

CHAPTER XXVI

FINIS

THE navy of land-locked Switzerland has always been a subject for jest among nations that go down to the sea in ships. But the patrol service of Lake Constance, which guards the line running midway down the length of the lake against illegality—the smuggling of arms and ammunition, the use of improper passports, and all the illicit dealings that are a part of the secret operations of nations at war, has been and continues to be a highly efficient force in the preservation of neutral relations.

Herr Lieutenant Hoffmeier, no lover, in spite of his name, of methods Teutonic, took as great a pride in his craft as though she had been a twenty thousand ton battleship, as much joy in his two small deck rifles as though they had been thirty-eight centimeters in caliber. It was his business to watch the lake for signs of suspicious craft and especially to note the movement of the German Government vessels at Lindau and Friedrichshafen. So that when the German Patrol emerged from Lindau, vomiting black smoke, he came out at once, assured that the two small fishing boats that he had been watching for some moments crossing in the storm were the objects of German attention. The round shots sent as warning aroused him to greater interest, especially as now it was clear that the sail-boats had reached Swiss waters.