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At first sight it looked like the antarctic. Yet this  
 expanse of frozen sea-water was almost on England's door-  
 step; the place, Dunkirk. The huge harbour ~~whose name will~~  
~~never be forgotten on this side of the Channel~~ was frozen  
 solid. We in Britain have been <sup>only</sup> talking about our own cold  
 snap. Compared to this ours was just chilly. Ships had to  
 be improvised as ice-breakers before ~~there could be any~~  
~~thought of~~ <sup>the</sup> harbour traffic <sup>ed</sup> starting again. But even  
 600 miles south of Dunkirk, ~~even~~ the Mediterranean country  
 near the Spanish border had a taste of winter it won't  
 forget for a long time. ~~Subtropical palms were weighed~~  
~~down by the heaviest snowfall for many years.~~

The roof of a large bus station collapsed under the weight  
 of the snow.

Even the ~~River~~ Rhine was frozen ~~across~~ near the  ~~famous~~  
 Lorelei Rock, <sup>where</sup> ~~Hereabouts, says the legend,~~ <sup>legendary</sup> the Lorelei  
 maiden threw herself into the water because her lover was  
 faithless. That must have been in summer. ~~Now, explosives~~  
~~were the only answer to nature.~~

*Explosives were the answer to nature*