THE PEARL POACHERS.

BY CUTCLIFFE HYNE.

you'll not think it under the state of the s

know your peculiar qualifications pre-ty thou-oughly. I'm an eminently practical business man; I offer you a handsome salary with both eyes open, and yet you refuse because you are afraid of ribbing me of my money.

"Mr. Carnforth," said the little sailer stiffly, "I have my own ideas of what's right You have seen me at see using violence and ugly words. But you will kindly remember that I was in service of an employer then and was carning his pay by driving no crew. It's another thing now; we are ashore here and I would have you know that ashoram a strict chapel member, with high-precsure conscience and a soul that requires careful looking after. I could never forgive myself if I thought I was taking your pay without earning it dioroughly."
"If you'll let me get a word in edge ways," said the other, lettlebly, "and not be so beastly cockeure that you can voo me-which you could no more do than fly—per-haps you'd understond what I'm offering and not sneeze at a good chance. The lugger is your ewn invention and so is the idea the I'm merely going pearl fishing in the ordin My notion is to go pearl poaching which is a very different matter; to get rich quick and take the risks and get over them. end to go at the business in a steamer with ing enough crew to-er-do what's

irany," suggested Kettle, gloomly. Piracy be banged. The Jars have annexel certain pearling islands and have declared them closed. At the outside we should be only guilty of peaching, and that's a folmild offense, and one I want to see oth sides of. Twe got pheasant covers here in England, which are plached. It amuses me to chass the poschers, and occasionally I catch them, and when I do, I go for them hot and beavy. So I know the loys of the game preserver, you see, and I want to teste the excitement—and the profits—of the

'And you're a rich man," said Kettle, "with a fine position in the country and a seat in Parliament. Some people never do know when they're well off."

know when they're well off."
"Some people don't," said Carnforth, "and you're another of them, skipper. For myself, I do a mad thing now and again because—O because I like the excitement and flurry of it. But you! You go and refuse a profitable billet that would fit you down to the boots, merely for the sake of a whim. A quarter of an hour ago you told me you were practically destitute—er—on the streets pour own words were; and here you are chucking up a certain f20 a month, and a possible f30, when it's ready to your hand. I didn't know about the steamer," said

Kettle, "and that's a fact." "Well. I'm telling you now, captain, and if you don't take charge of her upper bridge. it will be your own fault. Why, man, there isn't a job between here and New Jerusalem that would suit you better; and besides, I'm keen to go there myself, and you are the one man in the world I want to have as a shipmate, and I ask you to come as a per

'I'm sick of this smug, orderly, frockcoated life here. Nature intended me for a pirate, and fate has made me a successful manufacturer. I've tasted the wild, unre-generate life of the open-air once under your auspices and rubbed against men who were men, and I want to be there again. I'm tired of fiddling amongst men and women who are merely dollar millers and dress pegs. I'm sick of what they call success. I'm sick of

the whole blessed business. Captain Kettle thought of Mrs. Kettle and children in the squalid house in South Shields with the slender income and the allm pr. spects, and he sighed drearly. But he did not utter those thoughts aloud. He said instead that he was very grateful Mr. Caraforth for his magnificent offer, and would do his best to earn thoroughly the lavish income which was held out to him.

Carnforth reached out and gripped his "Thanky, Kettle, he said, "and mind, I'm g ing to try and lug you into a compe-tency over this. You might just as well have given way before. I always get my own way over these sort of things. And now probably you'd like to hear a bit more about the poaching ground."

"Well, I can't quote you latitude and longitude offhand, but I'll show you the whereabouts of the place marked on the chart afterwards. It's Japan way, and the Japs have chosen to claim all the bits of reefs thereabouts, and to proclaim a sort of close season against all foreign pearlers. the place I've got news of is in their area, but so far it has never been fished. It's enormously rich, and it's absolutely virgin. Why, man, if we can put in six months' work there undisturbed, we can easily carry of \$1,000,000 worth of shell and pearls."

"Six months!" said Kettle. "That's a big order. I've no doubt that, with a decemsteamer and a few rifles, we could beat off one of their gunboats when we got there, and, say, a week's fishing. But if that gun-boat steams back to Nagasaki, or wherever her port is, and brings out a whole blessed havy at her heels, we may find the contract outside our size. Of course, if you are going to fit out a real big steamboat with a gun or

two and 100 men-"
Carnforth laughed. "Wait a bit," said he. "You're going ahead too fast. There's no question of fighting a whole navy. In fact, we mustn't fight at all if there's any means of wriggling out of it. I believe fighting would amount to piracy, and piracy's would amount to piracy, and piracy's too lively even for my tastes. Besides, if we got very noisy we'd have some cruiser of the British-China squadren poking her ugly nose in, an't that's a thing we couldn't afford to

risk at any price." "Then how are you going to manage it?"
"What we must hope for is to be left
undisturbed. There's every chance of it.
The reef is out of all the steam lanes and circle tracks, and the Jap's gunboat patrol is not very close. In fact, the place has only them newly charted. It was found quite by accident by the skipper of a sea sealing schooner, and he missed the plum because he happened to have been a brute to one of

"But I thought you said this reef was out all ship tracks?"

