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- Geography:** The Baltic Sea is centrally located, with the Gulf of Finland to its north and the Gulf of Riga to its south. The Baltic Sea is bordered by Sweden to the west, Finland to the north, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania to the south, and Poland to the east.
- Major Cities:** Helsinki (Finland), Tallinn (Estonia), Riga (Latvia), Vilnius (Lithuania), and Warsaw (Poland) are marked as significant urban centers.
- Transportation:** A network of railways (solid lines) and roads (dashed lines) is shown, connecting major cities and coastal areas.
- Scale and Orientation:** A scale bar in the bottom right corner indicates distances in miles (0, 40, 80). The map is oriented with North at the top.

This map illustrates the Western White Russian region, highlighting the border between Lithuania and Russia. Key features include:

- Geographical Features:** The border is marked with a dashed line. Major cities shown include Minsk, Białystok, Smolensk, and Pinsk. Rivers such as the Dnieper, Dniestr, and Bug are depicted.
- Infrastructure:** Railways are indicated by solid lines with cross-ticks, and roads by dashed lines. Numerous smaller towns and villages are also labeled.
- Scale and Orientation:** A scale bar in the bottom left corner shows distances up to 100 miles. The map is oriented with North at the top.
- Political Context:** The map is titled "CENTRAL FRONT" and "GEOGRAPHICAL", suggesting it is a historical or military map from the early 20th century.

CENTRAL FRONT

London
April, 1942

STRATEGY AND TACTICS OF
THE SOVIET-GERMAN WAR

STRATEGY AND TACTICS OF THE SOVIET-GERMAN WAR

By Officers of The Red Army
and Soviet War Correspondents

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INTRODUCTION

MYTH OF GERMAN INVINCIBILITY

BY LIEUTENANT-GENERAL M. KHOZIN

The claim that the German Army is "invincible" is a myth invented by the Nazi rulers. The easy victories of 1939 and 1940, on which the German militarists now preen themselves, were won not so much by their own forces as by base treachery in the countries against which they fought.

This was the case in Poland, where the German High Command actually possessed all the mobilization and operation plans of the Polish Army. This was also the case in Norway. The landing of troops by parachute, which played such an important part in the defeat and capitulation of the Dutch Army, was effected in pre-arranged districts and with the aid of signals and instructions from German agents in Holland. As for Belgium, the Nazis stole the plans of the Eben-Emael fortress, built an exact model of it in Germany and practised attacks on it.

Many officers and generals in the Yugoslav Army formerly served in the Austrian Army. The Simovich government had to remove them from their posts on coming to power. One of them, General Copernick, as it afterwards transpired, actually engineered the defeat of Yugoslavia. The same applies to some Greek generals who capitulated before all means of resistance had been exhausted. For this action the Greek government deprived them of their military rank.

It is common knowledge that some members of the former French government were connected with German agents and deliberately led their army and people to defeat.

In cases where the Germans met resistance they crushed it by superiority in numbers and armament. In September, 1939, the Nazis moved 45 infantry divisions of 16,000 men each against Poland, which only had 40 divisions of 10,500 men each. The Germans had twice as much heavy artillery—1,400 guns against 600; they had 3,100 light guns against 2,400; 4,790 anti-tank guns against 600; 3,350 tanks against 910; and 2,500 aeroplanes against 1,200. Even with this superiority of equipment the German Reinhardt tank division was smashed in Warsaw.

In the main drive against the Allies in Holland, Belgium and Luxemburg on May 10, 1940, the Germans used 107 infantry and 10 tank divisions, while the Allies used 63 infantry divisions, 4 light mechanized and 6 cavalry divisions. These Allies belonged to four different armies—the French, British, Belgian and Dutch—which actually were not under one command. Moreover, some of these armies were disunited by deep-rooted political friction and conflicting opinions on operations and strategy.

Even adding the Allied forces on the Luxemburg, Belgian and Dutch frontiers, the entire reserve of the Anglo-French north-eastern front (7 infantry and 3 tank divisions), the Germans still had a tremendous superiority of forces over the Allies.

The technical equipment of the two sides can be summed up as follows: Each German tank division numbered between 400 and 500 tanks, whereas the French tank divisions had only 180 tanks. The Nazi Army had nearly four times as many aeroplanes—5,000 against 1,300—and considerably more artillery, which is justly called the “god” of war.

Having forced Holland and Belgium to capitulate, the German General Staff once again concentrated considerable forces—approximately 135 infantry divisions and 10 to 12 tank divisions—against the French, who at that time had 95 infantry divisions and had practically lost their few mechanized units. When the blow on Paris was struck the Germans had complete air superiority.

The same situation obtained in Greece: superiority in numbers and technical equipment. Here too, however, on the Metaxas Line, the German troops suffered a heavy defeat; had the Greeks had sufficient strength to launch a counter-offensive, the Fascist campaign would have ended in failure.

Irritated by the success of the Red Army in breaking through the Mannerheim Line during the Russo-Finnish war (the Mannerheim Line was built with the aid and under the supervision of German military experts), the Nazis made a pretence of breaking through the Maginot Line.

Actually, however, the German Army has had no experience in breaking through modern fortified zones. The Polish western frontiers were completely unfortified, and the defences on the northern frontiers of France were extremely weak. The German Army actually advanced on the Maginot Line from the rear, making use of the splendid French roads.

When they began the war in 1939, after several years of preparation, the Nazis expected a swift and easy conquest. They were mistaken. Although they have conquered a considerable number of the states in Western Europe, the Nazis have not succeeded in ending the war as speedily as they had hoped.

The attack on the Soviet Union is their last desperate throw. But the morale of the German Army is far from being what it was at the beginning of the war.

*BATTLES—Central Front*LESSONS OF THE BATTLES OF
SMOLENSK AND BOBRUISK *

BY COLONEL PODOROZHNY

Despite the heavy losses suffered by the Nazis in an attempt to cross the Beresina in the Bobruisk direction, their attempt failed. One regiment after another was thrust into this operation, but the results were fruitless. After this, Soviet troops completely smashed the 5th German Infantry Division in the Smolensk area. Two enemy infantry divisions were smashed in fighting in the same direction. This was followed by the routing of the Nazi mechanized infantry regiment called "Greater Germany", which formed part of a division consisting of special S.S. detachments, and the complete annihilation of the 137th German Infantry Division, which had just arrived.

We are not asserting that the German Fascist Army is already smashed. The enemy is still very strong. Despite heavy losses in man-power and material he is still attempting an offensive and striving to expand the area of captured territory. But the fruitlessness of enemy efforts becomes more obvious with every passing day. The Red Army has learned to reply to the adventurous tactics of the Fascists with unexpected and stunning action. After boldly permitting Fascist tank troops to advance, Red Army units cut off the infantry following in the Fascist rear. In vain has the enemy repeatedly resorted to his favourite method designed to encircle separate Red Army units and formations. By breaking their way out of encirclements and skilful manoeuvring, Red Army units themselves surround and destroy the enemy.

* In July and August, 1941

The struggle of the Red Army against the Fascist hordes is entering a new stage of severe and decisive battles. The enemy is making desperate attempts to break the resistance of the Red Army. New and even greater hardships are still ahead in this struggle. But it is already clear that Hitler has lost his stake on the blitzkrieg. Armed with modern military technique, educated in the spirit of the heroic traditions of the Russian people, the Red Army will find in itself sufficient strength and means to proceed from separate counter-blows at the enemy to a general counter-offensive which will crush the enemy. The longer the war lasts, the closer to winter, the clearer will the Fascist Army see the spectre of Napoleon's army which perished in Russia.

THE BATTLE OF SMOLENSK

BY COLONEL-GENERAL A. YEREMENKO

Fighting in the Smolensk and Nevel directions has been in progress for 30 days.* The battles in this area are a proof of the decisive changes in the position of the opponents. In the first days of the attack on the Soviet Union, the German generals maintained a certain measure of consistency in their operations, but the position has now radically changed.

For a whole month the Germans have waged a fruitless offensive, shifting from one sector to another and sustaining heavy losses. Hard pressed by the Red Army they have often been compelled to pass to the defensive. Theoretical conceptions about the war against the Soviet Union evolved beforehand have proved useless. When hostilities began the German Command, using the suddenness of the offensive to

* Written about August 15, 1941

good advantage, did manage to put some of its theories into practice. Subsequent engagements, however, necessitated essential corrections which thoroughly upset the Nazi offensive plans.

At the beginning of the campaign the Nazi Command was mainly concerned with fuel supplies ; now it is compelled to face other and more serious problems. Complaints of shortage in men and materials are becoming more frequent. The enemy has begun to rush from one point to another, and finally, having exhausted the initial impetus of the offensive, was constrained to take up defence in many sectors of the front.

Cases of Nazi panzer troops suffering defeat after defeat are becoming ever more frequent. Tank crews run from the field of battle and entrench their tanks in the ground, converting them into stationary pill-boxes.

Battle formations have also undergone a considerable change. Once having lost the initiative the enemy began to adapt himself to the methods of warfare forced on him by the Soviet troops. In the fighting in the Smolensk direction the operations of the Soviet Army were directed primarily at wearing out, exhausting and destroying the enemy forces. Here are some examples of this struggle :

In the first days of the engagements the Germans made wide use of the air force to disrupt the Soviet fighting formations. The German 'planes were directly subordinated to the division commanders and their bases were in close proximity to the land force, being only 5-10 kilometres from the front lines. This enabled them constantly to fly over the Soviet Army units. Several large-scale raids by the Soviet Air Force on the enemy field aerodromes and a methodical pressure on these by day and night, coupled with the incessant shelling of near-by aerodromes from our long-range artillery, forced the Nazis to revise their tactics of the interaction of various arms.

The losses suffered by the German air arm may be judged from the following facts. Over 100 aircraft were burnt when two Nazi airfields in the districts north-west of Y. and west of K. were completely destroyed by artillery fire. In the air encounters along the Mohilev-Orsha line the Germans lost in two days alone 162 'planes, brought down by Soviet aviation and anti-aircraft artillery. Incidentally, the Soviet A.A. artillery, particularly the small calibre units, have displayed remarkable efficiency. The anti-aircraft units keep the enemy aircraft from bombing from medium altitudes.

All this made Nazi headquarters introduce several alterations in their tactics. It is generally known that the German infantry is not distinguished for bravery and initiative in battle. Deprived of air support, it presents a rather sad sight. It cannot stand up to Soviet attacks and turns heel at the blows from Soviet artillery and tanks. This conduct of the infantry is explained also by the fact that the panzer units have likewise sustained heavy losses. This has considerably undermined the morale of the German infantry, which prefers to move forward only when it is covered by armoured vehicles.

The Nazi High Command concentrated picked divisions, commanded by "famed" generals, in the Smolensk-Nevel directions. Today many of these divisions have ceased to exist altogether, while others, having lost half or more of their effectives, were reduced to regiments. Not a few enemy tank regiments have been converted into ordinary infantry units, which only formally bear the name of a tank regiment as a result of the enormous losses.

The 20th Tank Division left 700 corpses and over 200 wrecked tanks on the battlefield near the village of K. alone. By the end of July this division had only 40 fighting machines, while the 19th Tank Division had no machines left at all. Near Vitebsk one regiment of

the 7th Tank Division was smashed, the 12th Tank Division lost 50 per cent. of its forces and one of its regiments was entirely put out of action. Heavy losses were also suffered by the panzer training brigade which the Germans pressed into active service through lack of forces.

Having covered every inch of ground with corpses the Nazis broke through to Smolensk. Stubborn fighting for the town proper raged for almost a whole month. The city repeatedly passed from hand to hand. More than one German division found its last resting place in the approaches to Smolensk and in the town itself. Every street and every house was contested by severe fighting and the Nazis paid very heavily for every yard of their advance. Hundreds of German soldiers and officers perished in the waters of the Dnieper River.

The Nazi Command had no choice but to rush fresh reserves into the battle, not infrequently throwing them into the heat of fighting directly after a march. Naturally, this weakened the other sectors of the front. The enormous losses which were suffered in the Smolensk district could not but affect the position of their front as a whole. The German reserves were exhausted in many days of bloody engagements and the Nazi troops had to take up the defensive on most sectors.

The colossal losses of the German Army are corroborated by numerous documents which have fallen into Soviet hands. Among them, for instance, is the report by the commander of the third battalion of the 53rd German Motorized Infantry Regiment, which reads :

"These last four days the position has become extremely tense : reinforcements are vitally needed. Heavy losses during the last day have made it impossible for the battalion to act as a regular unit. The fighting efficiency is tragically low. As far as

personal guidance by the officers is concerned the position is precarious. This tension has led to a situation when the battalion can be forced into the offensive only at the point of arms."

This document provides a vivid picture of what Nazi troops have become after continuous counter-blows by the Soviet units in the 30 days' fighting in the Smolensk and Nevel directions. Hundreds of thousands of killed and wounded, hundreds of fighting machines burnt or wrecked, very telling losses in artillery, in infantry equipment and particularly mine-throwers which were destroyed by our batteries—such are the sad results of these encounters for the Nazis.

It was these results which forced the German Command to change its plans. Then began the feverish regrouping of forces, the bringing up of reserves which were unquestionably of lower quality than the previous ones. Certain German divisions veritably began to rush about from place to place. In particular, the 13th and 14th Motorized Infantry Divisions first moved east, then changed their course, steered north-east, and later received orders to move north.

Officers and headquarters are exceedingly nervous. The orders issued by the German Command have also changed their tone ; such words as "suddenness" and "blitz action" have disappeared, and the recent orders more frequently speak of the losses, the economical use of material, petrol and ammunition. Commanders are warned that they should not expect reinforcements in tanks, motor vehicles or man-power.

Every passing day brings fresh examples of the unparalleled heroism of the Soviet fighters and the political staff. Hundreds of those who fought in the Smolensk and Nevel directions have been decorated by the Soviet Government for bravery and valour. The title of Hero of the Soviet Union has been conferred on

seven of them and 928 have received decoration. Among the Soviet commanders I met the sons of men who made history during the Civil War, and they are every inch their fathers where heroism is concerned. At one battery which crushed the Germans by direct fire I found Captain Chapayev, son of the famous Civil War hero. He fought courageously and skilfully.

An example of genuine heroism and devotion to the country was displayed in action at Vitebsk by the battery commander Jacob Jugashvili (Stalin's eldest son). In a hard-fought engagement he did not leave his post and continued to destroy the enemy until the last shell was fired.

The German Army orders and reports intercepted by Soviet units often contain complaints at the losses caused by the Soviet guerilla fighters. They set fire to the houses where the enemy troops are quartered, blow up supply depots, ambush enemy units and transport trains. These irregulars work hand-in-hand with the Red Army.

COUNTERING THE TACTICS OF WEDGES AND PINCERS

BY COLONEL KGROTKOV

The Soviet Command is countering the German tactic of wedges and pincers by the tactic of flank blows. It is applying the method of crushing one side of the wedge as a result of which the other side loses its force.

This is vividly demonstrated in the counter-blow delivered by the Soviet forces on the German 39th Tank Corps. The Nazi corps suffered a defeat and the operation of the German 3rd Tank Group, of which this corps was a part, was deprived of its striking force.

The method of combating the Nazi wedges is by striking at their infantry. When the German tank units move forward in mass formation, their infantry often lags behind and is cut off by the Soviet troops. In this position it is doomed to defeat.

The last ten days of July can be regarded as approximately the beginning of the second period of the war when the nature of German operations underwent a certain change. The Germans abandoned their mass advance along the entire front, their army groups were delayed and often halted and, in certain directions, as for example, near Zhlobin and Rogachev, they were hurled back. The basic cause for the slowing-up of the Nazi advance was the increasing resistance of the Soviet troops.

Compared with the fighting in France in 1940, what we see here is the reverse process. French resistance weakened as the enemy advanced, whereas the resistance of Soviet troops grows continuously, and their counter-blows become more effective. The result is that the Germans suffer tremendous losses. In the fighting in the western direction alone over 20 German infantry, panzer and motorized divisions have been smashed or have suffered considerable losses up to August 1.

As the war develops, Soviet troops devise new and successful methods of combating the Fascist tank wedges. A brilliant example of this is provided by the defeat and complete annihilation of some 300 enemy tanks by one Soviet rifle division. Having studied the enemy's tactics, the commander of the division ordered a sham retreat on one sector of the front, boldly allowed the German tank column to advance through his lines and then surrounded and destroyed it by concentrated artillery fire.

Good results have been produced by Soviet tank groups operating from ambush. In other cases mobile

anti-tank units take up positions along the route of a likely outflanking movement. In the course of a single day Soviet units have been known to change their positions five times, and have so exhausted the enemy that he was compelled to halt the advance until fresh forces could be brought up.

While the Nazi mobile troops have forced a change in the methods of warfare, it would be wrong to suppose that the enemy can no longer use large tank units or that he has abandoned the tactics of wedges and pincers. Such a conclusion would be premature.

THE BATTLE OF GOMEL

BY MAJOR-GENERAL BEREZOVSKY

As far back as July 23 a German corps made an attempt to break through to Gomel. At that time a strong Soviet counter-blow not only checked the Nazi advance but dislodged them from the important railway junctions of Zhlobin and Rogachev, inflicting heavy losses on the Germans. Batalov's unit alone destroyed over 4,000 German officers and soldiers near Zhlobin and in street fighting.

It took the Nazi Command about a month to recover from this blow and concentrate fresh forces in the Gomel direction. Only by August 11 had the German Command succeeded in concentrating a strong force, its nucleus consisting of the 17th and 131st Infantry Divisions, the 21st Infantry Division and the remnants of the 1st Cavalry Division. In addition, the Nazis concentrated not less than 200 planes.

For several days Nazi aircraft prepared the offensive.

On August 14 the Germans threw all their forces into the attack. Stubborn fighting continued unabated for six days and nights. The fighting assumed a particularly fierce character in the villages of Semenovka and Pokolyubichi. Soviet units, reinforced by the Gomel People's Volunteer Force, defended every inch of the ground. Over 4,000 Nazi soldiers and officers found their grave in the swamps and forests around Semenovka alone.

Infuriated at the stubborn resistance of the Red Army, the Nazis put local inhabitants, women, aged people and children in front of their troops on the Dobrush sector. Quickly regrouping its forces and striking at the German flanks, the Soviet Command frustrated the German plans. Desperate fighting raged in the suburbs of Gomel. The Red Army men repelled two desperate German attempts to capture the railway bridge and an ordinary bridge. Nazi aircraft dropped about 600 large bombs on the bridges, but every one missed its target. The bridges were blown up by Soviet sappers when the Germans were on them.

With its numerical superiority, the German Command calculated on an easy victory at Gomel. These calculations were upset by the Red Army and the Gomel People's Volunteer Force.

Striking testimony of this is revealed in a letter of the German Corporal Stahr to his wife, found when he was taken prisoner. "We are finally in Gomel. Ten days ago we were 138 men in our company; now only 18 remain. I spent the whole day walking through Gomel hoping to find something for a gift to you and relieve my own hunger. In vain! Nothing is to be found in the city. Even the orchards remain without apples. . . ."

Over 80,000 killed and wounded, about 200 tanks, several hundred guns, thousands of trucks and about 100 aircraft were lost by Nazis at Gomel.

FIRST BATTLES ON THE ROUTES TO MOSCOW

BY LIEUTENANT-GENERAL ROKOSHOVSKY

In the middle of July, after a thrust by panzer units and the landing of troops by air, the Germans attempted to drive a wedge between Soviet Army units. After this they intended to continue their march to Moscow. A map captured in a German headquarters had the route of a German division clearly marked, ending at Moscow.

Several Soviet units were ordered to check the German advance and not permit the enemy to pass a certain river which flows through the district.

The fighting in this sector has brought out the weak points in German defence. On one occasion, a small group of Soviet units was intended for operations against landing parties and not major forces. Reconnaissance scouts brought back the news that we were confronted by the 7th German Tank Division, accompanied by a large mass of infantry. Despite the fact that we were greatly outnumbered, we gave battle. What is more, we took the offensive and advanced several kilometres in the very first days.

This gave us the initiative and we caused the enemy heavy losses, destroying a large number of tanks, artillery and troops. Our losses were also considerable.

This first encounter showed that the Germans had a strong aircraft force in our sector. We soon learned that the Germans are not fond of night action. When attacked in the darkness, they reply by unorganized scattered fire in all directions in an endeavour to create the impression of an energetic repulse. But our men soon became accustomed to this and German fire failed to achieve its purpose.

The Germans organized their defence on a wide

front. Each company forms its own defence centre, as a rule in some inhabited point. Trenches are dug around a village and a large proportion of the automatic armaments are placed along the front line and arranged in good time.

The Germans avoid woods, fearing guerillas and knowing how difficult it is to use tanks there. In the villages they generally select brick houses or houses with brick foundations as firing posts. Not infrequently German soldiers dressed in women's clothing move from the houses to the trenches, reckoning that Soviet artillery will not notice this ruse.

Bayonet charges are dreaded by the Germans and they always avoid them. In counter-attacking, they shoot without even taking aim.

Engagements with enemy tank units have led us to the conclusion that German tank crews are afraid of the anti-tank grenades extensively used by Soviet infantry.

Only a small part of the German troops are kept in the front lines. The bulk of their forces is stationed close behind the front positions so that they can be easily shifted from one sector to the other. When Soviet infantry makes a wedge in the front line, the Germans as a rule dispatch a second echelon to counter-attack the Soviet flanks and rear. This counter-attack is supported by tanks operating frontally and covered by heavy fire from all available weapons.

By studying German tactics we altered our own methods and step by step we caused the Germans increasing losses. Altogether the enemy lost about 10,000 killed and wounded in encounters with our units. In recent days the number of Nazi war prisoners has been increasing, and it is becoming clear that German soldiers are war weary.

DISPATCH FROM YELNIA

BY WAR CORRESPONDENT VLADIMIR STAVSKY

Both sides of the road are intersected by ravines. In them are stacks of German shells, cartridges and other war material. Further away German artillery can be seen. Rifles, automatics and machine-guns lie about the overgrown rye and thick undergrowth.

Looking at this mass of scattered arms and ammunition, one can imagine the panic that reigned here and in what mortal fear these vaunted Hitler divisions ran for their very lives. And they had every reason to run. One glance at the enemy's former position shows that it is straddled with shell craters and every inch of land has been torn up by Soviet artillery.

We pass through village after village, most of them mere hamlets. Standing at the gates are collective-farm peasants who greet us enthusiastically. In the still evening these shouts of greetings are mingled with the sound of women and children weeping as they contemplate the charred ruins where their homes once stood. Behind us are a series of low hills and before us in the valley lies the town of Yelnia.

Yelnia is burnt to the ground and its destitute inhabitants pass through the streets covered with ashes and charred ruins. The Nazis here were helped by one Rozalinsky, whom they appointed commandant of the town of Yelnia. Rozalinsky proved to be a Nazi agent who had for many years lived in Smolensk and paraded as a modest book-keeper. The Germans were also helped by Dombrovsky and his wife, former local landowners. In the villages the Nazis appointed rural elders, who helped them to loot and oppress the population.

Now all this Nazi scum has been cleaned out. Over 50 villages and hamlets have been wrested from the enemy. Yelnia and the whole Yelnia district will go

down in the history of this great war as the scene of fierce fighting where a whole German army group was routed. The German High Command was set on capturing Yelnia, for this ancient Russian town is a communication centre from which roads lead to the north, north-east and south-east.

It was from here that the Germans intended to develop their offensive and advance towards Moscow and southwards. The German command took into account the terrain around Yelnia. The district is surrounded by forest-covered heights, intersected by ravines and valleys. The Yelnia district was particularly convenient for the Germans to concentrate large forces in preparation for a thrust on the Soviet capital.

In July, the Nazi troops had succeeded in capturing Yelnia district, but since then they did not advance a single step. The Soviet Command was well aware of Yelnia's importance. After plans had been completed, Soviet troops launched an offensive. Their blows were methodical and exact and the whole offensive was carried out with striking efficiency.

In the very first days the Soviet forces smashed the 10th German Tank Division. A Red Army unit under Colonel Utvenko smashed up some regiments of the 15th Division and captured heavy artillery supplies and prisoners. I may add that the German artillery was immediately put to good use and helped to destroy the German forces. The enemy was compelled to take to the defensive. He still held the commanding heights and erected powerful fortifications. In addition to a thick cover of logs and four feet of earth, their fortifications were reinforced by steel rails.

Nevertheless, the Germans sustained very heavy losses. I spoke with some war prisoners and they were unanimous in declaring that Soviet artillery fire was breaking their morale and destroying their men entrenched in the well-built fortifications. Corporal

Mittermayer of the Deutschland Regiment, which formed part of an S.S. Division, told me that of his section of nine, seven were killed and the remaining two wounded and taken prisoner.

At that time the German forces were not yet finally routed. The German High Command attached great importance to the Yelnia area, regarding it as the most advantageous position for a further advance into the heart of the country. The Germans made every effort to hold their line at all costs. The German Command dispatched fresh divisions, quite disregarding the fact that the German regiments were simply being slaughtered around Yelnia.

