on the west, the Dutch East Indies fell, and the Japanese took possession of territories which would give them the oil, tin, rubber, rice, and iron they needed for a long war.

To the fall of Singapore many factors contributed, three at least with their roots in the events of 1940—the surrender of the French bases in Indo-China to Japan, the loss of the French Fleet which involved the stripping of the Far East naval forces, and the decision taken by Britain to use in the Middle East what little strength was left to her after Dunkirk. It needed then only the crippling of the United States Pacific Fleet —accomplished at Pearl Harbour—to lay the Far East bare to the enemy.

The story of the local campaign in Malaya, from the landing at Khota Baru near the top of the peninsula on December 8, to the abandonment of the mainland on January 31 and the fall of Singapore on February 15, is one of lacks. Warships which could have faced the enemy in the Pacific, bombers which could have destroyed their transports, small armed vessels which could have broken up their landings on the coast of Malaya, fighters and reconnaissance planes, guns, and tanks which could have broken their air and artillery attacks—all these had been sent to meet the enemy elsewhere.

Britain had done what she could to meet the danger. To Singapore she had sent one of her new battleships, Prince of Wales, and the battle cruiser, Repulse, with a few smaller craft—but she had not been able to send with them an aircraft carrier, and on December 10 both were sunk from the air in an attempt to break up the Japanese landings. It was a bold venture made with a full knowledge of the risks.

Defenceless at sea, the British forces were almost as helpless in the air. On the day of the attack there were not many more than 100 front-line planes in all Malaya, and most of these were obsolete. Heavy losses were inflicted on the enemy, but within a week the Japanese had full control of the air. Reinforcements were sent, but they arrived too late and not in sufficient numbers.

On land the British forces—at first 50,000 in number, but later increased to 70,000—had to fight without air support and without air reconnaissance. The country of the Malayan Peninsula favoured the enemy—a long coastline parallel with their advance and indented by many river estuaries, up which infiltrating forces could proceed. It was a hard struggle. The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, 800 strong, crossed to Singapore Island with fewer than 100 effectives. When the cease fire sounded there were not 100 alive, including wounded, of the 846 men in one battalion of Malayan levies.

There may have been other factors which contributed to the defeat, but it is not correct to say that the guns "pointed the wrong way"—out to sea. The heavy coastal artillery, designed for a specific purpose, did point out to sea, but mobile artillery was provided for the landward defences, and plans were made for defence of the island by land. A plan is one thing; the force with which to carry it out is another. Britain had in Malaya the plans and the men—but not the equipment.

Three months after the fall of Singapore, on June 4, 1942, at the Battle of Midway Island, the Japanese received their first check—the first real reverse in fifty years of expansion. Early in August the Americans launched an offensive in the Solomons and established themselves on Guadalcanal. The offensive then begun carried the Allies into the Philippines, into Borneo, on to Okinawa and Iwojima, through Burma to Rangoon, to the coasts and over the cities of Japan. It was the enemy offensive in reverse. The Japanese were pressed back into the China Sea, from which in December of 1941 they struck out, and British forces early this year began to close in on Singapore five years after the French surrender had smoothed the way for Japanese conquest and three years after the fall of the island.