

self back in the race for supremacy. Germany seized the opportune moment and began constructing ships of equal tonnage, and to-day can build them as well and rapidly as England herself; so well, in fact, that the number of them falls like a darkling shadow across the waters of the North Sea; and it is now no longer a question whether Great Britain can have a navy equal in range and power to any other two nations, but whether she can have a navy equal to one power, and that one Germany herself.

France is awakening from her sleep of self-glorification to the fact of her actual maritime weakness, and is laying plans for construction by which she hopes to overtake her German rival. And now the news comes that Austria, never a sea power and with practically no sea-coast at all, has given a contract for the building of seven Dreadnaughts of the super type, together with torpedo boats, torpedo boat destroyers and submarines. Spain has commissioned England to build her an up-to-date navy. Russia, profiting by her disastrous war with Japan, is launching a fleet that will be equal in power to the best navies of the world; while Japan, night and day is seeking to justify the prestige of her war with Russia, and anticipating a possible contest with the United States for the control of the Pacific, is unceasingly pushing forward the work of building a navy that shall surpass even that with which