Soviet troops increased their pressure in the first days of September. By September 4, it became evident that seven German divisions had already been routed. The greater part of an important German army group was half surrounded. Its contact with the rear was along a narrow territory some five miles wide. This strip of land was covered from all sides by our artillery and strewn with the bodies of German soldiers.

Meanwhile, Soviet pressure was constantly growing. On the night of September 4 the German troops retreated in panic. They left behind the doomed machine-gunners and the crews of the mine-throwers and opened a furious artillery fire against the Soviet troops which were pressing hard on their only road to the rear. This retreat can only be described as disorderly. The Germans left behind tens of thousands of dead officers and men, some of them hastily buried and others just lying about. They evacuated an equal number of wounded.

The captured war material has not yet been counted up. To date we have taken 102 German artillery guns, 195 machine-guns and many hundred thousands of shells and cartridges. Utvenko's men alone captured 600,000 cartridges, 1,000 shells, two arms dumps and two aeroplanes.

HOW YELNIA WAS CAPTURED

BY MAJOR-GENERAL RAKUTIN

The fighting for Yelnia revealed the lack of firmness of the Nazi infantry. Though suffering heavy losses from the powerful Soviet artillery, the German soldiers as a rule did not resort to direct fire, but dug themselves into trenches and attempted to shake the morale of the attacking troops by the noise and rattle of their automatic rifles.

The German Command had placed great hopes on the picked S.S. "Reich" division which included the regiments "Germany", "Fuehrer", and "Elf". Numerous letters from the High Command found in the sector of this division's operations praise the "valour" of the Nazi formations and express confidence in their further victories. They did not, however, live up to the Fuehrer's hopes. Under the blows of the Red Army these S.S. divisions also found their destruction on the battlefield.

By increasing the rate of their offensive to seven to nine miles per day, Soviet troops pursued and smashed the enemy without giving him the opportunity to entrench himself in new positions. In the course of the 26 days of stubborn fighting and bloodshed the enemy lost from 75,000 to 80,000 in killed and wounded.

The Germans retreated, leaving behind five huge cemeteries in the suburbs of Yelnia, where heaps of corpses were simply thrown into hastily dug pits. Similar cemeteries were found in the vicinity.

Unposted letters of German soldiers, as well as the evidence of war prisoners, reveal the strength and swiftness of the Soviet blow. Joseph Walbot, corporal of the 1st Company of the 488th Infantry Regiment,

137th Infantry Division, who surrendered, together with a group of soldiers of his company, said: "Our company has suffered terrible losses with over 40 men killed and 80 wounded. Similar losses were suffered by all the other units."

THE BATTLE OF YARTSEVO

BY LIEUTENANT-GENERAL ROKOSHOVSKY

September 15, 1941.

Over six weeks ago the 7th German Tank Division, reinforced by infantry and motorized units, outflanked Smolensk, which for a considerable time after was still in our hands, and succeeded, by an unexpected manœuvre, in reaching the town of Yartsevo and taking up an advantageous position there.

The Nazis aimed at developing an offensive via Yartsevo to reach Moscow by the shortest route along the main road. By a stubborn resistance, the Soviet units, which were numerically small in this district, succeeded in halting the offensive. Time and again vast German tank and infantry forces launched attacks, which were all repelled. Having lost a great number of tanks and considerable man-power near Yartsevo, the German Command was compelled to go over to the defensive.

By the end of July the 7th Tank Division and the infantry and motorized units were reinforced with men and equipment. But by that time the Soviet units had also been strengthened and reinforced. The Germans' second attack lasted throughout the first half of August. Launching a number of strong counter-attacks, the Soviet units not only frustrated the German offensive but completely smashed the tank division, drove the

enemy from the city of Yartsevo and emerged all along the line on the eastern bank of the Vop River.

The Germans withdrew the remnants of their 7th Tank Division for regrouping. New units were hastily thrown into the front, but there could no longer be a question of an offensive on Moscow with such forces. Subsequently a new plan matured—to outflank Yartsevo and to find a weak spot for a break-through to Moscow. Vast masses of troops were set moving to outflank the Soviet units in the district of Yelnia. Bringing up the 161st and 28th Infantry Divisions, with a great number of tanks, artillery and mine-throwers to the hills overlooking Yartsevo, the Germans set themselves the task of covering the direction towards Smolensk and ensuring the concentration of the main German forces in the district of Yelnia. With this in view, the Fascist Command ordered the strongest possible fortification of the natural defence line on the western bank of the Vop.

Numerous orders of the German Command found among captured Staff documents stated implicitly: "The difficult situation compels us to organize all our work in such a manner as to weaken the enemy operations." Another captured order to the 9th German Army read: "The situation created demands primarily the fortification of the defence zone."

The German divisions near Yartsevo started to erect a strongly fortified defence zone. Before launching an attack on the enemy the Soviet units had to cross a stretch of $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 kilometres under strong enemy fire, cross the Vop River, mined fields and barbed-wire entanglements, and finally to storm the hills where the German key defence positions were situated.

The Red Air Force reported that the enemy was bringing up tanks and concentrating large reserves. Already on August 10, finding itself in a semi-encirclement, the enemy formation requested the Command to dispatch immediate aid to prevent their complete rout.

To save these troops the Nazis decided to throw into the Yelnia district their reserves stationed south and east of Smolensk.

The moment for the operations of the Soviet units in the district of Yartsevo had arrived. Their task consisted in preventing the arrival of German reserves. On September 1 they engaged the Germans in a fierce battle. The offensive took the Germans by surprise. In a few nights preceding the offensive the Soviet units had accomplished the regrouping of their forces. The holding force designed for operations on a wide front consisted of an insignificant section of these troops. The remaining forces were concentrated under cover of darkness on a narrow front in the direction of the main blow.

During the night of August 30 Soviet units crossed the Vop River and took up positions for the offensive. Still unaware of the situation, the enemy opened disorderly artillery and mine-thrower fire. At 6.30 a.m., in keeping with the plan, Soviet artillery opened fire. For 30 minutes the Soviet artillery kept the enemy's main line of resistance under fire. At 7 a.m. Soviet infantry, supported by artillery and tanks, launched the attack.

Breaking down the enemy's resistance in the main line the Red Army men penetrated to the heart of his defence line. The German divisions met the Soviet units with a storm of fire from mine-throwers and machine-guns. But it was too late. The Soviet infantry units that broke through persisted in their advance. Throwing down their arms the enemy beat a retreat on the whole sector of the front. At 11 a.m. Soviet aircraft reported that big German troop transports were on the way to the front from the districts of Smolensk and Dukhovchina. The enemy was bringing up fresh reserves.

At the close of the day these forces entered into

battle. Among the prisoners were men of the 11th and 761st Infantry Regiments who had not previously been present in this district. The fighting lasted until late at night. In the early morning of September 2 fighting was resumed.

The battle began by a raid of Soviet aircraft. For some 30 minutes Soviet pilots bombed and machine-gunned the positions of the German troops. Forcing the Nazis to take to their dug-outs they permitted the Soviet infantry to bridge the distance by 150-200 metres.

Following the air bombing and brief artillery preparation the infantry, supported by tanks, hurled itself into the attack. The enemy again offered strong resistance. War prisoners showed that two new regiments were in the fighting. But here again the enemy, unable to withstand the onslaught, began to retreat, simultaneously bringing up fresh forces from the rear and drawing up vast numbers of tanks and armoured cars.

By the close of the third day of fighting the enemy had a considerable numerical superiority. He brought into battle the whole reserve of this formation, and time and again launched counter-attacks from various directions with one or two regiments. In an attempt to restore their position the Germans brought up units of the 228th, 225th and 198th Infantry Divisions.

Fearing the prospect of a break-through by Soviet troops, the German Command threw into this sector part of the reserves designed to assist the Yelnia formations. Nevertheless, it failed to halt the offensive of the Red Army men, who compelled the German formation to retreat westwards. According to our estimates, as a result of eight days of fighting near Yartsevo, the Nazis lost over 10,000 killed and wounded. The Red Army destroyed over 100 guns, over 100 mine-throwers, some 150 machine-guns, capturing about 50 machine-guns, 12 guns, 30 mine-throwers and

considerable quantities of other military supplies and ammunition.

The Red Army units in the Yartsevo direction thus successfully accomplished the task set to them, which was to divert part of the enemy's reserves from the district of Yelnia.

THE FIRST BATTLE OF BRIANSK

BY MAJOR ANANYEV

The plan of attack on Briansk elaborated by the German High Command was briefly outlined by Lieutenant-Colonel Lebel of the German Army in his notebook. Lebel was brought down in a German bomber on September 6 near Ovstrug. According to Lebel's notes, the German plan consisted of four major operations :

- (1) Moscow aerodromes to be smashed.
- (2) Second tank group thrusts of right wing to Briansk with the aim of taking Kursk.
- (3) First tank group establishes itself in the approaches to the Valdai Heights. General Guderian to take Roslavl and develop further break through to Moscow.
- (4) From Moscow—advance south-east.

General Guderian, Commander-in-Chief, General Recht, Commander of the panzer army, General Jug and other German generals proceeded to carry out this plan. The 29th Motor Division, the 94th, 31st, 147th, 217th and 34th Infantry Divisions, the 3rd Tank Division, Guderian's first panzer group, consisting of the 4th, 17th and 18th Tank Divisions, the 14th Motorized

Division and Guderian's 2nd panzer group, made up of the 28th and 18th Motorized Divisions, advanced westwards via Roslavl to Briansk while it was still warm. This marked the beginning of fierce fighting for Briansk.

Hitler's generals failed to break through from Roslavl to Briansk. Oberlieutenant Kunze, historian of the German 455th Infantry Regiment, wrote about the Soviet artillery :

"The Russian artillery fired splendidly and had an inexhaustible supply of ammunition. Both in numbers and in shell supplies it was superior to the German artillery. Russian mine-throwers, by well-aimed fire and numberless shell splinters, caused the German infantry heavy losses."

To headquarters, Kunze reported :

"In defence, the Russians were firm and fought well. When the 3rd Company counter-attacked, severely wounded Russians lying in the space between our 10th and 11th Companies hurled a shower of hand-grenades from behind on our break-through detachment."

Foiled in their attempts to take Briansk from the Roslavl direction, the Germans pushed southwards and attempted to storm Briansk from the town of Pochep. After several days of tense fighting, their advance was checked, thanks to the courage and bravery of the Red Army men, commanders and commissars. The Germans left thousands of corpses in the approaches to Briansk, but were no nearer to the town.

General Guderian, Commander of two panzer groups, supported by motorized and infantry divisions, then made his way further south, and for the third time attempted a determined attack on Briansk from three directions simultaneously. The Red Army units

boldly went forward against the enemy, and Soviet tanks, aviation, cavalry and infantry engaged the enemy near Trubchevsk. This tank battle lasted several days and brought victory to the Soviet troops.

Two days later the Soviet divisions counter-attacked in various sectors. On the left flank, around Pochep and Novgorod-Seversky, the 215th German Infantry Division, the 10th Motorized Division, the 178th Infantry Division and Guderian's heavily damaged panzer group were slowly retreating, hard-pressed by the Soviet forces.

The German 101st S.S. Regiment received a staggering blow at Pochep. Dozens of villages were recaptured by the Red Army. The local population came out of hiding and greeted the Soviet troops with tears of joy. They told of the violence, robbery and wholesale executions perpetrated by Hitler's cut-throats.

Fierce fighting continued for the better part of 10 days. German casualties were over 20,000 killed and wounded. Guderian's panzer group lost up to 570 armoured cars, 1,525 lorries, 196 'planes, 206 guns, 51 mine-throwers, several thousand rifles and large quantities of other war material.

The Germans were forced hastily to collect most of the divisions participating in the battles and send them to the rear for "recuperation".

BATTLES—Northern Front

THE BATTLE FOR TALLINN

BY VSEVOLOD VISHNEVSKY

After fierce battles Soviet troops evacuated Tallinn. Fighting in Soviet Esthonia lasted seven weeks. Many

thousands of German soldiers and officers found their graves before the walls of the city.

The battles were extremely hard fought. On one of the sectors of the front the Nazis launched a "psychological attack". It was done at dusk. After strong artillery preparations the alcohol-primed soldiers rose to their full height and rushed into the attack, firing from their automatic weapons.

They advanced in waves, hoping to paralyze the defenders' will to resist. Well-aimed machine-gun fire, however, mowed down the Nazis in hundreds. Encircled by five times superior enemy forces the Red Army fought the unequal battle with iron tenacity.

In the approaches to Tallinn the Nazis were counter-attacked by Soviet marines. Under the latter's onslaught the enemy was hurled back from the city for several miles. On the highways hundreds of Germans met their end on the barbed wire entanglements.

Shelling from the Soviet warships threw whole German columns into the air. Anti-aircraft fire and attacks by 'planes were very intensive. In one raid alone the Germans lost entire groups of 'planes. Nazi airmen picked up in the water spoke with a nervous shudder of the Soviet A.A. barrage.

Although cut off, the marines continued to hold the position for days. The population of the city took an active part in the fighting. The metal workers of Tallinn, the textile workers of Keila, fishermen from Muhumaa Island, peasants of Volost Ravila, left their homes and participated in the defence.

Members of the People's Volunteer Force fought side by side with Red Army men. Esthonian girls were not behind the men in courage and bravery. A 17-year-old nurse, Nina F., brought a wounded soldier off the battlefield on her back under a hail of bullets. The Germans opened a deliberate fire on the nurse and wounded her. Bleeding profusely, she nevertheless

brought the Red Army man safely to the first-aid post, where she attended to him before attending to her own wounds.

Thousands of working people, Estonians and Russians, built barricades under artillery fire. Motor drivers delivered ammunition and provisions and picked up wounded under direct fire.

The fighting raged on the outskirts of the city and in the city itself, but the electric power station continued to work, and newspapers continued to appear. After a long siege the enemy brought up fresh forces and finally broke into the town.

For four days in succession heavy artillery pounded away at the port and the roadstead, putting up a curtain fire in an attempt to prevent evacuation. The heroic defence nevertheless made it possible to evacuate a large proportion of the population.

FIGHTING AT LAKE ILMEN

BY LIEUTENANT-GENERAL VATUTIN

The Nazis concentrated large forces and launched an offensive in the direction of Soltsy and Shimsk, on the River Shelon, south-west of Lake Ilmen, in an attempt to break through to the lake. They pushed back the Soviet covering troops along a narrow front and broke through the defence line to a depth of approximately 7-8 miles. This was the wedge, that hobby-horse of Hitler's generals.

But, speaking figuratively, this wedge was wedged out by a wedge. One of our divisions began to press the Nazis back from the front while other Red Army units inflicted powerful flank blows. The Germans were hurled back in disorder, leaving behind many

corpses, guns, motor-cycles, lorries and a mass of miscellaneous war material. In these engagements the Soviet troops thoroughly punished the 56th German Army Corps and all but completely smashed up the 8th Tank Division.

Following this the Germans rushed up fresh forces and attempted to repeat the offensive. They thrust many tanks and artillery to the river bank. The German advanced detachment which was to capture the bridge-head consisted of a battalion which alone was reinforced by 20 anti-tank guns and two battalions of artillery.

Under cover of heavy artillery and mine-thrower fire the enemy succeeded in crossing at a point where two Soviet units formed a junction. This created the danger of the Germans breaking through the defence formations. The advancing columns were met with blows from the front and the flanks while the Soviet Air Force attacked the crossing and the German reserves approaching the river.

The attempt to force a crossing was thus frustrated and the enemy suffered heavy losses. On the Soviet shore alone the Germans left 210 killed, 9 guns, 8 machine-guns, 19 lorries, 3 motor-cars, 25 carts loaded with supplies, 1,500 shells, 25 uncapsizable boats, 6 mine-throwers and a radio-station.

The enemy dashed about from one sector of the front to another, trying to detect the vulnerable spot for a break-through. Having chosen the spot the Germans directed a fresh S.S. division against it. What this attempt cost them may be seen from the following words of a German war prisoner: "We lost up to 2,000 killed and wounded and our command had no choice but to reform the division into two regiments."

The Nazi troops then asked for help. At the request of the 16th Army Headquarters, the High Command transferred the Richthofen Air Corps to the scene of the fighting. In addition to aircraft, infantry, artillery and tanks were brought up from the deep rear and partly

from other sectors of the front. After suffering a defeat at Shimsk the Germans shifted the spearhead of their blow to the direction of Staraya Russa, south of Lake Ilmen. For this purpose they brought up the 10th Army Corps, consisting of four infantry divisions and supported by a tank division. With such a concentration of forces on a narrow front the German Command hoped to win the battle by one swift blow, to break through to the river and thus be free for activities in the Novgorod direction.

Despite their superior numbers the Germans continued to suffer very telling losses from Soviet units which employed the methods of mobile defence. Already at the approaches to Staraya Russa, near Novy Dvoretz, the German 21st Infantry Division lost up to 1,500 men in only two days. At Dno, another enemy division, the 126th, lost up to 1,100 officers and men killed and wounded in a single day's fighting. Heavy losses were sustained also by the 30th and 290th Divisions.

According to very modest calculations their losses in killed and wounded amounted to 10,000. One war prisoner of the 501st Regiment said: "Only 30-40 per cent of our normal complement remained. Particularly great were the losses of officers. Reinforcements were promised but not furnished."

In the approaches to Staraya Russa, the German Command was forced to hurl into battle the 126th Infantry Division which had just suffered a beating and hastily to bring up new air units. The Soviet troops were ordered, by making good use of the terrain and by clever manoeuvres in artillery fire, to wear down the enemy and hammer at him at every point, destroying his man-power and equipment.

The plan of operations was based on these orders. The Fascist advance was met by a strong fire which caused the enemy colossal losses. Following this the Red Army units in several instances themselves launched

counter-attacks and completed the annihilation by bayonet charges. Such, for example, was the case at Staraya Russa where Soviet troops, by a mighty counter-blow, hurled back the Germans dozens of miles.

The position of the Nazis was much the same in another district where their second group was concentrated. Having begun the offensive along the roads, they soon lost forces and material. At one village we wiped out completely two infantry companies, two batteries of mine-throwers and one artillery battery, all belonging to the 32nd Infantry Division. Very shortly afterwards another two enemy battalions were wiped out by Soviet troops at the village of P., while the remainder of the enemy force beat a hasty retreat. The losses proved so grave that the enemy was compelled to take up the defensive and once more pull up fresh reserves.

Fighting at Lake Ilmen continued day and night. Many Soviet units acquired valuable experience in the course of these battles of night sorties and long-range break-throughs behind the enemy lines. The regiment under Major Goryainov, for example, destroyed up to 500 Nazi soldiers, 400 motor lorries and a large number of guns and machine-guns in one such raid alone.

As early as the close of August the Germans attempted to overcome a stalemate in this district and to launch an offensive from the vicinity of Staraya Russa. With this aim in view they formed there a strong group of seven divisions. Besides, they decided to abandon the tactics of operating along the roads and to deliver the main blow across the shortest route to a point D. Soviet troops held firm positions on the river bank.

The approaches to the river were surrounded by barbed wire, while the woods were intersected with anti-tank pits, mine-fields and tank traps. The approaches to the bridgeheads were covered by numerous artillery and machine-guns. The enemy hurled over new forces into the battle. Not infrequently the Germans

launched as many as five or six attacks against one point in a single day. But each of these attacks only served to increase their losses. The killed were so numerous that at one point the river was bridged by a dam of German corpses. In this fight the enemy lost up to 15,000 killed and wounded.

After ten days of fierce fighting the German headquarters withdrew part of their forces from this direction and transferred them 19-20 miles southwards. Their plan apparently was to attack the Soviet flank, to break through behind their lines and to encircle the Soviet troops. Having concentrated a powerful mass of troops the enemy, at the expense of enormous losses, did succeed in breaking through towards the point D.

The Nazis then began to move northwards and their mobile units reached the lines of the Soviet communications. On the map their movement appeared an almost closed circle inside which were certain Soviet units. The generals of the 16th German Army made haste to announce the encirclement of the Soviet troops.

In actual fact the German panzer columns had only moved up the hinterland road and they themselves were encircled and compelled to take up the defensive. By consistent infantry advances the enemy was almost completely annihilated; only a small section of his forces broke through and joined the main body.

Fighting in this sector of the front continues and the enemy has been subjected to new blows from the Red Army even after this incident of the German radio's boastful stories. The 30th German Infantry Division, replenished by new forces, lost over 2,000 in the fighting in September. Incidentally, the Germans stripped their dead of clothes and threw the bodies into the river. This purely Aryan outrage is apparently motivated by two considerations: the shortage of equipment and less trouble with burials.

With no actual success to their credit in this sector

of the front the Nazi headquarters decided to invent a success. The Soviet units at Lake Ilmen, which the German radio has put down as "destroyed", have not only succeeded in checking the further German advance, but at several points have hurled the enemy back by successful counter-blows.

THE BATTLE OF LENINGRAD

BY COLONEL S. BORISOV

The beginning of the struggle in the approaches to Leningrad dates back to the second half of July, when, developing the offensive from Kaunas via Pskov the 4th German tank group, consisting of the 1st and 6th Tank and 36th Motorized Divisions, reached the Luga River. Here they were checked by the stubborn resistance and the counter-attacks of the Soviet troops.

Another German mechanized group (the 8th Tank and 3rd Motorized Division) was advancing from Pskov on Novgorod to reach Leningrad from the south-east via Chudovo. Red Army troops inflicted a blow to both flanks of this mechanized group. As a result the 8th Tank Division was surrounded and compelled to beat a hasty retreat. With the support of a considerable number of aircraft it succeeded in breaking through to the west, suffering heavy losses. The Soviet troops captured some 200 tanks and other machines. Approximately the same quantity of enemy mechanized means were destroyed by Soviet artillery.

The 8th Tank Division was actually annihilated. For more than a month it vanished from the front, and only subsequently the remnants of this division again appeared in the Leningrad direction. The rout of the 8th Tank Division, and the successful attacks of Soviet

units on the flank and rear of the enemy motorized and mechanized troops on the Luga River compelled the Nazi command to refrain from an immediate offensive on Leningrad.

To launch a new offensive the Germans had to bring up infantry divisions, fuel, ammunition and other supplies, mainly by sea through the Gulf of Riga. But here, too, they encountered serious obstacles, as the Baltic Fleet was operating in the Gulf of Riga at that time. The Soviet vessels sank 45 large enemy transports with munitions, materials and troops, 3 large fuel tankers, not counting the small craft and warships. In addition 16 large transports were damaged. In the rear the German communications were cut by partisans, who attacked the supply transports, small groups of soldiers, headquarters, aerodromes, inflicting heavy losses on the enemy.

All this harassed the concentration of the enemy forces and means. Only by August 10, at the cost of considerable efforts, had the Germans succeeded in deploying their forces to launch an offensive on Leningrad. For this they had to transfer large formations from the other fronts. In all they concentrated 13 infantry, 5 tank and 3 motorized divisions for the offensive on Leningrad.

In the middle of August the Germans launched an offensive along the whole front, dealing the main blow at Novgorod, where the attack was made by the 1st Army Corps, supported by the 8th Air Corps. Due to the loss of a great number of tanks the Germans were compelled to rely in this offensive chiefly on the infantry. Only in certain cases did they employ whole tank battalions.

Encountering the stubborn resistance of Soviet units the Nazis summoned the air force to support the offensive. The Soviet divisions withstood the concentrated air attacks: 200-300 'planes raiding in waves of

30-40 bombers each. All this might impress troops not yet baptized by fire. Only the tremendous numerical superiority of the Germans accounts for certain successes near Leningrad at the outset. It must be remembered that the Soviet reserves were only being deployed at that period.

The forces operating in the Leningrad direction consisted mainly of divisions which had retreated from the frontier and which were fatigued by uninterrupted fighting since the beginning of the war, together with People's Volunteer Guard divisions, then just formed from Leningrad working people. These divisions were just being drawn into the battle. The Red Army units offered heroic resistance to the attacking enemy, forcing him to pay a heavy price of blood for every inch of Soviet soil.

As a result of a month of uninterrupted offensive the Germans succeeded in reaching the approaches to Leningrad. The resistance of Red Army units has grown stronger in the past three weeks. On many sectors near Leningrad the battlefield is strewn with Nazi corpses and damaged tanks and the Germans are completely unable to move. Fierce attacks of the Germans on September 22 failed.

On the 23rd the Germans again launched an offensive, but were kept down by Soviet artillery, which held them until darkness. The Soviet Air Force prevented the German 'planes from attacking the infantry and artillery. Uninterrupted battles were waged in the air and 19 German 'planes were shot down on September 23 alone.

The Germans are attempting to encircle Leningrad. In some directions they succeeded in coming close to the city. The Nazis are now mobilizing literally all their reserves to crush the defence and break through to Leningrad. They are shifting their troops from sector to sector. But in vain! The city is firmly repelling all onslaughts. On a number of sectors the Germans were lately barely able to hold their positions and in some

places were compelled to roll back. In the last battles Soviet units dislodged the enemy from a number of inhabited points and occupied new positions. Soviet airmen and anti-aircraft gunners keep a vigilant watch on Leningrad. The Germans have succeeded in causing only very insignificant damage to the city, mainly to dwellings, hospitals and public buildings. This has cost them a great number of 'planes.

