

The death of Nelson was felt in England as something more than a public calamity; men startled at the intelligence, and turned pale, as if they had heard of the loss of a dear friend. An object of our admiration and affection, of our pride and of our hopes, was suddenly taken from us, and it seemed as if we had never, till then, known how deeply we loved and revered him. What the country had lost in its great naval hero — the greatest of our own and of all former times — was scarcely taken into the account of grief. So perfectly, indeed, had he performed his part, that the maritime war, after the battle of Trafalgar, was considered at an end; the fleets of the enemy were not merely defeated but destroyed; new navies must be built, and a new race of seamen reared for them, before the possibility of their invading our shores could again be contemplated. It was not, therefore, from any selfish reflection upon the magnitude of our loss that we mourned for him; the general sorrow was of a higher character.

Southey