Don't hustle me. The schooner had been sealing off the Commander islands. She was coming home, and got into heavy weather. She was blown away three days by a gale, and picked up the surf of this reef one morning at daybreak, ran down into the lee, and lay there until the breeze was over. The reef wasn't charted, and the skipper, who was 'on the make,' wondered how he could gather dividends out of it. In the off-scaling season he was in the Thursday island trade, and his thoughts naturally ran upon pearls and shell. He'd a diving sait on board, and he rowed into the lagoon, made one of his crew put on the suit and

"Now observe the result," said Carnforth with sly relish, "of being too severe on one's hands. This sailor, who was cent down in the diving suit, had been having a dog's time of it on the scaling achooner, and when he got on the floor of the lagoon and saw up and walked the deck. He was conscious

"No. Mr. Carnforth." said Kettle, "it shell that had never been touched by human fingers, he made up his mind that the time had come to repay old scores. So when the came up out of the water again he said of course; who basn't? And, for the matter sulkly enough that there was nothing below of that, I've had on a diving suit mycelf and but seaweed and mud, and the boat rowed gone down and examined a slip's bottom to eee if the divers that had been sent down to look at some started plates had brought up a true report. But I've never done more his totique till he could find a market of the look at some started plates had brought up a true report. But I've never done more his totique till he could find a market of the lagron, and the change in the charter, and the sailor kept on helding his totique till he could find a market of the lagron. a true report. But I've nevel have than pass through these North Australian his tongue till he could fird a market for than pass through these North Australian his information. He didn't fird one at once; sees. They tell me the pearl fishing's done he had to wait two years, in fact; and then

be had to wait two years, in fact; and then he found me. I guess that skipper would be easier on his hands in future if ns only "It is," said the big man. "And—"
"Well, cir, you'd better get another captain. I'm a steamer sailor by bringing up, tain. I'm a steamer sailor by bringing up, better that schooler. We Carried and the found me. I guess that skipper would be easier on his hands in future if ns only the waller from the future file. The sailor frowned. "A sugmaster, sir, has to get the full amount or work out of his hands, or he neglecting his duty. I can be the second of the s and on a steamer I know my business and picture that schooner, Mr. Can forth, and I and on a steamer I know my business and produce that schooler, Mr. Cartorth, and to can do it with any other man alive. But can picture her old man tearing what he's you'd not find me much good on a little wind missid, and still carrying on the driving fammer like a Thursday's island peorler. I'm a Cardon man, Mr. Cardonth, and ors are beasts, and you have to treat them. I'm a ford-up man, Mr. Comforth, and ors are beasts, and you have to treat them desperately in want of a berth. I hope, too, as such, and of you can show me a master you'll not think it undue familiarity when I who's popular in the forecastle, I can show

I don't thick you'd better engage me es your skipper for this trip. You could get a so much better man for your enoney."

Carnforth laughed. "My dear Kettle," he carnforth laughed. "My dear Kettle," he said, "I don't think I ever came across a too obstinate an animal to change your opin-fellow with less real notion of looking after itos in a hurry. I've a pretty strong with his own interests. As you are aware, I myself, and so I can sympathize with you, However, we'll let that matter of ethics slide for the present, and go into the question of ways and means." And on the dry de-tall of this they talked till far into the night.

Here, however, the historian may for then selves, while to all others these small questics of ways and means would be innitely tedious. The yacht's voyage out to leglish capers andounced its commencement t one of the usual formal paragraphs: "Mr. Martin Carnforth, M. P. for the Musico livision of Yorkshire, has started in his line can yacht, the Ventris, for a lengthene our in Chica seas to study Oriental ques tions on the spot and will probably to absent some considerable time."

The official log kept on board was meager and scanty, being confined to arid statements of distances run and the ordinary meteoro ogical happenings of the ocean; and toward the latter entries even these were exilifully fletitious. Indeed when the vessel neared he scene of action her yellow funnel change o black with a crimoen band, a couple squarish yards were creased on her fore mant, her dainty gaff-sails vanished and were replaced by serviceable trysails, and the midship house was solled by the addition of a coat of crude white lead above the trimity polished teak and straddied over by a clumsy from bridge defended by fill-fitting canvaodgers and awnings. There was no making he expert believe, of course, that she a mere trader that had always been a trader But to the nautical eye one was unsuspicious she looked one of those ex-yachts that hav ocen sold out of the petticoat-cruising service of Cowes, and been adapted to the more homely reeds of the mercantile marine and in the Mediterraneau, the Australia. cas and China waters there are many of his breed of craft making a humble living for heir owners. A couple of weeks neglec will make any brass work look unyachtlike and a little withholding of the paint brusl con makes all small trade, a wonderfully