The heroic resistance of the Soviet units, coupled with the resolute counter-attacks, inflicted heavy losses on General von Leeb's troops. According to incomplete data, in the fighting on the sectors south and south-west of Leningrad alone the Germans lost over 100,000 killed, wounded and prisoner, 700 machine-guns, 300 mine-throwers, 400 tanks, 117 armoured cars, some 200 guns and 846 'planes. This does not include the losses in Esthonia and in the Novgorod direction.

Only a few numbers were left of many German regiments and divisions. The 1st, 122nd, 191st, 269th Infantry Divisions, the 8th Tank, 1 motorized and 1 S.S. division were sorely battered or partly routed in the fighting near Leningrad. It is known, for example, that barely 500 men remained in the 209th Infantry Regiment of the 58th Division and the whole division was left with only 2,500, the 43rd Infantry Regiment of the 1st Division remained with altogether some 600 men.

German war prisoners from various units are unanimous in their statements that only 70 to 80 men survived per company, some remaining with only 30 to 40. Particularly great were the losses of officers. Most of the company commanders had to be changed two or three times. The 11th Company of the 506th Infantry Regiment has the 3rd Company commander. It is further known that four German generals fell near Leningrad. The German losses are so heavy that they have no time to distribute their replacement troops along the divisions and hurl them into battle straight from the march.

German units have had a considerable number of cases of dysentery and influenza due to the extremely unfavourable living and climatic conditions. Despondency is beginning to get a grip on the soldiers. At the beginning of September the 220th Regiment of the 58th German Infantry Division refused to go into the attack. It was surrounded by other units and forced to go into attack under the threat of machine-gun fire from the back.

HOW LENINGRAD OFFENSIVE WAS HELD

BY COLONEL S. BORISOV

Already in the first half of September a large formation of Nazi troops, consisting of the 39th Tank Corps and the 28th Army Corps, including the 121st, 122nd and 96th Infantry Divisions, reached the approaches to Leningrad, having as its task to outflank Leningrad from the east.

However, the attacks of the Red Army upset this plan of Field-Marshal von Leeb. The German Command was compelled hastily to shift to the east the 29th Tank Corps and subsequently also to dispatch there the 122nd and 96th Infantry Divisions, the 28th Army Corps and also the 8th Tank Division from the Novgorod district.

This shock-group of German troops, after a number of stubborn engagements with Red Army units, was finally compelled to take to the defensive, dig in its tanks, using them as immobile gun emplacements.

In the meantime, von Leeb attempted to carry out Hitler's order to capture Leningrad at any cost. He launched an offensive on the city from the south, which began on September 10. It was characterized by the

stubborn resistance of the Red Army units to the enemy advance, which gradually died down. In the first days the Germans succeeded in advancing three to four kilometres a day near the town of K. Soon, however, their tempo dropped to one to two kilometres and finally the advance was completely halted by the resistance of the defenders.

In order to advance somehow in the direction of Leningrad the German Command launched a number of consecutive attacks on separate points, concentrating against them superior forces and supporting every attack with a great number of aircraft and artillery. But this method, too, failed to bring results.

On September 19, the Germans undertook an attempt to pierce the Soviet position with the aid of tanks. They hurled a tank battalion into the attack from the south-west, but in a few minutes it was scattered by Soviet naval and land artillery.

On September 22, the enemy again resorted to his old method of an offensive on a wide front. After artillery and aircraft preparation two German infantry divisions, supported by tanks, began the offensive in the same district on a front of ten kilometres. Two more infantry divisions, also with tanks, attempted to advance on a similar front in another district.

From the very beginning the German Command attempted to support the offensive by a considerable number of bombers. Their aim was to produce a moral effect on Soviet infantry. This enemy scheme was at once upset by Soviet fighter 'planes. Soviet naval and land artillery shelled the enemy lines, inflicting heavy losses. In the approaches to Soviet positions advanced German units were checked by machine-gun fire. Only at two points did the enemy succeed in making wedges in the main Soviet line.

In the morning of September 23, the Germans resumed the offensive on the whole front. Apparently

aiming to make the best use of their aircraft they began the attacks at different hours of the day. The offensive was halted near its original position by heavy artillery fire. At 8.30 a.m. the enemy brought fresh forces into the attack, but again failed.

The Nazis were again halted by Soviet artillery fire, which literally pinned them to the ground. At 12.30 the enemy undertook a new attempt to advance and once again his infantry was checked by Soviet artillery and mine fire. In this position the enemy remained until dusk.

In another district the enemy launched two attacks, but here, too, he was invariably checked by Soviet artillery and mine fire. Machine-gun fire was resorted to only on some sectors. As in the day before, almost uninterrupted air fighting continued during September 23. Soviet fighter 'planes drove the enemy from the battlefield, preventing his attacks on the infantry. The scope of these air combats may be judged from the fact that 47 German 'planes were brought down south of Leningrad on September 22 and 23. The Soviet Air Force lost 17 'planes.

At a first glance the battles of September 22 and 23 might seem to be nothing extraordinary. Actually they were of great significance. The fighting of these days saw the German advance on Leningrad halted; one more attempt of von Leeb to capture the city had failed. Of great significance were also the active operations of Soviet troops in the north-western direction which by counter-attacks on the German flank diverted the enemy forces, halting the advance on Leningrad.

In the following days the Germans no longer attempted an offensive. They confined themselves to scouting operations and on September 25 began to dig themselves in. These battles revealed the sharp decline in the offensive strength of the German infantry, worn out by uninterrupted combats.

On September 29, Red Army units launched counter-offensives on a number of sectors. They captured a number of inhabited points. By their active defence the Soviet units are steadily wearing out the enemy. The interaction of artillery, Red Army, Navy and Baltic forts are inflicting on the Germans heavy losses in men and material.

Soviet units have not yet achieved major successes near Leningrad, but by their resolute operations they are undoubtedly creating a serious danger to the enemy's position. The extent to which this position is precarious near Leningrad is shown by the fact that the German High Command was compelled to despatch there by air from Germany a battalion of the 7th Air Division which suffered least during the operations in Crete and which was completing the training of its men for reforming the division.

This battalion has been fighting near Leningrad since September 29 as ordinary infantry and has already suffered considerable losses. It would be incorrect to think that the enemy has given up the idea of a new offensive and relinquished his attempts to capture Leningrad. But Leningraders are determined to achieve the final rout of von Leeb's army.

BATTLES—Southern Front

THE DEFENCE OF ODESSA

BY MAJOR-GENERAL PETROV

The approaches to Odessa are hilly, forestless steppes intersected at places by squares of wooded groves. There are many roads.

These are the basic features of a battlefield which has become the scene of fierce and stubborn fighting for Odessa. The main task of the Soviet troops during the first days of defence was to check the enemy's advance towards the city in order to erect around Odessa fortifications and barriers. The entire city and environs were quickly converted into a large military camp prepared for defence. In this connection the particularly active role played by the population, which worked tirelessly day and night, must be stressed.

Soviet troops fulfilled their task—the enemy's advance was checked and the construction of defences completed. The Fascists hurled tremendous forces against the town from all sides. Odessa was completely cut off by land. In these circumstances every check on the enemy's advance, even for a single hour, was of prime importance, for it retarded the tempo of his offensive and frustrated his plan to cut off and capture Odessa by a blitz blow.

Every day won, helped to strengthen the city's defence. By September 1 fierce and ceaseless battles were raging along the whole front. The Fascists employed a tremendous number of troops in these operations. But despite the enemy's great superiority of forces the battles are not of a purely defensive character. Soviet troops not only repel the enemy attacks, but launch successful counter-attacks as a result of which every day brings the enemy heavy losses in killed, wounded and prisoners and supplies.

The battles around the villages K. and V. are of particular interest. The situation here was especially tense. Soviet troops retired to new fortified positions and the cavalry was ordered to cover this movement. Two cavalry regiments launched a determined attack against the enemy's basic forces consisting of two Rumanian divisions, supported by German tanks and artillery.

A hard-fought encounter lasted over two days. The advance of the Rumanian-German forces was stemmed and the enemy suffered heavy losses. Our troops captured many guns, machine-guns and several complete batteries of mine-throwers. In face of deadly artillery fire the Soviet cavalry regiments manoeuvred skilfully, immobilized the enemy's main forces in the chief sector of the front and cut off and annihilated single enemy units.

Meanwhile Soviet infantry entrenched itself in a new position. The few days won by the cavalry in this battle enabled Soviet troops to hold their positions for more than 15 days against the frenzied attacks of many enemy divisions. Meeting with stout resistance the enemy placed 17 to 18 divisions in the field, supported by aircraft and tanks. Certain sections of the enemy concentrations, amounting to six or seven divisions, tried to pierce the defences but without success.

These 15 days of fighting took a heavy toll of the Fascist forces. Some divisions lost three-quarters of their effectives and one-half of their equipment. Very tentative calculations reveal that between September 1-15 the German-Rumanian troops lost over 50,000 killed, wounded and prisoners in the approaches to Odessa.

The enemy makes extensive use of its artillery and particularly mine-throwers, under cover of which infantry is sent into the attack. Incidentally, in the first attacks the enemy, relying on a great superiority in fire and numbers, went forward very confidently, but the terrific losses compelled him to change his tactics and stick to a slow, cautious movement.

The joint action of Soviet artillery and infantry foiled all enemy attempts to gain convenient positions. In recent days, having received very substantial reinforcements of fresh German artillery, aviation and a large number of mine-throwers the enemy has under-

taken fierce combined bombings from land and air. He failed to achieve his goal, however, for the Soviet troops have adapted themselves to this tactic and have deepened their trenches. The enemy's fire has ceased to be effective.

On September 17, on a narrow sector of the front, the enemy brought up fresh regiments and attempted an offensive. Six infantry regiments were ranged against three Soviet infantry battalions. Over 15,000 mines and shells of various calibre were fired against the Soviet troops. On this occasion, too, the Soviet artillerymen demonstrated their high skill and efficiency. Their shells were well-aimed and rarely missed their mark. The enemy's formation was broken and his ranks wavered. At this point our artillery shifted its fire further and the enemy retreated in panic. Our artillery has received hearty support from mine-throwers, machine-guns and infantry.

After sustaining colossal losses the enemy was pushed back to his original position. The fighting around Odessa has shown that superiority in numbers does not always determine the outcome of a battle.

A striking example of this is provided by the operations in the district of L., where the enemy thrust three divisions into a gap in our line. Ceaseless and fierce fighting raged here for six whole days, but the enemy was unable to utilize or develop his initial success. This sector of the front was defended with unparalleled bravery by only one Soviet regiment.

The establishment of a stable and effective defence system required tremendous energy, and incredible difficulties had to be surmounted. In this task, commanders and political commissars worked with exemplary vigour. The most difficult task was the direction of troops in the field. In the limited and cramped space, constant artillery and mine-thrower fire often destroyed telephone lines. A system of dispatch-riders was organized to overcome this difficulty.

The success of the Soviet troops defending Odessa is due to the courage and fortitude of Red Army men, commanders and political staff. All of them displayed iron will-power and valour in the most difficult and trying engagements. Red Navy men, infantry, artillerymen, cavalry, collective-farmers from Stalingrad, Odessa workers and Kuban Cossacks are fighting here shoulder to shoulder.

Day after day they have repelled the frenzied attacks of the Fascist hordes. Noteworthy among Odessa's defenders is the battalion commanded by Senior-Lieutenant Shramko, the battalion commanded by Captain Petrash, batteries under Lieutenant Lysi and Lieutenant Taran, and the regiment under Captain Kovtun. Senior Political Instructor Balashov was wounded three times and each time returned to the field.

Many wounded men refuse to be evacuated to a hospital, and after being bandaged immediately return to their units. Characteristic of all Odessa's brave defenders is the complete absence of despondency or panic. The defence of the town is a hard job indeed, and numberless difficulties have to be overcome. But there are no cowards or slackers among the men and women who are determined to fight for Odessa to the last drop of their blood.

ENEMY TACTICS IN THE BATTLE FOR ODESSA

By COLONEL N. KRYLOV

It is nearly two months since fighting has been in progress near Odessa. On the way to and near the city itself the Rumanians lost a minimum of 100,000 men.

The battles near Odessa afford a striking demonstration of the servile dependence of the Rumanian Army and its General Staff on the German Command. The same tactical methods, the same practice of the notorious "wedges". This is not surprising, for German consulting officers, who work out the plans of the operations and battles, are attached not only to the Rumanian General Staff, but also the division and regiment headquarters.

In copying the German tactics, the Rumanians resort to concentrated attacks. Usually such an attack is preceded by careful artillery and mine-thrower preparation. The mine fire is particularly intensive during such preparation. It is established today that the density of artillery fire in the direction of the main blow sometimes reaches 80 guns per kilometre of the front.

For example, on September 15, in preparation for an attack, the enemy maintained an exceptionally heavy artillery and mine fire for a full hour, spending tens of thousands of shells and mines. The effectiveness of the fire was insignificant. In an attempt to create a great psychological effect the Rumanians aim the fire not on concrete objectives. Therefore the dug-in and well-camouflaged Soviet units are suffering hardly any casualties even from such powerful fire.

As a rule, during artillery and mine preparation, the enemy infantry take advantage of the corn-fields surrounding Odessa and emerge in columns along the line of attack. Knowing the enemy's tactics, the Soviet units bide their time while the enemy is concentrating his forces and, permitting him to come within close range, suddenly open fire, putting him to flight with heavy losses. A number of such cases occurred during the first half of September; each time the Rumanians retreated, leaving hundreds of thousands of dead on the battlefields. Usually such attacks end with 30-40 per cent. of the enemy man-power disabled.

The Soviet defence system and the firmness of the

Red Army units have compelled the Rumanians to revise their tactics. Now the enemy infantry is no longer brought up in columns, but approaches the line in small groups. Soviet units began to change from the defensive to brief counter-attacks. Surprise blows at the enemy flanks have dumbfounding effects, and as a rule cause the enemy to retreat in disorder to his starting-point.

A characteristic example was the battle near a rise N., which was of great tactical importance. Over a battalion of enemy infantry which attacked the rise was almost completely annihilated as a result of resolute surprise counter-attacks launched by small groups on the enemy flanks.

Lately, the Rumanian Command has resorted to new methods. Immediately after intensive artillery preparation, their forces advance with men firing automatics in front. They are followed by infantry platoons, which in small groups attempt to penetrate the junctions and gaps between the defence formations. These groups quickly dig in, whereupon steps are taken to extend and widen the wedge.

Soviet units consistently pursue the tactics of cutting the infantry off from the automatic riflemen and then annihilating them piecemeal.

The Rumanian Command decided to mark the beginning of the fourth month of the war by launching a new strong offensive on Odessa and reaching the city walls. This offensive was fixed for September 22, but the Red Army stole a march on the Rumanians by counter-attacking a few hours before the enemy had fixed the time. The surprise counter-blow, supported by the concentrated fire of aircraft, artillery and the operations of the Soviet air-borne troops in the enemy's rear and marines on the enemy flank, threw the enemy into a panic. They beat a hasty retreat, suffering colossal losses, abandoning their armaments, ammunition supplies, and even boots on the battlefield.

Far from carrying out the plan of the Rumanian Command, the enemy troops not only failed to reach the

city, but were hurled 12-15 kilometres back beyond their original positions. The Red Army men captured rich trophies: thousands of mines, vast quantities of shells, over 40 guns, some 200 machine-guns, over 1,000 rifles, hundreds of thousands of cartridges. The reinforced units of the 13th and 15th Infantry Divisions, which were preparing the attack on Odessa, were routed in this operation. Moreover, a point which is extremely important—the enemy was deprived of the possibility of shelling the city and port from its long-range heavy guns.

A document which fell into the hands of the Red Army Command shows that Antonescu has lost hope of effecting a speedy capture of Odessa and greatly fears the Soviet's offensive preparations. Only this can explain Antonescu's order to the Rumanian Army near Odessa, contained in this document, to prepare for a drawn-out stubborn defence, build trenches and dugouts and await the arrival of German troops before launching a new offensive.

BATTLES—Finnish Front

REPORT FROM THE ARCTIC FRONT

BY WAR CORRESPONDENT DUNAYEVSKY

Kola Peninsula.

In the first days of the war beyond the Arctic Circle, in the mountainous districts of the Kola Peninsula, the Nazis scored some initial successes when they pushed back our frontier units and entrenched themselves on a hilly range beyond a river.

The German generals announced to the world that the city would be taken in a few days. Each German soldier was promised 1,000 Reichmarks, a month's

leave and three days of plunder in the town as soon as it was taken. Six weeks have now passed and the enemy is far from capturing the town.

The enemy has been dislodged from several positions with heavy losses. Every summit, cliff and mountain path bears signs of recent severe battles. The Devil's Pass, a group of crags perched high above the surrounding terrain, was the scene of particularly violent fighting. Time after time the Nazis tried to cross the river and gain the Pass. On one occasion they reached the foot of the hill, and the Soviet Command learned that they were calling for volunteers to break our defences.

It was decided to allow the attacking column to cross the river. The Nazi detachment did so under cover of a foggy night, but were met by a hail of shells and bullets. The battle raged for three days, until the enemy was finally and completely destroyed in hand-to-hand engagements. The Germans left 1,000 officers and soldiers dead on our side of the river.

Every inch of ground and every approach to the Pass were contested bitterly. Field-guns, mine-throwers, machine-guns and ammunition had to be hauled up to the Pass by hand. All vegetation had been burned by the incessant firing and the hillside was strewn with smashed German mountain artillery and infantry corpses. The heroes of Narvik failed to stand up to the Soviet bayonet.

In one engagement a gunner named Frolov was surrounded by Nazis. He and his gun crew continued to fire on the Germans until the very last. Frolov, who had brought down four men himself, was severely wounded. When he was no longer able to use his bayonet the Germans ordered him to surrender. Rather than become a Nazi prisoner, Frolov took a razor from his kit and cut his throat.

In another mountain battle the enemy's resistance

was stubborn and fierce, as the regiment in action was composed of picked Alpine troops who had had experience in Norway. In a battle which lasted for several days, during which men and munitions had to be moved over dangerous cliffs and rocky trails, the crack regiment was finally defeated.

In this battle the Red Army captured a battalion headquarters and its important military documents. Other gains included a German supply depot, five radio transmitters and large quantities of armaments.

The enemy had to be literally smoked out of every mountain cave. One company, commanded by Lieutenant Ostrovsky, attacked three times in one day. This unit is often called the "international" unit, as it includes representatives of the many nationalities inhabiting the U.S.S.R.: Russians, Byelo-Russians, Ukrainians, Caucasians, Mordovians, etc. In one unit alone, 40 Red Army men, commanders and political workers, have been awarded honours by the Government.

TACTICS ON THE FINNISH FRONT

BY COLONEL MALITSKY

The experience of two months' fighting on the Northern Front permits one to draw certain deductions about the enemy's tactics in the conditions of heavily wooded terrain. Here the German units are operating alongside Finnish troops, but the operations of the two armies sharply differ.

When launching an attack, the German units usually make wide use of all types of arms. The attacks are prepared and carried out primarily to cause a strong moral effect on the defence. Artillery preparations con-

sist of moving fire at intervals of 100 to 150 metres. Such fire is kept up to a depth of 3 to 4 kilometres, repeated several times and concluded with an artillery attack on the main line of resistance.

Afterwards, groups of 'planes bomb the given sector for a long period of time. The Fascist 'planes incessantly dive down one after another and simultaneously keep up machine-gun fire. The Germans launch their attack in a massed group on a narrow front, thus striving to pierce the defence and then to encircle or outflank it. Sometimes the Fascist detachments penetrate into the disposition of the Soviet defence, but are always hurled back with heavy losses or completely destroyed.

The Northern Front does not permit German units to use tanks in large numbers. Instead, the Germans widely employ automatic arms and mine-throwers. Here, again, the Germans use these arms with a view to creating a moral effect and harassing the nerves of the defence.

It is significant that even in the wooded terrain, where close fighting predominates, the Germans avoid hand-to-hand encounters and strive to dislodge the Soviet sub-divisions from their positions solely with the aid of fire. They have never been known to accept a bayonet charge of the Soviet infantry. When launching an offensive the Fascist units usually sustain heavy losses in man-power. Whenever successful, they completely refrain from pursuit.

The Finns practise different methods of warfare. They rarely attack the well-organized defence and prefer cautiously to advance where resistance is weaker. The Finnish offensive on an organized defence is easily routed with heavy losses to them. In defence, however, the Finnish forces are superior to the Germans.

In general, the methods of offensive operations of the Finns consist in advancing slowly but securing their positions. Usually, after occupying a district, the Finns

immediately try to fortify it. A scouting party then seeks a new terrain and the units try to occupy the next district.

The methods for combating such tactics are not difficult. In one of the sectors of the Northern Front two Finnish battalions penetrated several kilometres into the Soviet lines and occupied a hill. After ascertaining the position of the enemy troops, Soviet units rapidly made their way to the one and only road along which the Finns were receiving their supplies and kept it under fire.

At the same time an attack from the front was made. Not expecting such a move, the enemy were unable immediately to comprehend where the main danger lay. Cut off from their supplies, the Finns began to retreat. This cost them considerable losses in manpower and material. Two enemy battalions were routed and the commander of one of them taken prisoner.

Such is briefly the difference in the operations of Germans and Finns on the Northern Front. The initial offensive onslaught of the German-Finnish troops, calculated to stun Soviet troops, is breaking against the staunchness and endurance of Red Army units.

DEFENCE OF MURMANSK

BY A RED ARMY OFFICER

Nazi plans for a second attack on Murmansk were outlined in a recently captured document, of which the following are the main points : (a) to break through to the main road ; (b) to cut off communications ; (c) surround and annihilate Soviet troops.

The enemy anticipated reaching the town within six

days without meeting any resistance. This was correct only on paper. It is true that, with heavy losses, the 138th and 139th Nazi Alpine Regiments and two battalions of the 388th Infantry Regiment pushed back our left flank and reached the road, threatening the supplies to some of the Soviet units, but they spent fourteen days on this operation, and their further advance was stopped by the stubborn Soviet resistance under the command of Major Pozhidayev.

Counter-attacks forced the enemy to switch over to the defensive. Trenches were dug, barbed wire and minefields were laid. Guns were also surrounded by wire and mines. It became clear that the enemy was reorganizing his forces, and preparing his reserves for a new blow. Soviet units anticipated these intentions by counter-attacking and striking from the right flank.

Two small groups held the enemy from the front. At the same time Zaitsev and Shushko approached the river from the left flank and struck at the German rear, cutting off the retreat. The balance of forces was approximately equal, but the Germans were stronger in ammunition.

Soviet artillery was reorganized according to the plan for attack, and its action was closely linked with mine-throwers and gunfire. At daybreak the artillery began preparations in co-operation with mine-throwing detachments. At the same time the Soviet Air Force attacked the German artillery and mine-throwers. This caused the enemy fire to quieten down considerably and sub-detachments of Soviet forces then pushed forward.

The enemy put up a strong resistance. Particularly fierce was the battle for the top of the Skalistije Rock, the Nazis' main base. Their heavy machine-guns prevented Soviet infantry from advancing towards this point. Lieut. Nikhmenko then pushed his alpine

regiment into the open. Several shots at point-blank range, and three out of the four heavy machine-guns which were covering the enemy base were smashed.

This helped the infantry. When the attack on the right flank began the sub-detachments under Zaitsev and Shushko appeared in the German rear. This was a complete surprise to the enemy. Fearing complete encirclement they withdrew part of their forces from the front, leaving a fairly strong protection of gunfire, and transferred them to the right flank to avoid being caught in the pincers.

As soon as Soviet scouts reported that about 30 German vehicles were moving towards the ferry on the other side of the river, the Soviet commander called on the Air Force. In a few moments Soviet bombers and fighters turned most of the vehicles into a bonfire. At the same time they destroyed the ferry-boats.

Pressed in on both flanks, the Germans hastily retreated towards the river. In order to save their manpower they threw quantities of ammunition and military supplies into the river.

On the second day of the battle, the main enemy forces had withdrawn to the other side of the river. German soldiers and officers were hastening towards the left bank, but the German Command had decided to hold some of their positions on the right bank at all costs. They left a fairly strong group on one of the heights as a base for a new attack.

This had to be annihilated as quickly as possible. The Germans reinforced the height and surrounded it with mine fire. They held it with two mine-throwing batteries supported by artillery from the other bank of the river. Their men were equipped with automatic rifles.

After careful investigation of the district, the Soviet commander decided to attack the height at night, and worked out a detailed plan. A careful study was made

of the enemy's defence methods. Infantry commanders came to an agreement with the artillery and decided on signals for opening and ceasing fire.

In the evening, the division under the command of Zhilin opened fire. At midnight Soviet artillery prepared for action. In order to secure accurate firing, Lieut. Potashkov quickly moved up to the enemy lines and directed his fire from there. His gun destroyed several heavy machine-guns. He was wounded by a splinter of his own shell but continued to direct his fire.

