

Unionist or Nationalist, and instantly effaced as a mere demonstration, by the gallantry at the same moment of Irish soldiers in the battle line—lifts its treacherous hand in vain; the increasing and terrible pressure of the British blockade of Germany, equivalent, as some one has lately said, every twenty-four hours that it is maintained, to a successful action in the field; the magnificent resistance of an indomitable France; the mounting strength of a reorganised Russia. This island-state—let me repeat it with emphasis—was not prepared for, and had no expectation of a Continental war, such as we are now fighting. The fact cries aloud from the records of the struggle; it will command the ear of history; and it acquits us for ever from the guilt of the vast catastrophe. But Great Britain has no choice now but to fight to the end—and win. She knows it, and those who disparage her are living in a blind world. As to the difficulty of the task—as to our own failures and mistakes in learning how to achieve it—we have probably fewer illusions than those who criticise us. *But we shall do it—or perish.*