500 aircraft, have been reorganized into four divisions. The disposition of these divisions is given as: one in Manchuria, one in Burma-China-Siam-Malaya, half a division in China, and the remainder in New Guinea, Formosa, and Japan. The Japanese naval air strength is estimated at 2,600 first-line and 1,700 reserve aircraft. The total losses in the Japanese air forces during 1942 were estimated at 3,600 first-line and 3,500 reserve aircraft.

L UFTWAFFE Losses in Russia
Assume Gigantic Total

Air action on the Russian front continues in support of the opposing armies. The Luftwaffe is reported to be making considerable use of towed gliders for transporting supplies to the forward German troops, and it is thought that the serious losses in transport aircraft incurred by the Germans during the assault and defence of Stalingrad (and in the Mediterranean theatre of war) have caused a shortage of troop-transport. Gliders can be more quickly built, they are less costly in labour man-hours, and they require no petrol, engine, or aircrew. In addition, their crews can be trained in a shorter time.

Their extended use by the German army commanders indicates a compulsory economy due to pressure upon the German military machine from all directions. It is a sign that the all-round squeeze, by decimation on the fighting fronts, blockade by sea, and the bombing of Germany, is showing the trend of its ultimate and inevitable effect. Russia estimates that Germany has lost 4,000 aircraft in Russia since the summer of 1942. Meanwhile, Soviet bombers are bombing German lines of communication, breaking up the ice in the Kerch Straits, and combating the Luftwaffe in the air.

The day and night offensive against Germany is growing from United Kingdom bases, and it is probable that the early summer will see it rise to a new level of intensity. The Bomber Command in Great Britain, under the command of Air Chief Marshal Harris, is operating at a peak efficiency which can only be matched by the Luftwaffe.

BOMBER Command attacked by day railway workshops and sheds at Tours (Feb. 14-15); targets in North-West Germany (Feb. 18); Den Helder docks (Feb. 19); Rennes naval yards and naval stores (Feb. 20); Dunkirk docks (Feb. 26 and 27); they recently lost 80 aircraft. Night attacks were made against Cologne, Milan, Spezia and Genoa, and Western Germany (Feb. 15-16); Lorient (Feb. 16-17); Wilhelmshaven (Feb. 18-19, 19-20, 24-25); Bremen (Feb. 21-22); Nuremberg and Munich (Feb. 23-26); Cologne (Feb. 26-27); N.W. Germany and mining (Feb. 27-28); on these raids 54 aircraft were lost. No aircraft were lost in the bomber raids and last night’s raids; the last-placed raid was a Canadian Bomber Group. Bombers of the U.S. Army 8th Air Force attacked Wilhelmshaven by day on Feb. 26, losing seven aircraft. Next day they attacked Brest without loss, but three covering fighters were lost.
Are the F.A.A. Planes Really Obsolescent?

FLEET AIR ARM planes have been criticized on the score of "obsolescence"; Mr. A. V. Alexander, First Lord of the Admiralty, recently said the work of their pilots, "with the old, slow, though pretty sound craft they have had, has been beyond reproach." Here are some of the machines with which the F.A.A. has already fought so magnificently. 1. An Albacore goes up in the lift from its hanger to the flight deck. 2. Martlet fighter about to land aboard the 22,000-ton Victorious. 3. Martlets stowed in the vast hangar below deck. 4. A Seafire fighter warms up. 5. Martlet taking off preparatory to a patrol flight. (See also illus. p. 609.)
From India Wavell's Men Move into Burma

WHY WE ARE INVADING ARAKAN

THE military operations in the Burmese maritime province of Arakan are the prelude to large-scale offensives to reconquer Burma, the key to the Orient. Since it occupies a highly strategic position in the Far East, Burma's reconquest is essential to the United Nations before any general counter-offensive can be launched against the Japanese on the Asiatic mainland. With Burma once again under the control of the Allied Powers, Japanese hold on the neighbouring countries would become precarious, the famous Burma Road would be reopened, and the Chinese would be free to complete the Burma-Yunnan railway, under construction at the time of the Japanese invasion of Burma last year. From Burma, combined American, British, and Chinese forces would be able to launch offensives against Siam and French Indo-China by way of the Kawkareik Pass and down southern Burma into Malaya.