Rechrictening, of course, is but a clums device, and one which is (the gentle novelis notwithstanding) most selfom used. A ship at her bir h is given a name and endowed with a passport in the shape of "papers. Without her papers she cannot enter a civil ized port; she could not "clear" at any cus tom house, and to attempt doing so be a blatant confession of "som "something wrong." So, when the paint brushes wen round, and the name Vestris on counter cats and life-buoys Governor L. C. Walthrop (which seemed to carry a slight American flavor) a half sigh went up from some of the ship's company, and a queer little thrill went through rest, according to their temperaments They were making themselves sea parlahi from that moment onward, until they should deem fit to discard the allas.

Captain Kettle himself finished lettering the last of the life-buoys and put down his brush and shook his head. Carnforth was watching him from a deal

chair. "You don't like it?" he said.
"I never did such a thing before," said
Kettle, "and I never heard of it being done and come to any good. We're nobobies now, and it's everybody's business to meddle with nobody. If you're a somebody, only the proper people can interfere.

"I can't help it," said Carnforth. "The Vestris is well known at home, and I'm well known, too, and we've just got to see this business through, one way or the other. under purser's names. She's the Governor Walthrop, and I'm Mr. Martin, and you can be what you like.' "I'll still use my own name, sir. I've car

ried it a good many years now, through most kinds of weather, and it's had so many stones thrown at it that a few more won't hurt. It we get through with this little



THE LITTLE MARINER WAS SEATED, TURNING IN THE FRAYED SLEEVE OF A WHITE DRLL JACKET.

game, all right; if we get interrupted, guess the only thing left will be to attend our own funerals. I'm not going to taste the inside of a Japanese gaol at any price."
I never eaw such a fellow as you for looking at the gloomy side of things, said Carnforth irritably. "It's the gloomy side that's mostly come

my way, eir."
"I wish to goodness I'd never been idiot enough to come out here on this hare-

"Why," said Kettle in surprise, "you've got the remedy to your hand. You give your orders, Mr. Carpforth, and I'll bout-ship this minute and take you home. "And don't you want to go through with it, skipper?"
"I don't see my tastes need be mentioned."

said the sailor, stiffly. "You are my owner, sir. I'm here to do as I'm bid." "Captain Owen Kettle," said the other, with a laugh that had got some sour earnest at the back of it. "You're a cantankerous little beggar. I sailed with you before, and found the most delightful of shipmates. I

sall with you now, and you keep me always at boat-hook's length away from you. He hanged if I see what I've done to stiffen "Sir," said Kettle, "on the Sultan of Borneo you were my guest; on this yacht you are my owner; there's all the difference in

"You wish to point out, I suppose, that a shipmaster looks upon an owner as his nat-ural enemy, as he does the board of trade. Still I don't think I personally have deserved

"I am as I have been made, eir, and I suppose I can't help it."
"You are a man with some wonderfully

of fine sense of disappointment and disillu- back of his head. His face was burned to sionment. He had started off on this expedition filled with a warm glow of romance. He had been grubbing along at distasteful pusiness pursuits for the large part of his least at the end of a picce of fine sinnet was a gold-rimmed eyebusiness pursuits for the large part of his least at the end of a picce of fine sinnet was a gold-rimmed eyebusiness pursuits for the large part of his least making over his chest at the end of a picce of fine sinnet was a gold-rimmed eyebusiness pursuits for the large part of his least. The sum of the large part of his least. The sum of the large part of his least. The large part of his least making over his chest at the end of a picce of fine sinnet was a gold-rimmed eyebusiness pursuits for the large part of his least. The large part of his least making over his chest at the end of a picce of fine sinnet was a gold-rimmed eyebusiness pursuits for the large part of his least making over his chest at the end of a picce of fine sinnet was a gold-rimmed eyebusiness pursuits for the large part of his least making over his chest at the end of a picce of fine sinnet was a gold-rimmed eye-pusiness pursuits for the large part of his least making over his chest at the end of a picce of fine sinnet was a gold-rimmed eye-pusiness pursuits for the large part of his least making over his chest at the end of a picce of fine sinnet was a gold-rimmed eye-pusiness pursuits for the large part of his large part of h cutside, had always lured him strongly. Once in Kettle's company he had tasted of the realities of adventure amongst Cuban revolutionists; had got back safely, and set-looked at the glass this morning. I hope the sum of the destination of the work; Kettle, with all his nonchaisnes the mind.

Then the chief engineer called up to the revolutionists; had got back safely, and set-tled down to business again for a time; and then once more had grown restless. But he had the virus of adventure in his blood, and he was beginning to learn that it was a cumulative poison. So, once more he had started off, but this time he was being chilled from the outside. Properly treated, the pros-pects of the trip would have been rosy enough. Handled by Captain Owen Kettle, the whole affair was made to assume the aspect of a commercial speculation of more than doubtful sanity. And as he walkekd, he cursed Kettle from his inmost heart for bringing him to earth and keeping him there

amongst sordid considerations.

