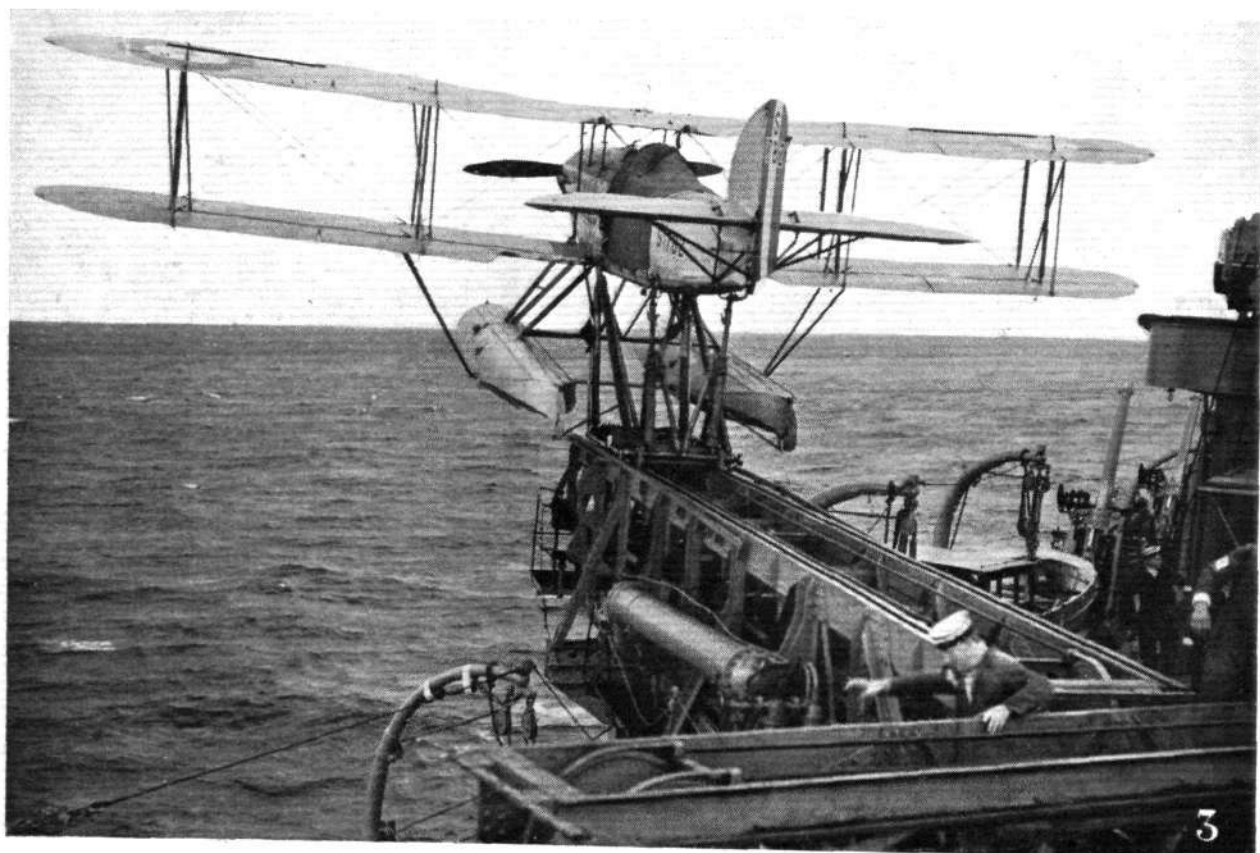
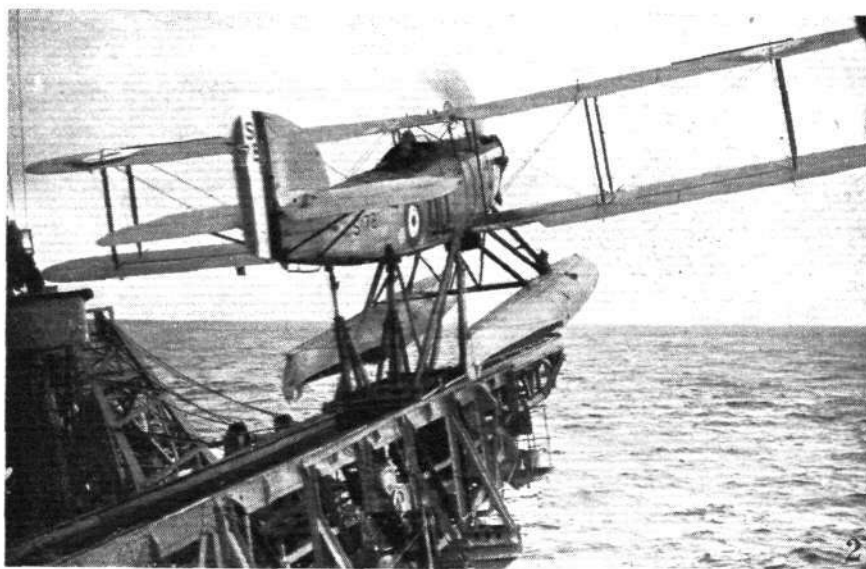
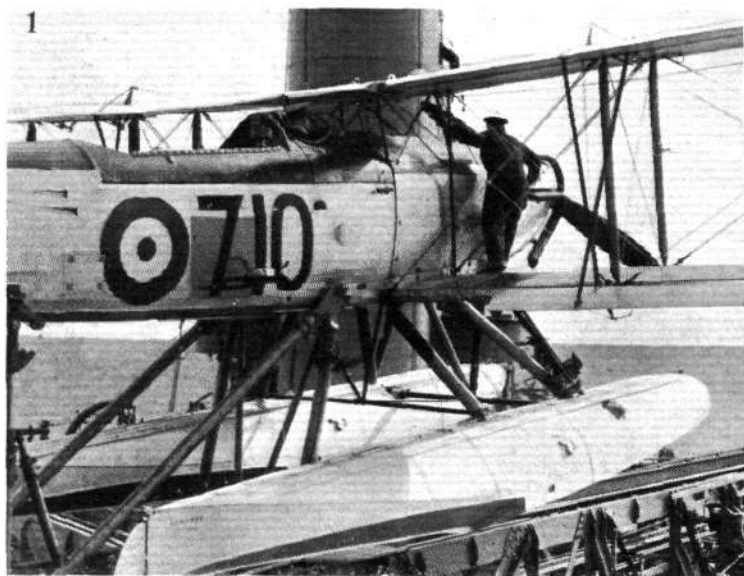