Thus, as a preliminary to full-scale military operations to retake Burma, Field-Marshal Wavell has launched an attack against the Japanese in occupation of the Burmese coastal province of Arakan, which forms the eastern arm of the Bay of Bengal. Japanese forces in Arakan, with its strategic harbours and air bases, which are less than two flying hours away from Calcutta and the industrial centres of Bengal, where 70 per cent of India's war industries are to be found, constitute a threat to India, much more so than their presence in Northern Burma and the Chinwin Valley.

WAVELL'S immediate objective is Akyab, an important Japanese base situated at the mouth of the Kaladan River and only 85 miles to the south-south-west of Maungdaw, the Burmese frontier town, now in British hands. Several thrusts are being developed towards Akyab from Maungdaw and Buthidaung near the coast and on the Mayu River. But the main drive on Akyab is bound to be directed along the coastal track, supported by light naval forces from the sea, owing to the difficult nature of the country in Arakan, with ranges of forest-clad hills running north and south and sending out spurs and subdivisions almost to the sea coast. The Arakan coastal strip is also intersected by a labyrinth of tidal creeks, and as a result, there is a highly developed system of inland waterways, which is the chief means of communication in this Burmese maritime province.

Seventy-five miles south-south-east by boat from Akyab is Kyaukpyu, situated on Ramree Island. The large expanse of water between Ramree Island and the mainland affords an excellent harbour, over 2 miles wide and 30 miles long, large enough to take the entire Japanese fleet. It would be surprising, indeed, if Kyaukpyu harbour and the deep, narrow, salt water tidal creeks in the mainland opposite, which are ideal for submarines, are not being used by the Japanese as a naval base.

Occupation of Arakan, with its strategic air and naval bases at Akyab and Kyaukpyu, would not only remove the threat of a Japanese invasion of India; it would also serve as a jumping-off ground for an attack on the heart of Burma and her capital of Rangoon. Though Arakan is isolated by the Yoma mountains from the rest of the country, there are two mountain passes, the One and the Taungup, which lead into the interior of Burma. A 100-mile-long motor road, one which has been greatly improved by the Japanese, runs through Taungup Pass, 2,800 feet above sea level, from Padaung on the River Irrawaddy to the near coastal town of Taungup. From these geographical details the importance of the present operations in Burma can be appreciated.

OUR BURMESE OFFENSIVE demands formidable fighting qualities from British troops. Left, men of an English North Country regiment wade through a jungle stream during a reconnaissance patrol. The map of the Arakan Province in N. Burma shows main strategic centres. Heavy raids have been directed against the port of Akyab. Right, aircrafts of a Blenheim bomber squadron, with escorting Hurricanes in the background, on their way to attack enemy targets.
'THE FINEST IN THE WORLD' was how Malta's C-in-C and Governor, Field-Marshal Lord Gort (recently on a visit to this country), described British infantry in Malta. This photo shows Brigadier K. P. Smith, O.B.E., standing in front of his camouflage car, taking the salute as a long column of British troops in Malta marches past.
BRITISH soldiers in the First Army in North Africa are now being paid in francs, the currency of the country, but during their first weeks in Africa they used special notes printed in England to prevent the Germans ** unloading ** Bank of England notes which they have kept for just such an occasion. Some of these notes in German hands have been captured, others looted from banks in occupied countries, and others again, no doubt, confiscated from people interned. The introduction of new notes, completely different in appearance, to Germany, is a small matter what rate of exchange is fixed, although, in fact, the rate has always been fantastic. This is, of course, pure looting and does not differ in principle from putting armed soldiers at the door of a shop and proceeding to remove its contents.

In most countries shopkeepers have naturally been reluctant to part with goods for these ** occupation marks.** Within 24 hours after occupation the order has gone out that shops must open and must sell. To the unfortunate shopkeepers of Belgium, France, Yugoslavia, Greece and other countries, the United Nations will never use such methods, for quite apart from their gross dishonesty, they are liable to recoil on the perpetrator. Germany is sowing the seeds of an eventual currency chaos even more truly than that which overtook her after the First Great War. The books made of 100,000,000 mark notes sold for a few pence by enterprising hawkers in Berlin as ** souvenirs** in 1922 should not have been trusted. A currency which has no backing but bayonets is liable to collapse when the bayonets are blunted.