The little mariner himself was seated in a deck chair under an awning, turning in the frayed sleeve of a white drill jacket. His sewing tackle stood in a pictured tin biscuit box on the deck beside him. He unripped the old stitches with a pocket knife, and resewed the sleeve with exquisite accuracy and neatness. His fierce eyes were intent on the work. To look at his nimble fingers one would think that they had never held anything more deadly than the ordinary utersils of falloring. Caraforth broke off his work and stood for a moment beside him. "Skipper," he said, "you're a queer mix-ire. You've lived one of the most exciting lives any man's ever gone through, and yet you seem to turn your more peaceful moments to tailoring or poetry indifferently,

guess we're all discontented animals. We always like most what we get least of." "Well, I suppose that's intended to sum up my character us well as your own," said

The mate, on the yacht's upper bridge picked up the reef with his glasses that awhile withhold his pen, since those in the evening, a couple of hours after sandown, slipping interest can fill in the gap for The night was velvet black, with only a few stars showing. A sullen ground swell By the way, it's awfully rude of me; I rolled the seas into oily hills and valleys. haven't tumbled yet to who you are."

Ind the reefs ahead showed themselves in "Never mind my name," said the visitor. Japanese waters may also be omitted. The a blaze of phosphorescence where the swell

a fine dark mebogany color by the sun, and dangling over his chest at the end of a picce of fine sinnet was a gold-rimmed eye-

it's going to keep steady."

The visitor glanced round and sized up the yacht and its resources. "O I should say

"Humph, it's an uniucky number. Well, too long. The weather's a bit uncertain, you know, in these sras."
"We want some pearls and shell before

"I might have guessed that. Well, it's a nuisance from our point of view, because we thought we'd the legeen to ourselves, and intended to skim it clean ourselves, if the Japs don't intermipt. But, take a tip, captain, and don't be too greedy. If you stay too long, the glass may fall suddenly,

"Take care, my lad," snapped Kettle; "I'm a man that eccepts throats from no

"O, all right," said the stranger, carelessely. "But who have we here?" And he stuck the glass into his eye and whistled. Captain Kettle made a formal introduc-ion. "My owner, sir, Mr. Martin of New York."

"Humph," said the visitor; "you used to and enjoy them with gusto.

"Mr. Carnforth," said the little sailor, "I M. Carnforth, I remember, and M might guess were all discontented animals. We possibly stand for Martin."

Captain Kettle smiled grimly, and Carnforth swore. Bit of a surprise to find you pearl poach-Carnforth, and set down and watched the sewing.

Carnforth, and set down and watched the sewing.

Carnforth I see your name in the wo sewing. notion you were something big at home. "No," said Carnforth, "I'm all right there,

Come below and have a drink and a talk. ecolly. "I don't suppose you'd remember me



"TAKE CARE, MY LAD," SNAPPED KETTLE, "I'M A LITTLE MAN THAT AC-

ano. The watch below were all on deck, fizzle of after life. the deep sea lead. At intervals came the report, trolled in a minor key, of "No bot-

The engines were running half-speed ahead, and presently they stopped, and the order was given for the yacht to lay to where she was till daybreak. A light breeze had sprung up, bringing with it a queer, slender taint into the sweet sea air.

For a long time Carnforth had been snuffling diligently. 'I'm sure I smell something," he said at last. "It's there," said Kettle. "Have you ever been in a north country Norwegian port,

"By jove, yes, skipper. It's just the same, Decaying fish."
"There's not another stink like it on this earth. You know what it means here?"
"I suppose some other fellows are in the

lagorn before us, and they're rotting out "That's it." said Kettle, "and we're going to have our work cut out to get a cargo. But we'll do it, Mr. Carnforth, never you fear. I suppose there'll be trouble, but that'll have to be got over. We've not come all this way to go back with empty ho'ds."

Carnforth looked at the little man slyly. Here was a different Captain Kettle from

the fellow who had been mending the white drill coat half a dozen hours before. He was rubbing his hands, his eye was bright, his whole frame had stiffened. He was whistling a jaunty tune and was staring keenly out at the phosphorescent blaze of the breakers, as though he could see what was behind them and was planning to overcome all obstacles. An hour before Martin Carnforth had been cursing the tedium of now. Before many more hours were past he had a strong notion he would be scared at its liveliness. He had seen Captain Kettle's methods before when things went contrary to his plans and wishes.