Soviet infantry then rushed forward and the German artillery began firing. Penetration appeared to be impossible. But the clever manoeuvring of the battalion commander, Lieut. Kasatov, solved this difficulty. He pushed forward heavy and light machine-guns, and the sub-division began to surround the height under cover of the guns. One unit under Lieut. Kozlov reached the enemy rear and threatened their retreat to the other side of the river. At the same time two companies under the command of Kasatov pushed the enemy from the front.

In the morning the Nazis retreated to the left bank, after having suffered heavy losses. The success of this battle was the result of thorough preparation and co-ordination between artillery and infantry. The commanders of these two branches were in constant contact and cleared the way for the rifle companies.

In two days the German wedge was annihilated. The Nazi Alpine forces were scattered. The Germans had lost as many as 1,400 killed and wounded.

According to incomplete data, Soviet forces captured 21 heavy machine-guns, 15 light machine-guns, 26 automatic rifles, 9 anti-tank guns, 3 field radio stations, a large number of rifles and other military equipment. The battle lasted 18 days.

Victory was due to the fact that Soviet forces did not

confine themselves to defence, but by counter-attacks they tired the enemy out, found his weak points and surprised him by unexpected blows. The battle was finally decided by the able manoeuvring of the sub-divisions under the command of Zaitsev and Shushko.

BATTLES—General

CLOSE-UP OF A BATTLE

BY WAR CORRESPONDENT EUGENIE KRUEGER

During the short lull it is difficult to believe that the place where I am writing this has been the scene of fierce and bloody battles, day and night, for the last 20 days.

There is not a single vehicle on the highway, though now and then the roar of a motor-cycle is heard. Only the bomb craters and slanting telegraph poles with torn wires remind one that this is war.

Suddenly a gun goes into action. Somewhere near by a mine explodes and a minute later it seems as if the sky above the forest has been rent asunder. Fighting develops with the speed of a hurricane. The call of the guns is answered by the drone of bombers which make the earth heave and tremble with their blows. When they pass, sappers crawl out to fill up the craters in the road.

At night the highway comes to life. Columns of lorries carrying ammunition move up under cover of darkness. Artillery is brought up nearer the main line.

It is already more than 20 days since large German

units have been centred here, unable to advance a single yard. Here, as everywhere else, the German Army operated like an automatic machine: bombers "stunned" the enemy, tanks "edged in", followed by infantry in lorries—and then H.Q. issued a victorious communiqué.

Now something appears to have gone wrong with the machine. It has to be set going backwards. There are no ferro-concrete fortifications here to protect the Nazi soldier against the incessant blows of the Red Army.

Lieutenant-Colonel Vorobyev's regiment was the first in action on this spot. Their job was to hold back the numerically superior enemy until a Soviet division could be moved up. The regiment marched 75 hours, during which it was bombed 11 times, and then went into battle straight from the march.

Their assignment was, with the support of tanks, to encircle the highway leading to the river, seize the bridge and dislodge the Germans from their commanding positions on a certain hill. The Germans were well entrenched on the hill and met the advancing Red Army men with a fierce fire of anti-tank artillery, mine-throwers and machine-guns. The Nazi fighter 'planes, flying low and nearly touching the heads of our men, hammered away incessantly.

According to the rules, a numerical superiority of at least 3 to 1 was required to take the position, but, disregarding classical rules, Vorobyev's men pushed on. They beat the enemy with their own methods: encircling and squeezing in a pincer movement. A Red Army man, Zaitsev, a member of the Young Communist League, crept up to an enemy trench, cut its telephone and hurled a hand-grenade at its machine-gun post. The Nazi soldiers fled from the trench and Red Army men moved through the gap made by Zaitsev.

Blows from the air were beaten back by anti-aircraft guns; one gunner alone accounted for two 'planes.

Fighting continued all night, and towards morning the Red Army had captured the height and ousted the Nazis from their vantage point.

This first attack launched by the regiment compelled the Germans to halt their extensive plan of attack and to pass over to the defensive. Since then, in 20 days, the Nazis have not advanced a yard and in some places have been forced to retire. Fighting has gone on without a break.

Our men have entrenched themselves on the main line and can only be reached by crawling up to their position. This was their first battle, but now they have learned all sorts of tricks. During a recent night attack they had to force a certain river. The ford was under heavy German fire. Our men then found that they could stuff their waterproof tents with straw and use them as rafts. In this way they appeared on the other bank where they were least expected.

While this was going on, three Red Army men carried 40 boxes of mines for two miles under a tornado of fire. As a result, the Soviet mine-throwers were able to put several German machine-gun positions out of action.

BATTLE FOR A SOVIET RIVER

FROM A CORRESPONDENT AT THE FRONT

Fighting on the River X has been going on for three days now. The Germans hurled their picked units into action to ford this river. Their formations included S.S. detachments and a large number of artillery tanks.

Usually when they tried to advance they employed their full firing power. In groups of two or three

their soldiers, armed with automatics, ran from bush to bush and from tree to tree as they moved forward. When they came up against the Soviet front lines they were met by bursts of machine-gun fire, whereupon they would fall flat and entrench themselves until they got a signal indicating the line of the German offensive.

Then enemy artillery would immediately open up a tornado of fire on the Soviet main line of resistance. At times the fire was so strong that Red Army men had to withdraw to a new line to avoid heavy losses. At present the fighting is developing on different lines. Red Army men have learned to withstand the fiercest fire from the German mine-thrower batteries. After occupying their line, they immediately build individual earthen fortifications, which are so reliable that no matter how fierce the fire of the mine-throwers, there are few casualties. Red Army men meet the German infantry with a hail of lead without retreating a step, and in many cases they use their bayonets. It has been established that in no circumstances will German soldiers withstand a bayonet attack.

A few days ago the enemy decided on an evening attack. White flares indicated the direction of their offensive; red flares meant: "Open fire"; green: "Cease fire". The latter indicate that the Germans mean to advance.

The Commander of the Soviet battalion, Senior Lieutenant Sokolov, who was well acquainted with German tactics, sent to H.Q. for a couple of green flares. The Germans kept the battalion under heavy fire. As soon as the flares were brought, Sokolov sent one of them up into the sky. Immediately the German fire ceased. Tense silence reigned. This was shattered by a cry familiar to the Germans: "Into the attack—Forward!"

Discarding everything that could be thrown away,

the Germans fled; behind every shrub they were met by the bayonet of a Soviet fighter. Next day the same battalion again launched a bayonet attack. This was after a battle lasting 20 hours.

A lull then set in at the front. The enemy was played out and was resting. At sunset the Soviet company went into action, to the complete surprise of the Germans. The soldiers who were holding their main line of resistance were so exhausted and overcome by surprise that they were quickly destroyed.

In the three days in which they had tried to ford the River X the enemy lost no less than 5,000 men, according to the most moderate estimates. On one of the sectors the Nazis, who were dead drunk, launched a "psychological attack". They advanced in crowds, only to be mown down by machine-gun fire. When the field was strewn with their corpses, new crowds rushed shouting into the deadly hail of lead.

Everything was explained afterwards when the dead were examined. Red Army men could smell a strong odour of alcohol.

DEFENCE OF A RIVER AGAINST NAZI TANKS

DISPATCH FROM THE FRONT BY POLITICAL COMMISSAR
M. BULKIN

The Nazis were endeavouring to capture the right bank of a small river. They threw against it tanks, artillery and aircraft, supported by motorized infantry.

Our riflemen were given the task of preventing the enemy from crossing the river. Our 1st and 2nd Companies took up their position on the outskirts of a wood, 120-160 yards from the river. They were joined by

anti-tank guns, while Soviet artillery entrenched itself on a height behind the wood.

Assuming that their artillery and aircraft had already demoralized our defence, the Germans let loose their tanks. Our men had, however, already dug themselves in. The first German tank advanced, firing tracer shells. After three rounds from Soviet artillery it burst into flames. The Germans then immediately followed up with eight more tanks, behind which advanced their infantry.

From the forest clearing they were met by anti-tank fire, snipers and sub-machine-guns. Soviet artillery joined in. Six tanks were destroyed before they could reach the river bank. The Nazi infantry, having lost their armoured protection, hid themselves in the riverside bushes.

At this point two more enemy tanks appeared on our flank. They attempted a ruse. On the tank turrets they flew red flags. Although the trick was quickly seen, the tanks succeeded in reaching the river bank. Behind them, like a swarm of locusts, the infantry hurled itself forward. In repulsing their repeated attacks our 1st Company exhausted their ammunition, but the menace of a break-through was averted by the rapid support of the 3rd Company. Meeting fresh forces, the enemy attack halted.

The Nazis now shifted their attack against another company and succeeded in crossing the river. Day was drawing into dusk. To leave the Nazi infantry there meant giving them a chance to consolidate their position.

The commander of the Soviet company which was threatened ordered a bayonet attack. The Germans had no way out. Behind them was water—in front of them a wall of steel. Our men hurled their hand-grenades and then charged with their bayonets. The Germans couldn't stand the cold steel. They fled back

across the river, leaving tanks and arms strewn on the ground. The river banks were covered by their dead.

BATTLE FOR A TOWN

BY CAPTAIN KRASNOV

After fording a river, the enemy occupied the southern outskirts of a small town and sent out a mechanized reconnaissance detachment. Two Soviet companies, supported by anti-tank and divisional artillery, met the attack.

Under cover of their artillery, the Germans moved forward motor-cycle mounted infantry. Dismounting, the infantry opened an intensive fire, while the heavy tanks moved slowly up from behind. The enemy calculated that the hidden Soviet machine-gun and artillery posts would open fire on the infantry and betray their position, thus becoming an easy target for the tank guns.

The Soviet commanders saw through this ruse and held their fire. The Nazis then thickly shelled the whole defence area with artillery and tried several attacks against Soviet infantry, all of which were repulsed with rapid rifle and machine-gun fire.

From their concealment Soviet artillery now opened up point-blank on the Nazi tanks. One group of tanks stormed the Soviet trenches in an attempt to crush infantry with their caterpillars. The Red Army men had, however, dug deep trenches, in which they remained staunchly while the tanks crashed across. The tanks were then met by a deadly fire from the rear.

The battle started at 9 p.m. and continued until 1 a.m. Soviet infantry and artillery destroyed 15 Nazi tanks, 20 cars, 50 motor-cycles and killed or wounded about 200 soldiers and officers.

STREET FIGHTING FOR A TOWN

After inflicting heavy losses on the enemy, Soviet troops evacuated the town of N. in the Ukraine. Fierce battles raged for several days in the approaches to the town, in which the Germans lost more than 1,500 killed, after which Soviet units took up their positions inside the town.

Every street and every house were defended by Red Army men and civilians. The first Nazi tanks appeared on Nikolayevskaya Street. The leading one was blown up by a mine. The two following tanks attempted to avoid the wreckage, but ran into a hail of grenades and fire-bottles. Both tanks went up in flames.

Other enemy tanks broke through to Frunze Street in the centre of the town. They were met by anti-tank gunfire from Captain Rasumov's battery. Those which survived were put out of action by grenades.

A bitter fight raged in Pushkin Street. A detachment led by Lieutenant Trubokurov allowed six tanks to pass, and when the enemy infantry appeared mowed them down with machine-guns. More than 150 German soldiers and officers were killed here.

The struggle lasted for 16 hours. The Germans met bullets, grenades, shells and mines in every street. Great courage and heroism were shown by members of the People's Volunteer Force. A platoon of railway workers, commanded by Korneyev, destroyed three tanks with grenades and fire-bottles. Another platoon of People's Volunteers put a German company out of action with machine-gun fire, over 50 Germans being killed in the street.

In and around N. the Germans lost over 10,000 men and officers killed and wounded, about 40 tanks and armoured cars, 20 guns, a large number of machine-guns and 100 motor lorries.

A RIVER CROSSING PREVENTED

German motorized troops with the help of pontoon bridges had crossed a river and attacked a Soviet unit. By a resolute counter-blow the enemy was thrown back. The Soviet unit assumed the offensive and pressed the enemy towards the river.

Meanwhile the Red Army men of Lieutenant Snegirev's unit, operating in the Fascist rear, blew up a dam three-quarters of a mile above the enemy's pontoon bridge. The torrent swept away the bridge and flooded a vast area. The enemy's retreat was thus cut off. Machine-gunners then fired point-blank, annihilating the enemy infantry and disabling lorries and guns.

The fighting resulted in a complete rout of the enemy. Not less than 400 German soldiers and officers were killed or drowned in the river, over 40 lorries were put out of commission, and 120 men, including six officers, were taken prisoner.

CLAMPING IN A RING

HOW THE 456TH GERMAN REGIMENT WAS DESTROYED

In the central sector of the front, the 256th German Infantry Division planned to seize a height N. and force the River D. To effect this the enemy moved the 456th Infantry Regiment forward and reinforced it with an artillery regiment.

The Soviet Command decided to strike out in a westward direction to forestall the enemy and seize the

height N. When the enemy's main force approached the river, Soviet guns joined in the action. Red artillery poured tons of metal on the German positions on the height.

Simultaneously, the unit commanded by Zhuravlev was ordered to advance along the river bank to penetrate the enemy rear and surround the 456th Infantry Regiment.

The most difficult task fell to the unit commanded by Senior-Lieutenant Smirnov. Stealthily crossing a forest, his unit forced the river and appeared behind the enemy's lines in the vicinity of the village of Z.

Other Soviet units approached from the southwest. The ring around the 456th Regiment was gradually closed. When it was finally encircled, the Soviet units launched their attack. The German division withdrew its other weakened units and abandoned the 456th to its fate.

This regiment offered stubborn resistance, striking out in various directions in an effort to break through the ring of death. Several German tanks dashed westwards in an attempt to break through the Soviet lines and clear the way for their infantry to rejoin their division.

Meanwhile, the units commanded by Zaitsev, Guts-mayer and Zenin were pressing the Nazi regiment from the west. The fighting lasted several hours. The enemy failed to break through the encirclement, and the 456th Regiment was completely destroyed.

According to preliminary figures, the enemy lost 6 tanks, 5 guns, 6 mine-throwers, 18 machine-guns, 1 armoured car, motor-cycles, bicycles, etc. The Germans were prevented from crossing the River D. and were thrown back west of the river, allowing Soviet troops to advance far beyond the height N.

TANKS

GERMANS TRY NEW TANK TACTICS

BY LIEUTENANT-GENERAL MISHULIN (TANK CORPS)

During recent attacks the German tanks have been attempting to operate mainly in small groups: in forces ranging from a company to a battalion, and very rarely in large numbers. This allows them greater flexibility in their operations, permits them to manoeuvre and ensures the possibility of passing rapidly from one form of fighting to another.

At the same time, however, this weakens the blows of their tank troops. Only rarely now does the German Command concentrate larger forces in a frontal attack for a decisive thrust with a large number of mobile forces (several tank divisions) as was the case, for instance, in the Briansk direction.

The speed of German tanks has also slowed down. The former tactics of deep "wedges" are practically no longer practised. This is explained by the fact that German tank units now forge ahead of their infantry less resolutely than they did in the early part of the war. They prefer to operate in closer co-operation with the infantry, supported by strong artillery and mine-thrower fire and aircraft.

German tanks do not cease fighting at night. With the approach of darkness, tracer shells and bullets, as well as wireless, are used to locate targets and direct the fire. Soviet tanks permit the enemy to come within close range and then open fire against the front-line tanks and the tail end of the column. The tanks in the centre, no matter which way they turn, come up either

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against their own smashed and burning tanks or our own destructive fire.

When their ammunition is exhausted and no other means of attack are left, Soviet tank crews, like Soviet airmen, ram the enemy machines. Technically, the enemy is well equipped. Soviet tank units, however, with the active support of infantry, not only counteract German anti-tank units, but also manage to inflict heavy blows on them. This is strikingly demonstrated by the blows recently inflicted on General Guderian's tank formations.

TACTICS OF THE GERMAN TANK UNITS

By MAJOR-GENERAL SUKHOV (TANK CORPS)

In their war against the Soviet Union the Germans have applied the methods of mobile attack—a method which has taken root in Fascist tactics. Hitler relied on the crushing force of his tank divisions accompanied by large numbers of motorized infantry. One hundred and seventy divisions were concentrated in the east for this purpose, of which 60 divisions were composed of mobile troops. The latter included as many as 25 tank divisions.

The fact that the Nazi mobile troops were nearly three times the number put in the field against France show that the Nazis intended to rout the Red Army with a lightning blow and achieve a rapid victory. Taking advantage of their surprise attack they gained certain territorial successes, but their calculations on crushing force and the sweeping movement of armoured groups have not been justified.

In subsequent operations the movement of these groups was completely stopped in certain directions,

and in others it was retarded. During the first days of the war the Red Army used skilful manoeuvre to destroy small and large groups of German tank and motorized troops which had become cut off from their infantry units. One such group of 300 tanks was destroyed by the co-ordinated efforts of Soviet infantry and artillery. It is significant that in this complex operation the destruction of the Fascist tanks was accomplished without the participation of Soviet aircraft or tanks.

Having made a study of the enemy's tactics and knowing his vulnerable spots, the Red Army is in each case using the weapons within its reach. The 39th German Tank Corps engaged in a decisive battle was routed by a powerful blow from Soviet air and tank forces. Tanks, supported by infantry and artillery, participated in the destruction of the 20th Tank Division.

Usually the enemy pushes forward large tank units in the directions of major operations. This move is preceded by the operations of general infantry troop formations or by tank troops jointly with motorized infantry, supported by artillery and aircraft to make a break-through in the defence lines. Tank divisions are followed by motorized formations. Mobile groups of troops push ahead as far inland as possible, and in their sweeping movement they neither look back nor pay attention to their flanks, irrespective of whether the rest of their troops are following along.

Lately the German tank forces have adopted the following method: When the tank units which have pushed on far ahead run short of fuel they dig themselves into the ground, leaving only the gun turrets above the surface. Thus while waiting for the arrival of fuel the tanks are transformed into a kind of fortified post, and the district occupied by the tank unit becomes something of a fortified district.

As the favourite Nazi method of driving in a wedge

with large mobile masses is not succeeding, the Germans (while still attempting to repeat this measure) are passing to the organization of more planned offensives with all their forces. In this development tanks are not used isolated from troops at the front, but in joint operations with infantry formations. Besides this, the Germans have started to use their tank forces in groups of various sizes, reinforcing them with artillery and infantry. These groups take advantage of certain gaps in the defence and sometimes a small break-through is effected.

Their troops then attempt to slip through into the depth of the defence zone in order to create panic by attacking the rear and giving the appearance of encirclement. The same object is pursued by parachute troops dropped together with light tanks and armoured cars.

The Red Army has seen through these tactics and has elaborated the appropriate counter-measures. It has already routed more than one Nazi tank division.

In speaking of the Nazi tank tactics and the successful Red Army counter-actions we must not conclude that all these German methods are no longer to be considered. Although thoroughly harassed the Hitlerite army may nevertheless once more attempt to throw large tank units into the attack. In the first six weeks of war Germany lost more than 6,000 tanks—not less than 15 tank divisions. While it is not easy to replace losses of material, it is still more difficult to replace the well-trained and staunch troops required for such a complex weapon as the tank.

WAR OF TANKS ON SOVIET FRONT

By SIMONOV (Military Correspondent)

During the night Soviet scouts reported that German tanks were concentrated in a forest at two points previously under Soviet fire, ready to attack.

At 3.30 70 German tanks emerged from the forest and opened a hurricane of fire with artillery and machine-guns.

Soviet anti-tank guns held their fire without disclosing their position. Soviet supporting artillery, however, immediately opened up. After losing several tanks the Germans were compelled to launch the attack before they had adequately prepared it with artillery. They deployed and began firing indiscriminately as they advanced.

In their path was an anti-tank ditch. A group of tanks skirted this, but, in doing so, came on a minefield. Seven tanks were blown up in several seconds. From the Soviet trenches the Nazi tank men could be seen jumping out through the hatches and being mowed down by machine-gun fire. The remaining tanks skirted the ditch on two sides and appeared before the beginning of the defence zone.

At this point a German Staff car and several lorries laden with soldiers emerged from the forest on to the road—apparently imagining that victory was already assured. A minute and a half later the entire area surrounding the forest was covered with dead German soldiers. The occupants of the Staff car were killed on the spot. A similar fate was met by two companies of German infantry which emerged from the forest in close order. Their intention was apparently to launch a “psychological” attack.

Meanwhile the tanks continued to advance, several of them coming on to the main road. Lieutenant Khoroshev gave sappers the order to explode a mined bridge on the road. After allowing the first tank to pass, the sappers blew up the bridge under the noses of the remaining tanks. Soviet batteries stationed near the highway then opened up with head-on fire. Three were destroyed and the caterpillar wheels of a heavy tank were damaged. This tank stopped but continued firing.

Sergeant Tarasevich crept up to it and hurled a bottle of benzine at the red-hot exhaust pipe. The tank burst into flames and the crew jumped out. Tarasevich shot one with his revolver and destroyed the rest with a hand-grenade. Seeing the blazing tanks, the German infantry, which was preparing to move into action from the forest, flung themselves down.

During this time the tanks in the centre had rounded the anti-tank ditches and the minefield and had arrived within about four hundred yards of the Soviet infantry. The tanks were followed by trailers in the form of armoured platforms bearing infantry. Some of the infantry crouched on the rear of the tanks themselves under cover of their armour.

Soviet anti-tank guns then opened fire, putting 10 tanks out of action, but being themselves partly put out of action. The German infantry now leapt from the armoured platforms and tanks, hurling hand-grenades into the Soviet trenches. Captain Gavrushin opened fire with anti-tank guns and machine-guns from the depth of the defence zone. Simultaneously Soviet infantry launched a counter-attack. German infantry, unable to withstand the heavy fire and afraid to meet a bayonet charge, retired in disorder.

Three more tanks were now in flames. The remainder retreated, covering their infantry's flight with rapid fire. The German infantry fled through a field of tall rye, throwing away their arms and tearing off rank marks from their uniforms. At the outskirts of the forest they were met by the fire of Soviet howitzers.

The battle had lasted fourteen hours. Dead German soldiers lay in groups in the rye field. Thirty-nine enemy tanks, two motor lorries and a Staff car were destroyed, and about two companies of infantry wiped out. A considerable quantity of motor-cycles, bicycles, rifles, machine-guns, and ammunition was captured by Soviet troops.

SOVIET EXPERT ON FAILURE OF GERMAN TANK STRATEGY

By E. TOLCHENOV

Extensive motorization has given armies the necessary mobility and possibility of launching offensive operations at high speed. Nevertheless a defence which possesses mobile reserves also has the means of countering breaches made by the attackers.

In their offensive the Germans employ methods based on the instability of demoralized enemy troops. After piercing the enemy front, tank formations move forward, ignoring the remaining flank troops. Such operations are only successful against inadequately mobile and firm troops. During the first days of the present operations, however, German troops were severely routed.

An example of skilfully planned operations by Soviet troops is the defeat of units of the 39th German Tank Corps, consisting of two tank divisions and two motorized divisions. This corps included several tank regiments, eight regiments of motorized infantry, five artillery regiments, four motor-cycle battalions and several anti-tank battalions.

The 39th Tank Corps apparently had the task, while operating against groups on the exterior flank, of striking in the direction of Alitus-Vilno-Minsk, piercing the advanced Soviet line and appearing in their rear; then, together with air-borne troops, to interrupt communications and cut off the retreat of Red Army units from the district of Minsk and further west.

Further south another advancing armoured tank group had the task of striking in the direction of Brest-Kobrin-Slutsk-Bobruisk. Both groups were operating in directions which crossed in the Minsk district,

attempting thereby completely to encircle Soviet groups west of Minsk.

Operating in the past against a poorly armed enemy with little initiative, the Nazis were accustomed to a high-speed offensive. Battles against advanced Red Army units showed, however, that the speed of advance was constantly slowed down. As it became obvious from captured documents, the German High Command began to show uneasiness. The commander of the 39th Corps repeatedly received insistent demands to speed up the advance by all means and at any cost. The uneasiness of the High Command communicated itself to Corps Headquarters. German tank divisions changed directions, thrusting now in one, now in another direction in an attempt to advance east.

All this no longer resembles the confident advance of German armoured tank units towards the French coast. Spurred on by their High Command, Corps Headquarters made impossible demands on their troops. The Soviet Air Force dealt units of the 39th Tank Corps a crushing blow. The losses and panic which ensued compelled the corps to halt its advance.

This was only the first blow. On June 27, at 2 a.m., Soviet tank units dealt a severe and sudden blow to the surprised enemy north-west of Minsk. The Germans were thrown into confusion, and units of the 39th Tank Corps suffered heavy defeat. As many as 300 Nazi tanks and a large number of men were destroyed.

Soviet troops completely routed the Corps Headquarters. Corps Commander General Schmutdt, the "unconquerable hero" of campaigns in Poland and France, was killed. Operational documents were captured. In the following days the Tank Corps was no longer able to participate in fighting as an independent formation. Its remnants operated jointly with motorized infantry.

Other German motorized units which followed in the

wake of the 39th Corps along the road Smorgon-Molodechno-Radoshkovich, and which were intended to follow up its successful operations, were compelled to halt. The intended encirclement of Soviet troops completely failed.