The methods used by the Allies to provide sufficient currency as one country after another is occupied will probably vary. But it is likely that they will err, if anything, on the side of financial orthodoxy. The U.S. forces in North Africa are also using specially printed U.S. currency to thwart the Germans. The notes are of one and one-third the order has gone out that American pilots and the first troops to land carry hold coins from Canada and each franc for the persuasion of any who might be sceptical of the **almighty dollar.**

British troops in the East African campaign had a comparatively easy task in producing currency acceptable to the Abyssinians. The only coin universally used in Abyssinia has long been the silver Maria Theresa dollar, bearing the arms of Austria and the date 1780, and containing full value of silver. For many years the British Mint was used to make these coins for Abyssinia. It was these dollars that British officers of secret **Mission 101** carried into the country. But it is interesting to note that at one time they ran out and had to borrow 6,000 silver dollars from the Patriot leader, Dejasmatch Nagash.

It is not widely known that the British Mint in normal times used to make an average of 20,000,000 coins a year for various foreign governments, and British specialist printers were given large contracts for notes. One of the largest was that for 1,000 million bank notes for China in 1911.

In the First Great War the British Army used all kinds of currency, generally that of the country in which they were fighting. But in the 1919 campaign in Russia they had to print paper currency of the local variety. The Germans had been up to their tricks and had flooded the country with worthless notes, making the ordinary rouble values.

**INCIDENTALLY,** soldiers have a habit of keeping special money as a souvenir. Many of the British notes in North Africa seem to have been autographed by landed gentry and will probably never circulate. British soldiers in the South African War of 1899-1902 sometimes amused themselves by **inscribing** the date, the number on a shilling, adding a hat and a pipe.

The travels of the British Army have given us some of our money slang. The **tanner,** according to one account, comes from India, where troops found a rough equivalent of sixpence. The ticky got its name in South Africa from the fact that native labourers were given a threepenny-piece for exchange for the ticky. The guinea was first coined in 1663 by the Royal Company of Adventurers on the Guinea Coast of Africa. Soldiers fighting on the continent of Africa in the 16th and 17th century may have brought back the slang **bob** from the French coin **boîte.** And if we like to go back 2,000 years, Roman soldiers introduced the word money into our language.
To These Our Roving Camera Pays Tribute

I.T. N. A. L. JEWELL (see pages 398, 486), captain of the British submarine which contributed to the success of the Allied N. African landings last November. In addition to valuable reconnaissance off the Algerian coast, he embarked General Giraud off the French shore, taking the French leader to the Mediterranean, where the General was transferred to a flying-boat.

DAME KATHERINE JONES, D.B.E., R.R.C., Matron-in-Chief of Queen Alexandra’s Imperial Military Nursing Service, is the first nurse to be gazetted Brigadier in the British Army. Members of the Q.A.I.M.N.S. (and of the Territorial Army Nursing Service now merged into it) suffer all the hazards of war. Since 1941 its sisters have been accorded military rank as officers.

ADMIRAL AS SKIPPER’S MATE. A small vessel manned by a veteran crew of six has repeatedly carried out important coastal work. Former captain of the Renown, Sir Herbert Meade Featherstonhaugh serves as skipper’s mate. Below, he is shown on the right; C. J. Burton, a dental surgeon (left), assists Capt. G. D. Begg, M.C., retired army officer, seen with broom, to “clean up the ship.”

MRS. BEATRICE HARRISON drives an L.M.S. van in the London district, and gave up her job as a tailoress in order to devote herself to this war work. Every day she and her horse journey through London’s streets, collecting goods for dispatch by the L.M.S. Mrs. Harrison gained experience during the last war as a railway van-driver.

ENGLAND’S OLDEST SWORD-MAKER, Mr. T. Beasley (centre), aged 82, has worked with the same firm for 56 years. He is at present busily engaged in making bayonets and Commando knives, an occupation to which he applied himself in the last war. The craft of sword-making has been handed down in his family for over 250 years. He is here shown engaged in testing a bayonet.

SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS, Minister of Aircraft Production, addresses workers at one of the Ministry’s factories during a recent visit in the London district. Sir Stafford was appointed Minister of Aircraft Production in Nov. 1942, when he relinquished the Leadership of the House of Commons. Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; Topical Press, Central Press, Planet News, Daily Mirror
I WAS THERE! Eye Witness
Stories of the War

I Had a Live Shell in My Leg—and Didn't Know It

Life was placid enough at the training school in a South Coast town until that Monday morning when, having nothing in particular to do for a few minutes, I strolled along to the "local" and there met some of my pals. One of them had a telegram in his hand and joy written all over his face. The telegram announced that he had become a father—a fine bouncing boy. That called for congratulations and drinks, and we were about to celebrate when, above the buzz of talk, we heard the hum of a plane and the roar of A.A. gunfire.

Then came the shattering of glass and we flung ourselves flat to the deck, or rather the floor. There followed a short burst of what I took to be machine-gun fire and I felt a sudden sharp twitch in my right leg. Looking down, I was amazed to see a hole just above my knee. I thought I had been hit by a piece of flying glass or something, but I felt no pain—just the sudden twinge. I tried to get up, but my leg wouldn't work. I turned on my side to see if any of the boys had been hit; and there was my best pal, face downwards, with blood streaming from a big wound in the back of his head.

I let out one yell, and someone came along, lifted me on to a trolley and wheeled me to the sick bay. Others attended to my pal. In the sick bay, whilst they were dressing my leg and putting a splint on it, I asked what had happened to Andy, the proud father whose name had been about to be written in the book of births. They told me he had escaped without a scratch and that, fortunately, there were not many casualties. I still did not know what had happened to my leg, and no one told me.

The dressing completed, we—the casualties—were driven in an ambulance to the Royal County Hospital, Brighton. At the hospital, they lost no time in getting to the bottom of my mystery. They took an X-ray photograph of my leg, and when they showed me the plate I got the shock of my life.

For I realized then that nothing so commonplace as a bit of flying glass had hit me. It wasn't even a bullet. It was an Aero-cannon shell, about three inches long and three-quarters of an inch in diameter, buried deeply in the flesh. The officer in charge of a Bomb Disposal Unit, called in for consultation, identified it as of the armour-piercing variety which explodes on impact; there were suspicions that it might even be a sub-variety whose explosion is delayed. So I had been harbouring live ammunition in my leg for at least two hours! I think the doctors were not a little astonished, too, but they made no fuss about it.

They wheeled me into the operating theatre and prepared me for the operation which would result in the safe removal of the shell, or—disaster. It was liable to explode at any moment. They told me afterwards that if it had exploded my leg would have been shattered and I might possibly have "gone West." The surgeon and his assistant, the anaesthetist and the nurses, all faced very considerable risk. At the least they might have been blinded. But they just ignored that and got on with the job. I've asked myself several times since if I would have had the pluck to do what they did.

I was under the anaesthetic, of course, and knew nothing of what was going on. They tell me the shell was lodged very tightly, near the knee joint, and that the surgeon had to do some cautious tugging to get it out. First he had to work down to the base of it, and then pull. It took him half an hour to complete the operation, described later by the chief man of the hospital as "the most delicate and the most dangerous of his (the surgeon's) career." When at last the surgeon held the live shell in his hand it was passed over to the bomb disposal squad that had been standing by in readiness.

When I opened my eyes again I was in a big ward, in a nice warm bed, with a rather stiff right leg and a slight headache, but otherwise none the worse for the experience. My first thought was of my pal who had been wounded in the head. I asked how he was, and they told me he was very bad. Poor chap, he died in the hospital that night. I was the lucky one.

I Saw Our Shells Bounce off a German 'Tiger'

This "story in a nutshell"—an incident in the fighting between a British composite force of tanks, guns and infantry, and Rommel's troops driving towards Thala—is told by Alan Humphreys, Reuters Special Correspondent on the Tunisian front.

We held our positions on high ground north of the Kasserine Pass until dusk, when we were ordered to withdraw because the Germans were 'winking us out.'

As we did so the enemy fired everything they had at us, including 105-millimetre guns. The shelling was very heavy and accurate. Later, undeterred by heavy rain, German tanks penetrated the pass and advanced towards Thala, some 40 miles to the north-west, headed by a number of 'Tiger' tanks.

Though the moon was at full, rainclouds had reduced visibility, adding to the difficulties of the anti-tank gunners. To ensure that he was not firing at our own tanks, the British battery commander went out ahead of our guns.

