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ON TO ANTANANARIVO.

While consolidating our positions at the seaport town of Majunga, following its surrender... it was decided to press southwards to the capital. Operations were, therefore, resumed during the drive to ANTANANARIVO, roughly 250 miles inland. The chief opposition met with was systematic obstruction. Creeping fires were more a menace to villages than to our columns. The first big obstacle was the blown-up bridge over the BETSIBOKA RIVER. This only had the effect of slowing up our advance as the main span was not severed. Resistance by the Vichy French was almost solely confined to bridge demolition and road blocking. But in spite of this, our forces averaged about 18 to 20 miles a day.

MALAGASY country folk displayed little or no interest in all that was going on around them.

British occupation respected the French Flag at all times. High in the mountains MEVATANANA, entered in the early hours and no sign of any organized resistance.

Pressing on to MAHATSINJO our cameraman overtook South African armoured columns and British artillery threading their way forward.

These French lorries were overturned by effective gun fire. In spite of some stiffening resistance and more dynamited bridges, the advance went on. At ANKAZOBI our men rigged up an improvised crossing with reeds, rushes, and bamboo shoots supported on timber and stone boulders.

Buried into the hilltop a revolving turret used as a machine gun nest. It was not occupied for very long.

Ten miles from the capital, the last Vichy resistance took the form of trees felled across the roadway. On occasions, there were exchanges of rifle and gunfire, but Capitulation was soon forthcoming when the last objective was carried. Two weeks out of MAJUNGA, ANTANANARIVO was entered and the Governor-General had fled. Over the radio came a British voice saying that the Capital had fallen.

A French Brigadier met several Vichy dupes at the last scene of Capitulation. The happy sequel to this occupation is that ANTANANARIVO is now settling down to normal life with a great measure of co-operation between the French and British troops.