

Isles, every word of its highly-amusing evidence having been printed in full in the daily papers for over a week. Of the three cases cited, perhaps that of the Black Pearl Swindle was least generally known, because disposed of in one short paragraph, yet it presented features that might have advertised it widely, since it was so curiously manipulated that the law could not lay hold of the perpetrators. It originated in the purchase of a black pearl by a gentleman representing himself as a wealthy American and staying at one of the best hotels. He explained he was about to be married and wished for something unique to present to his fiancée as an engagement ring. Ten thousand pounds was the price of the jewel and he handed out the money unhesitatingly. At the end of six months he paid a second visit to the jeweller, explained that he had just returned from his honeymoon in Italy, and that his wife had a fancy for a pair of earrings instead of the ring. He instructed the head of the firm to obtain a mate for the one he had, if possible, at no matter what price. This the jeweller immediately set about doing, sending notices to Paris and Berlin, as well as communicating with all the big firms in London, and asking to be informed of any black pearls that might have come into the market. After a lapse of weeks a representative of an Amsterdam firm called upon him, bringing a flawless black pearl for sale, the exact counterpart in size of the other. He asked £17,000 for it, but after considerable parleying he agreed to accept £15,000, and the transaction was closed. When, however, the jeweller sent word to his customer he had vanished and he realised that he had bought back his own pearl at an advance of £5,000.

My own first definite thought about London was of its many-sidedness, and observation and reflections made possible by a six months' residence

have convinced me that herein lies the explanation of the spell it casts over all sorts and conditions of people. The infinite variety even of what meets the eye in its labyrinth of streets pricks the curiosity and bids one investigate and ever investigate. I have got off an omnibus and have even paid a return visit to a neighborhood to look into something I have seen in passing. Why is Park Lane more attractive than Fifth Avenue? Is it not that each house therein bears the mark of an individual idea of beauty and convenience? And if this is true of the outside, which is reckoned with in relation to a whole scheme, how much more is it so of the interior of even quite ordinary dwelling-houses, where personal taste alone need count? And as with houses, so with everything that goes to make up a household. I have seen a curious looking private vehicle driven about in the streets of London during the season by a coachman, immaculately liveried, wearing a military or naval cockade. It consists of the body of an ordinary closed brougham on four wheels without a coachman's seat in front. Instead the horse is driven from a boxlike erection behind, like the hansom cab, and the invention obviously represents one person's idea of pleasure in an unobstructed view, and of perfect safety. I have also seen a coachman and footman on the box of an ordinary brougham, the body of which was turned back to front in such wise that those inside could only see the receding view. Here again is the evidence of courageous individual taste, for no carriage-maker is to be found who would construct such a grotesque vehicle for ordinary sale.

I wonder if there was ever a man or woman who has once lived in London but who has regarded himself as an exile if circumstances have thrust him into the outer world. How easily one seems to come into touch with the intimate lives and personalities of all