

## Sea Fights of the Great War

trying to find his destroyer in the dark; he was terribly exhausted when at last picked up.

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We have learned many new lessons from this most tremendous of all wars as waged during the first nine months. Wireless telegraphy and the submarine, with the enormous increase in the range of modern artillery, have modified old ideas. The big gun and the fast ship are still lords of the ocean, and sea power is the dominating factor in the struggle on land it has always been.

Ever since the night of August 4, 1914, when the Morse lights signalled the declaration of war to the expectant crews, our superiority over the Germans has been steadily increasing. We have lost many ships and thousands of noble lives; but the men of Great Britain, descendants of those who fought under Drake, Hawke, and Nelson, have come forward in ever-increasing numbers. We have replaced the sunken fighting ships by thrice their number, and the new craft are faster and more heavily armed.

Besides the man-o'-war proper, an immense number of armed merchantmen, yachts, trawlers, drifters, and motor-boats have been taken over, and their crews completed by fishermen, yachtsmen, and hands from the Merchant Service.

So this volume ends as prologues do. It tells only of the doings of some of our ships; there is no mention save in a few odd paragraphs of the Grand Fleet. This mighty host of engines of destruction steamed away from Portland a few days before the declaration of war, the flagship's band playing "Twas in Trafalgar Bay." All proceeded "East about" to their war stations.

Since that moment, like a decree of sudden parting, there has been no word of the Grand Fleet's doings—no word of its whereabouts. We know only incidentally that it has been growing in might and power day by day; we know further that it has its grip on the throat of our enemy. We know that the German flag is wiped from the outer seas. Far below, the German Shark may be found bent on some mission of spite or murder. On the open seas this counts but little. The links with America, with the Dominions, with our close and glorious Ally, France, remain unbroken. What we have lost we replace. And still our grasp grows tighter in spite of ruthless submarine warfare. The grip of the Grand Fleet will not relax; it will only become more irresistible. Every week, every month, will disclose its powers of strangulation. In the end it will mean death; so Mahan prophesied; so will it be! Storm-beaten ships will ever stand against Grand Armies in their attempts at the domination of the world.