A tank approached along the road, but rattle to a stop at the British officer's command: "Halt!" The officer then identified a German Mark VI (Tiger) tank, "Fire!" he shouted to his battery, at the same time diving for a ditch. One man jumped from the Tiger tank and also dived into the ditch at the same moment as the British officer. Each went a different way.
however, the British officer dashing back towards his guns and the German racing to the tanks following up behind.

The battery, although only at 40 yards range, fired five rounds before the remainder of the crew of the Tiger tank jumped out.

One gunner, speaking of the action, told me: "The first shell from our six-pounder bounced off and went straight up in the air. I followed its flight, but I could not see the rest. I think several other shells also just bounced off the Tiger tank."

We Were the American 'Lost Legion' in Tunisia

Surrounded by Nazi tanks in Southern Tunisia, a "lost" American battalion was led for more than nine miles through the enemy lines and back to its own base by Major Robert R. Moore of Vailville, Iowa, who told Rodin's Special Correspondent, Alan Humphreys, this story of how it was done.

We were holding positions on the Djebel Lesoua—just north of Lesoua, about 25 miles east of Sbeitla—when the Germans threw more than 100 tanks round us in the dawn attack they launched on Sunday, February 7. We were dug in, and for three days we stuck there. We went off several attacks, and did not suffer a single casualty, and captured some prisoners.

These included a German captain. "My comrades will soon come," he told me. "There is nothing for you to do except surrender." He is still a prisoner, and I should like to see his face now. By Tuesday evening we had eaten all our food. Ammunition was perilously short, when an American plane swooped over us and dropped a long yellow streamer. Inside was an order from the commander telling us to withdraw during the night to a point where protection and guides would be waiting.

The battle moved out during the night and marched along a road. A sentry rose from a slit trench and challenged us at one place, but I did not answer. I just kept on, and he apparently assumed that such a large force was, indeed, behind the German front could only be Germans, and he got back into his trench. I had given instructions to the leading troops not to fire in any circumstances for fear of prejudicing the chances of escape of those behind.

We reached the American line and I was looking around when I was challenged. It was an unpleasant sound. The Germans had got there before us. I did not answer and went back to the column, where an officer asked: "Who was it?" I told him and gave the order to keep going. We went on. We were challenged again, and still I did not answer.

Then machine-guns opened up and hit the middle of one company, who suffered about twenty-five casualties. The Germans began firing along the ditches, so the officer commanding the following company led his men down the middle of the road. All the way through unchallenged.

The next company had gone to the right and came past without even being fired at. Finally we caught up our protection and guides. I heard the familiar challenge, and asked: "Are you Americans?" And I applied: "Are you in infantry outfit?"

I said: "We are, and I'm glad to find you!"

Hole No. 37 Was Her Address in Stalingrad

In a hole in the ground between two armies lived one of the heroic women of Stalingrad—the washerwoman of No-man's-land. Her simple, tragic story is told by Paul Helt, War Correspondent of The Sunday Express, and reprinted here from that newspaper. For the story of the Battle of Stalingrad see page 590.

I remember it was just about the time I began to look at the ground as I walked along. When you are sick of a sight you look at the ground and that way it seems a quicker journey. A tired man does that. I was tired. Tired of looking at the savage ruins of Stalingrad, tired of registering on the retina shock after shock of the power and terror and pity. The power of blast, the terror of the shapelessness of common things, the pity of scraps of house-hold intimacies.

It was just about then that I noticed a stick standing upright in the rubble. It had a cardboard notice on it which said, very firmly and boldly, as if nothing had ever happened to Stalingrad, "Hole No. 37." You might imagine a postman trudging along a lane I was trudging, stopping and dropping in a letter at "Hole No. 37."

The road I was trudging was no road at all. It was a crooked, tortured track beaten out between shell craters and rusty iron sheets that might once have been tramped by the patient feet of an army under siege.

Tramping at night only, for this track lay between the Russian and German front lines through a narrow No-man's-land between Stalingrad's great hill, the Mamat Korigan, and the consumer goods building of the Red October factory, where Govorov's Guardsmen fought the Battle of Garden Spades.

