

Why Were Ye Silent?

GREY watchdogs of the sea, your task is done.
Through glooms of night and winter tempest
wild,

O'er pathless waters, tireless have ye coursed
To hunt the lurking demons of the deep,
Or dare from safe retreat leviathans.
Ye guarded well our little island home;
No foeman's foot her borders hath profaned;
Ye kept secure dominion of the waves
That torn and trampled nations might be free,
And Right and Justice never fail from earth.

THROUGH morning mists of dim November
dawn,

Your two long lines of grim and ghostly forms,
Extending to the far horizon's verge,
Silent and ready, waited for the word
That, on a sign of treachery, would bring
Thunder and lightning from a thousand throats
Of steel, upon the monsters of the deep,
Huge, cowed, submissive, moving to their doom.
Your crowded decks were silent. Not a sound.
No mock. No cheers of triumph. Why should men
That bravely fought, yet kept their souls unstained,
Stoop to a triumph over captured fiends