

CHAPTER XIII

THE ACTION IN THE PACIFIC

ON November 5th the Admiralty announced sad news. The naval authorities had no information, except such as came from German sources—apparently the wireless service issued to a world which would otherwise be in ignorance of the feats of German arms ashore and afloat. But the Germans claimed that a naval action had been fought off the Chilian coast with the result that the armoured cruiser "Monmouth" had been sunk, and her consort, the "Good Hope"—flagship of Rear-Admiral Sir Christopher Cradock—"very severely damaged." The Admiralty announced that they "could not accept these facts as accurate at the present time, for the battleship 'Canopus,' which had been specially sent to strengthen Admiral Cradock's squadron and would have given him a decided superiority, is not mentioned in them; and further, although five German ships concentrated in Chilian waters, only three have come into Valparaiso harbour."

For two days the mystery of this reported action continued unsolved. The Admiralty then issued a further statement which, it was apparent, was an incomplete reflection of events, and it was not