Why was even five pounds 'too dear'?

Small boats loaded with wares sped to the great liner as she was entering the harbour.

Before she had anchored, the men from the boats had climbed on board and the decks were soon covered with colourful rugs from Persia, silks from India, copper coffee pots, and beautiful handmade silverware.

It was difficult not to be tempted.

Many of the tourists on board had begun bargaining with the tradesmen, but I decided not to buy anything until I had disembarked.

I had no sooner got off the ship than I was assailed by a man who wanted to sell me a diamond ring.

I had no intention of buying one, but I could not conceal the fact that I was impressed by the size of the diamonds.

Some of them were as big as marbles.

The man went to great lengths to prove that the diamonds were real.

As we were walking past a shop, he held a diamond firmly against the window and made a deep impression in the glass.

It took me over half an hour to get rid of him.

The next man to approach me was selling expensive pens and watches.

I examined one of the pens closely.

It certainly looked genuine.

At the base of the gold cap, the words 'made in the U.S.A.' had been neatly inscribed.

The man said that the pen was worth £50, but as a special favour, he would let me have it for £30.

I shook my head and held up five fingers, indicating that I was willing to pay £5.

Gesticulating wildly, the man acted as if he found my offer outrageous, but he eventually reduced the price to £10.

Shrugging my shoulders, I began to walk away when, a moment later, he ran after me and thrust the pen into my hands.

Though he kept throwing up his arms in despair, he readily accepted the £5 I gave him.

I felt especially pleased with my wonderful bargain — until I got back to the ship.

No matter how hard I tried, it was impossible to fill this beautiful pen with ink and to this day, it has never written a single word!

The next man who approached him was selling watches and pens, and when the writer looked at one, it looked genuine.

The man said it was worth £50, but the writer could have it for £30.

The writer offered him £5 and waited.

Eventually, as the writer was walking away, the man agreed and took £5.

The writer was very pleased-until he was back on board.

The pen was impossible to fill.

It has never written a word since.

The writer had only just gotten rid of a man who was trying to sell a diamond ring when another man approached him with some expensive pens and watches.

When he held them up for the writer to look at, the writer showed quite a lot of interest.

'Can I see one of the pens?' the writer asked the man. They all looked genuine.

The man handed the writer one and said: “It's a beautiful pen, sir. It's worth £50, but you can have it for £30.”

When the writer offered him just £5, there was an argument about the price, but eventually the man said: “You can have it for £10, sir. That's the least I can take.”

As the writer walked away, shrugging his shoulders, the man followed him.

“I can't really do it, sir- I'm almost giving it away,” he said, “but you can have it for £5.”

The writer was obviously very pleased.

He gave the man £5, took the pen, and the man disappeared quickly into the crowd.

The writer was extremely pleased: he had bought a very expensive pen for just £ 5.

What a bargain!

Later, back on board ship, the writer discovered why the man had been in such a hurry to get away: you couldn't fill the pen with ink, and it just didn't work!

It wasn't such a 'bargain' after all!

I had no sooner opened the door than the telephone began to ring.

He had no sooner finished his speech than everyone began to clap.

She is as old as I am.

She is not as tall as I am.

While I was working in the garden, my brother was sitting in the sun.

I was just going into the shop when I met an old friend.

It takes me an hour to get to college in the mornings.

It has taken me two hours to get here today.

This car was made in Germany.

It was made by Germans.

The World Cup is made of gold.

Glass is made from sand and lime.

Up till now, I have been to the UK three times.

So far, I have seen that film five times.

At what point did the tradesmen start trying to sell their merchandise? While they were laying it out on the decks.

What happened once the writer got on shore?

What made the writer finally buy the pen? The man eventually agreed to his original offer.

But I decided to disembark before buying anything.

I was assailed by a man who wanted me to buy a diamond ring.

The man said that although the pen was worth £50, as a special favour, he might give me for £30.

It was difficult to resist temptation.

However hard I tried, it was impossible to fill the pen.