

been called "The Great Refusal." He was very sorrowful (compare Mark 10: 22; Luke 18: 23), which is so much to his credit, although he fell so sadly short.

IV. A Warning, 23-26.

Vs. 23, 24. *It is hard for a rich man* (Rev. Ver.); as they had just seen. Riches are so apt to completely fill the heart. *Again I say unto you.* They could not understand such a saying, and so it had to be repeated. It was the common belief that the rich man was an especial favorite of heaven. *Easier for a camel, etc.* The proverb explains itself. It denotes what is impossible.

V. 25. *They were exceedingly amazed.* "The severity of the Master's doctrine on wealth took their breath away." (Bruce.) They

And, behold, one came and said unto him, Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? v. 16. It is instructive to notice that this story follows immediately on the account of the children being brought to Christ. If the former incident teaches "the importance of seeking to win the children for Christ, while yet they are children," this incident suggests that "the susceptibility of the child nature may harden into impenetrability which is sometimes found even in youth."

"Heaven lies about us in our infancy!
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
Upon the growing Boy,
But he beholds the light and whence it flows;
He sees it in his joy;
The Youth who daily farther from the east
Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,
And by the vision splendid
Is on his way attended;
At length the man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day."

—Wordsworth.

If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. v. 17. It is natural to contrast the answer of Jesus to this inquirer, with that of Paul to the jailer of Philippi (Acts 16: 31). Jesus pointed the young ruler to the Law, Paul directed the jailer to the Saviour. The reason for this difference of treatment is not

were sorely puzzled—the rich shut out and the little children let in. (See vs. 13-15.) *Who then can be saved?* If not the rich, the "favored of heaven," who then?

V. 26. *But Jesus beheld them:* "with mild, meek eye, soothing their scared mind, and relieving their distress." (Chrysostom.) *With men... impossible.* Wealth is, humanly speaking, a hindrance to the kingdom not to be overcome. *But with God all things are possible.* He can renew the heart. He can take away the love of riches. By His spirit He performs miracles of redemption. So the narrative ends with the proper answer to the young man's question. Eternal life comes by the grace of the only good one, that is, God. (v. 17.)

APPLICATION

far to seek. The jailer felt his need of salvation; the ruler had no sufficient sense of his need. The one man realized that he could do nothing to merit the divine favor; the other thought that he had done a great many good things already, and that if he only did a few more he would have earned eternal life. Jesus saw that the youth before him required to be shown his need of his helplessness. This is the reason why the Master said to the young ruler: "Go and keep the commandments, if you would have eternal life."

The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept, v. 20. This youth had already won many victories over temptations. He had not listened to the vile and vicious proverb that encourages young men to "sow their wild oats." But his past victories did not render him proof against temptation. There is no number of victories over temptation that will render watchfulness unnecessary for any man. There are no moral immunes. A man may be a sober man half a lifetime and die a drunkard. A man may have behind him the record of many years of honest dealing and end his days in a felon's cell. Many a British soldier sleeps beneath the African veldt because of insufficient care in guarding against surprises. Souls are lost for lack of unceasing watchful-