# A Naval Occasion

Being an account of a visit paid to H.M.S. "Exeter" of the 2nd Cruiser Squadron, Home Fleet

**F**OLLOWING our policy of keeping our readers in touch with all phases of aviation, we are publishing, this week, a series of photographs taken by our staff photographer during a visit he paid recently to H.M.S. *Exeter*, of the 2nd Cruiser Squadron, Home Fleet, commanded by Capt. I. W. Gibson, R.N., at Invergordon. In FLIGHT for May 16, 1930, we gave a special supplement illustrating a visit to the aircraft carrier H.M.S. *Glorious*, and in the issue for July 31, 1931, were details of the equipment of the ill-fated submarine M.2, while on February 27, 1931, there was published an article on aircraft catapults of the type built by MacTaggart, Scott & Co. Reference should be made to this latter article, as space does not permit us republishing much of the matter it contained, but which is peculiarly apposite, as H.M.S. *Exeter* is one of the cruisers fitted with catapults manufactured by this firm.

Two of these launching devices are carried, and these are situated just abaft the after funnel and inclined at an angle of roughly 45 deg. to the fore and aft line of the ship. Our first photograph shows the Fairey IIIF. Fleet Spotter Reconnaissance aircraft (Napier "Lion") run back on the catapult and being prepared for flight. In No. 2 the aircraft is just leaving the trolley, which, it can be seen, has reached the extended forward portion of the catapult, at which point it is decelerated by the liquid-controlled