SOVIET TACTICS IN MECHANIZED WARFARE

The new methods of the Red Army in countering German blitz strategy are now becoming apparent. In a recent encounter German-Rumanian infantry and two artillery regiments invaded Soviet territory. Soviet artillery struck unexpectedly at the head of the column. Armoured cars then attacked, while infantry met the enemy with cross machine-gun fire, spreading panic in its columns.

Lorries, guns, horses and soldiers were thrown into confusion. Soviet artillery then moved up quickly and turned the enemy's own guns against them with withering fire on the fleeing German soldiers. The results of this concentrated action were the annihilation of an infantry and artillery regiment and the destruction of three batteries. Captured material included 56 guns, 80 heavy ammunition lorries, 600 carts, 1,000 horses, whippet tanks, many machine-guns, and a large quantity of rifles, shells and other ammunition. Several square miles were covered with enemy killed and wounded.

In another case Red Army scouts reported that the Nazis were preparing a tank attack in a certain sector. During the night the probable direction from which the tanks could be expected was calculated. After an artillery preparation the enemy attack was launched at dawn.

Two Red Army men concealed themselves and allowed the tanks to come within 25 yards before detonating mines under the tank caterpillars. The three leading tanks were blown up, blocking the way for the

rest. At this moment anti-tank guns went into action. Firing at the enemy point-blank, the Red Army destroyed 16 enemy machines.

At dawn on another occasion nine Soviet bombers, led by Senior-Lieutenant Zverev, raided an enemy tank column concentrated in a forest. Aircraft flew over their objective several times and caused a fire with their first bombs. Planes then dived on the tanks escaping from the fire and smashed them. Twelve tanks were destroyed by planes in this encounter.

Two Red Army scouts discovered 16 enemy tanks standing camouflaged at the edge of a forest in the rear, apparently in ambush. While one scout kept watch the other reported to the nearest Red Army unit. In a short time a flight of dive-bombers fell on the surprised enemy. The tank crews did not even have time to start their engines before all were destroyed.

HOW A SOVIET HEAVY TANK WORKS

In a recent engagement one of the heavy type of Soviet tanks caused great destruction in the German positions. The powerful tread-belts were used to crush German mine-throwers and machine-guns, and trees on which perched German snipers were hewn down at one blow.

Emerging from the forest, the tank came to the edge of a sharp decline, at the bottom of which were three German 75mm. guns. Without hesitation the heavy machine leaped over the edge and came crashing down on the gun position, crushing the guns and gun-carriages like twigs.

It then continued its progress through the artillery position, crushing gun after gun and ploughing up the place like a tractor in a field. The German gun crews, smitten with panic, fled from the smashing mass of steel.

COUNTERING TANK ATTACKS

A large Nazi tank formation five times attacked Soviet fortifications in the vicinity of a town in the north-western (Baltic) sector of the front. When the enemy had been worn out by these unsuccessful attacks and had used up its fuel, Soviet tanks launched a counter-attack. Fierce fighting took place between about 300 tanks and armoured cars on both sides.

Soviet tanks overwhelmed the advance columns of the enemy, destroyed four German batteries and sped on into the enemy's rear. Lieutenant-Colonel Sinelnikov's tank unit formed the vanguard. This unit alone destroyed 30 German tanks, 12 mine-throwers, two batteries of heavy guns, and hundreds of German soldiers. The field was strewn with the debris of enemy tanks, armoured cars and trucks. Altogether the enemy lost in the course of this engagement over 100 tanks and armoured cars, 45 guns of various calibres, about 20 mine-throwers and over 100 lorries. No fewer than 1,000 men and officers were killed.

SOVIET "TANK-SMASHERS"

In a recent engagement the Soviet defence line was situated within three-quarters of a mile of German rifle units and a column of light tanks reinforced by machine-guns and mine-throwers. In addition to tanks, the numerical strength of the Nazi infantry was two or three times that of the Soviet units. The enemy was preparing a combined attack.

The Soviet forces were joined by a special group of Red Army men—"tank-smashers". They consisted of a military technician, Bulgakov, Lieutenant Mashinin, Junior-Lieutenant Zubov and eight Red Army men.

They brought with them several boxes packed with "fire-bottles".

German artillery began with intense fire. Planes swept down in a bomb attack and the Nazi tank column moved forward along a 60-yard front, five tanks in a row protecting the infantry.

When the tanks were within 30 yards of the Soviet line, Bulgakov gave the signal by hurling a fire-bottle at the nearest tank. The brittle shell broke against the armoured turret and poured incendiary liquid over the metal, enveloping the tank in flames. The same thing happened to the other four tanks in the first row, bringing them all to a standstill. Their crews were burned before they could jump out. Tanks which tried to break through the fire and smoke met with the same fate. A few hundred fire-bottles were sufficient to destroy the entire tank column.

The whole encounter did not last more than ten or twelve minutes. A few hours later the "tank-smashers" had already moved to another section of the front.

TANKS ARE NOT INVINCIBLE

Thousands of specially selected men and commanders have now been trained by the Red Army as "tank-smashers". Another example of how these platoons work is reported from the front.

The Germans opened their attack with intense artillery fire. Soviet infantry lay in special anti-tank trenches. In an advanced position Lieutenant Bublikov's platoon of tank-smashers had entrenched itself. They allowed the tanks to approach within about 40 feet. Then Red Army man Betov hurled two bunches of hand-grenades under the caterpillars of the leading tanks, giving the signal for a hail of grenades and special "fire-bottles".

Several enemy tanks were put out of action. Those

which managed to break through were allowed to pass over the trenches, while Red Army men crouched below, and then were sandwiched between anti-tank gunfire from the front and hand-grenades from the rear.

TANK DESTROYERS

The Red Army battalion commanded by Major Gnedin is making a special study of anti-tank fighting. The men spend hours studying the weak points of the German machines and determining the best methods of combating them. These include armour-piercing bullets, bundles of hand-grenades and fire-bottles.

Within a month Gnedin's battalion has destroyed 104 German tanks. Red Army men Ruzavin, Kucherenko, Bolotov and Vedeneev have particularly distinguished themselves for their coolness and daring in action.

Ruzavin and Kucherenko are specialists with fire-bottles. Their bag so far is: August 10, two tanks; August 12, one; August 13, three; August 15, two. Their method is to camouflage themselves in a trench with grass and twigs, let the tanks come to within 45-60 feet, and then fling two or three bottles at the engine compartment of the machine.

These two men have also evolved a method of combating tanks in forests. On August 15 they set fire to three tanks by throwing fire-bottles down on them from trees. Bolotov and Vedeneev followed their example with nine tanks in one month.

TANKS IN THE BATTLE AROUND OREL

BY LIEUT.-COLONEL KRAPIVIN

After the first engagement near Orel, in which heavy blows were inflicted on the German Army, the Nazis

came to a halt to bring up reinforcements, regroup their troops and prepare for a new assault.

There was a certain lull in the fighting while both sides carried out night reconnaissance. During the day there were engagements between small tank units and some minor artillery duels.

On October 9 the enemy launched his new offensive, attempting to break through to the north. The battle began at dawn with the Germans hurling a tank division and large numbers of infantry against the Soviet defences.

At first, small tank units appeared on the field, evidently with the object of testing the defence system, detecting gun positions and machine-gun nests. Red Army units under Commander Lelushenko routed these reconnaissance units, and they retreated without fulfilling their task.

At this point the Germans brought large tank forces into battle. They came in wave after wave. This is one of the new features of German tank tactics in recent engagements. They first send out small tank units, which are evidently meant to harass and weaken the enemy, and then the main body of tanks comes into action.

Soviet troops saw through this tactic. Seeing that his advance units were making no headway, though suffering losses, the enemy was compelled to put his main force into the field before preparations were completed.

A powerful tank column was sent out in two directions, followed by infantry. German artillery greatly increased its fire. The Nazi tanks were met by a hail of shells, and only two machines managed to come close to the defence trenches; both were destroyed by fire-bottles.

With many dozens of wrecked tanks on the field, and with no results to show, the Germans retreated and attempted a flank blow. Here, too, they met with strong resistance. Nazi tanks in groups of eight to ten dashed about trying to locate the vulnerable spots in the defence.

Their efforts were in vain, and the enemy was once more compelled to retreat.

However, this was not the end of the enemy's attack. Bringing up fresh forces, the Nazis continued incessant attacks on the Soviet defence lines. Towards evening, taking advantage of the terrain, German infantry succeeded in approaching Soviet units. They attacked the Soviet lines, but were met by a hurricane of machine-gun fire, forcing them to call off the attack. The battle lasted till late at night, but the enemy did not succeed in breaking the resistance of the Red Army.

ARTILLERY

USE OF ARTILLERY ON THE SOVIET FRONT

BY MAJOR-GENERAL OF ARTILLERY E. KAMERA

The Nazi rulers thought that their tanks and mechanized troops would crush the Soviet artillery before it had the chance to offer resistance. Nevertheless, Soviet artillerymen continue to smash the enemy's equipment and fortifications. Recently on several sectors Soviet troops inflicted a number of heavy blows on the enemy. A considerable part in this was played by the Soviet artillery.

On August 11, in the fighting in the district of Demeshonka-Zubovo-Maseyevka, Soviet artillery, in close co-operation with rifle units, launched an attack on the 56th German Infantry Regiment and the 3rd Motor-cycle Detachment. The Nazis lost 1,500 killed and wounded. Five enemy batteries and some 100 lorries were destroyed by Soviet artillery fire.

On August 17-23 Soviet artillery in co-operation with other branches of the armed forces dealt a fresh blow to German units in the district of Poselitsa-Ryadyn-Turov, inflicting heavy losses on 161st and 5th Infantry Divisions and 900th Motorized Brigade. The Nazis retreated in disorder, throwing away their arms and leaving their killed and wounded on the field. To restore the situation the enemy brought up motorized infantry and tanks from the rear. Organized artillery fire beat back the counter-attack. The Nazis left hundreds of dead and about 70 damaged tanks on the battlefield. Subsequently Soviet troops found in the places on which artillery fire had been concentrated hundreds of Nazi corpses. The trophies comprised 40 guns, including some of 150mm.

No less significant was the work of Soviet artillery in the battles during the first week of September in the districts in the western direction of the front. Scouts determined the exact disposition of the enemy's gun emplacements and man-power, and at a specified hour concentrated fire was opened. Taken by surprise the Nazis beat a retreat, abandoning their arms and supplies. The fire was so accurate that the crews of two German batteries fled, abandoning their guns. In striving to restore their position the Nazis brought up reserves from the neighbouring sectors, but the Soviet long-range guns met them with fierce fire, dispersing them before they had a chance to approach the field of battle. The direct fire of one Soviet battery completely annihilated the 11th German Motorized Battalion.

Finally the Nazis launched one more attack which could only be explained by desperation. They threw into fighting a battalion of drunken Nazi soldiers, who marched into the attack to the accompaniment of a band. A few minutes later the battalion ceased to exist. It went down to the grave to the strains of its own music. As a result of three days' fighting the Nazis

lost 4,000 soldiers and officers killed, about 15,000 wounded, 30 guns and several dozen mine-throwers and machine-guns.

Suffering such heavy losses from Soviet artillery fire, the enemy is directing his main effort against Soviet artillery. But the majority of the enemy reconnaissance planes and observation balloons are shot down by Soviet fighters. Nor have enemy bombers caused us any damage of late. The anti-aircraft unit under Senior-Lieutenant Koltsov alone brought down over two dozen German planes in a brief period.

The Nazis are themselves already compelled to admit the supremacy of Soviet artillery on the field of battle, recognizing its superiority both in quantity and quality and, above all, in the correct grouping of batteries and guns according to the tasks required.

THE WORK OF SOVIET ARTILLERY

BY MAJOR-GENERAL SUSLOPAROV

In military operations, wedges are possible only where anti-tank defence is weak. The German infantry is usually brought into play after tanks and aviation have succeeded in breaking through the defence line.

The operations at Yelnia are characteristic in this respect. After forcing wedges in that direction in a short space of time, the Germans brought up large forces and planned to develop their break-through. But the Red Army caught the Nazis at Yelnia in a pincer movement and routed them. No small part in this success was due to Soviet artillery.

German war prisoners have declared that Soviet artillery fire not only caused tremendous losses but had a strong effect on morale. The Germans had a large

amount of artillery centred around Yelnia, but the Soviet artillerymen were able to crush it, to destroy many tanks and to compel the Germans to retreat.

For example, during the 20 days' fighting on the South-Eastern Front, one Soviet artillery unit destroyed 250 tanks, 200 lorries and over 100 motor-cyclists of a picked S.S. corps. Another artillery unit, operating on the Southern Front, destroyed an enemy battalion and one artillery battery in a single battle. At one point Soviet artillery commander Sveshnikov skilfully organized his defence line and opened sudden fire on a large advancing panzer unit, destroying over 300 enemy tanks and many other vehicles.

Here is another characteristic example: a Soviet artillery regiment, operating on the North-Western Front, was holding back superior enemy forces and covering the Soviet infantry which was retiring to a new defence line. The artillery regiment was furiously attacked by Nazi motorized and mechanized units, heavily supported by bombers. The regiment was encircled, but the artillerymen repelled all attacks and caused the enemy great losses. In this combat the enemy lost many tanks, vehicles and infantry, while our regiment successfully broke through the encirclement.

On one front our artillery destroyed and routed some 200 German batteries in one month of fighting alone. Excellent work is being done also by the Soviet A.A. artillery, which has also been successful in combating tanks and motorized infantry. Hundreds of enemy tanks have been destroyed by the Soviet A.A. units during the German attack on their gun positions. One of the indications of the might of the Soviet artillery and the bravery of its men is the fact that the Germans, in leaflets dropped over our lines, threatened that they would give Soviet artillerymen no quarter if they fell into their hands.

INFANTRY

NAZIS CANNOT STAND BAYONETS

Close-range fighting is the chink in the German infantry's armour. On the South-Western Front 300 Nazi soldiers were destroyed in one day, mostly as the result of Soviet bayonet attacks. The German infantry rarely brings the attack close enough for bayonets to be used; but when they do, they scatter in panic or surrender.

The German infantry is accustomed to advance behind a steel wall of tanks. Independent action is their weak point, and the Red Army takes advantage of this weakness.

In a recent engagement Major Laskin was given the task of smashing a German concentration at a certain point. The Nazi forces included a large number of tanks and motorized infantry. Under cover of night Major Laskin's battalion approached the enemy's outposts and entrenched itself in a hollow during the artillery barrage.

By the time the barrage was over the Nazi infantry had climbed out of its transports and their tanks were moving off. The hidden Red Army men let the tanks pass and then made a bayonet charge on the infantry. The Germans declined to fight. Some of them scrambled back into the transport lorries, but the fear-crazed drivers drove off and left most of their comrades to their fate. The Nazis fled in all directions, some hiding in the tall rye, others taking refuge in ditches and on roof-tops. They were everywhere hunted out and dispatched with bayonets.

A Nazi old campaigner named Broider, taken prisoner, said afterwards: "The Russians swooped down like lions, and we could not hide from them anywhere. I understood that until now we had not engaged in military action but had merely rolled on in the wake of our tanks."

ENCOUNTER WITH A NAZI REGIMENT

A recent engagement between a Soviet unit, commanded by Lukyanov, and the 312th German Infantry Regiment gives a typical example of the battles now being fought on the Eastern Front.

The engagement began after two hours of German artillery fire. The enemy first attacked the Soviet right flank defended by Lieutenant-Colonel Stepins' unit, but were thrown back by artillery and mine-throwers. The second attack was also repulsed.

After this the Germans resumed their shelling of the Soviet right flank. An hour later a tank group advanced against the same flank. The Red Army let the tanks pass into the interior defence zone where it was completely smashed. Twenty-three tanks were destroyed and the enemy infantry cut off from its tanks was decimated by mine-thrower fire.

Having thrown back the enemy, Stepins' unit launched a counter-attack, destroyed 8 German guns, 11 machine-guns, 3 lorries, and captured over 1,000 shells, 500 grenades, small arms ammunition and a wireless station. Over 400 Germans were killed and wounded, while 219 were taken prisoner.

CAVALRY

COSSACKS RIDE IN NAZI REAR

A Cossack cavalry detachment commanded by General Dovator penetrated into the Nazi rear and for a long time was engaged in smashing German troops and communications.

The Cossacks cut communications, captured wireless stations, set fire to enemy stores and hacked down German men and officers. The German command issued a special order on "the extermination of the Cossack detachment". Next day this order fell into the hands of the cavalymen.

Making their way through marshes and dense forests the Cossacks appeared wherever they were least expected by the Germans. In one engagement they annihilated another enemy battalion, destroyed 3 guns, captured 4 mine-throwers, 9 machine-guns, 16 sub-machine-guns, a wireless station, and burned down lorries and stores of clothing and provisions.

They then raided a German transport column, killing 138 German officers and men, destroying 58 lorries, 3 cars and 3 fuel lorries. The Germans sent tanks and planes against the cavalymen and laid ambushes for them, but the Cossacks eluded them.

The Cossacks took no baggage train with them but carried everything they needed on their horses. After smashing an advanced battalion of the 66th "Hitler" Infantry Regiment and routing the Rumanian Royal Guard, they penetrated about 60 miles into the enemy positions.

The terrain, dotted with numerous forests, favoured the raid. Sixty miles behind the German front lines the Cossacks became complete masters of the situation. They damaged roads and communications, burnt down stores, destroyed motor columns and fuel lorries and caught enemy H.Q. staffs by surprise.

For 12 days they harried the enemy without respite. On the second day of the raid they ran into the 9th Battalion of the 430th Infantry Regiment and after six hours of pitched battle destroyed it.

When local inhabitants informed General Dovator that the Germans were forming special detachments to destroy the Cossacks, he broke up his formation into

small groups which began acting independently in all directions, completely bewildering the German staffs. Making their base in a dense forest, the Cossacks appeared in the night or at dawn wherever they were least expected.

At night they perfected a method of catching enemy motor-cyclists by drawing a wire across a road and raising it suddenly when a cyclist appeared.

From the surrounding woods, stranded Red Army men and officers rallied to the Cossacks. General Dovator furnished them with rifles and machine-guns captured from the enemy and formed them into a detachment. In 12 days he was able to arm 1,000 men.

Destruction during the raid included 2,500 German officers and men, 10 guns, 87 machine-guns, 115 lorries, 6 tanks, 2 ammunition dumps and 3 wireless stations.

When it was time for them to return to their lines, local inhabitants led the Cossacks through dense woods to the rear of the German front line. On a misty morning in the first days of September, the detachment flung its whole weight against the Germans from the rear, charged through their lines and returned safely to their own units. The Germans were apparently so glad to get rid of them that they made no attempt to pursue them.

The Cossacks had, however, left behind them over 1,000 men as guerillas who would continue to harass the enemy's rear by every means.

IS THE ROLE OF CAVALRY FINISHED?

BY MAJOR-GENERAL KRUCHENKIN

The opinion has been expressed in certain quarters that cavalry operations in modern highly technical warfare are impossible and that the role of cavalry is

finished. These critics fail to take into account the wide scope for cavalry operations along the vast stretches of the present front.

Our sixty days of fighting against the Nazis have served to refute the view that cavalry "is a thing of the past". On the contrary, our experience showed that in modern warfare a high degree of manoeuvrability is a factor in success. Cavalry and tank units are the most manoeuvrable of all land forces. Cavalry, moreover, has proved to be less vulnerable than armoured vehicles to air attacks.

It has been shown that mounted units can move rapidly during darkness and in all weather conditions. This cannot be said of motorized infantry, which is tied down to roads and presents a conspicuous target to aircraft.

For sixty days our division was engaged in constant and heavy fighting with the enemy. The Germans hurled picked units against us, including large panzer forces. We were faced by the 16th Panzer Division, the 60th Motorized and Mechanized Division, the 68th Infantry Division and several other Nazi units. We encountered them at Kremenets, Dubno, Tarashchi, Katerinburg (in Western Ukraine), in the villages of Yakhny, Stepantsy and on the Ros river.

Near Kremenets the enemy charged us four times and continuous stubborn fighting went on for six full days. Operating against us were 100 tanks, motorized infantry, a motor-cycle battalion and 40 armoured cars.

Repeated German attacks failed, and the enemy's attempt to encircle us was equally unsuccessful. The Germans lost about 500 men killed, 30 tanks, 12 armoured cars, 50 lorries, 34 heavy and 40 light machine-guns. Our air units brought down three 'planes.

Our battle against the German 60th Motorized and Mechanized Division and the 16th Panzer Division near Dubno will long be remembered. It lasted five days,

during which the enemy attacked us 11 times in a desperate effort to break our resistance. It did not succeed. Over 500 German soldiers were killed, 21 tanks, 30 armoured cars, 75 motor lorries and two planes were destroyed.

We completely annihilated two companies of German motor-cyclists and two bicycle companies. Our spoils included three medium-calibre artillery batteries and two anti-tank batteries. About 30 heavy and light machine-guns were smashed.

At Tarashchi, the Germans attempted to launch a sudden attack to demoralize our men, but this also failed. Here the enemy lost 400 men and officers killed, in addition to a large number of wounded. We captured 13 tanks, 9 armoured cars, 30 lorries and 6 whippet tanks.

Our division found itself encircled three times. Near the small town of Katerinburg two of our regiments and their entire supplies were surrounded. The Germans rejoiced, and their commander ordered us to surrender, threatening to destroy every man if we refused.

We decided to launch a night attack and break through the enemy ring. Every man was pressed into action—even the wounded took up arms again that night, when the fate of our division was at stake.

Our attack was met by a devastating fire from 15 German mine-thrower batteries. We attacked three times before we could pierce the German front. We managed to break through and to save our transport trains, motor vehicles, ammunition and other supplies. That night cost the Nazis at least 400 killed and wounded, 19 wrecked tanks and 13 destroyed armoured cars.

The Germans continued to pursue us. Their aircraft incessantly hovered over our units. Near the Yakhny Woods, where our division had pitched camp, we had to face a bitter air attack. From eight in the morning onwards, for 14 hours, our division bore incessant German

bombing. Tons of bombs were dropped, but even this did not shake our spirit. While the raids were going on we were also engaged in fighting large German land forces.

Today, our division is still very much alive and in the best of fighting spirits. Many more German soldiers will fall before its attacks.

CAVALRY FIGHTING IN THE UKRAINE

BY MAJOR-GENERAL BELOV

Two months of fighting against the Nazi forces show that the Red cavalry has preserved its great Civil War traditions. Day and night on the march, hardly ever unsaddling their horses, without rest, covering 50 miles in a day, cavalry units on the Southern Front have successfully engaged enemy infantry and motorized and mechanized troops supported by German aircraft, and have acted under the concentrated fire of Nazi mine-throwers. The cavalry not only repelled the ferocious Nazi attacks, but itself took the offensive and often remained the master of the situation, maintaining its freedom of manoeuvre.

Here are some incidents. For seven days fighting raged on the River Prut. A Soviet cavalry unit was ranged against a Rumanian Guard Division supported by heavy artillery and a cavalry regiment. By a series of counter-attacks, the Red cavalry annihilated the enemy forces which attempted to cross the river. The surviving Rumanians either surrendered or swam back without their weapons.

Our cavalry attacks were often supported by small tank units. The Rumanians could not stand up to tank attacks and turned heel immediately they sighted the grim machines. In these engagements the

Rumanians lost practically the whole of the 6th Rifle Regiment and the better part of the 9th and 2nd Rifle Regiments. They left 5,000 dead on the Soviet shore and over 100 prisoners were taken. These figures do not include the large number of Rumanian soldiers and officers who were either drowned in the river or shot down on the western shore. The Guard Division was reduced to small scattered groups, which were hastily withdrawn.

In mobile defence action, our cavalry units take up two positions, one behind the other, which enables them to sever contact with the enemy infantry and avoid losses. In some cases—as, for example, when we withdrew beyond the Dniester—we undertook limited offensive actions in order to immobilize enemy forces and to cover our own movements.

Defence gave way to offence near the town of Balta. Supported by artillery, the Soviet cavalry broke through the enemy defences and compelled the Germans to retreat. Major Zubov's detachment advanced 12 miles and smashed the staff of the 128th German Infantry Division, killed the Colonel, who was the Chief of Staff, and captured several tanks.

On another occasion, near Novybug, our scouts reported the movement of a German column. Under cover of artillery and supported by aircraft, our cavalry attacked this column, while other smaller detachments outflanked it and attacked from the rear. A motorized S.S. regiment and the 2nd Tank Regiment suffered heavy losses.

Soviet cavalry is capable of successfully counteracting motorized and mechanized troops in all forms of battle and can cause them heavy losses. In damp, rainy weather the tanks lose much of their mobility and are often compelled to pass to the defensive. Under the same conditions, cavalry maintains complete freedom of manoeuvre. Nor were we seriously affected by enemy

aircraft, for our cavalry units are well camouflaged and their movements hardly detectable from the air. Anti-aircraft units work well, and in the first month of fighting one such unit brought down 15 'planes, another 11.

