

heard the same story. They were eager to fight and tired of "watchful waiting." I find the ships and men better prepared than when they steamed to the world's greatest sea battle three months ago. Then the men hoped for victory: to-day they are certain that they will win. They are even confident that they can defeat a fleet far stronger than their own.

Some testimony from officers is given, confirmatory of this roseate picture, and we are assured that in the three months that had elapsed since the Battle of Jutland Germany had managed, "in some miraculous fashion, to provide herself with practically a new navy. 'We have more ships than we had at the Skagerrak,'" said an officer, who showed me through the battle fleet as we visited the super-Dreadnought Kaiser. "I can not tell you how many Dreadnoughts, battle cruisers, light cruisers, destroyers, and submarines have been completed since then, but they would make a fine navy in themselves. It would interest those in your Congress who think the last naval appropriation Bill is excessive. With two exceptions all the ships damaged at the Skagerrak have long since been back in the service. But even more important is the confidence the victory inspired in our men. It was a lesson in tactics and strength of gunfire which we learned. It was a great experience, for these things you can only learn in such a life-and-death struggle. The fleet had hardly returned to port after the battle before all the commanders, navigating officers, and gun captains were busy collaborating and putting into shape for practical use these lessons. We hope that we will not have to wait long before the next battle permits us to show what we have learned."

Then the correspondent again takes up the parable and his final word is that the men of the German fleet are almost losing their sleep at nights in their eagerness for another fight: "I wish that Asquith and Balfour could see what I have seen to-day—the great fleet straining at the anchor chains and waiting for an opportunity again to meet the enemy. It almost had that chance last week. The world will never know how near was another great sea battle when the German and British navies slipped by each other out there on the stormy fogbound North Sea. But that battle will yet come and it may be sooner than the world expects. Certainly if the spirit of the German sailors has anything to do with it the world will not have to wait long for a decisive battle. Every man to whom I spoke to-day was eager to face the foe. Those who were lucky enough to be in the Skagerrak battle were among the most eager for another combat. Those who were wounded in that fight have now recovered, and I was told that out of a total of 500 such men more than 400 were back at their posts. I was also told that the total number of Germans killed was less than 2500, while the British loss was 8000. As the fleet steamed out of the harbor to-day men and officers alike expressed the hope that it would be like the dawn of May 31, when the ships did not drop their anchors off the coast, but steamed on until they met the foe and gave battle." The wish was not gratified on that occasion: but if both sides are really so anxious to meet, the day of decision should not be far distant. It is interesting to note that this correspondent avers—and we presume the statement may be accepted—that amongst the ships which he saw slip out of the harbor were the battle cruisers Seydlitz and Moltke, both of which have been chronicled as having been sunk in action.

Ireland's Defamers

Says a London paper: "Popular prejudice has hardly any limits, as witness the verdict of a coroner's jury scarcely 40 years ago that a man found dead in the Midlands had been murdered by some Irishman unknown." In many respects the world has moved fast and far during the past half century, but the vulgar anti-Irish spirit of forty years ago appears to be still

fresh and green amongst some of the 'stand-pat' unprogressive, too-old-to-learn newspaper offices of the Dominion. It was exemplified the other week by the petty and unworthy attack launched by the Christchurch *Press* against the local movement to send money for the relief of Irish distress. Similar collections had been taken up throughout almost all the rest of New Zealand without let or hindrance or public criticism or opposition of any kind. But when it came to be the Christchurch's people's turn to take up the movement the *Press* could not resist the temptation to display its anti-Irish animus, and to emit its ill-natured but happily harmless and ineffectual growl.

A further illustration of the same unamiable spirit is furnished by a paragraph which appeared in the cable columns of the *Dunedin Evening Star* of October 29, and was copied, presumably under arrangement, by the *Otago Daily Times* of the following day. A Melbourne cable relating to a disturbance at a conscription meeting was transmitted to New Zealand papers in these terms: "After refusing to hear speakers in favor of conscription, a crowd at Port Fairy brutally kicked the chairman, and attempted to hang him with a luggy trace. The lights in the hall failed, and he escaped." To this the *Star* cable editor appended the following note: "A large proportion of the western district of Victoria, from Port Fairy (formerly known as Belfast) to Warrnambool, including Killarney, Kirkstall, and portions of the Tower Hill (Koroit) district, is descended from Irish laborers, many of whom came over after the Fenian rising." We submit that there was absolutely no occasion for the insertion of this objectionable tag, and, so far as we have seen, in no other paper in the Dominion, outside of Dunedin, did anything of the kind appear. What the settlement of Port Fairy was fifty years ago is no guide whatever to the composition of the population at the present day. Had there been anything to specially connect the Irish element with the disturbance, the cable agent could have been safely depended upon to report the fact. But the Irish had to be dragged in somehow, and so this ancient and rusty item was dug up for the occasion. We ask these papers, in all seriousness, what they hope to accomplish by this thoughtless and confounding gibing at the Irish people. Is such a course calculated to promote that unity and solidarity which are so essential when the Empire has such serious work on hand? Is it calculated to promote that voluntary enrolment of man power which it is a point of honor with this country to develop and foster to the highest possible degree? Already, so we are informed, the lickerish and censorious attitude of the Christchurch *Press* has had a noticeable effect on voluntary recruiting in the Christchurch area. Is it consistent with real patriotism to continue to pursue such tactics—tactics which have, in themselves, no justification, and which become doubly culpable in view of the harmful consequences to which they give rise?

For ourselves, we believe we are stating the simple truth when we say that the Irish people, here and elsewhere, are thoroughly sick of being lectured and hectoring and scolded and abused by these self-appointed and half-baked critics of the daily press. Our sentiments, and the sentiments of Irishmen generally, have been expressed to a nicety, and in words of burning eloquence and power, by Sir Thomas Henry Grattan Esmonde, Bart., Nationalist M.P. for North Wexford, whose son, a young naval officer of brilliant promise, was killed in the Battle of Jutland. In a letter published in the English press, Sir Thomas writes: "I have grown sick and tired of the incessant abuse of Ireland in connection with the war. I do not know if there is any sense of fair play left in England where Ireland is concerned: but if there is, the interests both of the war and of the Empire would suggest a stop to this unending vilification of Irishmen. Neither do I know if there is anyone in England of sufficient manliness and honesty and authority to cry halt to this hideous campaign of hate. It would be to England's interest if he