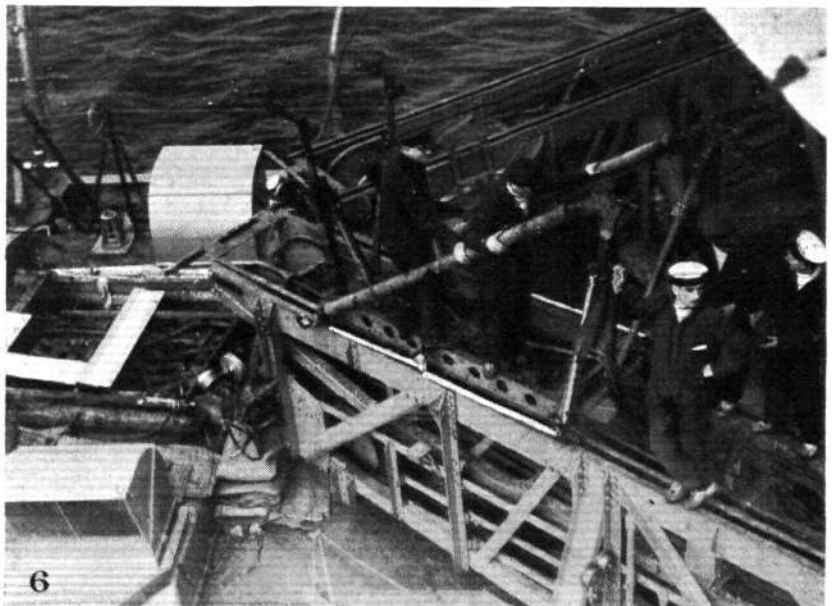
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gives a very good idea of the difficult conditions under which these aircraft have to be maintained. Work on them must always be done in the open on platforms high above the water, and the greatest possible care has to be taken to guard against corrosion. For this purpose, of course, all parts subject to attack are continually greased with various special preparations, and those parts which can be, are covered up. It speaks well for the productions of the Fairey Co. that their IIF's stand up to this work so well, for they are kept in service in ships like H.M.S. *Exeter* for a year at a time without complete overhaul, and the whole of this time they are maintained in an airworthy condition. The aircraft, of which one is carried for each catapult, are used for reconnaissance and spotting, according to the work upon which the ship is engaged. For example, one can well imagine circumstances, such as action against coastal towns, when the photographic equipment of the aircraft would be their most valuable feature. Back in harbour, our photographer was taken up in one of the IIF's piloted by Lt. C. John, R.N., and was able to secure the following air photographs of some other ships of the Fleet. No. 8 is a fine view of H.M.S. *Exeter* herself, with H.M.S. *Norfolk* in the background. The other aircraft can be seen stowed on the port catapult, and abreast of

recoil ram. No. 3 is a rear view, showing the IIF. in the stowed position ready for sea; the special jury struts from the floats to the wings and between the ailerons and flaps should be noted; these are fitted to prevent racking stresses when at sea. In No. 4 the starboard catapult is seen extended at each end, and the trolley is still right forward, where it was left after the aircraft had been launched; just abaft the funnel can be seen the platform, which is mounted round the engine to enable work to be carried out on it at sea. In No. 5 the aircraft is not intentionally being maltreated, but merely being hooked on to the crane preparatory to being hoisted on board again; the slings are secured either side of the top centre section. The view in No. 6 is that which is seen of the catapult from the aircraft as it is being slung on board; the trolley is ready for taking the aircraft, and the catapult extensions have been run back. No. 7 is a view looking aft at the IIF. on the port catapult, and it shows another cruiser, H.M.S. *Norfolk*, Capt. J. F. Somerville, R.N., also of the 2nd Cruiser Squadron, keeping station astern. A photograph like this