Just then a woman's head appeared beside the little stick that "Hole No. 37." Behind her came two children, one a girl of three, all ruffled up in a white woolly cap with flaps like a Belgian rabbit's ears, another little girl, dark and solemn, about five. The woman went towards the washing, washed with her hands frozen stiff and flapping in the bitter breeze like three-pley boards in a gale. The little girls ran up towards a toy sledges.

We stopped and talked to the woman. She answered in monosyllables, and her voice had that tone that women put on when they talk of the imbecility of men. Yes, she had been there all the time. It was terrible. Yes, it was very difficult to live. Her husband was in the army. She had kept her children with her because there was no time to send them away.

But why did she stay? Why did she live for five months in a hole in the ground between two armies, and why was it postmarked "Hole No. 37."? Her answer was very feminine. She was doing washing for the Red Army.

I said to the Red Army major who was our conducting officer: This is Hole No. 37. How many such holes are there in Stalingrad?" He shrugged his shoulders. There were many, he said. In that long walk to the Red October factory I did not see another.

The last Russian encyclopedia gave the population of Stalingrad as a quarter of a million. Since that date, with the growth of industrialization, the figure must have grown towards 400,000 by the time the Germans began to creep towards the Volga last summer.

How many are left? There was, of course, in the early days before Stalingrad was "Rotterdammed" on August 23, 1942, evacuation. This was not an organized business of trainloads of people being ferried across the Volga, then set out to walk with their bundles, their children and their old folk, across the flat San Steeple, where only occasional mud-houses and little tin windmills of the artesian wells break the flat, brown expanse.

Many stayed—some to carry on working at the great factories, some because simply they did not wish to go. The workers joined home guard battalions and fought with the Red Army in the last days of September and October.

Where have they gone? In four days at Stalingrad, touring the city on foot and in ambulance lorries, I saw perhaps 500 people. I do not think there can be more than 500 people living there still. Those who do live have dug themselves into the sandstone
cliff along the Volga bank or into the deep sandstone ravines that run through the town.

There are three main ravines—Bath-house Gully, the Long Gully and Steep Gully. Looking down into these gullies, which some of the fiercest fighting of the whole battle took place, for they were royal routes for the Germans to the Volga, I saw a few clusters of homes with stove smoking and washing hanging out.

The main impression I gained of those gullies is as if some bad-tempered giant had tipped up Father Christmas's sack, spilled out his dolls' houses, and then stampeded them. When General Rokossovsky threw his ring around the German Sixth Army he stretched for 50 miles one way and 30 miles another. In that ring, so I learned from General Kotelkov, it was estimated that there were living 50,000 to 60,000 Russian civilians. Living in holes in the ground off food they had buried before the Germans came.

I asked another Russian officer what he calculated had become of those 60,000 Russian folk. He said: "We don't know yet how many have survived." And then he said laconically: "At one place, just beyond Gumrak, when our men were driving forward, they came across a prison camp. It was just barbed wire and snow. In that camp they found 3,000 Red Army men and civilians dead from hunger and cold."

When the war is over this will be one of the crimes of which will have to be answered by Hitler and his instrument, Field-Marshall Frederick von Paulus, nor was it the least of those either who will have to answer will be the woman who stayed to do her washing in Hole No. 37.

North Africa.—U.S. troops occupied Kasserine Pass in Central Tunisia. The north enemy attacks were held. Mediterranean.—Allied air-bombards of Suda, Crete. "D" fianco bomberd. Russians against Kasserine Pass were held. Air.—R.A.F., bombers again raided Maupuru airfield by day; night heavy night raid on St. Nazaire.

Flash-backs

February 19. First jat raids on Port Darwin, Northern Australia.


February 22. Australian soldiers occupied Port Darwin, Northern Australia.

February 24. In Burma Imperial forces attacked across Sittang river.

February 25. Battle of Java Sea began; Allies lost cruisers Exeter, Perth, Houston, Java and De Ruyter and six destroyers.


