

widows and children and those depending upon the sailors of the Mercantile Marine who may lose their lives in the Service. Remember, they are not in receipt of pensions or patriotic allowances, so our gratitude should be all the greater.

What the Fleet Has Done

The President of the Navy League of Britain, the Duke of Buccleuch, has just sent a message to the Navy League of Canada, dealing with the Naval situation as it is to-day. He says:—

"At the close of three and a half years of war, it may be advantageous to epitomize the outstanding features of naval achievements during the process of the struggle.

(a) In consequence of British command of the Seas, apart from air raids and a few spasmodic dashes of enemy cruisers, the territory of the British Empire has been held inviolate from enemy invasion. The British Empire is the only nation engaged in the War which has conquered enemy territory and lost none of its own.

(b) The lines of communication between all the arteries of war have been amply defended and maintained and protected for the transport of over 13,000,000 men from port to port. Moreover, under the guardianship of the Fleet, over 2,000,000 horses, 26,000,000 tons of munitions and war supplies, and 63,000,000 tons of coal and oil have been conveyed to meet the needs of the allied armies. Within the British Empire itself, the Navy has safeguarded the ocean carriage of nearly 140,000,000 tons of food and material.

(c) The maintenance of the blockade of Germany has resulted in the complete stoppage of her ocean-going commerce. The German flag has been swept from the Seas, and only on one occasion, the 1st of June, 1916, has German naval power ventured to challenge a fleet action.

(d) The conquest of German Colonies in Africa, Asia and Australia has been the direct result of the application of sea power in support of the operations of military force on land.

On the naval side of war nothing can be more calculated to stir the pride of the British race than the magnificent bravery and chivalry of the Officers and Men of the Mercantile Marine. It was the arrogant hope of the enemy that the methods of frightfulness that were so ruthlessly practised in the destruction of merchant vessels at Sea and their crews, would, in effect, increase the difficulties of manning and operating the British Merchant Service. In this respect, the enemy has been completely disillusioned and the fearless bravery, cool skill, and irrepressible sense of public duty of every section of British Seafarers, no matter on what class of craft they have been employed, are the admiration of the civilized world.

It may be declared in the fullness of conviction that as an instrument of war, the British Navy at the opening of this year is the most powerful and the most highly developed weapon which has ever been devised."

(Signed)

Buccleuch