legrees the blackness thinned. The eastern waters grew gray, and the sky above them changed to dull sulphur yellow. Then a coal of crimson fire burned out on the horizon and grew quickly to a great half-dish of scarlet, and then the rest of the sun was shot up, as an orange pip is slipped from the flugers, and it was brilliant, staring, For full an hour the yacht had been under-

weigh at half steam, with lead going, circling round the noisy reefs. The place was alive with the shout of breakers and the scream spouting waters, were three small turtle backs of sand and a lugger at anchor

canal between the reefs, shown up vividly by the gap in the ring of creaming surf. It was not likely that any one from the lugger would lend a hand for pilotage— or te trusted if they offered. So Kettle steamed the yacht to some half-mile off the entrance, called away the whaleboat, and went off in her himself, with a crew and a couple of lead man, to survey the channel. He did it with all deliberation, returned, took his perch on the forecrosstrees, where he could see the coral floor through the clear water beneath, and conned the yacht in Carnforth leaned over the bridge

end and watched. The coral floor, with its wondrous growths, came up toward him out of the deep water. The yacht rolled into the pass on the breke of the great ocean swells, and the reef ends on either side boomed like a salute of heavy guns. The white froth of the surges spewed up against her sides, and the spindrift pattered in showers upon net deck planks. The stink of the place grew stronger every minute.

Then she shot through into a mirror of still, smooth water, slowed to half speed, and, with band lead going diligently, stramed up to an anchorage in sixteen fathams, off one of the sandy islets. A white whaleboat put off from the lugger, rowed by three Kanakas, and by the time the yacht's

broke into thunderous surf. It seemed as I was a reading man up there, and you though the yacht was steaming toward the weren't. You did your best to totunent my glow and din of some distant marine vol- life out. I took a big degree and made a drawn there by curiosity, and along one came a commercial success. So you see bulwark the watch on duty were handing we've little enough in common, and besides I was here first, and I resent your coming." "O, rubbish, man; come below and have a we'd better have bottled that dirty

"Thanks, no. I prefer rot to be under the of bread and calt with-er-trade rivals." He dropped his eyeglass and walked to the head of the accommodation ladder. "Look nere, said Carniotta hour, the ladder is all nonsense. We've got as much right here as you."

He dropped his eyeglass and walked to the is all nonsense. We've got as much right here as you."

Here, Master Caraforth," he said, "I'll give "Right!" said the pearler, "right had betthe dropped his eyeglass and water to the dropped his eyeglass and water took here as you."

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men pulled frim back to the lugger. Curse that beggar's impudence," caid Carn-

'Maybe we'll find out," said Kettle. "I tried to catch your eye whilst he was speak- and I guess you look upon the thing much ing. If I had my way he'd be on board as you did bagging kneckers and brass doornow, kept snug till we were through with our business here. He'd have been a lot safer that way."

"O, no," said Carnforih, "we couldn't have done the high-handed like that on the little all of us poor men, and we've been all of us

he said. Wonder who he can be, though? what we call 'on the beach' for more years Some poor beggar whose corns I trod on up than we like to count, and we want to wrigsome poor beggar whose corns I trod on up that we like to count, and we want to wrigate Cambridge. Well, anyway, twenty years and that beard have completely changed him out of memcry. However, if he chooses to come around and be civil he can, and if he doesn't I won't worry. And now, captain, pearls? The sconer we get to work the more chance we have of getting a cargo "You are a successful man." You're as the count, and we want to wrigate that we like to count, and we want to wrigate that we like to count, and we want to wrigate that we like to count, and we want to wrigate that we like to count, and we want to wrigate that we like to count, and we want to wrigate that we like to count, and we want to wrigate that we like to count, and we want to wrigate that we like to count, and we want to wrigate that we like to count, and we want to wrigate that we like to count, and we want to wrigate that we like to count, and we want to wrigate that we like to count, and we want to wrigate that we like to count, and we want to wrigate that we like to count, and we want to wrigate that we like to count, and we want to wrigate that we like to count, and we want to wrigate that we like to count, and we want to wrigate that we like to count, and we want to wrigate that we like to count, and we like the count, and we like to count, and hatches and slipping away undisturbed."

"Right-o," said Captain Kettle. "They've got the other two sand banks, and, by the stink, they're doing a roaring business. We'll tag this empty one near us and set about fishing this very hour, and plant our shell to rot there. It'll smell a bit different expedition. A little chill went through him to a rose garden, Mr. Carnforth, but it'll be a sight more valuable."

Then began a period of frantic toll and labor. Every man on board was "on shares," for it had pleased Carnforth's whim to use this old buccancer's incentive. Half of the profits went to the ship and the rest of the erew. Each man had so many shares according to his rating. Carnforth himself, addition to his earnings as owner, earned also as an ordinary seaman and sweated and strained like any of the hands. From an hour before daybreak to an hour after sunset he was away in the boats, under the dews of morn and eve, or the blazing torrent of midday sunshine. Every night he tumbled into his bed place dog-tired, and exulting in his tiredness. Every morning he wake eager again for the flerce toil. He was unshaven, sun burned, blood smeared from the scratches of the shell, filthy with rank sea mud. But

withal he was entirely happy.

