

larger income than the provincial press, which depends more on the support of its readers. The big Japanese daily papers also resemble the American ones in that they are very broad-minded about the advertisements they print, especially advertise-

ments of the most dubious patent medicines. The police recently tried to intervene, but the eight most important Tokyo newspapers protested that the income from patent-medicine advertisements provided them with their most important source of revenue.

IV. ON THE FAR EASTERN FRONT

By H. R. GOLA

Translated from the *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*, Vienna Conservative Daily

WHEN I went back to China after the World War it took my train two weeks to cross Russia, and I remember being amazed that this almost endless railway was a single-track affair. Russia has no other means of transporting her troops to the East. Although a second track has recently been built, it is capable of carrying only a small fraction of Russia's huge army eastward in a brief space of time. Reliable sources out here estimate this army at about a million men, but the Transsiberian Railway could transport only fifteen per cent of them, weather and Japan permitting.

A quiet, but none the less desperate, struggle for supremacy in the East has now begun, and the whole world is eager to receive news from the scene of action. Japan, with a population overflowing its own islands, has long been seeking for colonies to take care of its surplus inhabitants. It also needs new markets in which to sell its products. The latter economic consideration, however, likewise spurs on Russia because of its proximity to China. Moreover, the Communist leaders have for a long time hoped and dreamed of the huge area of China

and its 350 million people. The doctrines of Moscow have penetrated parts of southern China, and Russian exports have accompanied them.

The stake to-day is a mere matter of 350 million people and a territory more than 5 million square kilometres in extent. The preparations for this struggle have given its future victim an opportunity to feel free and easy. Not until the struggle itself is finally decided will the second war begin, the war of the victor against China.

People have certainly not forgotten the terrific battles between the Chinese and Japanese in Shanghai, North China, and the Chinese provinces that Japan has seized. During the past year, however, Japan seems to have decided on a better course. It has withdrawn nearly all its troops from Shanghai, and the undeclared war against China over Manchuria is coming to an end at a surprisingly rapid rate. Time was when nobody in China expected Japan to withdraw its troops from inside the Great Wall. But the miracle happened: Japan evacuated the zone, and for some time trains have been crossing this former scene of warfare on a normal schedule.

The reason for this is not any desire

for peace on the part of Japan but fear. While Japan was posing as the protector of rebellious North China, another railway was being built in the north. Russia was bending every effort to double-track the Transsiberian. At the same time it was negotiating with Japan concerning the railway that crosses Manchuria, of which Russia is part owner. Negotiations broke down because there was a difference of some millions between the price offered and the price demanded. But, before any agreement could be reached, Russia's hopes of supremacy in the East received a serious blow. Manchuria declared its independence with all the aid and resources that Japan could provide.

II

In order to be able to transport her enormous army to the border and supply it with at least half the munitions and supplies that it needed, Russia built a parallel line, which cannot accomplish any miracles because of its roadbed. No sooner did Japan discover this fact than it replied by establishing an enormous airport in Korea, which provides the island kingdom with a secure base on the mainland. Huge hangars were erected in Urusan, which was to become a great aviation centre, and these hangars were built for the sole purpose of destroying the new Russian railways.

The Soviet Union continued building. It talked and still talks of war. Russia set all the convict labor at its disposition to work building the railway to the east. A hundred thousand men were employed on the stretch of track, laying a roadbed three thousand kilometres long between Amur

and Ussuri. New locomotives were built for this track capable of attaining a speed of 150 kilometres an hour. But it was to be used only for reinforcements. Troops arrived on a test mobilization and practised manœuvres until gradually the necessary army assembled. The result is that today ten divisions of infantry with fifteen thousand men each have been stationed in the east. Six hundred heavy and light cannon are distributed along the border, and trucks stand in readiness to move them to any point. More than five thousand machine-gun nests, connected by underground concrete trenches, have been established between the places where these large guns are stationed. The number of tanks is estimated at five hundred. All these troops and weapons were shipped out here during the last six months to provide the shock troops for the future war. Emergency barracks were built along the border, and eighteen thousand men occupy them. These posts, as they are called, consist for the most part of cavalry and flare guns, and their principal duty is to neutralize an airplane attack by creating a disturbance on the frontier. The commander of these special troops is Colonel Petrovich, who is subordinate to the well-known General Blücher.

