

SUBMARINES

even a torpedo-boat, let alone a destroyer, would hit it if she came over. But nothing hit anything. The search was conducted on scientific principles while they sat on the silt and suffered. Then the commander heard the rasp of a wire trawl sweeping over his hull. It was not a nice sound, but there happened to be a couple of gramophones aboard, and he turned them both on to drown it. And in due time that boat got home with everybody's hair of just the same colour as when they had started!

The other nightmare arose out of silence and imagination. A boat had gone to bed on the bottom in a spot where she might reasonably expect to be looked for, but it was a convenient jumping off, or up, place for the work in hand. About the bad hour of 2.30 a.m. the commander was waked by one of his men, who whispered to him: 'They've got the chains on us, sir!' Whether it was pure nightmare, an hallucination of long wakefulness, something relaxing and releasing in that packed box of machinery, or the disgusting reality, the commander could not tell, but it had all the makings of panic in it. So the Lord and long training put it into his head to reply! 'Have they? Well, we shan't be coming up till nine o'clock this morning. We'll see about it then. Turn out that light, please.'

He did not sleep, but the dreamer and the others