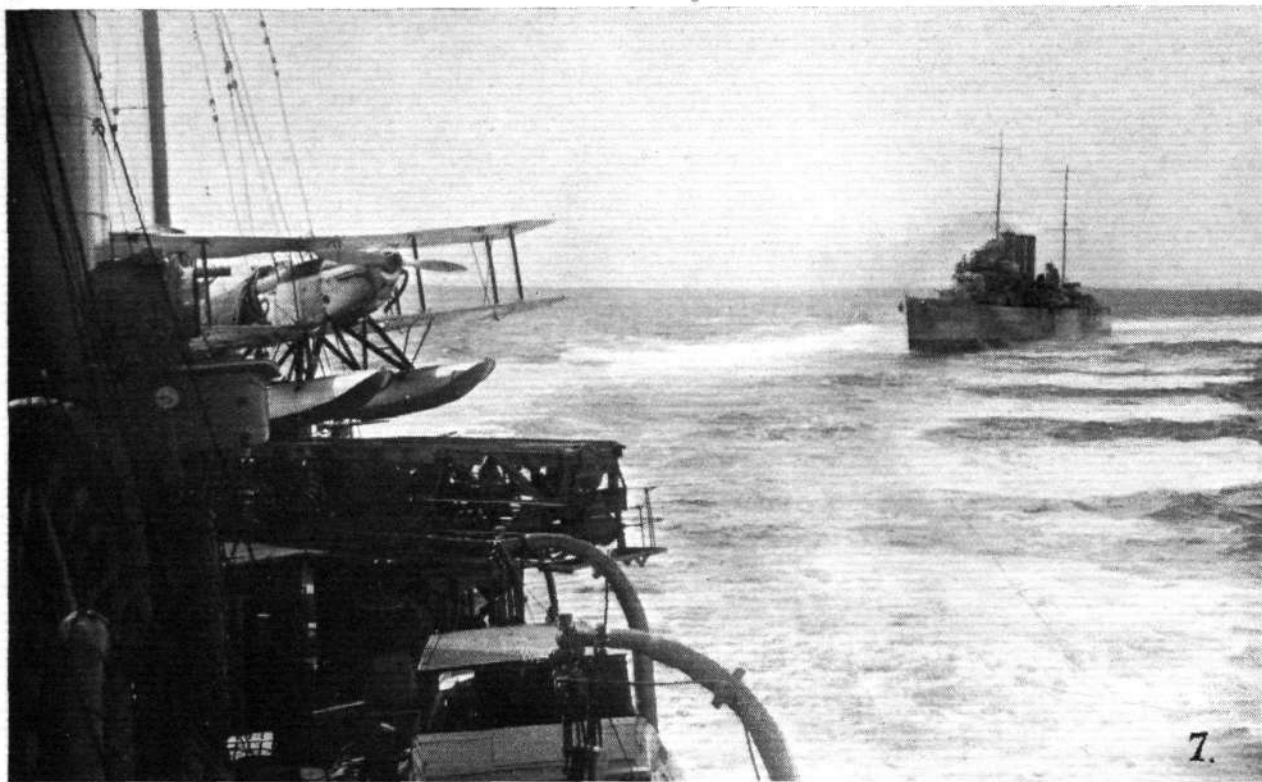


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(FLIGHT Photos.)

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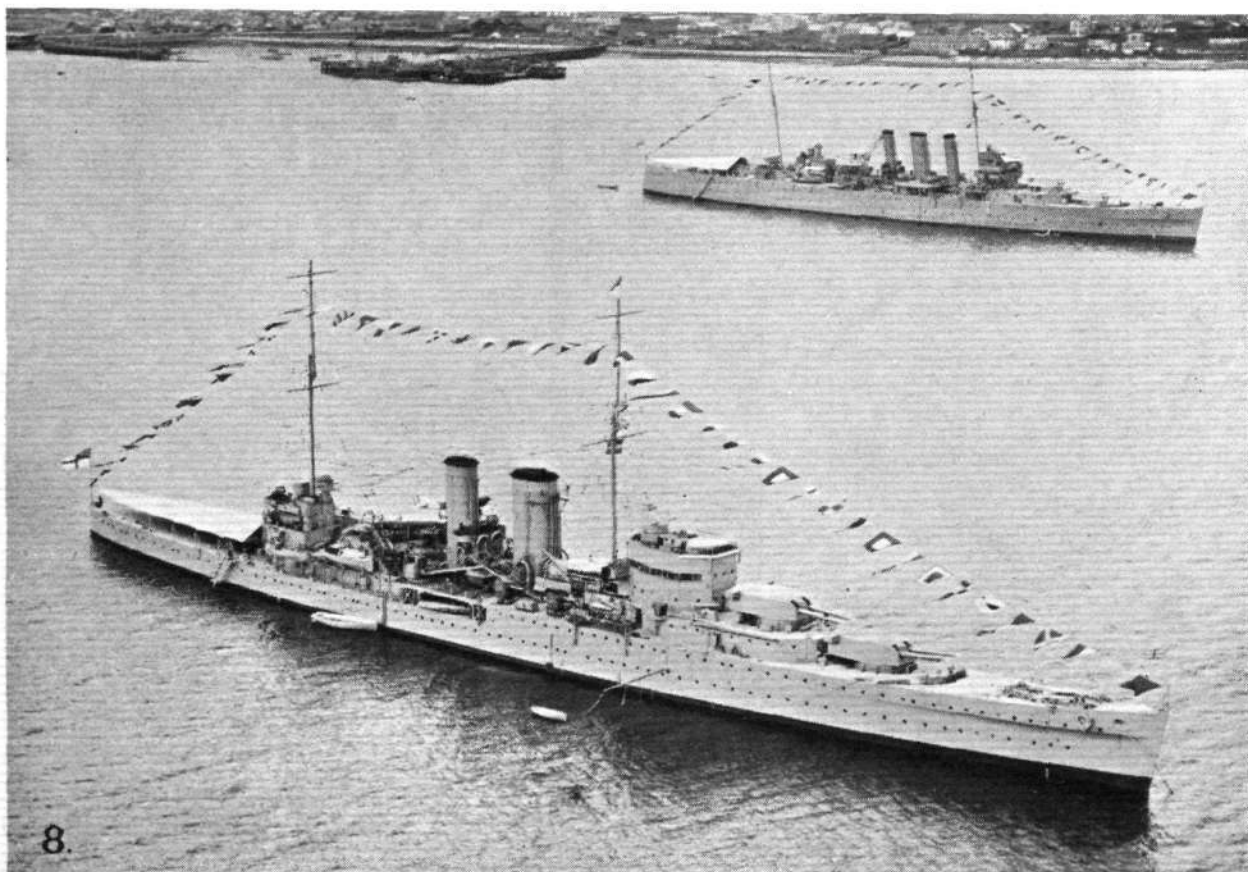


