

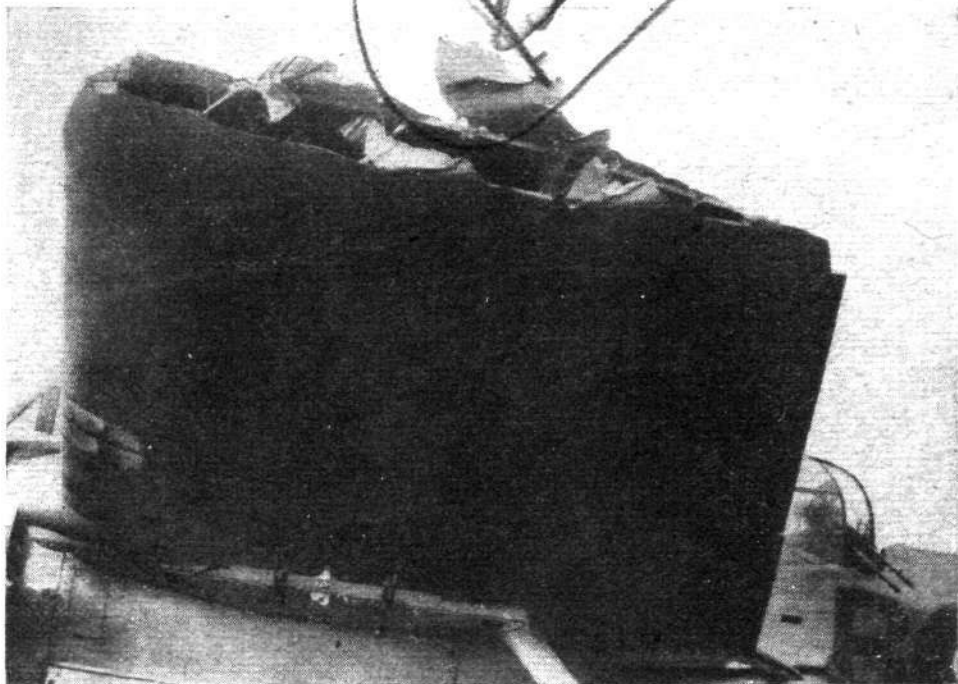
## WAR IN THE AIR

outpourings in his proclamation ("I know war . . . I was wounded twice") are merely an appeal to the sentimentality of the German people. He will doubtless work through the General Staff. None the less, we may feel glad that von Brauchitsch will no longer command the German armies.

### The Daylight Raid on Brest

IN the northern area of war, before Christmas the R.A.F. resumed its activities against the warships in Brest harbour. First came a heavy night bombing of that naval base, and on the following day at 12.30 p.m. a new assault began in brilliant winter sunlight. This was briefly touched on in our last issue, but further details are now to hand. Stirlings went in first, then Halifaxes, and, finally, Manchesters. A strong fighter escort flew overhead and fought fierce battles with the German fighters. Other British fighters covered the withdrawal of the bombers. Very few of the Messerschmitts were able to attack our bombers, and of those that did four paid the penalty of their temerity. The heavy bombers went in to the attack in perfect formation, having decided that it was best to take their chance with the *flak* while preserving a united front against the Messerschmitts. It is believed that both the dry docks in which the *Gneisenau* and *Scharnhorst* were lying were hit by heavy bombs. This raid was another useful blow in the Battle of the Atlantic.

Messerschmitt 110s have been in action in the Malayan theatre of war.



**WINGLESS FLYING**: Last week we published a picture of a Beaufighter which came home minus most of one wing. This week we have a Beaufort which tried conclusions with the rigging of a vessel off the Dutch coast.