Even out here nobody discusses infantry as the decisive element in any future war. They are all for the most modern weapons and are bending every effort to get as many as possible on the scene of action. In bomb-proof cellars that are naturally kept secret, tremendous underground factories have been built to manufacture poison gas. The biggest factory of the kind is in the neighborhood of Irkutsk,

where most of the heavy bombing planes are also stationed. These machines of the latest construction are equipped with four motors and can fly to the western coast of Japan, 3,500 kilometres away, without landing. It is common talk here that, in the event of an emergency, Russia will abandon Vladivostok and that already she has reduced her troops stationed there to a bare minimum. This city, which was once so important, has today become strategically completely worthless since it lies too close to the Japanese airplane base and is also exposed on two fronts, its seacoast and the Manchukuo frontier.

Armored cars have been especially developed. Most of them are light, mobile tanks that look like armored racers. Their equipment consists of a miniature cannon and a machine gun, and they carry a crew of only three men. We learn that these vehicles can withstand the attack of a medium-sized hand-grenade and can develop a speed of sixty kilometres an hour. We know that they are real speed tanks.

Since the Soviet Union does not trust its native comrades in the east very much, they have been released from all obligation to deliver grain for six, and even ten, years while the industrial districts in this part of the country are required to deliver goods at a higher rate of output. The Red Army troops in the Far East also occupy a special position. As a result of all these favors, Russia has set in motion a great stream of people toward the east, and they represent an important reserve in the event of a future war with Japan. At the same time, cattle farms are being established with a special breed of animals.

In order to forestall sabotage on the part of the local inhabitants, the unruly elements were simply removed and sent to the Ukraine. The fleet is also being mobilized, for Russia attaches chief importance to its new submarines, which are real giants, displacing thirty-six hundred tons.

The preparations on the other side are no less intensive. Japan, as I have already explained, has its aggressive weapons in the form of airplanes, but it cannot send any great number of these planes inland. What it lacks in material and men it makes up in patriotism and sacrificial devotion. Japan now has 290 thousand men under arms, 215 thousand of them in the army. The rest serve in the navy at a cost of 265 million yen a year. The airplanes are built by technicians from European factories and are assembled in the Mitsubishi plant. Their engines develop 3,200 horse power and can carry seven machine guns, the necessary ammunition, and twelve tons of bombs.

In the event of war Japan plans to use these airplanes to cut off the Russian Far Eastern provinces from the hinterland. This will be all the easier because, as I have explained, only a single track line serves the Maritime Province—a stretch of territory about the size of Germany. Moreover, this whole district is hemmed in by mountains over which roads cannot be built. Japan enjoys a further advantage in that this part of Russia reaches around the state of Manchukuo, so that Japan, the real ruler of that state, has already thrust a wedge into the Soviet Union and can cut off all the eastern Russian provinces to the Sea of Okhotsk if it proceeds in the direction of Ussuri

and along the Amur River. Any defense of this huge stretch of territory on the part of Russia is out of the question.

But, if things break Japan's way in this quarter, it will not be able to concentrate on attack or defense along the western front because the United States navy threatens the other flank. America is deeply interested in this future war, and not merely because of the munitions that are now being shipped out there. It would immediately lose the Philippine and Chinese markets in the event of a Japanese victory.

Here is an example of how Japan has already penetrated this part of the world. The population of the Sandwich Islands, including Honolulu and Hawaii, comes to 500,000, of whom 150,000 are Japanese, as against 40,000 Americans. The rest are natives and half-breeds. Thus Japan has already occupied nearly one-third of these American islands.

The question naturally arises how the huge realm of China, with its 350 million inhabitants, will face this situation. That question can be answered briefly. China will not, and cannot, have any voice in the matter. The two opponents of the future war are Russia and Japan, and they have prepared China after their own fashion in such a way that it is completely wrapped up in its own affairs. For one thing, there are treaties that China must observe, then there is the Communist danger in the southern districts, and finally there are the numerous wars in the interior of the country, which prevent it from giving any thought to foreign affairs.

The inhabitants of Manchukuo feel the tension in the east more keenly

than any other people, for the Chinese Eastern Railway crosses their country. China or, it would be more accurate to say, Japan owns half this railway; Russia the other half. It consists of a stretch of track, 2,000 kilometres long, and it is supposed to provide its own defense troops according to treaty provisions. But quarters for the men have never even been built along the track, and the guards are confined to a few soldiers. The continued bandit raids on this important line not only upset passenger traffic but hamper the delivery of freight. Ruddy, the director of the Chinese Eastern Railway, energetically demanded the protection that his road had been promised, but the military authorities replied that it would cost more than their budget could afford. Ruddy then handed over four million yen from the railway's own reserves to be spent on protecting it, but he got nothing for his money. All that happened was that the Japanese guards along the frontier were increased from 200 men to double that number in each post, and there is one of these posts every two or three kilometres.