CAVALRY VERSUS PANZER

Soviet cavalry units commanded by Batskalevich recently made an extensive raid in the enemy's rear. At one point, Lieutenant Sokolovsky's squadron came across a battalion of German motorized infantry which had halted in the forest.

Overwhelming the Nazis by a sudden attack, the Soviet cavalymen smashed the German battalion and captured a wireless set, many motor-cycles, bicycles and lorries loaded with ammunition and provisions.

After this engagement the Germans moved panzer troops and a detachment formed of two cadet schools against the Soviet cavalry. The cavalymen dismounted and engaged in battle. Senior-Lieutenant Porokh and political instructor Orlov led their men in a fierce charge. The fighting lasted about eight hours. The Nazis lost about 300 killed and wounded, including a general.

In a subsequent engagement the cavalymen destroyed another battalion of motorized infantry and captured their H.Q.

During their raid the cavalymen succeeded in diverting large enemy forces from the front, destroyed many lorries, armoured cars, guns and a large quantity of fuel and ammunition. They also blew up a number of bridges. According to incomplete figures, the Nazis lost 1,200 killed and 500 wounded.

AIRWHAT HAPPENED TO THE LUFTWAFFE
IN THE EAST

BY MAJOR-GENERAL D. GRANDAL, RED AIR FORCE

Germany has hurled practically the whole of her air force against the Soviet Union. The Red Air Force was faced by four German air fleets and one separate air corps, and the Germans have concentrated the entire personnel of their air force against the U.S.S.R.

At a first glance the aeroplanes used against the Soviet Union in no way differ from the machines employed by the Germans in the operations against France and Britain, but the present-day German machines cannot be compared with those used in the first stages of the war. It is true the Germans did not introduce new types of 'planes on the eve of the war against the U.S.S.R., but the Luftwaffe's material underwent a thorough modernization in the winter of 1940-1941. Hence there are actually ranged against the U.S.S.R. greatly improved German aircraft bearing the former names.

The German High Command, however, did not regard this measure as adequate, and took steps to speed up the output of the new fighter, the Heinkel 113. The balance-sheet of two months of warfare proves beyond question that the Germans have failed to achieve their main aim, unchallenged supremacy in the air. Air encounters have strikingly shown that Soviet aircraft technique is far from being below German standards, and is actually above them in many respects. In particular, the Germans are themselves obliged to admit the superior quality of the new Soviet fighters.

The operations of Soviet aircraft against enemy aerodromes are particularly effective. In this war the

German Air Force is acting in small groups instead of large masses, and there are no large airfields at the front accommodating hundreds of 'planes. Most of the airfields are designed for a few dozen 'planes, some for 40 to 60, and these are well concealed.

Up to the present the Red Air Force has destroyed over 2,000 Nazi 'planes on the ground. Soviet anti-aircraft artillery is also causing the enemy heavy losses. The German losses were heaviest in the districts where air fleets under Kesselring and Stumpf operated on the western and south-western front.

Most of the Nazi machines brought down were Messerschmitt 109 fighters. Prior to the war against the U.S.S.R. the Germans considered this model the best type of modern fighter. One-third of all the machines brought down have been Heinkel 111 bombers. The Germans regarded this type as absolutely up to date, and despatched large numbers behind the French and British lines, without fighter convoys. After the very first days of fighting on the Eastern Front, however, the Germans were forced to modernize the machines in great haste.

The Germans are making desperate efforts to reduce the losses of their air force. They are staking their hopes primarily on the replacement of machines—but this is by no means a solution. In the war against France and in air encounters with the R.A.F., the Germans lost 12,000 skilled pilots, and they were compelled to establish numerous short-term training schools. In the main, Germany's present-day aircraft personnel consists of airmen who have received only a hasty training.

The questioning of war prisoners has brought out the fact that the majority of German fliers joined the force in the second half of 1940 or in the first half of the present year, and have a record of two to eight months' fighting service. They find it very difficult to master the complicated machines, and this inevitably leads to increased losses. In addition, the low level of

training of Hitler's half-baked "aces" does not allow them to make full use of the new machines. Hence the replenishment of material will hardly make up for the losses. The training of a large number of skilled and experienced fliers requires time, and time is one thing Hitler Germany cannot afford.

The German aircraft industry's capacity to replace the lost machines is limited. Before the war against the U.S.S.R. the German aircraft factories could make good all losses providing that only a part of the aircraft, usually from one-fifth to one-half, was actually in action. The situation drastically changed as soon as the basic Luftwaffe forces were brought into play. From May to September, 1940, the German aircraft industry could barely keep up with the Luftwaffe losses. At any rate, an increase in the number of 'planes did not take place in these five months.

Germany's aircraft industry could not meet the demand for 'planes as hostilities developed. Throughout the war preceding the attack on the U.S.S.R. the Luftwaffe lost no less than 9,000 machines. Nevertheless, in order to make good this loss, the Germans had to strain every effort, and their air force was frequently forced to curtail the scope of its operations.

In two months of war against the U.S.S.R. the Nazi losses amount to the imposing figure of 7,200 aircraft. Should the tempo and scale of fighting on the front stretching from the Arctic to the Black Sea continue at the present rate for two or three months more, the Nazi aircraft losses are bound to increase. The losses in machines and flying personnel will inevitably weaken and limit the scale of German air activity. Even now the Luftwaffe has no choice but to narrow down the zone of its operations and is forced to shift units from one front to another. Even if they work to full capacity, German aircraft factories will not be able to make good the rapidly increasing air losses.

FAILURE OF GERMAN AIR STRATEGY

BY MAJOR KOSTROV, RED AIR FORCE

In the first days of the war the Red Air Force checked the forward thrust of the German 39th Tank Corps; it was then engaged by land forces and smashed. Two days later a large unit of high-speed Soviet bombers began raids on German panzer divisions, which included the 39th and 118th Regiments.

Failing in their attempts to destroy the technical bases of the Red Air Force in one blow, the Germans changed their tactics and shifted their blows rapidly from one sector of the front to another. This was done to terrorize the Red Air Force—but the plan failed utterly.

Soviet fighter 'planes have performed excellent work. They are of sufficiently high quality and have a sufficient number of skilled pilots to counter the very latest models produced by the Nazis. In addition to the latest Soviet fighter types, the fighters designed several years ago have made a good showing. It was with the help of these machines that Soviet airmen rammed many Nazi bombers; one of them was used by Junior-Lieutenant Talalikhin, who recently rammed a Heinkel 111 near Moscow.

The high quality of the Soviet dive-bomber, particularly its high speed, give it a superiority over the latest type of German fighters. The dive-bomber formation commanded by Colonel Kabanov includes crews who have brought down several German fighter 'planes each.

Heavy bombers capable of taking large bomb loads and flying at high altitudes are used by the Soviet forces in raids on the enemy rear. It was in co-operation with dive-bombers that a squadron of heavy bombers recently destroyed Czernovodsk Bridge.

The encounters in the Smolensk region are characteristic of Soviet air operations. The offensive began by raids on front-line enemy aerodromes; in this operation all types of machines were used, from the heavy bombers to the fast fighters. Low-level attacks played havoc with the enemy forces and caused them hastily to remove their remaining 'planes.

The longer the war lasts the more difficult it becomes for the Germans to oppose the Soviet air attacks. This is clearly shown by the figures of losses in various sectors of the Smolensk front. Working in close co-operation with A.A. artillery, Soviet pilots brought down 162 Nazi 'planes on the Mohilev-Orsha line in two days alone.

The first days of the war showed that many German 'planes cannot stand comparison with Soviet machines of the same type. The German losses are mounting so rapidly that their aircraft industry is unable to make up for them. This forces the Germans to press into action obsolete machines long since taken off the active list. At several points on the front obsolete Junkers were brought down.

The Germans are doing everything they can to change their tactics and modernize their machines. Now that they are finally convinced that the Messerschmitt 109 fighters are useless against the Soviet dive-bombers, the Nazis have introduced the Heinkel 113 fighters on various sectors of the front.

BOMBS AND LAUNDRY

Whilst on reconnaissance air patrol, Senior-Lieutenant Kozhin noticed that a great deal of washing had been hung out near a certain village which was known to be in German hands.

In view of the fact that very few people ever remain in a village captured by the Nazis, this sudden appearance of washing seemed strange.

Kozhin took a chance and came down low over the outdoor laundry. He saw, under the camouflage, a number of enemy petrol tanks. His bombs soon disposed of both petrol and washing.

LENINGRAD MEETS RICHTHOFEN'S MEN

By WAR CORRESPONDENT R. KARMEN

In a special order designed to raise the spirits of the German infantry units, worn out by the resistance and counter-attacks of the Red Army, the German High Command announced the arrival of the 8th German Air Corps on the north-western front (Leningrad area). The order stated:

"You will attack jointly with the Richthofen Air Corps. You will have the support of an offensive force the like of which has hitherto not been seen on the Eastern Front."

It will be remembered that the original Richthofen Squadron, commanded by the German air ace, von Richthofen, won its fame during the 1914-1918 war. After the death of its leader it was commanded by Goering. Many of the original airmen in the corps were subsequently employed to form and train the present Luftwaffe.

Despite the fact that flocks of black 'planes from the Richthofen corps circled over their heads, the German infantry was routed and forced to flee. The air corps was obliged to mobilize its entire strength to cover the retreat of the German units.

After the defeat of the German infantry, despite the support of the black 'planes, guerillas informed a Red Air Force unit that the Germans had concentrated a large number of bombers and fighters on aerodromes near two cities.

The sun was already setting when groups of Soviet bombers, dive-bombers and fighters took to the air, heading for the two towns. Later the dive-bomber commander, Myshko, and the navigator, Lieutenant Petrochenko, told the following story:

"We were flying at about 2,400 feet. Below we saw the ruins of the city. We headed for the aerodrome from the sun, and we could see two rows of 'planes on the ground. The Germans did not expect us. They were taken by surprise and not a single fighter had time to take off.

"Our first load of bombs started several fires. We could see the panic-stricken Nazis rushing about the aerodrome amid the blazing 'planes. Only after our first heavy bombs had hit their target did the A.A. guns open up a ragged fire. Our fighters soon silenced the guns. After that we had the aerodrome to ourselves. Our bombers and fighters flew low, machine-gunning and setting fire to the machines and strafing the men below. One German fighter did try and take off, but it was destroyed by Major Gruzdev just as it left the ground. The Messerschmitt dropped straight into a heap of blazing machines.

"Having done our job we headed for home. Not a single 'plane was damaged. The ground below looked like a fiery sea. The same thing happened at the other town. Here also the Germans were taken by surprise

and our dive-bombers were able to drop their loads right among the enemy 'planes. Meanwhile, the bombers and fighters disabled the A.A. guns and machine-gunned the ground personnel. This group also returned without losses.

"As the result of these raids the Richthofen Corps lost 74 machines and a large number of pilots and ground crews."

AIR RAIDS ON MOSCOW

BY COLONEL ILIN, RED AIR FORCE

The German Air Force began preparations for raids on the capital from the first days of the war. Several air formations were assigned to raid Moscow. The Nazis placed particular hope on the 53rd Air Squadron consisting of long-range Condor bombers. This big air unit is equipped with Heinkel 111 machines. Raids on Moscow were also assigned to the 26th long-range bomber squadron equipped with Junkers 88 dive-bombers.

By the middle of July the air formation detailed for the raids on Moscow had 250-300 war 'planes with approximately 180-200 crews composed of sergeant-majors and officers trained for long night flights. By the middle of August the number of crews experienced in night flying had apparently declined to 100-120 and the number of fighting 'planes to 150-180. This induced the German Command to transfer new forces to the eastern front to reinforce the battered formations.

On August 14, about four groups of long-range bombers, numbering approximately 80-100 'planes, were sent to the Smolensk front from western Europe. During the first raid on Moscow the 'planes flew at an altitude of not more than 3,000-3,500 metres, on the second day 4,000-4,500. Owing to the heavy losses in the first two raids the enemy was subsequently compelled to fly not lower than 6,000-7,000 metres.

The flight from the aerodromes to Moscow usually lasted 2-2½ hours. In order to locate the target the first group of 'planes always used incendiary and flare bombs. The number of 'planes participating in every raid varied within certain limits. In all, about 2,500 'planes participated in over 30 raids on Moscow in the course of 2½ months, each apparently carrying not less than 1,800-2,000 lbs of bombs. Only about 100 'planes succeeded in breaking through to Moscow in this period. Moreover, a great percentage of bombs dropped caused no damage.

For these raids the German Air Force paid a heavy price. In the course of two months, over 110 enemy 'planes were brought down in the approaches to Moscow by Soviet fighters, some 60 by anti-aircraft fire and three 'planes perished in collision with balloon barrages. German pilots taken prisoner, who were familiar with the operations of their Air Force as a whole, testified that the German daily losses averaged 90-100 'planes. All the airmen flying to raid Moscow are ordered to evade battle with the Soviet fighters, either to retreat in zig-zag at full throttle, hide behind clouds or dive to get away from the fighter at great speed.

None of these methods, however, will succeed. When machine-gun or cannon fire is inadequate, Soviet airmen do not stop short at ramming, which has already sent no small number of German 'planes crashing to death. The Soviet airmen and anti-aircraft gunners compel the Nazis to drop their bombs mainly in the approaches to Moscow and get away as soon as possible. The population immediately extinguishes the incendiary bombs, the fire-brigades quickly put out the fires. As a result the few 'planes which succeed in breaking through in spite of the anti-aircraft barrage, are deprived of the possibility of accurate bombing.

A NIGHT FIGHT OVER MOSCOW

During the night of August 6, Nazi 'planes, as already reported, made another attempt to break through to Moscow. They were dispersed by night-fighters and A.A. fire. Several German 'planes were brought down and one of them was rammed by a Soviet fighter. The pilot of that 'plane, Junior-Lieutenant Victor Talalikhin, who baled out safely, now tells his story :

"I was on patrol that night and the full moon allowed me to see over a great distance. I was cruising around when suddenly I saw a 'plane flash by on one side. I immediately headed for it and identified it as a twin-motor Heinkel 111 bomber. My first round set his starboard engine afire and flames shot out of the cowlings.

"The Heinkel tried to make off, but I stuck on his tail, and when I got within about 30 feet I pumped bullets right into the cockpit. There was no return fire from them, but the 'plane still went on. Then I ran out of ammunition, so I thought I'd ram them. If I die, I thought, it's only one of me and four of them.

"The Heinkel was losing height by then. I crept up on his tail, intending to hit it with my propeller. Just then a heavy machine-gun opened from the bomber and I was hit in the right arm. I shoved the throttle over and rammed the Heinkel full and square. It burst into flames and went down. My 'plane started to drop, too, so I baled out and landed safely. Some collective-farmers gave me a great welcome."

The Heinkel shot down by Talalikhin was afterwards examined and found to be of 1941 manufacture. It was armed with six twin machine-guns and one large calibre machine-gun. The pilots were armed with automatic rifles and revolvers. The crew consisted of a 40-year-old Lieutenant-Colonel, a sergeant-major and two pilots. The Lieutenant-Colonel bore the Iron Cross,

and on his left sleeve was a Nazi emblem for bombing Narvik in 1940. The remaining German airmen were dressed in stolen Russian tunics.

GERMANY'S AIR STRENGTH

BY MAJOR PETROVICH, RED AIR FORCE

The German Air Force, with the exception of Army co-operation and coastal command 'planes, is divided into five air fleets. Each of these is an operative formation in itself and, as has been shown by the experience of war, is confined to supporting the operations of the Forces on a particular sector of the front.

An air fleet consists of two or three air corps. Each air corps contains five to eight squadrons of bombers, dive-bombers and fighters; in addition, there is a group of reconnaissance and transport 'planes.

The air squadron is the basic operative unit and consists of three or four groups. Each of these is divided in three detachments. A bomber squadron comprises up to 100 'planes and a fighter squadron up to 120 'planes.

The Army co-operation service forms an organic part of the separate units and is divided into two groups: long and short distance reconnaissance. These are under the command of General Bogatsch, the representative of the General Staff, attached to the command of land operations.

The Germans are using the method of changing over squadrons and whole air corps from one air fleet to another in order to reinforce their Air Force at the most important points. In order to secure greater mobility the units of the air fleet are kept separate from the organizations in the rear.

The Nazis have sent four air fleets to the Eastern Front, a fifth fleet being stationed in France and reserved for action against Britain.

German anti-aircraft artillery for protecting objectives from air attacks consists of stationary A.A. divisions and separate batteries. The A.A. artillery is divided into regiments, divisions and corps. The latter are usually under the command of the Army group commander.

An A.A. artillery regiment comprises 60 guns. The Germans pay great attention to the anti-aircraft protection of aerodromes, and each aerodrome is usually protected by one or two A.A. batteries. In spite of the combined action of A.A. guns and fighters, the German system has not been able to prevent the attacks of British and Soviet 'planes on important objectives in Germany. Anti-aircraft protection of aerodromes has frequently proved helpless against the attacks of Soviet bombers and fighters.

The German parachute and air-borne forces consist of parachute divisions, each comprising three regiments of 5,000 men, and air-borne divisions carried in transport 'planes and consisting of two infantry regiments and one artillery regiment. A division contains up to 7,000 men.

The parachute and air-borne divisions are transported in 'planes of the Junkers 52 Condor type. The Germans gained experience in landing large forces from the air in Belgium, Holland, Norway, and Crete. In the U.S.S.R. they have not made any large-scale landing operations, confining themselves mainly to landing small groups for sabotage purposes.

It is quite possible, however, that the enemy, in spite of the heavy losses of these air-borne forces (in their landing on Crete the Germans lost more than 1,000 men), will attempt to land troops on a larger scale. During the last three or four years the Germans have trained special forces for this purpose.

The Germans are attempting to reduce the variety of 'planes used in order to simplify the production of spare parts and the training of pilots.

In 1936 the air fleet consisted of the following fighters:

a single-seater Messerschmitt which has since undergone some modifications ; its speed has been brought up from 337 m.p.h. to 360 m.p.h. The two-seater, twin-engined Messerschmitt 110 fighter is used both as a fighter and bomber, its bomb load reaching over 2,400 lbs. As a fighter its speed is 322 m.p.h.

The bomber fleet consists mainly of the following types :

(1) The Junkers 88, a twin-engined dive-bomber with a speed of 272 m.p.h. and a bomb load of about 2,800 lbs.

(2) The Heinkel 111, a twin-engined 'plane with a speed up to 262 m.p.h., equipped with six or eight machine-guns and a 22 mm. cannon. Its bomb load is up to 4,000 lbs.

(3) The single-engine Junkers 87 is used as a dive-bomber. Its speed is 247 m.p.h. and its bomb load is 1,200 lbs.

(4) Some units contain Dornier 117 machines, and the transport 'planes are the three-engined Junkers 52 which can carry up to 20 men with full equipment. Other types include the twin-engined Junkers 90 and Junkers 86, and the four-engined Focke-Wulf Condor.

During the last year and a half only four new types of 'planes have reinforced the German Air Force : the silent fighters 187 and 198, the Heinkel 113 and the Dornier 217 bombers. Apparently, these 'planes have not been in great use on the Eastern Front and the Dornier 217 has not been used at all.

The twin-engined Messerschmitt 210 has been in production for a long time. It is a modification of the ME110 with more powerful engines. Other new types are the twin-engined Dornier 29 fighter, with a maximum speed of 375 m.p.h. and the four-engined Heinkel 177 bomber with a top speed of 300 m.p.h., a bomb load of 8,000 lbs. and a range of 1,875 miles.

The hopes of the German leaders to wage a quick

war against the U.S.S.R. by means of a large Air Force have been shattered. Over 9,000 German 'planes have been brought down or destroyed on the ground. This has been the result of the battle in the air so far.

ANTI-AIRCRAFT

AIR DEFENCE OF MOSCOW

BY MAJOR-GENERAL GROMADIN, COMMANDER OF
THE MOSCOW AIR DEFENCE ZONE

During the nights of July 22-24 the German Air Force tried to launch the first powerful blows against Moscow. About 150-200 Nazi 'planes participated in these raids.

In the distant approaches to Moscow, the enemy was met by our night fighters and co-ordinated A.A. gun-fire. Their formations were quickly dispersed and fled, dropping their bombs haphazardly. The main body of the enemy never reached the city, and only small groups of Nazi 'planes managed to drop explosive and incendiary bombs on houses. In all the raids not one military objective was damaged.

The Nazi Air Command sent their best fliers on these first raids over Moscow. In every 'plane shot down there were generally found officers decorated for previous "services".

Moscow's anti-aircraft defence has proved its effectiveness. Fighter 'planes and A.A. gunners have inflicted serious blows on the enemy, and this influenced the extent of his operations. In later raids on the capital a smaller number of 'planes were used, but heavy casualties continued.

Lately, in the 'planes we have shot down, we have found quite different types of crews from those which

raided us at first. Most of them are young fliers with poor technical and tactical training.

The Moscow air defence system works smoothly in all weathers. The men work unselfishly and tenaciously. At times thick cloud hindered the work of the fighters and the A.A. guns. The enemy bombers flew at 20-25,000 feet. The reply to this was a massed barrage of shell-fire in the enemy's path, which caused the bombers hastily to turn back and attempt another route of approach. They tried coming in from the south, the east—and everywhere they found the same intensive barrage.

Some of the Nazi pilots tried climbing high and then gliding through with engines throttled-down above the reach of the A.A. guns. The scouting 'planes, which generally approached Moscow in the daytime, consistently avoided battle and dodged in and out of cloud, diving from high altitudes and swooping away as quick as they could.

The failure of the Nazi attacks has inspired Goebbels to invent fantastic tales about the burning of Moscow, the destruction of military objectives, railway centres and the transport of foodstuffs.

We of the Moscow air-defence personnel recently received the greetings and best wishes from members of St. John's Wood A.R.P. services in London. We know that Londoners are showing the greatest pluck and endurance in the defence of their city. We, too, are guarding and will continue to guard our capital.

WHY THE MOSCOW BLITZ FAILS

BY MAJOR-GENERAL GROMADIN, COMMANDER OF
THE MOSCOW AIR DEFENCE ZONE

The first attempts to raid Moscow ended in a failure for the German Air Force. Moscow's air defence showed

its strength. Only individual aeroplanes broke through the anti-aircraft barrage.

During the night of July 21, single scout 'planes appeared at 10 p.m. over the approaches to Moscow. A few minutes later four groups of enemy 'planes, flying at intervals of 10 minutes, were sighted. There were altogether 70 'planes in these groups. The air defence system immediately went into action, with the result that not a single one of these 'planes broke through to Moscow. Four 'planes were brought down, while the rest hurriedly turned back, some dropping their bomb loads on fields and forests and others not dropping them at all.

The next wave of enemy aircraft came in the form of single 'planes or small groups at intervals of 10 to 15 minutes. Many of them failed to reach Moscow and beat a hasty retreat. Far outside Moscow are a large number of craters caused by bombs dropped haphazardly. Only individual 'planes succeeded in getting to the capital, where they dropped bombs without even aiming at any target, so as to get rid of their load.

During this night, fine work was done by night fighters and anti-aircraft gunners; the units manning the searchlights particularly distinguished themselves. Thanks to their blinding beams, three enemy 'planes were brought down in one of the districts of the city.

Mention should also be made of the Soviet small-calibre artillery which brought down two German 'planes. This small-calibre fire decisively prevented the attempts of German airmen to come down lower for target bombing. The following characteristic action was noted during the first air raid: when German airmen were caught in the cross beams of searchlights and attacked by Soviet fighters they dropped baskets attached to parachutes in order to draw the attention of searchlight units and airmen to the object dropped, while they themselves tried to withdraw unnoticed. Neither

the searchlight units nor the fighter pilots were deceived by this trick. The fact that the majority of the enemy 'planes shot down fell without even managing to drop their bombs testifies to the good work of the Moscow air defence.

It can be confidently stated that the Germans sent their best airmen, who have had experience in raids on Britain, France and the Balkans, to bomb Moscow. This was shown by the fact that one of the comparatively undamaged German bombers brought down was piloted by a German Air Force colonel.

The second day of the German air raid over Moscow held more difficulties for the air defence forces. Dense clouds hung over Moscow, hampering the operations of the fighters and anti-aircraft guns. The enemy bombers flew at high altitude of 21,000 to 27,000 feet.

Having been repulsed on the preceding evening, the Germans applied new tactics. They tried to break through to Moscow in small groups, taking advantage of the overcast sky and high altitudes. Twelve waves of 'planes were sent, which in the majority of cases reached the approaches to the capital singly. The 'planes sent against Moscow were for the most part Junkers 88 bombers and afterwards quite a number of DO.215 and DO.217 'planes. During the second raid four waves of enemy bombers failed to reach Moscow. Caught in the fire of night fighters they beat a retreat. The rest of the enemy 'planes came within the A.A. barrage and only individual machines succeeded in breaking through to the city. An important role was played by the artillery barrage to which the Soviet A.A. resorted because of the dense clouds. A wall of fire was placed along the routes of the German bombers. Coming up against this barrage fire, the enemy hurriedly retreated and tried to use roundabout routes, but was met everywhere by powerful salvos of A.A. fire.

