

in some measure preoccupied in the paramount task of safeguarding the Expeditionary Force from molestation in transit, will she ever dare to face it at all? Anyhow, if our command of the sea could have been overthrown at that juncture, the Expeditionary Force must have been destroyed in its turn, and sooner or later our maritime commerce must have shared its fate. The fortunes of war in Belgium and France, bad enough as they were at the outset, must have been gravely worsened in proportion to the strength and valour of the English contingent, and Germany by a single coup might perhaps have grasped the coveted sceptre of a world-wide dominion.

All this and much more the Allied Fleets have done, and yet there are smatterers and grumblers who insist that our own fleet has done nothing, except lose a few cruisers, and allow a few German cruisers to capture less than a score of British merchant-vessels in the outer seas. Away with such craven, vain, impatient, and ignorant imaginings! Let us lift our eyes above these really trivial happenings and survey the whole situation from the height of its true significance. Above all let all our sympathies and all our confidence go to the British fleets, squadrons, and flotillas which are keeping watch and ward on the seas in circumstances as trying as seamen have ever had to encounter and surmount. It may indeed be the deliberate policy of Germany to take full advantage of these trying circumstances in the hope of wearing our seamen down by the acute and almost agonizing tension of a prolonged period of suspense and comparative inactivity, combined with a vigilance never for a moment to be relaxed. Let no one underrate the force of this psychological calculation. No one will underrate it who has ever witnessed,