III

In recent weeks the population has been showing signs of unrest such as always precede important events. The Russians in particular have displayed a nervousness that is not due solely to personal interest but that arises from definite sources of information. The trains to Manchuria, the Russian frontier station, are full of travelers. Many households are breaking up. Businesses are selling out, and contracts are being transferred. Every day one can gaze in amaze-

ment on the White Russians in Harbin. The voluntary military organizations they used to maintain have now become compulsory. They parade in front of their Ataman Semenov, who expects nothing less than to bring all the eastern provinces of the Soviet Republics into an independent state under his own rule. He still believes in the promises and assistance that Japan offers if he will turn his troops against Russia in her behalf.

What used to be happening in Manchukuo is now being repeated here. Houses are almost given away to imaginary individuals since the owners are threatened with confiscation on political grounds. Those owners who live in the greatest fear are the Russians who have shown sympathy for the Soviet régime.

In the country districts the shipment of food is being restricted more and more in order to assure the Japanese troops of receiving supplies in the event of war. For the same reason the rolling stock of the Chinese Eastern Railway is not allowed to pass beyond the Manchukuo border, and this has done grievous harm to the foreign trade, which had already almost expired. At the frontier all travelers must change cars, and all the freight is also moved into Russian or Chinese cars.

One thing remains uncertain. What

will the line-up of Powers be? Russia has high hopes of gaining the aid of America. Japan is courting England, from which it has taken huge supplies of raw material in order to win its future support. Although America is no friend of the Soviet Union, it would have to fight on the Russian side, unless it wanted to turn the whole East over to the yellow race, since Russia alone, in spite of its armies and airplanes, is too weak to protect its seacoast. On the other hand, England fears the appearance of America in one of its own private preserves and believes that it can count on a safe place for itself by the side of the Empire of the Rising Sun if it gives Japan's flag at least moral support.

Out here the conflict seems inevitable, and the barroom strategists already know the future boundaries that Japan will lay down in the event of victory—they will claim that the Island Empire extends as far as the Urals. Its southern boundary will skirt the Yellow River through China, Tibet, and the Sea of Aral. This enormous stretch of territory would be half again as large as the United States. A Japanese officer I questioned on the subject informed me, however, that Japan would go no farther. Its watchword merely runs: Asia for the yellow races.

Persons and Personages

GENERAL BLÜCHER

By PAUL SCHEFFER

Translated from the *Berliner Tageblatt*, Berlin National-Socialist Daily

THAT it pays to stick to the truth should be the watchword of any journalist who attempts to describe the supreme commander of the Red Army in the Far East. His life has been a remarkable one and more crammed with unusual events than even the most lively imagination could devise. It also pays to observe him closely because his career shows how many important events of our time flow past us without attracting our attention. Blücher to-day commands a big army, an enormous body of men and vast supplies of raw materials in eastern Siberia. He is preparing himself for war and is perhaps ready for it by now. He stands in line with those who are waiting to enter the temple of history, yet he already has a great history behind him, enough to qualify him for admittance.

His early years will be a puzzle to historians until the Soviets decide to speak, if indeed they ever do. There is some question as to whether he really comes from a family of peasants. It seems more likely that he chose to become a metal worker because he did not want to become a merchant. The contention that he comes from a proletarian background seems to be correct, for that is what the author heard, long before the Chinese interlude, from some one in Moscow in a position to know. The story then was that Blücher had entered the Party in its early days, devoting himself to propaganda work for two years, and that he later served with distinction in the War. The latter report is correct, for Blücher was at least a non-commissioned officer when he was incapacitated in 1915, but that he had been active in the revolutionary movement before that time is unlikely.

An Austrian scholar who wrote a study of Blücher in the *Neue Freie Presse* states that he participated in a big strike that landed him in prison. This, however, is pure invention because no strike occurred in 1910 in the Neitschensk car factory where he was supposed to have got himself in trouble. It is, however, true that after the Revolution Blücher joined the Bolshevik Party, though he was never a member of the Samara revolutionary committee, as is sometimes maintained. He was a party member like thousands and hundreds of thousands of others who had served in the Tsarist army.