

*Never Knew
How Bad
We Were*

of religious fervour, especially amongst the young and that the whole community should be purged of its ungodliness, its worldliness, its deadly indifference to things spiritual.

Indifferent we must have been in normal times, for we never knew how bad we were until the revivalists came along and told us. Then we realized the enormity of our offences and the little chance we had of entering the pearly gates. Some of us who did not profess to have any religion, and others of us who were Presbyterians, attended dances occasionally and indulged in so frivolous and sinful pastimes as playing cards, singing secular songs, going to races, and, most of all, indulging in strong drink. And there were as well the secret sins. On them the revivalists always laid great stress. Sins known only by ourselves and God! That is where the revivalists struck home, where they touched everybody. Secretly we all were more or less covetous, selfish, lustful, deceitful, jealous, avaricious. With these sins in our hearts we dare not meet God face to face. We dare not meet even our fellow men. We had to slink away, with lowered heads, abashed by our own secret vices, smitten by our own consciences. We might lie and cheat and steal and not be revealed. But God knew. We might hoard our treasures and heap up our gold, but it was easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God.

The eye of a needle! What did Jesus mean that day as he spoke these words, standing on the coast of Judea beyond Jordan, after the rich young man had gone away sorrowful, having great possessions? Did he mean, as some held, that it is easier for a camel to go through the Needle's Eye, a small gate in the walls of Jerusalem, which is possible, or did he mean, as others held, that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a sewing needle, which is impossible? If he meant a sewing needle, then the rich man had no chance. But we were not content to let it go at that, for in Matthew XIX, 29, it says: "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, that a rich man shall hardly enter the kingdom of heaven". We were enjoined by Charlie, the agnostic, and by Mrs. Hammill, an arch critic, to observe that here Jesus plainly indicates that a rich man may enter, though hardly, into the kingdom. If so, then, what else but the Needle's Eye could Jesus mean when he makes the comparison in the next verse? Mrs. Hammill, who awed us by her knowledge of grammar, said that it all depended on the article and on capi-

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