

# RECUMBENT STRATEGISTS:

## High Casualties But No Bloodshed In "Little Wars"

(By GENERAL FLITZ)

"Little Wars" is a game which was devised by H. G. Wells before Great War I. It is played with whole hosts of lead soldiers, guns that fire wooden shells, howitzers that lob heavy leaden shells, tanks that move, and lorries that carry troops. These men and materials of war are moved according to fixed rules across a miniature countryside, and the "generals" featured in this account of a recent "battle," make a claim that it corresponds very closely to the real thing. One of them, General Flitz, describes the Battle for Paris, held last week-end, and covers most of the main points in a fascinating game, during his description of how the defenders held back the enemy

**W**E were sorry only that the day was spent without the encouraging attendance of Gamelin, Weygand, Petain, Blanchard, et les autres. Otherwise it was completely enjoyable," states General Flitz's despatch. "We killed off two or three hundred men and left no wounded on the field, except one who lost an arm—his sword arm too, but an excellent surgeon was available to stick it on again, once it had been found behind Hill 13 by a search party assembled for the purpose.

"All this killing was not without purpose. The battle was magnificently successful in all other respects. At great cost the attackers deployed on two flanks. A small force which advanced up the open centre was reduced to one private and a stretcher-bearer by frontal artillery fire and a withering barrage from the defender's flank positions.

"On his left and right flanks the enemy advanced behind better cover, but was unable to get up in time to prevent the defence from establishing good gun positions on higher ground.

He effectively blocked all hope of advance across the open towards Paris.

"With the field strewn with bodies, the attackers finally were forced to withdraw, pursued hotly, with many men dead, or taken prisoner, and most of their tanks and mechanised units captured.

"The defending force was reduced by more than half, but Paris remained inviolate."

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FOR the uninitiated reader it is as well to explain here that all this blood-thirsty talk does not necessarily mean that last week-end was spent shedding actual blood by the three peculiar adults whose activities are so briefly described above.

Their tanks were only six inches long, their guns had bores no bigger than one-eighth of an inch and their heaviest artillery, howitzers, only fired a shell of three-eighths. Their men were made of lead and their hills of wood and papier maché. Their rivers were cellophane, and their lakes were broken mirrors.

Three hundred square feet of artificial

terrain had been laid out on the floor of a drawing-room from which all furniture and all non-combatants had been evacuated. The terrain had been made by the victorious General Blotto over a period of some ten years spent building up all his *materiel* for the fascinating game of "Little Wars." Over it he had sufficient reserves to deploy some 2000 men, with the necessary supply of artillery (which fired with devastating effect), moving tanks (which spat sparks as they trundled along), pontoon bridges, troop carriers, and the rest. For the day's battle we could only find time to use some three hundred troops, of which the attackers were given one-third more than the defence.

The defence, however, had almost as many guns and far better positional opportunities (of which he made good use).

### A War of Movement

He got first move (by winning the toss of a coin), and up his roads soon had compact bodies of cavalry and foot moving fast. Generals Blitz and Flitz were new to the game and were familiarising themselves with the rules as they went along. They failed to realise, therefore, that it was necessary to get up fast and cross the open country beneath the heights before the defenders of Paris could assemble men and guns at strategic points.

It was a war of movement for the attackers. They dashed here, dashed there, advanced, retreated, but to no

avail. Blotto sat back and made merry with his howitzers and deadly 'seventy-fives until the attackers were sufficiently reduced to warrant his advance, which entailed their complete rout.

