

are numerous. An imperceptible sand fills the air of Egypt, vermin abound, the water is too dirty to use for cleansing sores, whether of eyes or wounds or eruptions of the skin. Skin diseases and those which develop in sores are often mentioned in the course of Hebrew history, often as a curse which God sent to punish the people.

By Way of Illustration.

Verse 19. No man can tell whether he is rich or poor by turning to his ledger. It is the heart that makes a man rich. He is rich or poor according to what he is, not according to what he has.—*Becher.*

It were no bad comparison to liken mere rich men to camels and mules. They are often laden with India purple and gems upon their backs, attended, too, by a long line of servants as a safeguard on their way. Soon they come to their evening halting place, and forthwith their precious burdens are taken from their backs, and they, now wearied and stripped of their lading and their retinue of slaves, show nothing but livid marks of stripes. So also those who glitter in gold and purple raiment, when the evening of life comes, have nothing to show but the wounds of sin impressed upon them by the evil use of riches.—*St. Augustine.*

Verses 20 and 21. Luther said once, "I thank thee, O God, that thou hast made me a poor man on the earth!" When the elector sent him a valuable present, he begged him to send no more, for he began to be afraid that he should be numbered among those whose portion is in this world.

Verse 23. "Where is hell?" asked a scoffer. "Anywhere outside of heaven," was the answer.

Verses 24-31. Dives is not charged with open immorality. All that is implied is, that he failed to employ his riches as God's trustee for the benefit of his fellow-men and for the glory of him to whom they belonged. He kept them to himself and spent them simply and only on his own enjoyment. The beggar that sat neglected at his gate is the little feature which indicates his great unfaithfulness. He did no more for the outlying world than he did for the poor diseased Lazarus. He was like the lady of whom Thomas Hood has sung, whose large wealth might have relieved the world's suffering, but who never thought of such work until when, in her dream confronted with death, she saw the blind, the crippled, and the hungry and homeless and famished and naked whom she might have helped and did not. Dives was a type of those to whom it shall be said, "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me." And the lesson of his history is that to live for one's self is to lose one's self.—*Dr. W. M. Taylor.*

Christ depicts the divergence of characters by

the "great gulf." Character is an engraving more enduring than ever burin has traced upon hardest steel. It lasts. Death does not modify it. Dives finds it natural to ask the once beggar to bring him a drop of water. He wishes Lazarus to go back to warn his brothers. In every movement of the scene he regards Lazarus as inferior still. The same conceit is manifest in each new delineation of his character. The "great gulf" began on earth. Between the two there had been nothing in common. Is this fact not daily evident? Is there not a gulf between the libertine and the virtuous, between the drunkard and the clean man, the murderer and his innocent victim. People walk our very streets, touching elbows, who are farther apart than New York and London. The gulf begins with sin.—*D. O. Mears.*

Before the Class.

The lessons which may be drawn from this parable are almost as numerous as the questions which it will be sure to provoke. We will do well, however, to take for granted, as Jesus did, the future state of rewards and punishments, the impassable gulf, the sufficiency of the Scriptures, and other fruitful topics, and concentrate attention upon the lesson that selfish worldliness has no place in the kingdom of heaven, and is inexcusable.

What is the inside of a rich man's house like? Tell us about it. Do you know any rich men? What are some of the pleasures of riches? Are all rich men bad? [Talk about one or two Christian men of wealth known to the class.] And yet the Scriptures are full of warnings about the danger of riches. It is easier, Jesus says, for a camel, etc. What does Paul say is a root of all evil? Not money, but the love of money. And yet, if we have money, we love it, don't we? How rich will you have to be before you will love money? Love it now, do you? Take care; you are in danger.

There are two dangers in loving money. The first is this: You cannot love money and love God too. What does the Golden Text say? Mammon was the Syrian god of riches. Repent the first commandment. Could God say it any more plainly than that? The other danger is the one that this parable tells about: You cannot love money and love your neighbor too. Suppose we say those words together.

Now for the parable. Tell about the rich man. Does it say that he was wicked? No; he was just rich and selfish, and never did anything for poor Lazarus, except to let the servants throw out the crumbs to him. Does it say Lazarus was good? He was a devout Jew, of course, or he would not have gone to heaven; but all the parable says is that he was a sick beggar at the rich