## THERE is much in the East Indies that Japan would like to have for her own. The islands lie scattered as if a hamper full of especially rich soils and raw materials had been tossed carelessly from the continent of Asia into the Pacific. The area produces almost all (94 per cent.) of the world's supply of rubber and three-quarters of its tin; it yields more petroleum than all the rest of the Far East; it supports important and vast plantation crops—sugar, tea, coffee, rice, tobacco, cacae-coconuts, and various fibres.

SINGAPORE is one of the four most formidable naval fortresses in the world. Before the war, Britain's strength at Singapore consisted of three cruisers, one aircraft carrier, nine destroyers, 15 submarines, and some smaller craft—enough, altogether, to play for time until help could be brought by the China Squadron (four cruisers) and from Australia and New Zealand (eight cruisers five destroyers).

" N her busy naval yards, Japan to day has on the stocks eight new battleships-four fast super-powerful 40,000 tonners, two aircraft carriers, four fast battle cruisers, four light cruisers, four destroyers, and nine big submarines," said *Time* in October, 1940. "Four of the big battleships will be in commission in 1942, the other four, barring accidents, in 1943. These, added to her present ten battleships, will give Japan 18 capital ships. The U.S. to-day has 12 capital ships in the Pacific plus three of ancient vintage in the Atlantic. It will get two more in 1941, and wil' have to wait till 1943 for its next capital additions-six battle ships, including two 45,000 tonners."

BRITISH, Dutch and U.S. sir and naval forces now in the Far East would be no match for the full power of the Japanese Fleet, but they would have more than a nuisance value" said Time in October of last year.

Since then, of course, they have been heavily reinforced. At the Dutch bases there were five cruisers, eight destroyers, 18 submarines, and about 100 long range bombers. In the Far East, the U.S. had two cruisers, 13 destroyers and 12 submarines as well as bombing and patrol aeroplanes. Against an attenuated lapanese supply line they would be very dangerous. Japan's alternative would be a tough one, too-to reduce the flanking bases, while her aircraft operating from Yap, Palau, and other bases in the mandated islands went to work on Amboina and Sourabaya. In Tsingtao, garrisoned by about 6000 German troops and wide open to attack, held out against the Japanese and British for more than two months. Hong Kong, better armed and better located (on an island) than Tsingtao. is well garrisoned by British troops. Once having silenced Hong Kong, Sourabaya and Amboina, the Japanese fleet might swing round the east side of Borneo and force a landing there. Japan would then have only a fair start to the conquest of the Indies. And with the U.S. taking a hand, the Japanese will now have to take the U.S. base at Cavite, reduce its island fortress at Corregidor, and knock out 11,000 U.S. regulars and the 20,000 native soldiers.

## THE PACIFIC - NEW WORLD