March 2. Russian Eighth Army returned home from the Russian front.
So the old Cunard-White Star liner Majestic has been raised and brought inshore from the deep waters of the Firth of Forth in which she sank when she took fire some time ago. Already 13,000 tons of steel have been cut from her carcass, and at least another 25,000 tons will be salvaged. Many another sunken ship has been saved, the total thus salvaged to date providing iron and steel sufficient (we are told) to build a dozen cruisers. One of the ships sunk off the west coast of Scotland had a cargo consisting in large measure of bottles of whisky. With a truly Scotch acumen, which I am quick to appreciate, the local crofters scented out the wreck before the salvage men could get there. The resulting atmosphere was highly convivial. But, talking of salvage, I could give directions how to reach a certain Sussex common where I saw some Bren carriers refuelling the other day, and passing later observed that they had kindly left nearly a score of empty two-gallon petrol tins which are still there—excepting only those that villagers may have put to better use as vessels for water carrying. I am told they are quite serviceable as pails when the top has been removed. But is this in accord with our ideas of salvage? Should not our mechanized army be made to deposit its empties where they would be of use to the War effort, rather than turn rural commons into unsightly dumps of dirty tin cans?

In future, we are told, small cheque-books are to be the rule. A considerable saving in paper is anticipated, since many million cheques are made out in the course of a year. But the smaller cheque has at least one drawback in that the space for the payee’s name is somewhat reduced. And how long some payees’ names are! In their nomenclature most of the banks have now attained to a sweet simplicity: we no longer have The London Full title tell of a history of amalgamation, have adopted shorter, simpler forms, lull the excrecences of premium payers, although we still have a few such centipedes as The National Employers Mutual General Insurance Association Limited. Of the young ladies behind the shop counters pay their ‘dues’ by cheque, but if so they must be hard to put it to compress National Almangated Union Railways, Warehousemen and Clerks into 3½ inches; and I regard myself fortunate, if only in this respect, that I do not live in an area whose ‘juice’ is supplied and Home Counties Joint Electricity Authority. But I do have to write now and again to the Divisional Petroleum Officer, Divisional Petroleum Office, South-Eastern Division, The Pump Room, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. I can’t help feeling that the Divisional Petroleum Officer, Tunbridge Wells, should suffice. Economy is a good watchword in wartime—economy in words as well as in things.

Outside your local cinema this week you may see an announcement of Desert Victory, the film of the recent long shot by Army Film and Photographic Unit and the R.A.F. Film Unit cameramen; it should be worth seeing. Major MacDonald, who was in charge of the A.F.P.U. in Libya, brought back to this country over 40,000 feet of film, which has had its shot into shape by the technicians at Pinewood Studios. Associated with Major MacDonald in this work have been the capable who directed Thunder Rock, Lieut. Jenkins, Asst.-Director for London Films at Denham, and Sergeant Best, Asst. Editor of many peace-time productions at Pinewood Studios. An indication of the way in which the 30-odd cameramen of the A.F.P.U. in Libya have collaborated with the advance is evidenced by the fact that Capt. Geoffrey Keating and four sergeants of the Unit were in Teheran for over a month when the 8th Army occupied the town; their photographs of the hauling down of the swastika flag and the hoisting of the Union Jack in its place is one of the high-lights of Desert Victory.

At this very moment (Mrs. Amabel Williams-Ellis reminds us in her little book Women in War Factories: Gollancz, 1s.) women are driving great steam hammers and travelling cranes, making the absurd barrage balloons red again with the gas from them, measuring and weighing, dipping something into a bath of boiling tin to test it, working with a pair of piers screwed up in a gun-turrett or the tail-end of a tank, or also dishing out the soup in the canteens, travelling through the black-out, getting the worst of their housework done before they go to the factory. As Mrs. Williams-Ellis only too truly remarks, we, the general public, are not bothering our heads any too much about that great army shut away at their work behind the high-fenced wire fences of the war factories and workshops. Yet these men and women have stuck it for more than three years, and have done a job as well as the men, perhaps better, and for all history. We ought to know more about them and their work; Women in War Factories will help to fill a gap in our knowledge of which we ought to be ashamed.
London Salutes the Ever-Glorious Red Army

IN THE ALBERT HALL on Feb. 31, 1943 an impressive pageant marked London's celebration of the 25th Anniversary of the Red Army. This photograph shows the vast assembly during the spectacular finale. On the platform the principal speaker, Mr. Eden, is seen in the centre. On either side, on the pedestals, are the narrators, Lt.-Cmdr. Ralph Richardson and Dame Sybil Thorndike. The huge backcloth represents a modern Russian city; and in front of the Soviet flag stands a Russian soldier on guard.

Photo: The Times