

Or Bringing Home The Dinkum Oil



... And this is how it really was

(continued from previous page)

Its cooking drifted about in the air and mingled with the sunlight and the sea-foam. The sea-gulls whirled around and screamed till it was a case of getting at the food before the birds. But when seven-foot sharks have been leaping and plunging on the end of your line anything tastes good. Luxury of luxuries, they also had stewed pears and thick cream.

The sharks they caught were of two species—the School Shark (*Galeorhinus australis*) and the seven-gilled shark (*Notorhynchus pectorosus*). A strange thing about these fish was that the School Sharks were all females and the seven-gilled all males, which made it very interesting for the scientists.

* * *

EACH night at dusk they came back to earth. On the beach in the dark the girl rigged up the balance from the jetty and cut up the sharks by the light of a hurricane lamp on dinghies turned upside down. She discovered that sharks were the most beautiful things to cut up; for their insides were clean and shaded from pale mauve to deep purple. There was very little blood about. Mostly the livers weighed about eight pounds, and off each liver she took a two pound sample which she preserved in alcohol. The oil could be extracted with solvents. Shark liver oil, particularly that of the School shark, is very high in vitamin A and D content, but it is not as pleasant as cod liver oil. It has a very distinctive smell, and a taste of its own, not exactly unpleasant but very sickly. So much had been found out, but with these samples much more could be discovered. This was the first time any samples of male seven-gilled sharks had been taken in that locality, though female School sharks had been caught not far away, and male and female had been taken from Cook Strait.

Back in the laboratory, the staff act as guinea pigs and have a daily dose of the different liver oils. Soon she knew, she would be having her dose of shark-liver oil. But that was an anxiety she would meet when it came. The immediate task was to sort out and label her two-pound lots of liver and consign them by rail.

As we have said, you never can tell when you may be wanting shark liver oil; but now you won't have first to catch your shark. This girl has done it for you.

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