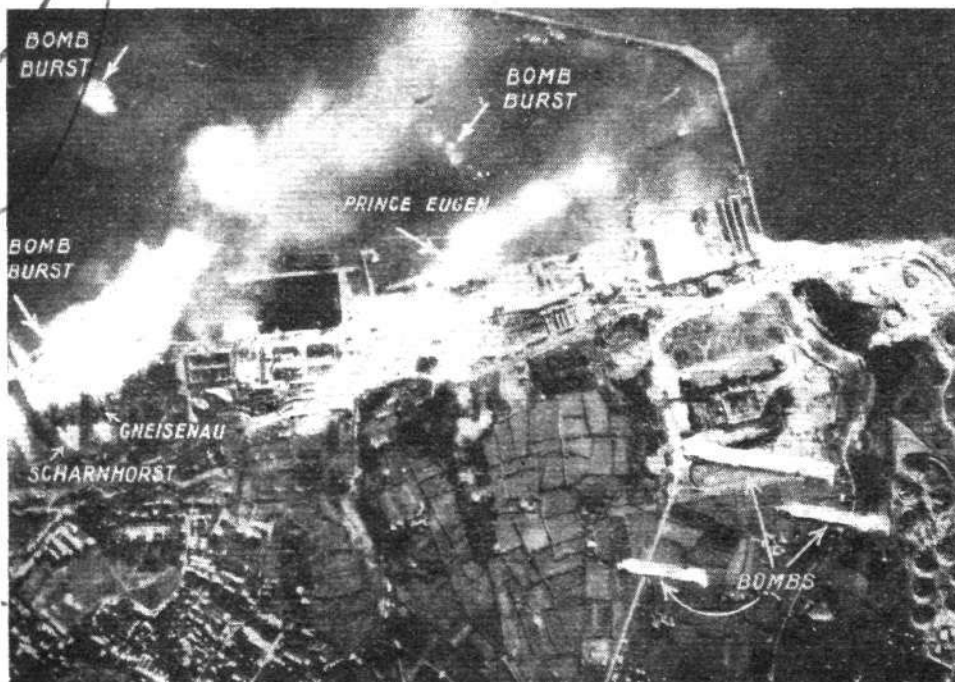
An R.A.F. pilot in a Brewster Buffalo had crossed the Thai border on reconnaissance when he was attacked by four of these German machines which came at him 14 times. His duty was to get back with his information, which meant avoiding a fight if possible. He found that his Buffalo was so much more manoeuvrable than the two-engined German fighters that he was able to escape. He was afterwards attacked by Japanese naval aircraft, but they were not fast enough to catch him. Then more Me 110s appeared, but the Buffalo got back safely.

Bad weather for some days handicapped our air operations in Libya, and also hampered a raid on Taranto harbour. But none the less the R.A.F. and Empire squadrons, assisted by some Free French bombers, have been destroying enemy supplies with gusto. One Blenheim squadron found a train near Zura, in Tripolitania, consisting of engine, three petrol tankers, and six coaches. The bombers came down low and played havoc with that train. Petrol lorries have also been shot up in numbers by both fighters and bombers. The Germans and Italians have been pushing hard to the west, evidently hoping to get at least part of their forces away into Tripolitania, and have left huge quantities of equipment behind. Our men have occupied over a dozen of their airfields, and have found at least 70 damaged German aircraft on them, besides quite 100 machines abandoned by the Italians. So rapid has been our advance that enemy airmen have not always known which landing grounds remained in their hands, and on one occasion two Messerschmitts landed on one which they thought was safe, and were at once taken prisoner by a party of British sappers.

### Naval Night-fighters

MENTION was recently made in these columns of the good work done in Libya by a naval squadron which fights at night. It is pleasing to learn that its commanding officer, Lt. Cdr. J. W. S. Corbett, has been awarded the Distinguished Service Order—or, to be more accurate, has been made a Member of that Order.

Malta has not infrequently to endure day raids, when cloudy weather gives cover to the approaching bombers with their fighter escort. It



**BREST RAID**: A vertical photograph taken by a raider during a recent attack on the German ships in Brest harbour. Stirlings, Halifaxes and Manchesters all took part. Heavy armour-piercing bombs were dropped from sufficient height to ensure penetration.

Photobooks