

SHARKS

CHAPTER I

THE COMPANY FACTORY

THE Mansion House stands like a great rock in the flood tide of London, and the surge of humanity beats upon it in vain.

Mr Percy Thawne got down from his omnibus at the corner by the Bank of England, and crossed the wide pavements between an avenue of silent traffic waiting for the fall of the policeman's imperious hand. He stopped at the police station under the steps of the Mansion House and read the notices displayed there in a leisurely manner; then he looked at his watch, a slim and dapper little engine, not much thicker than a five-shilling piece, secured to his person by a neat chain of aluminium and gold—quite the newest sort of chain.