

## CITY OF FLINT

The month-long odyssey of the City of Flint, with its unexpected climax in Norway, has all the elements of first-rate fiction. Perhaps that is why this sea-saga of mystery, dramatic surprise and sudden reverses has overshadowed in the American mind even the shocking tragedy of the *Athena*, in which the Flint played her part as Good Samaritan.

Safe for the moment in Bergen Harbor and freed of her German captors, this one vessel has left in its wake ripples of international complications which washed the shores of half the western world and involved five great nations. Judging by the violent controversy between Germany and Norway, they are by no means yet stilled. Meanwhile our grinning crew has been painting back the big American flag which the Nazis blacked out and thinking of home again after an involuntary exploration of the Arctic and a taste of extremely dubious Russian hospitality at Murmansk. But there are few grins on the faces of the German prize crew interned at Haugesund, and the German frown at Norway is portentous. These Norwegians, who apparently acted with punctilious regard for The Hague covenants governing war prizes in neutral ports, nevertheless displayed a good deal of what Americans would describe as spunk. Germany's wrath, and especially her chagrin, is not to be lightly incurred by small neighbors, but Norway seems to feel she is reasonably safe from retaliation.

Now that the ship has come safely through so many alarms and dangers, every one of generous instincts will hope the voyage of the Flint ends happily. Perhaps second thought will suggest to Germany that it would have been better if the *Deutschland* had never captured her. She proved a "hot" prize from that moment. Her visit to Murmansk scarcely improved Russian-American relations. It even seemed to put a strain on the Hitler-Stalin axis. Nor did her subsequent stealthy progress down the Norwegian coast almost to the Skagerrak, with British cruisers lurking just outside territorial waters, support Germany's boast of an eventual blockade of Britain.