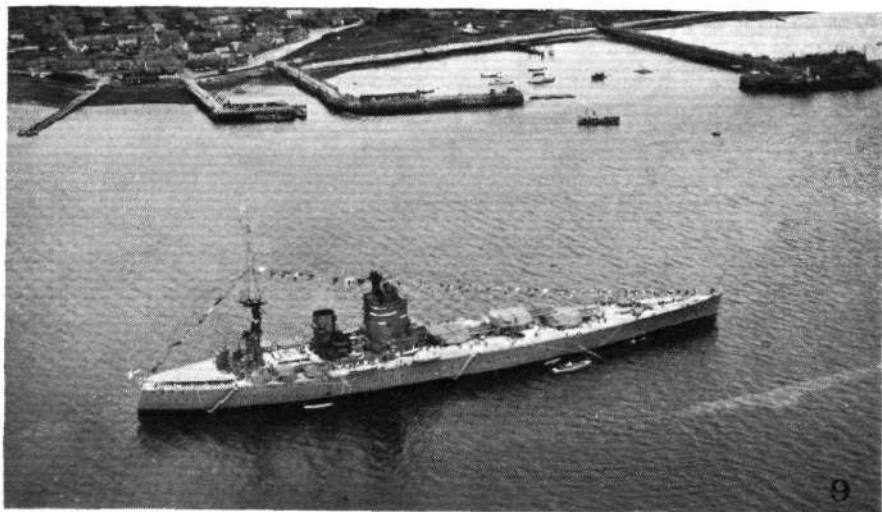


the funnels on the starboard side will be seen the crane—folded down—which is used to hoist the aircraft inboard. The after 8-in. gun turret is beneath the awning, and this, with the forward pair of turrets, comprises the main armament of this cruiser. Abreast the foremast are the 4-in. guns, which also form the anti-aircraft armament, while on the quarter-deck level, somewhat forward of the catapults, can be seen the torpedo tubes. Close examination of H.M.S. *Norfolk* will also disclose the fact that one of her aircraft has just been hoisted on board and stowed on the catapult, which is in roughly the same position as in H.M.S. *Exeter*. The next photograph, No. 9, is a view of H.M.S. *Nelson*, flagship of Admiral Sir John S. Kelly,