Kettle toiled with equal vigor, working The water outside was clear as bottle-green glass, and of enormous depth. The the others. Neither his arms nor his tongue only cutrance to the lagoon was a narrow ever tired. But he was always neat, seldom unclean. Dirt seemed to have an antipathy for the man, and against his disheveled owner, he looked like a park dandy beside a

At the other side of the lagoon the white man from Cambridge and a white friend and their crew of ten Kanakas worked with similar industry. The ring of the lagoon was some half mile in diameter, with lanes of deep water running through its floor where divers could not work. There was no clash-ing of the two parties. One of these waterlanes seemed to set out a natural boundary and neither transgressed it. On each sub-marine territory there was enough shell to work on for the present, and each party tolled with the same frantic energy, and spread out the shell on the sun-baked sand banks, and poisoned heaven with the sceni of decay. But there was no further interbetween the two bodies of men nor indeed any attempt at it. How the others were doing, the yacht's party neither knew nor cared. Theirs was a race against time for wealth, and not one striver amongst them all had leisure to be curious about his

neighbors.

In a nicer life, the smells of the place would have offended them monstrously; here they were a matter for congratulation; the more the putrefaction, the more the profit. They ripped the shells from the sea and spread them upon the beaches. The roasting the Japanese gunboat find been sighted sun beat upon the spread out shell fish and far enough off and, as it was coming up melled away their soft tissues in horrible from the further side of the riog of reefs, it decay. The value was all a gamble. There

them tedious beyond words. Every filled shell, with its latent possibilities of treasit's likely to for the present. You've a nice little beat here, and a likely-looking lot of men. You'll be having ten of a crew all told, captain, eh?"

"Thirteen," said Kettle.

"Buttle beat here upon the sand, was so much capital left in a perilously insecure investment. They were so bitterly airaid of intercuptions, the dark shadow of Japan was always before their even.

"Electron of treas—"Foredeck, there!" cried Kettle. "Break out that enchor! By hand!" And the men investment. They were so bitterly airaid of intercuptions, the dark shadow of Japan the precious steam. They was always before their even.

the humble opalescent sphere worth its meager half-a-crown to the black pearl worth its score of pounds, or the great pear-

shaped pink pearl worth a prince's ransom. It was all a gamble, but none the less fas-

Still at last came the first moment of realization. They had tolled a month, and they had collected that day the fruits of their first day's labor. The mother o' pear shell was packed to the hold; the little croof pearls stood in a basin on the cabin table, said they gloated over them as they

cupped.
Carnforth stirred them lovingly with the butt of his fork. "Pretty little peas, aren't they, skipper? "For those they amuse though I like to

myself. "Matter of taste and matter of fashion Pear's are all the rage just now. Diamonda are slightly commonplace. But women will spend their money on something, and so the price of pearls is up."
"So much the better for us, sir. It's a

and probably worth any ten of the rest put together."
"Well," said Kettle, "I don't set up for

being a pearl merchant. Poaching them's trouble enough for me."

"Pass the biscult, will you?" said Carnforth, yawning. "I suppose that little lot is worth anything over f1.000—" and with that he dropped back dead asleep in his chair with a forkful of food in midair. Captain "Say what's i Kettle finiened his meal, but he, too, man clisely, "and dec of wire though he was, suddenly tumbled ward and went to sleep with his head on the table. It was no new thing for them to on us, and do. They had dropped off like this into unus to Jone consciousness more than once during that in return." month of savege toil.

The next day they had a smaller crop ready to glean, a bare £500 worth, in fact. But they did not lament. There would be an enormous quantity ready for the mor

That further realization of their wealth however, never came. During the night another lugger salled into the lagoon and upset their plans. She was the concort of the lugger commanded by the Cambridge man, and she had taken away to a sate place their first crop of pearls and shell. Further she was married by fourteen whites, at armed, and all quite ready to defend what they considered their poachers' monopoly As a consequence they pulled across to the yacht come two hours before daybreak, and Carnforth and Captain Kettle found themselves waked by three men who carried mar-lin repeating vifles, and were quite ready to

use them if pressed. But the little sailor was no easily cowed "By James!" he cried, "this is piracy!"
"It'll be a funeral," said the man with
the eyeglase, "if you don't bring your hand out from under that pillow, and bring i out empty. Now, don't risk it, skipper I'm a good spap shot myself, and this is only a two pound trigger." Captain Kettle did not chuck his life away

He let go his revolver and drew out his band. "Well," he said, "what are you grimy pirates going to do next? our soap and hair brushes." "Carnforth," shouted the man with the

eyeglass, "come in here and be told what's going to happen. I say, you fellows, bring Carnforth into the skipper's room." Martin Carnforth came into Kettle's room sullenly enough, with his hands in his and tricked out with a black and while pockets. "Now, I'll give you the whole case packed peer of the realm.

