

16 THE BATTLE OF JUTLAND BANK

PHASE II

(See Map II, 4.52-6.0 p.m.)

Immediately upon sighting the German Battle Fleet Beatty 'altered 16 points in succession to starboard i.e. turned about from the direction of the approach battleships, 'and proceeded on a northerly course lead them towards the [British] Battle Fleet.' A few minutes later (4.52 p.m.) Hipper also went about, and for more than an hour the two fleets retraced their path. But the position was vitally altered. Hipper now was supported by his main body. Beatty, though drawing his adversary towards Jellicoe, was for the moment engaging the whole German High Sea Fleet. The opportunity, possibly, was that which the German 'enterpriser' had contemplated.¹

By 5 p.m. Beatty's squadrons were disposed to meet the new situation. In his rear was the Fifth Battle Squadron,² a position whence its 15-inch guns could engage the battleships in the German rear. The British Light-cruiser Squadrons and Destroyer Flotillas took station to cover the heavy ships. From 5-6 p.m. the battle continued on a northerly course, the two fleets steaming on parallel lines distant from one another about 14,000 yards (8 miles). Weather conditions were becoming increasingly difficult. The enemy was frequently invisible through mist, while the British ships were silhouetted against the clear western horizon. None the less, and in spite of inferiority of metal, Beatty's superior speed enabled him to control the fight.

At 5.50 p.m., after the action had continued on a northerly course for more than an hour, the approach of Jellicoe and the Grand Fleet was heralded. At that

¹ See diagram, *infra*, p. 33.

² See diagram, *infra*, p. 34.