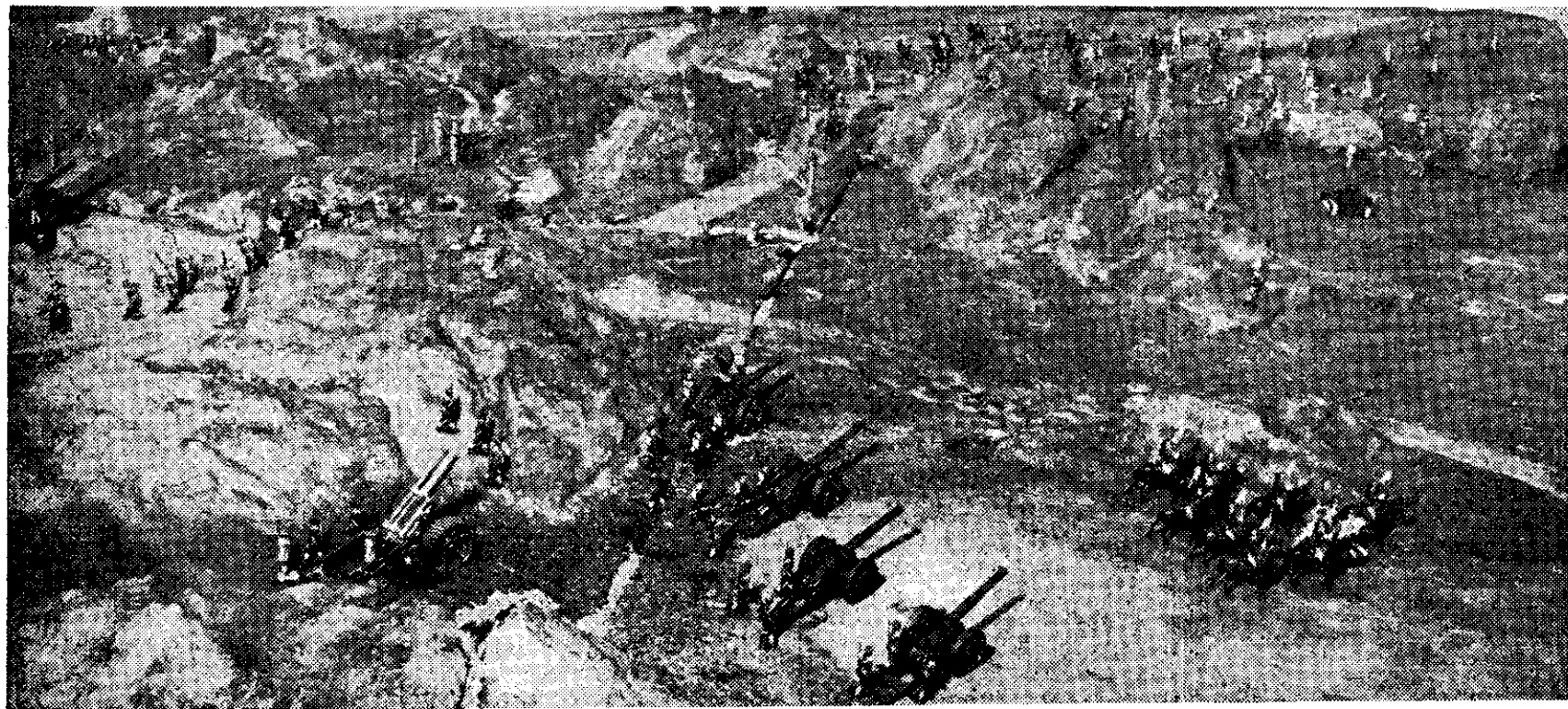
We sat on our haunches after the eight-hour struggle and decided that there were many lessons to be learned from this engagement.

### The Real Thing

Roughly, the position of our toy Paris corresponded to the position of the real city. It was set in a plain, which corresponds to the geological pan in which Paris itself stands, and the ramparts on which Blotto made his stand corresponded roughly to the latitudinal line of terraces which lie to the north of Paris and from which a defender can overlook advancing forces.

On one flank the terrain was flat, without much cover, and this corresponded to the flat fields of Flanders. Close to it there were some small hills and a miniature forest, corresponding to the position of the real Ardennes.

General Flitz, with a little less than half the attacking force, attempted to force through on the direct Paris front. He had more cover than Blitz for most of the way, but was forced to cross open country before contacting the main forces of the defender. It was the task of Blitz to advance with cavalry, guns, and tanks across the open country, and make a wide flanking movement on Paris. Blotto, however, established a strong force of infantry and guns near



THE ACTION DEVELOPS: General Blitz's force on the right flank advances into open country and faces hot fire from General Blotto's battery in the foreground, while a squadron of cavalry waits to cut down any attackers who happen to cross the stream which winds across the centre of the picture