small," said the spokesman. "A crowd of A last despairing he us found this place, and discovered the waters, "Are you noble?" pearls and the shell. We were all budly "Yes, haven't I told you? Lord Martin in want of a pile, and we took the risks and You'll know it better when you're next in started in to get it. Most of us went away port."
with the first cargo, and only two white And that was the last word. The gunmen were left, with a few Kanakas. Then beat turned and steamed out after them, you came. You are told you're not wanted, but her turning circle was large and her but you gently hinted at force majeure and speed slow. By midday she was bull down were allowed to stay. Finally the rest of our crowd comes back, and it's force majure You got plowed and be-al success. So you see us; at any rate we don't intend to chare."
"Mr. Camforth," said Kettle, "I told you with the window pane eye who's been like that."

talking.

to that. You know that Mr. Martin, or Carnforth, or whatever you choose to call yourself for the time being. You came here under a purser's name, your yacht is guyed out like a Mediterranean tunny fisher.

"And let me tell you this. You've got the upper hand for the present, I'll admit. You may even force us to go out of the lagoon. But what then? I guess the aclagoon. But what then? I guess the account would not be closel, and when a man chooses to make me his enemy, I always see that he gets payment in full sooner or later."

"All cight," said the man with the eyeglass, "pay away. Don't mind us."
"A hint at one of the Japanese ports as to what was going on would upret your little

"Not being foels," said the pearler, coolly A hail came down the saloon skylight out side from the deck above: "Scoot, boys scoot! The philistines be upon us!" "What's that?" shouted the man with the eyeglass.

"Well, it's one of those blasted Jap gun boats, if you want to know. Hurry, and we shall just get off. We'll leave these fools to pay the bill." "Humph," said the pearler, "Well, this settles the matter another way. I must go, and I suppose you'll try to hook it, too. Ta. ta, skipper; you're a good sort: I like you By-by, Caenforth; can't recommend the Jat Hope you get caught, and that'll square

up for your giving me a bad time at Cam-

He followed the others out on deck and a moment later their whaleboat was pulling hard for where the luggers code lazily at their anchors. Carnforth and Kettle went after him and the engineers and the yacht's crew, who had been held down in the fore astle at rifle's muzzie, came on deck also. It did not require any pressing to get the were cold, but gever were fired lit quicker Parafine, wool, small coal, greece, anything that would burn, was coaxed into the furnace doors. The cold gauges began to quiver, but, as every mon on board well knew, no

human means could get a working steam pressure under half on Lour. On deck the crew had run the boats up to stood like men on the drop, waiting their The luggers had mast-headed their yards and were beating down the lagoon against a spanking breeze. One after the other they tumbled out through the passage and swing on the outer swell; and then, with their lugs goose-winged, fled like some seared sea fowl out over the blue sun-scorched waters.

But, though the yacht had convas, Kettle knew thee it could not beat to windward and so dare not break his anchor out of the ground till the engineers had given it steam. There was nothing for it but to wait with

cable was bitted a man from her had stepped up the accommodation ladder, and was looking about him on deck.

He was a biggish man, in striped pajamas, barefooted, roughly bearded, and working a barefooted, roughly bearded, and working a crumpled pith helmet well down on the cable was all a gamble. The roasting far except off, and, as it was coming up melted away their soft tissues in horrible from the further side of the ring of reefs, i decay. The value was all a gamble. There had to circle round them before it could gain the only entrance. Moreover, its utmost inlay work; or a seed learl, such as the paper pace was eight knots, and it happened chinese grind up for medicine; or larger to be foul, and so its advance was slow.

pearls of any size and color and shape, from But still to the watching men it seemed the it raced up like a western occan greyhound.

The sun rose higher. The stick of the rotting shell came to them in poisonous whife. At another time it would have spoken of wealth in sweet abilitance. But now they disregarded it. Prison and disgrace were

But the process of realizing their wealth

But the process of realizing their wealth
was none too fast, and, in fact, seemed to bridge through the voice tube that he could give her enough steam for steerage way in

gave it to Carnforth. "It's only a beggarly chance, sir, but we'd better try it, I sup-

'Yes." said Carnforth. "If only we hadn't painted out those names we might have done it more safely. As it is, we must risk it. Off with you below sir, and get into some decent clothes. You'd give the whole show away if you stayed up on the bridge here in those filthy rags. You may be a yacht owner, sir, but by James, you look far more like an out-of-work coal see a bit more color in a woman's ornamenta | trimmer.

Carrforth ran down the ladder, and Kettle gave crisp orders to the hands on deck who disappeared also, and presently came back dressed as spruce yachtsmen, in white trodsers, white drill jumpers and straw hats, and by that time the yacht was under way

"So much the better for us, sir. It's a pity though, that some of them seem a bit off color, like that big gray chap for ineverything cleared for action. The Japanese everything cleared for action. The Japanese "Gray, man! Why that's a black pearl flag ren up to her peak.

