

H.M.S. Tiger to New Guinea, where she shelled several native villages, and drove the savages into the interior. I kept the finding of the pearls a secret as the ends of justice would not be aided by making my discovery public.

After reflecting upon the facts I decided that Chapman had discovered a process by which, with the aid of electricity, he had been able to stimulate the growth of pearls to an abnormal size and also to develop them with greater rapidity than under normal conditions. I recalled his statement at the Queensland Club and no doubt remained in my mind that he had selected the New Guinea coast as the place where he was least liable to be disturbed by white men, owing to the hostile character of the natives. I also found that the scientists had concluded that pearls were formed by some extraneous substance getting inside of the oyster, thus setting up an irritation and giving rise to the term, "The tears of the oyster."

There was but one market in the world where my three great pearls would find purchasers at their full value and that was London. I therefore took passage a few months later on the Orient steamer, Orizaba, and a jeweler in Regent street paid me a very handsome sum for my find, but he informed me that he would willingly have given double the amount if I had been able to produce two that would match.

An old friend, whom I had not seen for years, invited me down to his box in the country for a weeks' shooting. One day as we were standing before the Crown Arms, a carriage rolled up to the door. I gave a great start. Leonard Chapman hurriedly alighted and went inside.

"Who is that man?" I asked the moment I recovered my voice.

"The young Earl." He only came into the estate a few months since. His life has been quite a romance. The Black Earl, his father, quarreled with him some ten years since and turned him out of the Hall. The trouble arose over the Vicar's daughter, whom the young man wished to marry. For nine years not a word was heard from the son. The Black Earl had lived a fast life, but after the quarrel he redoubled his pace and when he died everything was mortgaged to its full value. After his death the Jews swarmed down like the plagues of Egypt. Three months later the heir suddenly appeared. The debts were paid and what is still better, he married the girl, though it is said he never wrote her a line during his absence.