

THE HOUR

James Bernard Fagan

a poem

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WE'VE shut the gates by Dover Straits,
And North, where the tides run free,
Cheek by jowl, our watchdogs prowl,
Grey hulks in a greyer sea.
And the prayer that England prays to-night—
O Lord of our destiny!—
As the foam of our plunging prows, is white;
We have stood for peace, and we war for right,
God give us victory!

Now slack, now strung, from the mainmast flung,
The flag throbs fast in the breeze;
Strained o'er the foam, like the hearts at home
That beat for their sons on the seas.
For mothers and wives are praying to-night—
O Lord of our destiny!—
But we've no time, for our lips are tight,
Our fists are clenched, and we're stripped to fight.
God give us victory!

The west winds blow in the face of the foe—
Old Drake is beating his drum—
They drank to "The Day," for "The Hour" we pray.
The day and the hour have come.
The sea-strewn Empire prays to-night—
O Lord of our destiny!—
Thou didst give the seas into Britain's might,
For the freedom of Thy seas we smite.
God give us victory!



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