"Gray, man! Why that's a black pearl flag ren up to her peak.

Promptly an English royal yacht club burgee broke out at the poacher's main truck, and a British blue ensign ran up to her propitall and dipped three times in salute.

Carnforth came up onto the bridge. "Now, sir," eaid Kettle, "you must do the taiking, I guess it's got to be lies, and lying's a thing I engit do."

What shall I say?" "Say what's needed," replied Kettle conelsely, "and dor't say it wrong. Remember, ic, you're lying for your liberty. It's neck or nothing. She's got two big guns trained on us, and a shot from either would send

us to Jones before we could get in a smack "What ship's that?" came the hall in perfeet English.
"Steam yacht Vestris, Lord Martin, owner," said Carnforth, who knew the value of titles on the foreigners. "I am Lord

"What are you doing in here?"

Been watching those poachers." "Heave to and explain."
"I shall do nothing of the sort and if you dare to fire on me I will bring the British fleet about your ears."

The Japanese spokesman gasped, and consulted with a superior, and the steamers drew abrenst. "I shall do nothing of the kind."

"But you are in forbidden waters." "Then you should put up a notice to ray I shall report this to my admiralty is

"Go it," said Kettle, sotto voce, "For clooming check give me an M. P. "But you must stop," sail the Japanese, or I shall be compelled to fire."
"You can do as you please," sail Carnforth. 'I shall report you to your com-mander-in-chief at Nagasaki. I never came deress such insolence. You heard my name, Lord Martin. You'll hear more of it before

Steam was rising in the gauges, and the yacht was getting into her stride of twelve knots. She sped out through the passage the look of you, you've come here to steal and rolled in the trough of the glistening swells beyond. The crew of the war shi stood to their gars, but the officers were is a dilemma. These pestilential Britishers al-ways did make such a row if any of their vessels were fired on, and this apparently was a yacht, though grotesquely unkempt

A last despairing had came over the

stern; by evening her mask trucks were under the water. Carnforth strutted the deck complacently

Rather a gorgeous bluff, ch. skipper?" he said at last. "You're the only man on this ship that could have done it," said Ket:le admiringly

It takes a parliamentary education to Il-Again the silence grew between them, and then Carnforth said musingly, "I wonder who that Cambridge man was."

"He seemed to hate you pretty tenderly. "He did that, I suppose I must have played some practical joke on him. Well, I know I used to be up to all sorts of larke in those days, skipper, but that's long enough ago now, and all that sort of fool-

Captain Kettle laughed. "Have you done with pearl-peaching, sir? Or are you going to have another try at it. But don't paint out the name of your ship next time. I that Jap had had the eyes of a mole he'd have seen the change, and he'd have taker his chances and fired. Governor L. C. Walthrop is no name for an English milord'

To drive a cough from the system use Dr. Bull's Cough Syrup. It never fulls.

Capture a Connecticut Murderer. COLUMBUS, O., March 11.-Ben R. Willis 23 years of age, alias Charles Jerome Sharp, vas arrested here today by Pinkerton De tective Koach and local Detectives Humble and O'Neill. He is wanted by the Wilton Conn., authorities for the murder of David S. R. Lambert on the night of December 17 Williams here for the fight of December 17 S. R. Lambert on the night of December 17. Willis came here from Chicago and stopped on Linwood avenue. He at first denied his identity, but finally confessed to Assistant Superintendent Robertson of the Pinkertons of Chicago that his name was Willis and that he, together with Max Brockhaus, under arrest, shot the man. Willis is held for the Connecticut authoritis.

CHICAGO, March II.—Sheriff Hasley of Bridgeport, Conn., arrived in Chicago today with requisition papers for the extradition with requisition papers for the extradition of Brockhaus, who is in jail here. He will go to Columbus on his way back to Con-necticut and take Willis with him.

Don't annoy others by your coughing and risk your life by neglecting a cold. One Min-ute Cough Cure cures coughs, colds, croup, grippe and sil throat and lung troubles. Eno Leaves Much to Charity.

HARTFORD, Conn., March 11.-The wi f the late Amos R. Eno, proprietor of the Fifth avenue hotel, New York, has been filed for probate here and disposes of an estate valued at \$2,000,000. The public bequests include \$50,000 to Amherst college; \$1,500 to the Simsbury, Conn., Congregational church and \$5,000 each to the American Home Missionary society and the American Sunday School union. Ten New York cheek the receive \$6,000 each and an eleventh \$3,000. The sum of \$150,000 is left to the corporation of the Chamber of Commerce of New York, for aid and assistance to such members as may be reduced to poverty, and for aid to their families provided that a like sum is raised by the corporation. The rest of the estate is divided among the children and grandchildren. Fifth avenue hotel, New York, has been

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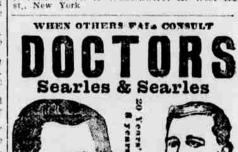
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