PARATROOPS

PARATROOP TACTICS

BY MAJOR-GENERAL D. GRANDAL, RED AIR FORCE

The German Air Command has for the time being abandoned the idea of using large parachutist detachments on the Eastern Front.

The Germans use parachutists exclusively for diversionist activities: to destroy communications and transport behind the Soviet lines. In order to make these detachments more mobile they are limited to 10 to 30 people. Each such group includes several Russian-speaking persons and not infrequently includes women.

In order to penetrate behind the Soviet lines unnoticed the Germans paint a red star on their transport 'planes. This ruse is rather clumsy, as it is hard to camouflage the Junkers 52, which least of all resembles any Soviet model.

Paratroop parties destroyed on Soviet territory were armed with heavy and light machine-guns, 50 mm. mine-throwers, anti-tank rifles, hand-grenades and automatic rifles. The parachutists were dressed in Soviet Army or militia uniforms and often in civilian clothes. They landed mostly during the night, and the 'plane which carried them usually avoided large inhabited points.

During the first month of the war practically the entire population in the front-line zone was recruited for observation duty of one kind or another. This enabled us to keep a vast territory under constant surveillance and rapidly to detect any landing parties.

In order to reduce the time necessary for operations to a minimum, the Germans drop their landing parties close to the objectives they intend to destroy. This requires quick preventive action. Wherever the

Germans succeeded in landing unnoticed they despatched scouts to the main road. Dressed in ordinary civilian clothes and with a fair knowledge of Russian, the scouts had to lead the main body of parachutists to the objective. One such scout was captured behind the lines on the central front. He had been specially trained for operations on Soviet territory, and before coming to the U.S.S.R. he had spent nine months in a special training school.

During the fighting in Holland and Belgium, German paratroops were often dropped directly in areas where enemy troops were operating in order to demoralize these troops. In the U.S.S.R. the Germans attempted this only once—in the beginning of July on the north-western front. During the first fortnight of the war the German Command dropped dozens of small paratroop groups behind the Soviet lines.

The large majority of these parachutists were destroyed before they had time to do anything at all. Their failure was so obvious that the Germans abandoned them and are now organizing larger groups. They have landed several such large groups on Soviet territory, all of them in close proximity to the front lines. These groups consist of several hundred men armed with whippet tanks, armoured cars, large-calibre machine-guns and mountain artillery pieces.

The Germans tried to land these groups during the September fighting near Yartsevo, but having suffered defeat from the start they abandoned the idea. Often they sent scouting groups behind the lines, together with large parachute parties. During the July fighting on the central front, they landed two groups near a station, one of 300 men and a small scouting group of two squads.

The scouts were to open the road for the Nazi troops to the town of D. A Soviet battalion cut off their route and destroyed them.

Of special interest are the German attempts to land large groups from seaplanes. They attempted this in a forest region abounding in lakes. The seaplanes landed on the lake and the troops were brought ashore in uncapizable boats. Armed with automatics and well supplied with explosives, they attempted to destroy an important objective, but were detected in good time.

In the war against the Soviet Union the tactical methods employed by German landing parties have proved a complete failure. This explains why the Germans, who were so active in using paratroops in the early stages of the war, have been unable to continue these operations on the same scale in subsequent months.

HOW WE DEAL WITH NAZI PARACHUTISTS

BY COLONEL M. SPIRIN

From the very first hours of war we had to deal with enemy air landing parties. At several points on our territory the Nazis sent down landing parties, either by parachute or by 'plane, repeating what they had done in Norway, Holland, and Belgium.

We took all necessary steps to annihilate these landing parties as soon as they reached the ground, wiping them out a few minutes after landing and not allowing them to develop action against intended objectives.

Seeing that their plans had gone awry, the enemy tried new and crafty subterfuges. In order to protect their troop-carrying 'planes from our fighters they marked them with a red star—the emblem of the Soviet Union. But Soviet airmen and the civil population quickly saw through this underhand trick.

After this the enemy began to disguise the members of their landing parties, even going as far as dressing some of them in women's clothing. Parachutists have been landed dressed as Red Army men, members of

the Commissariat of Home Affairs and militia. Some of them were dressed as civilians. As a rule, all of them spoke Russian.

Landing parties are most frequently dropped in small groups with plans for sabotage and diversion. The size of these parties ranges from a few men up to several hundreds. They are generally landed in large forest glades or convenient fields. In some cases landing parties have been brought by seaplanes. Glider 'planes have not yet been tried, but their use is not precluded.

In the first days of the war the landing parties were dropped immediately in the rear of our troops, but they were soon taken deeper into the country, several hundred miles behind the front lines. These were all small groups and they were exterminated before they could do any harm.

What are the tasks of landing parties? They are as follows: To destroy all means of communication; to seize and destroy bridges and fuel dumps; to signal to enemy 'planes the targets they are to bomb. In some areas, as for example Brest-Baranovichi, landing parties were dropped to destroy railways.

In all cases the enemy strives to avoid meeting not only our troops, but also collective-farmers and workers. This is prompted, not only by the desire for concealment, but because the parachutists fear any open engagement, even with collective-farmers.

A characteristic feature of landing parties is that their members, at best, resort to defence and often try to flee. As soon as they see that flight is impossible they lose their nerve and surrender.

While the enemy is resorting to the landing of small groups this does not mean that they have given up the idea of landing large groups. We are ready for this, as we are ready to deal with trains of gliders. We know that the enemy disposes not only of transport 'planes on a mass scale, but also many gliders.

We have also not forgotten the army of spies which the enemy is undoubtedly landing in our rear. These men do not engage our troops or even commit acts of sabotage; their task is to gather quickly information concerning our military units and the work of our industrial undertakings.

The dispatch of parachute spies is effected mainly at night, when there is the best chance of landing unnoticed. How does the spy convey his information? It is most likely that an enemy 'plane will arrive to pick it up. For this reason we keep a particular watch on the night flights of enemy 'planes. The 'plane will not be able to land without some signal from the ground given by the spies; the machine will therefore have to fly around one spot where it intends to land to pick up the spy or his information.

When observing an aeroplane cruising around one particular spot, during the day or the night, it is essential immediately to make for the place which might afford a landing ground and to arrest any strange person found lurking in the neighbourhood.

School children have displayed a remarkable ability in combating landing parties. In a certain town some children, knowing the enemy's devices, guessed that a strange man who had suddenly appeared was looking for a suitable landing-field. They immediately notified the nearest military unit, and before the enemy arrived a warm welcome was prepared for them. The parachutists who were landed from two 'planes were destroyed on the spot.

ACTION BETWEEN A BATTERY AND PARATROOPS

On one sector of the front the Germans landed a party of more than 200 parachutists with five whippet tanks in the rear of Lieutenant Apraksin's battery of

heavy artillery. The paratroops attempted to surround and capture the battery.

The Soviet artillerymen immediately organized a defence ring. By direct fire, Gunner Shuravlev smashed the first tank to approach the battery. Gunner Protassov put out of action two more tanks. The remaining machines then gave up the attack.

The paratroops then began to creep towards the battery. They were met by point-blank fire from the battery's guns and machine-guns. In two hours of stubborn fighting the landing party lost nearly 150 killed. The remainder of the party were destroyed by Lieutenant Lipatov's company, which arrived to assist the battery. Two whippet tanks, many machine-guns and automatic rifles, and a wireless set were captured.

WE DROP BEHIND THE RUMANIAN LINES

HOW SOVIET NAVAL PARACHUTISTS HELPED TO DEFEND ODESSA

A landing party of Red Navy men from the Black Sea Fleet dropped behind the lines of Rumanian troops besieging Odessa. The sailors fought with skill and tenacity in the enemy rear, and succeeded in joining forces with the Soviet troops advancing on this sector of the front. The action of these naval parachutists behind the enemy lines was of great aid to the main Soviet units. The parachutists destroyed the Rumanian headquarters and machine-gun nests, killed many Rumanian soldiers and reconnoitred the position of the Rumanian troops. Here is the story of their daring exploits, as told by some of the participants:

RED NAVY MAN KOTIKOV.—No sooner had we landed in the enemy's country, than I heard somebody speaking Rumanian. Judging by the voices there were

two people. I hid myself, allowed them to come to within 50 feet and then threw a hand grenade, followed by a volley from my automatic. I could hear them groan. I waited and a little later I heard several people talking nearby. Only this time it was in Russian, and I was glad to see that there were some more Navy parachutists nearby.

Working together, we were able to destroy small groups of Rumanians, ranging from five to fifteen men. All our attacks were sudden—blitz attacks if you like—and we depended on the quick action of our automatics, hand grenades and bayonets. We attacked the crews of every gun that was shelling Odessa. After this we hid in the woods and waited for an opportune moment to escape. Rumanian cavalry detachments were sent out to look for us and we were being surrounded. As soon as we heard a Rumanian officer order his men to attack, we all retaliated by fire from our automatics. The Rumanian line gave way at one point, and we broke through to our advancing units.

RED NAVY MAN NAGREBA.—I jumped from the plane and landed on the fringe of small woods. Not very far away was a dug-out, and towards this I made my way. I had not yet reached it when four Rumanian cavalrymen rode up to it and dismounted. I crept along stealthily, until I was very close to the sentry at the dug-out entrance. I could hear the telephone ring and somebody talking in Rumanian inside. I made up a bundle of four hand grenades and sent them right into the window. A thunderous explosion and nobody ever came out of that dug-out.

Nothing more to be done here, so I went further into the Rumanian lines. On my right I found about 30 Rumanian soldiers marching in single file. I opened up with one long volley from the automatic. Some of them fell down, others hugged the ground and opened fire on a haystack behind which they thought I was concealed. After five minutes of shooting they directed

their fire on the woods. Suddenly I heard Russian being spoken, and I found some of our Red Army men being pursued by three Rumanian soldiers. I shot down all three of them.

We decided to work in twos. We were left with Liontev, who was seriously wounded, and we carried him about two kilometres to safety. We reached a gorge where the enemy could not see us, bandaged his wounds again, gave him six grenades and an automatic and concealed him from the enemy scouts.

We told him not to open fire himself, but only to shoot in self-defence. We would call for him soon. My mate went to see how things were in the village, and an old woman told him that the village had just been retaken by the Red Army. So we joined our forces, and in an hour or so we saw Liontev limping in. He said he did not like sitting all alone in the gorge doing nothing.

JUNIOR-SERGEANT BOGDANOV.—Upon touching the ground I first of all decided to find my comrades who landed before me. But this was no easy job, and after a while I was discovered by the enemy. I had no choice but to hide in the grass and see a group of horsemen approaching in front and five soldiers from behind. I got hand grenades and automatic ready.

The horsemen were coming nearer. I let them come very close and threw a grenade. One of the Rumanians fell from his horse, another's horse was scared and jumped aside. I followed with a sharp volley from my automatic and dashed over to the other side of the road and gave two shots from there. The Rumanians were in a panic and ran for their very lives. I sent a few volleys after them and myself took leave. Now I was free to move forward. Somewhere very near, almost directly in front of me, I could hear the sound of trench-mortars.

So that was the front line, I decided. I made my way there carefully and almost tripped over a telephone line. It took me two or three minutes to cut the wire

at several points, and no sooner had I done this when the mortar fire ceased. Later I learnt that this telephone was connected with the observer who corrected the battery's fire.

Some dark buildings could be seen far ahead, and I set out for them. On my way I found a large anti-tank grenade and took it along. Finally I reached the buildings, examined things carefully, and found that behind them were a group of horsemen, artillerymen and six guns firing at regular intervals. I found a convenient place and threw my anti-tank grenade, followed by several others. They landed in the very midst of the guns crews and what a terrible panic they caused. Those who survived were running in all directions, which gave me time to change my position and open up with my automatic.

I crept away and hid in a roadside ditch. Dispatch riders passed along this road every once in a while, and I picked off one of them with two shots. This brought several Rumanians on the road, but they did not notice me, and I crept away to safety. I decided to move ahead towards the front, since fighting was not far off. Directly in front of me were the Rumanian trenches. I stopped to load my automatic and prepare the grenades. One grenade I decided to keep for myself for I had made up my mind not to be taken alive.

So I crept along for some time when I heard a mighty Red Navy "hurrah" just in front of the Rumanian trenches. The Rumanians let loose heavy machine-gun fire and this, I decided, was the right time for me to appear on the scene. I opened fire on them from the rear—this they least of all expected.

My shots compelled them to retire to the left, while I pressed in on them from behind. Odessa's defenders had attacked with such vigour that the Rumanians did not even try to organize a proper resistance.

Soon I was with my men again, and after reporting

to the commander about the situation behind the lines I said good-bye to the lads and returned to the Rumanian rear. On my way I encountered two wounded Red Army men, and with them we continued to move ahead. Dawn was breaking. Ahead of us we could see the Rumanians, they saw us too, and opened mortar fire. We changed from place to place, seeking shelter in shell-craters.

Finally we decided to stay in one and see how things developed. Just then about 850 to 900 yards from us the rat-tat-tat of a machine-gun could be heard, firing at the Rumanian flank. The Rumanians quickly took cover and fired on the machine-gun. I decided to help our machine-gunner, and told one of the wounded to load the magazines and keep me supplied. I fixed myself up on a crater edge and opened fire.

Altogether I brought down 26 Rumanians and wounded five. They thought better of it and decided to retreat. Things looked quiet, so we crept up to the village and about 300 yards from it we met a little boy who told us that the Red Army had occupied the village. He also led us through what seemed an endless line of gardens and orchards into the centre of the village where I met all the other members of our landing party.

NAVAL

OPERATIONS OF THE SOVIET FLEET

BY A NAVAL CORRESPONDENT

Soviet surface vessels and submarines are patrolling the seas and hastening to places where the enemy attempts to utilize the waters for a concentration or shipment of forces. Powerless to conduct active military

operations in the eastern waters, and evading direct encounters and naval battles with the Soviet Navy, the German naval forces prefer to engage in piracy and attack hospital ships.

Soviet warships are invading enemy ports and bases, sinking his transports and mining his communications. In the Baltic, Red Navy men destroyed a Nazi convoy, sank two German destroyers, 13 troop transports, a barge carrying tanks, and set fire to 13 other transports.

A few days later the Baltic Navy men sent 11 enemy transports and a tanker to the bottom of the sea. A Northern Fleet submarine, commanded by Lieutenant-Captain Stolbov, penetrated into a Nazi harbour and torpedoed a big transport vessel. In the Black Sea a Soviet submarine, firing two torpedoes simultaneously, scored direct hits and sank two Rumanian transports of 15,000 tons.

Large Soviet warships have on many occasions shelled Constanza, Sulina, and other Rumanian ports, while cutters and mosquito craft have also won much fame.

The Naval Air Arm is raiding enemy ships and harbours, operating independently or in co-operation with the naval forces. A squadron of the Northern Fleet Air Arm under Captain Safonov attacked a group of German 'planes. The enemy tried to evade battle, but the Soviet airmen cut off their retreat. Captain Safonov fired four machine-gun rounds into a Heinkel from 150-200 feet, sending the Nazi 'plane crashing in flames against the rocks. Immediately after this victory Captain Safonov hurled himself against a Messerschmitt in a head-on attack. The enemy accepted battle and opened fire from 1,200 feet. At 600 feet Safonov opened fire with all his machine-guns. The Nazi pilot attempted to get away, but having been forced down low he crashed into a cliff.

The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. has also awarded orders and medals to many outstanding pilots and mechanics of the Fleet Air Arm.

On land also Soviet marines are fighting fiercely. In the district of Odessa the famous 1st Marine Infantry Regiment annihilated 2 regiments of the Rumanian infantry in the course of 3 days, destroying 4 tanks, many trucks and guns and capturing 6 tanks, 18 guns, 8 mine-throwers, 17 machine-guns and other war material.

LANDING AT LENINGRAD PREVENTED

BY VSEVOLOD VISHNEVSKY

The enemy endeavoured to approach Leningrad through the Gulf of Finland. In the darkness of night the outlines of a small ship could barely be distinguished. It was an enemy craft and it could easily be destroyed by artillery, but that would mean letting the Nazis know that Soviet patrol cutters had intercepted their communications.

The order was given to ram the ship, which the fast cutter did without difficulty. There was a splash, cries from the German boat and then silence. Two other German boats were sighted. One was assigned to Lieutenant Yeskov and the other to Lieutenant Tunguskov. Both boats were rammed and fell to pieces—in the darkness they sank, together with their crews.

The enemy heard no shots and was therefore ignorant of the fate of his advance craft. German troops continued to arrive in launches. One was rammed by a Soviet patrol cutter, and then a barge loaded with 100 soldiers and towed by a motor launch was rammed by Lieutenant Tunguskov. A second barge was dealt with in the same way by Lieutenant Yeskov. Altogether the Nazis lost several hundred soldiers and officers in this attempted landing.

HOW GERMAN LANDING AT OESEL WAS PREVENTED

On September 13 German troops attempted to land on Oesel Island, which dominates the entrance to the Gulf of Riga. The landing party was composed of six transports, each carrying 2,500 German soldiers. They were escorted by 8 destroyers and 11 torpedo boats.

This attempt was vigorously repulsed by the Baltic Fleet. With intensive fire the Soviet coastal batteries sank a destroyer and transports. Naval aircraft attacked and bombed ships heading for the coast and also covered the operations of the Soviet artillery. Sailors of the Baltic Fleet launched torpedo attacks and opened artillery fire, which inflicted heavy losses on the enemy.

The fighting, which started at daybreak, lasted approximately four hours. Four out of the 6 German transports, 1 destroyer, 10 torpedo boats and many small craft were destroyed. An enemy plane was also brought down. The remaining enemy ships and transports, which received damage, moved away from the zone of the Soviet coastal defence, hid from attacks of the Red Air Force and turned back.

On September 14 the enemy again attempted to land troops on Oesel and Moon Islands. A large number of transports, small craft and aircraft were concentrated beforehand at adjacent ports. This time it was not a classical naval landing. The Germans had practically no big transports. For the most part the enemy tried to ford the water line separating Moon and Oesel Islands from the shore of the Riga coast in cutters, barges, schooners and other small vessels.

With the support of field artillery from the opposite shore and aircraft which incessantly bombed Soviet units and ships, these transports attempted to land troops and entrench themselves on the islands. There was also

an attempt to land parachute troops. This new attempt was met with powerful fire from Soviet coastal and field batteries. Soviet naval airmen strafed enemy ships in the approaches to the islands. For two days fighting continued without interruption. Under cover of darkness, part of the German soldiers managed to reach the shore. As a result of two days of stubborn fighting the overwhelming part of the air and naval troops were destroyed on shore and in the water. One destroyer, one big transport and about 80 small transports were sunk. The remnants of the landing party were hurled into the sea.

The sailors of the Baltic Fleet destroyed several thousand Nazi soldiers and officers and sank a large quantity of equipment and ammunition.

FIGHTING FOR RIVER ISLANDS NEAR LENINGRAD

The Chief of Staff of a Red Army unit, Lesik, was informed that the Germans had occupied several small islands on the river in the approaches to Leningrad, and were preparing to cross to the right bank to attack the city. He decided on a bold course of action.

Soviet units were to cross the river, counter-attack and dislodge the Nazis from the islands. Rifle detachments were to cross under cover of a heavy artillery barrage.

Artillery and mine-throwers began by a concentrated fire on the left bank of the river. Infantry then rushed into the attack. Some crossed on pontoon bridges, others in boats, some made their way along the rocks and others swam across.

The men and their commanders, among them many Leningrad factory workers, rushed forward, showering the enemy with hand-grenades and fire from automatic

rifles and machine-guns. The fighting continued until late at night, with the enemy stubbornly resisting.

Finally, unable to withstand the pressure of the Soviet forces, the Nazis withdrew, leaving hundreds of killed and wounded and abandoning their mine-throwers, guns and ammunition. By the end of the day Soviet infantry were in complete control of the islands which they proceeded to convert into fortresses for their own use.

NAVAL BATTLES IN THE BALTIC

BY CAPTAIN E. MATVEYEV, RED NAVY

The Monsund Archipelago, consisting of several islands, of which Oesel and Dago are the largest, forms the centre of Baltic Sea communications. On the right, these islands shield the entrance to the Gulf of Riga.

In order to bring his transports into the Gulf of Riga the enemy had to reconnoitre our forces and risk operations around the Irben Straits, which form the main entrance to the Gulf of Riga. Two enemy destroyers, one auxiliary cruiser and several torpedo-cutters which ventured into this region were met by three Soviet destroyers.

Enemy aircraft attempted to evade battle and threw up a smoke screen. The Soviet warships, however, opened fire and determinedly advanced, reducing the distance separating them from the enemy. At the same time, Soviet bombers were summoned into action.

In this engagement the distance between the Soviet and enemy ships was in some places only 55 cables lengths. The guns of a Soviet destroyer sank one enemy destroyer and damaged another. An auxiliary cruiser was also hit in the stern.

On July 12, a Soviet submarine and 'plane reported

that from 45 to 50 large and small transports convoyed by five destroyers, three patrol vessels, a large number of torpedo-cutters and covered by fighter 'planes, was heading for the Irben Straits.

Soviet destroyers, torpedo-cutters and aircraft were despatched with the order to destroy the enemy. Coastal batteries opened fire on enemy aircraft as soon as it came within range. The German vessels steered a zig-zag course while their torpedo-cutters raised a smoke screen. This was of no avail, and Soviet guns found their target. Enemy ships were also blown up by mines.

Within a few minutes five transports, one destroyer and a patrol vessel struck mines and went to the bottom. Caught in the minefield, the enemy ships began to manœuvre desperately to find a way out. Some of them turned back, while others continued to forge ahead into the Gulf of Riga. A powerful headwind did not prevent the Soviet torpedo-cutters from launching a resolute attack, in the course of which they had to overcome the barrage of fire from enemy destroyers and armed transports. The enemy cutters attempted several counter-attacks, but were invariably driven off by machine-gun fire from the Soviet ships.

On July 18, the Germans again attempted to force their way into the Gulf of Riga. Twenty-six German troop transports, convoyed by destroyers and aircraft, were attacked by the Red Fleet Air Arm and the patrol destroyer *Stereguschy*. Soviet naval aircraft sank five transports and the *Stereguschy*, in face of bitter fire from the enemy destroyers, broke through their line and emerged in the very midst of the convoy. With her guns and torpedoes she accounted for five transports and damaged and set on fire several more without being hit once. One large enemy tanker struck a mine and sank.

Following this engagement, the Germans decided on a new tactic, and began to force their way through by despatching small groups of transports in the darkness of

the night. In the evening of July 26, Soviet aircraft detected 12 enemy transports, two destroyers and two patrol vessels sailing from Windava towards the Irben Straits. In the approaches to the straits Soviet torpedo-cutters, by a bold attack, sank two German transports, a destroyer and a patrol vessel.

From July 30 to August 21, the Germans made six attempts to pierce the Irben defence. Each time their ships were sunk or burnt by Soviet warships and coastal batteries. Thus the German attempts to penetrate the Gulf of Riga were for the most part unsuccessful. The German operations were greatly hampered also by mines laid in the Irben Straits. Nor could they clear the Straits of the mines, for the coastal batteries on the Svorb Peninsula did not permit this.

The German Command therefore decided to destroy these batteries by capturing the peninsula with the help of a landing party. On September 13 and 14, the enemy made several attempts to land troops on Svorb, which forms the southern part of Oesel Island. Six large transports, eight destroyers, a large number of cutters and motor barges, covered by aviation and heavy smoke screens, approached the shore and attempted to land troops. The Baltic defenders routed the enemy by combined and determined operations of their warships, coastal batteries and aircraft. In this engagement the Germans lost four large transports, totalling 28,000 tons, no less than 15,000 men, one destroyer, ten motor cutters and many motor barges carrying troops.

After this unsuccessful attempt, the enemy decided to repeat the effort, but first to destroy the Soviet coastal batteries on the Peninsula. Accordingly, on September 25, the Germans began an intensive shelling of these batteries. At first, fire was opened by four destroyers, but these were soon driven off by the Soviet batteries. Seeing that the destroyers were useless against the batteries, the Germans dispatched a cruiser, accompanied

by a destroyer convoy. The cruiser began to fire at long range, and two German 'planes took off from it to correct the fire of its guns. Soviet fighters brought both of them down. With no means of correcting its fire, the German cruiser did not dare to approach the shore. The coastal batteries kept up a steady fire on the enemy, but the range was too great for the fire to be very effective. But as soon as the enemy ship came nearer, the direction of the fire improved, and the first direct hit was registered, followed by several other well-aimed hits.

The cruiser began to retreat under cover of the destroyer smoke-screen. In the heat of the battle it did not notice how several Soviet torpedo-cutters dashed off from the shore to attack. The torpedo-cutter attack was well supported by the coastal batteries, and one soon saw shells landing on one of the German destroyers. A second volley went home and damaged another destroyer, which was quickly sent to the bottom by the torpedo-cutters. The cutters began an intensive torpedo attack, and scored direct hits on still another German destroyer and cruiser.

A German cruiser and two destroyers were sunk in this battle. The remaining destroyer took the damaged destroyer in tow and retreated under cover of the night. Fighting at Irben continues.