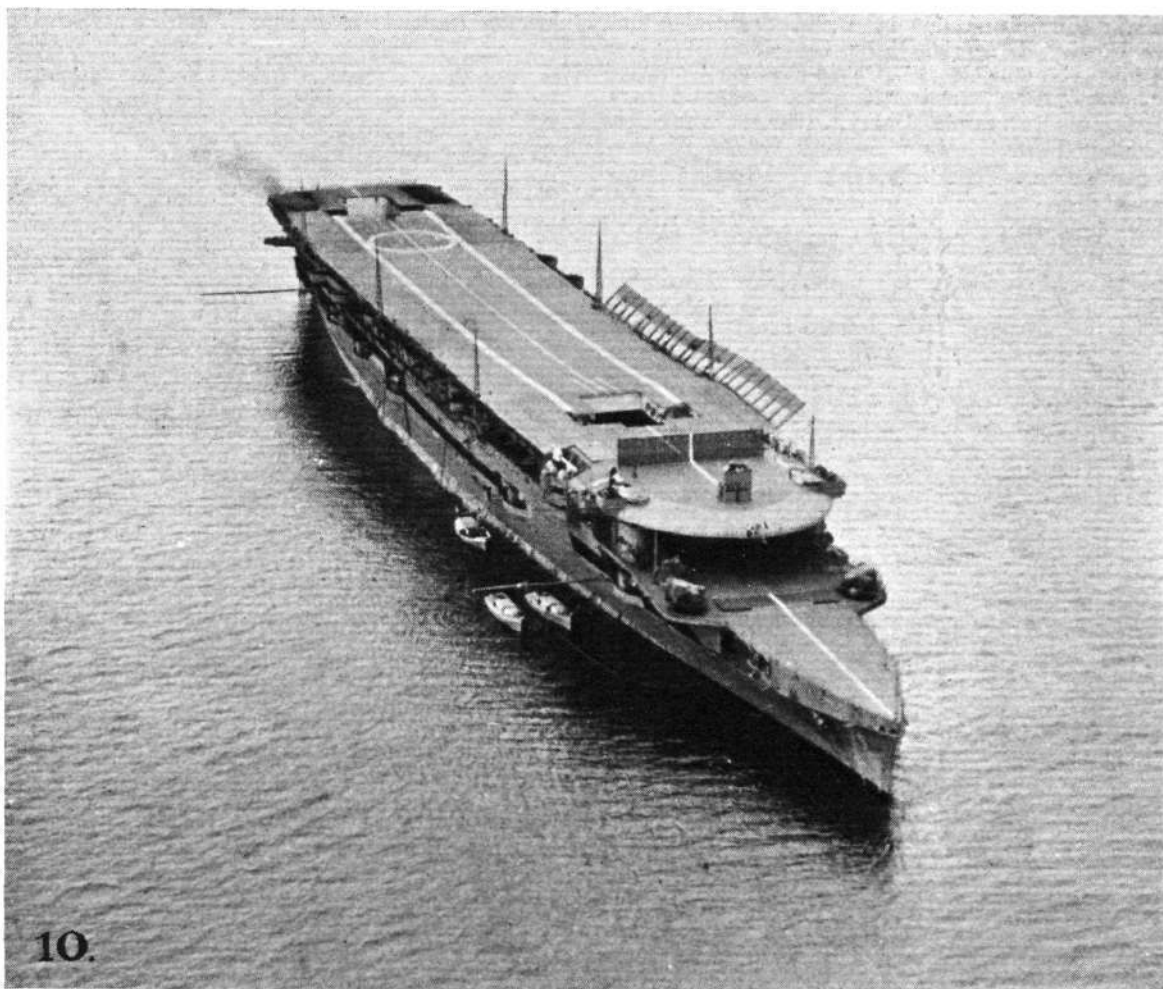
Commander-in-Chief of the Home Fleet; with her heavy armament—nine 16-in. guns, twelve 6-in. and six 4.7-in. anti-aircraft guns—she is, with her sister ship, H.M.S. *Rodney*, probably the most formidable capital ship in the world. She carries the Fleet Aviation Officer to C. in C., Home Fleet, Wing Com. C. O. F. Modin, D.S.C., R.A.F., and is here seen lying off Invergordon.

Already known to our readers, H.M.S. *Furious*, Capt. C. F. S. Danbey, R.N., is the only aircraft carrier in the world with a clear flying deck extending over the whole ship. No. 10 shows this ship with her bridge, in the fore part of the upper flying deck, raised, and just abaft it are the screens for keeping the wind off the deck while





be no reason why improvements should not be effected greatly increasing their sphere of usefulness. It stands to reason that, where operations are carried out near the coast, the aircraft can return, in bad weather, to some sheltered bay and land there, but the important point is that they will in all probability have been launched without interfering with the tactics of the Fleet in any way at all.



working on the aircraft. The curious smoke outlets from the boilers are seen at the after end, either side. Our last view, No. 11, is of H.M.S. *Malaya*, Capt. J. S. C. Salmond, R.N. This photograph was taken, as were the other aerial views, on the occasion of the King's Birthday, which is the reason why all the ships are "dressed." Her armament is eight 15-in. guns, twelve 6-in. and four 4-in. anti-aircraft. A sister ship carries a catapult on her quarter deck, with a Fairey IIIF. aircraft. The use of catapults in sea-going ships is as yet comparatively a venture, and their working is still very much in the experimental stage. That they are a valuable means of launching aircraft from ships not otherwise fitted for carrying aircraft is certain, and while at the present time the use of those aircraft is limited, due to their inability to land on rough water, yet there would appear to