In two days ten German 'planes were brought down over Oesel Island. On September 29, five German destroyers again tried to approach the island, but were driven off by Soviet coastal batteries. One German destroyer suffered heavy damage and was towed away by other German vessels retreating under cover of a smoke-screen. The men of the Red Baltic Fleet are displaying a remarkable heroism in their defence of the gates to the Gulf of Riga.

PROPAGANDA

THE VOICE ACROSS THE RIVER

SOVIET BROADCASTS IN FRONT OF GERMAN POSITIONS

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

On the Central Front.

The night is pitch dark. The Germans have been attempting to encircle from three sides a piece of ground tenaciously defended by Soviet units.

A blinding white flare pierces the darkness and immediately automatic weapons begin to rattle furiously. The Nazis are evidently not asleep.

The flare dies away and out of the darkness suddenly comes a voice. It can be heard from a long distance. It is a German voice and it says :

"Soldiers of the 15th Infantry Division—this is N.C.O. Siegfried Witte from the cyclist scouting battalion speaking to you. I was taken prisoner by the Russians. At first I thought that was the end of me. You've heard yourselves how the officers say that Russians shoot their prisoners. It's all a lie. . . ."

The firing beyond the river has died down. Astounded by the suddenness of it all, the Germans are listening attentively.

"Men of my battalion," comes the voice again, "Sergeant Scheffer, Albert Herbst, Arthur Jan—I could enumerate all your names—but you will now believe that it is I who am speaking to you. Be sensible and stop fighting. Don't believe your officers. Put an end to the war which Hitler thrust on you. Come over to the Red Army. Peace will then speedily follow and we shall all return to our families unharmed."

There is utter silence on the German side. The soldiers are interested to hear what their former comrade, whom they all know, has to say. The invisible speaker continues :

“Soldiers of the 15th Infantry Division—your friends Witte, Corporal Betcher, N.C.O. Berke and N.C.O. Bartonitz, Corporal Schmidt and many others surrendered. They are finding things good here. Follow their example. The Red Army Command guarantees you your life, good treatment and a return to your native country after the war.”

The voice ceases and music is heard. Not a single flare is sent up, not a single shot is fired. The Germans listen to the song of the Red Army men—“Moscow Mine”.

The broadcast is organized by four Red Army men. Nearly every night they creep up to the German positions with their portable wireless station. The broadcasts do not always pass off smoothly. There are occasions when Nazi officers order a tornado of machine-gun and mine-thrower fire on the broadcasters, but they are masters at camouflage.

The broadcast sometimes lasts 40 minutes. German prisoners of war, soldiers and non-commissioned officers are given a chance to speak. The wireless operators also broadcast special bulletins on the situation in Germany, announcing, for example, how the Nazis have established special stud farms for human beings.

The broadcasters usually organize themselves as follows. Before sunset they study the terrain and the route along which the wireless lorry will travel. They then choose a place for the loudspeaker—this is the hardest of all—generally it is placed on a height where sound can carry further. Then from a concealed post the broadcast begins.

In the daytime the apparatus is used to broadcast concerts of records for Red Army men off duty.

SOVIET PASSES FOR GERMAN SOLDIERS

Soviet 'planes and reconnoitring detachments daily drop hundreds of thousands of leaflets addressed to the soldiers in the enemy rear. One of the most important features of these leaflets is that many of them serve as passes for coming over to the Soviet side. Recent reports from the front indicate the effect these leaflets are having on the minds of German soldiers.

On July 16 Helmut Markus, soldier in the 2nd Company of the 8th Motorized Rifle Battalion, 8th Division, came over with a pass leaflet. He is 19 years old and is the son of a carpenter in Duisburg. He relates the following regarding his coming over to the Soviet side :

“Many Soviet leaflets were scattered in the forest. I picked up a pass-leaflet on the outskirts of the forest and saw how another three or four men did the same thing. In general, many soldiers picked up the leaflets. After reading the leaflet I hid in the rye for three days until the Red Army men approached.” He went on to say that the German soldiers are in low spirits and that many have been killed and wounded. In the Dvinsk district the battalion lost up to 60 per cent of its men.

On July 21 a corporal of the 3rd Company, 3rd Regiment, 1st Division of Motorized Infantry, Helmut Kerdel, came over with a pass-leaflet. Kerdel is the son of a tailor in Danzig and has been serving in the army since July 19, 1939. He was in Poland and afterwards in France. Kerdel reported that the spirits of the German soldiers had lately been very low owing to the heavy losses. Kerdel said that after deciding not to fight against the Red Army he hid his pass with the leaflet and when the occasion presented itself he surrendered.

The leaflets are often found on war prisoners, who state that the leaflets and passes are eagerly read by

the German soldiers. It must be admitted that it is not always possible to go over to the Red Army with a pass, as during the fighting it is difficult to move under fire, whereas after the fighting every step of the soldier is watched by the officers.

MISCELLANEOUS

FORTY-FIVE DAY RAID IN ENEMY REAR

BY LIEUT.-GENERAL E. BOLDIN

[The author of this article, which provides a further illustration of the new anti-encirclement strategy of the Red Army, is the commander of the formation whose exploits he describes.]

Units of a Red Army formation found themselves encircled. The plans of the Nazi command to destroy these units met with complete failure. Waging continual fierce battles with the numerically superior enemy, our detachment, on July 5, withdrew in the Minsk area, then already occupied by the Germans.

Further progress was cut off by large enemy forces. Behind us moved the German reserves. The detachment was encircled. There was only one way out: to break through the enemy front west of Minsk, advance eastwards and rejoin the Red Army.

Fighting began successfully. However, the enemy's forces steadily increased and he succeeded in piercing the centre of our front, causing a critical situation. The last reserves at my disposal—a company of frontier guards—had to be rushed into action. This saved the situation. The company prevented the break-through and held back the Nazis for several hours. German infantry, supported by tanks, rushed into the attack several times. The heroic frontier guards perished, but did not retreat a single step.

The Germans then threw increasingly fresh forces into the battle. Towards evening we were attacked by 50 enemy tanks that had come from Minsk. All the tanks flew red flags, but we saw through this stratagem. Artillery met them with well-aimed fire and destroyed 26 German tanks, while the rest turned back.

With the approach of darkness our detachment succeeded in breaking through its encirclement and continued to push forward in an easterly direction. We moved through conquered but not subjugated country. Everywhere we were joined by groups of armed men and commanders. In the Byelo-Russian forests and marshes our fighting detachments inflicted severe blows on enemy communications. Our scouts penetrated everywhere, found out everything—because everywhere they had thousands of volunteer assistants: peasants, collective-farmers, women and even children.

We were always informed of the strength and disposition of the Germans; we knew where we could succeed by launching surprise attacks on stores and supply transports, on motorized columns, etc. Not a day passed without our forces inflicting effective losses on the enemy.

On July 31 our detachment was near the village of Homi. Somewhere in the vicinity Nazi 'planes were seen to take off and land. A scouting party discovered an enemy aerodrome. A group of our men thereupon proceeded to destroy the German 'planes by setting fire to all of them on the aerodrome. They returned from their operation without sustaining any losses.

In another operation two of our platoons moved to the right and left, enveloped and destroyed the enemy, killing 18 German officers and several soldiers. The headquarters' cars, motor-cycles, important documents and five cases with topographical maps were seized. We likewise succeeded in destroying the headquarters of a big German formation.

In this way our detachment advanced towards the front, ceaselessly striking blow after blow on the Germans. Not only the guerilla fighters, but also all village inhabitants helped the detachments in every possible way. Whether it was provisions or clothes or information about the enemy—the peasants invariably found us to deliver these essentials. Armed guerilla groups recaptured cattle seized by the Germans and drove them our way.

By August 16 our detachment was already quite close to the front. At mid-day our guards came across a sergeant and some Red Army men, who reported that several Red Army detachments were in the forest north of Novo-Losyev. On the following day they joined our detachment.

We now presented a considerable force and all that was needed was to cement it into a united fighting body. Within a few hours the detachment was organized into sub-divisions and units. This completed, the men had to be trained for operation under the new conditions. Planned military training started immediately in the sub-divisions. The men studied their weapons and how to use them, studied reconnaissance work and the peculiarities of forest warfare. Our men were by no means depressed by their encirclement. On the contrary, this only further increased their hatred for the Nazis.

It was impossible to break through the German front without co-ordinating our operations with those of our main forces. We had very little artillery, hence the break-through presented certain difficulties; what is more, independent operations by our detachment did not preclude the possibility of our own units clashing. In order to establish contact, several of our scouts, dressed as civilians, attempted on August 9 to cross the front. The majority of them were obliged to turn back.

Only two of our scouts got through the enemy positions unnoticed. They reported to Red Army headquarters my plan for breaking through the front. At dawn on

August 11 the courageous scouts were able to inform me of the successful fulfilment of their task. They returned to the detachment with a rifle platoon. It is interesting to note that the whole platoon were able to pass through the enemy position undetected and without a single shot being fired by the Germans.

For three days our detachment intensively prepared for its break-through. The Germans undoubtedly knew of our existence, but lacked exact information regarding our numerical strength, composition and armament. The detachment was camped in the forest, which was not particularly large but very dense. This in all probability was the reason which stopped the Germans, who avoid forest warfare and are unable to fight under such conditions. They burned all the trees around our forest, blocked up all the wells in an effort to take us by exhaustion through thirst. They did not expect that we would dare to emerge from the forest and attack them.

The decisive day dawned. At 6 a.m. on August 11 Soviet units on the other side of the front crashed down on the enemy. Eighteen bombers raided the enemy positions. Artillery opened fire. In accordance with the plan my detachment was to pass over to the offensive at 7.30 a.m. I resolved to organize the break-through at two places at an interval of two kilometres. At the appointed hour we occupied positions on the fringe of the forest and moved forward immediately the signal was given. Our men rushed into battle, burning with the desire to join their units.

Our artillery struck the first blow. Five German batteries, including two anti-aircraft, faced us on the front of our offensive. The Fascists, taken by surprise, lost their heads and did not even manage to open fire. Only one battery fired a few rounds before it was destroyed by our men. We also caught the German infantry unawares. Dashing forward, our men annihilated the

Fascists with bayonets and grenades. The German soldiers and officers rushed about the battlefield; dozens of them surrendered as prisoners.

The front was pierced and our detachment was able to rejoin its main forces. As a result of this short but fierce battle, we destroyed more than 1,000 German soldiers and officers, five artillery batteries, more than 100 lorries, cars and headquarters cars, 130 motor-cycles, a number of mine-throwers, machine- and sub-machine-guns.

Altogether, during operations in the encirclement, we destroyed the headquarters of two German regiments, 26 tanks, 1,049 cars, headquarters cars and lorries, 147 motor-cycles, five artillery batteries, four mine-throwers, 15 machine-guns, eight sub-machine-guns, one aeroplane, and an ammunition dump containing air bombs. Thus ended the 45-day raid of a Red Army detachment in the enemy rear.

COUNTER TACTICS OF SOVIET UNITS

A further example of how Red Army units, operating in the Nazi rear and encircled by the Germans, break their way out of the encirclement and rejoin the main armies, is provided in the action of Captain Karmanov's unit. The experience of this unit closely resembles that of Major-General Galitsky's force whose exploits have been described in *With a Soviet Unit Through Nazi Lines*.*

In the course of its operations in the German rear, Captain Karmanov's unit destroyed 22 Nazi tanks, 14 armoured cars, 8 ammunition lorries, 27 fuel transports and 16 cart trains of provisions. In these engagements the Germans lost over 450 soldiers and officers killed and wounded.

The German Command sent two infantry and one

* Hutchinson & Co., 2s. 6d.

motorized infantry battalion against Karmanov's unit. In the face of numerically superior forces Karmanov retreated and took up a defensive position. Four Nazi attacks were repulsed by Soviet machine-guns, infantry and snipers, with a loss of 250 men for the Germans.

Captain Karmanov decided to pierce the enemy encirclement during the night and to rejoin the main forces. At 10 p.m. his machine-guns opened up a concentrated fire on the German left flank. The enemy presumed that the Soviet unit was preparing to break through on this flank and concentrated their main forces there. At midnight Captain Karmanov attacked the Germans' right flank. Lieutenant Gruzdev's platoon captured a Nazi mine-thrower battery, Lieutenant Kopychov's platoon disabled a group of enemy machine-guns, and Captain Karmanov's unit then penetrated to the rear of the German battalions.

Towards morning the Germans gave way and fled, having lost 150 soldiers killed, 12 machine-guns, eight mine-throwers and many automatic rifles.

THE LOSSES OF THE GERMAN ARMY

BY A. PETERSKY, MOSCOW

Many German divisions have already been destroyed on the Soviet Eastern Front. As a result of several engagements with the Red Army dozens of other divisions lost nearly half and some even more than half of their men. During fighting in the Nevel direction on July 8, the 464th and 453rd Infantry Regiments of the 253rd German Infantry Division were utterly routed. By July 28 the division had already lost 60 per cent of its complement, a fact lamentably reported by the officers and soldiers of the division who were taken prisoner.

On July 23 the 110th German Infantry Division arrived on the Nevel front from France. Within a few

days this division was left with less than half of its strength, and at the beginning of August the German Command was compelled to admit with regret that the division had lost its fighting efficacy. During the 10 days' fighting in the Vitebsk direction, that is from July 7 to 17, the losses sustained by the 14th German Motorized Division were 60 soldiers killed and wounded for every 100 men.

The 20th German Tank Division was left with only 42 tanks by July 30. This tank division, incidentally, was outstripped by the 19th German Tank Division, which lost every one of its tanks and became a new kind of tank unit without tanks. In the Smolensk direction the 12th Tank Division operated for several days. As a result of the fighting many companies of the division lost up to 70 per cent of their forces and a large number of soldiers were taken prisoner. Under the fire of the Soviet bombers the 7th German Tank Division lost from 50 to 60 per cent of its men as well as its fighting strength. The 121st Infantry Division, the 206th Division, not to mention a number of others, were withdrawn to the rear to be regrouped.

During the week of July 16-24, the 20th Motorized Division lost from 30 to 40 per cent of its complement, and by August 1 the division was already left with less than half of its original number of men. During the night of July 28 an H.Q. company had to be rushed into action to save the situation. Half of the division's material was destroyed. Also the 18th Motorized Division lost half of its men and material.

The destruction of the 5th Division in the same direction was reported earlier. The 28th Infantry Division likewise sustained enormous losses. According to reports of prisoners and other sources, half of the division's companies have only one officer each. The 137th Infantry Division arrived on the sector at the Smolensk direction only on July 26, and was imme-

diately sent into action. Two days later less than half of the division was left. The S.S. divisions in the western direction suffered particularly heavy losses. The 11th and 30th S.S. Divisions were sent by the Germans to the Mogilyev district. Thousands of Nazis were annihilated by the deadly fire of the Soviet artillery, tanks and infantry. The pontoon battalion and the liaison battalion of the 30th Division were one of the first to be completely destroyed.

Towards the end of July the remnants of the two routed divisions were withdrawn from the front by the German Command and hurriedly sent to the rear. During the week of July 9-16, the so-called Imperial 3rd S.S. Division lost from 30 to 50 per cent of its men. The Command planned to replace it with the 263rd Infantry Division, but the latter had to be rushed to another sector, where the 485th Regiment of this division was almost completely smashed. The 18th Tank Division also sustained enormous losses. On the Pruth river its 18th Rifle Brigade lost some 70 per cent of its troops. Towards the end of July no more than 40 per cent of the soldiers remained in the division.

The 17th Motorized Division lost its commanders twice in the battle in the Lepel direction on July 9. The 52nd Infantry Division found itself in a similar position. The Red Army seized the order of the divisional command, dated July 21, stating that the division's casualties exceeded 50 per cent. The fate of all the above German divisions also befell the 27th Motorized Division operating in the Lepel direction. Its 34th and 36th Infantry Regiments were almost completely destroyed in action and soon after the whole division ceased its inglorious existence.

The old Napoleon Road is strewn with the corpses of tens of thousands of German soldiers. Picked German divisions are either destroyed or bleeding to death. The German Command is throwing fresh reserves into

the fighting. It is withdrawing the broken divisions to the rear, where they are reorganized and sent back to the front. The German Army is still strong, but the myth about its invincibility is shattered once and for all.

RED ARMY DRAINS GERMANY'S MAN-POWER

BY PROFESSOR ZVAVICH

The ratio between the trained and raw reserves in Hitler Germany is one to three. This is one of the reasons why Germany strives for a lightning war.

Germany's man-power is insufficient or not of full value from the military point of view, as it is not trained. Only the outer covering of the German Army comprises trained reserves. The blows being inflicted on this outer covering, affecting the army's fighting capacity as a whole, are far stronger than was expected. This is confirmed by data on the composition of German prisoners. In the air force and the tank units there are on the one hand youths, ranging between 16 to 19, who have only recently seen service in war conditions, and on the other soldiers aged from 40 to 45 and even 50, who have behind them the military experience of the first world war or training in the Reichswehr.

In the Soviet-German war the failure of a "lightning blow" planned by Hitler confronted the German Command with new problems. Above all else the German losses affected the picked units of the army thrown into action. These units now have to be supplemented by other troops which are greatly inferior. The number of men fit for military service is fixed at no more than 10,000,000. This includes the workers engaged in industry and transport, as well as in agriculture, State administration, etc. Part of them cannot be replaced by men unfit for service, by other ages, women or workers who

have been forcibly driven to Germany from other countries. Hitlerite Germany is unable to remove the very skilled workers and at the same time is compelled to retain the German "stratum" also in the other branches of labour; it would be very dangerous to act otherwise in view of the increasingly frequent acts of sabotage on the part of foreign workers.

Hence the majority of workers in Germany's war plants are Germans. When the German losses on all fronts of the war, including the enormous losses sustained on the Eastern Front are taken into account, the number of all man-power reserves of the German Army between the ages of 18-40 totals approximately 5½ million men; drawing on the men who are older than 40, i.e. by straining all the man-power reserves, approximately 7,000,000 can be mustered. The Austrians and Sudeten Germans in this army constitute 15 per cent of the total number.

Among the willing and unwilling allies of Germany on the front against the U.S.S.R. the German units play the role of overseers who drive the Finns, Slovaks, Hungarians and Rumanians before them. But the failure of the "blitzkrieg" threatens still further to aggravate the difficulties of the German Command, which, after sustaining heavy losses in men, will have to withdraw its German units. Time—the great factor in this war—is working against Germany in the sphere of man-power reserves as well as in all other directions.

AN UNDERGROUND HOSPITAL BEYOND THE ARCTIC CIRCLE

BY NIKOLAI VIRT

It was a dark, cloudy night and the mountains were enveloped in mist when I dismounted and said goodbye to my companion, the Red Army man Filipenko.

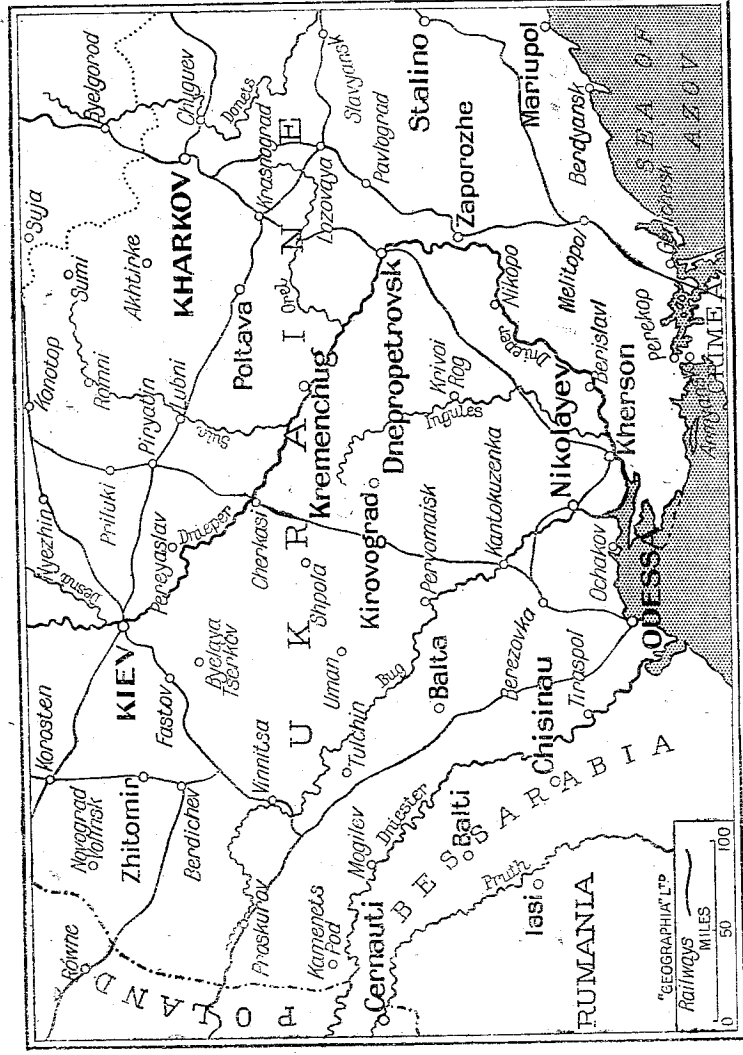
"A short way off," he told me, "you will come across a big rock and a sentry—he will guide you." I soon reached the location of the Medical Service Battalion. The front line was not far away. I looked around for some sort of buildings, or at least tents, but saw nothing but hills, lakes, rocks and midget Tundra birches.

The sentry led me to a hollow where I was surprised to see many people, in spite of the late hour. It appears that the working day here begins when it grows dark at eight o'clock in the evening and ends in the morning, when only a skeleton staff remains on duty. In the daytime the place is completely deserted. Passage through the grounds of the Medical Service Battalion is permitted only in the event of extreme necessity.

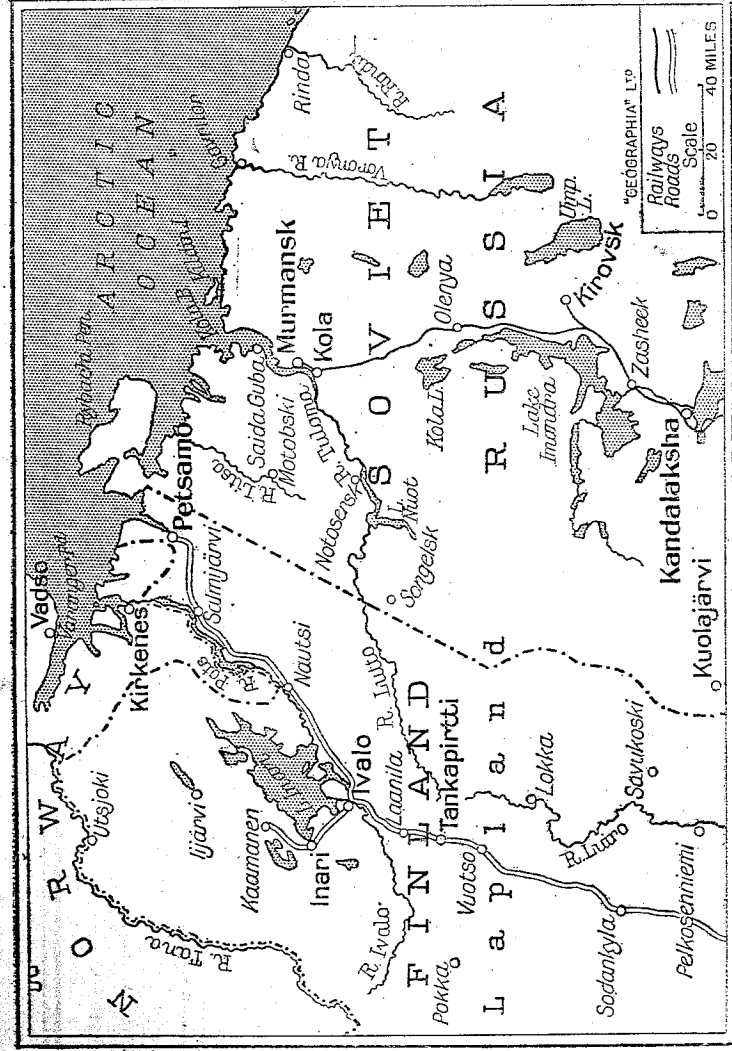
The Nazi raids hold no terror for the men here. Medical units, wards and other services are situated deep underground. An embankment built of huge rocks protects the wards from bomb fragments and machine-gun bullets. I descended into the operating room—vast spaces dug in the ground by sappers, doctors and nurses, and spotlessly clean. The operating table, under a white linen canopy, was brightly illuminated. The medical battalion set up its own electric power plant, which supplies light to all the wards. The floor of the operation room was covered with a tarpaulin. The doctors are able to perform the most difficult operations here regardless of Nazi planes hovering above or cannons roaring in the mountains.

I inspected the well-equipped wards where the wounded are placed after being operated, the dispensary and the first-aid station. Narrow passages cut in the walls of the wards afford shelter from the heaviest bombing.

Dr. Murzin has designed and built all this with the aid of his entire staff. They are continuing their work, constantly introducing new improvements and more and more skilfully camouflaging the hospital from the enemy.



SOUTH-WESTERN FRONT



ARCTIC FRONT