

duty, every noble ambition, every golden opportunity must get off the road when fun's gay procession advances. This is the creed of frivolity. Some must be admired. Praise is the breath of their nostrils. They will commit any folly or crime to escape ridicule. This is vanity. And some, like Jesus, must fulfil the will of God. Whether it leads to riches or poverty, health or sickness, life or death, that is the road they take. These are God's heroes.

Consume them, v. 54. Insults are hard to bear. A brickbat does not hurt so much. And, besides, a bruise on the flesh heals more quickly than a wound in the spirit. A blow from a fist stings most at first, but an insult rankles in the memory so that the pain and fever it causes continue and often increase. Beware of insults. They have a dreadful capacity for injury. They chill our love, and sour our faith, and slay our peace. A young beau once challenged Sir Walter Raleigh to combat, and spat in his face to provoke him. The knight calmly wiped his face with his pocket handkerchief and replied, "Young man, if I could wash your blood from my sword as easily as I can wash that stain from my face, I would kill you where you stand." The way to defeat an insult is to refuse to accept it. It is meant to enrage us. Do not let it succeed. Be good humored if you can, but be at least self-controlled. Think of the Lord, who, "when He was reviled, reviled not again."

Not where to lay his head, v. 58. It is the long dark night which sifts out the impulsive enthusiasts. In the early days a man once started out of Vancouver, land-hunting. With his pack of blankets and food on his back he traveled up the banks of a stream looking for a possible homestead. But when the darkness fell, and a vast silence settled on the woods, he began to be afraid. Then a wolf's howl floated down from the mountains and he climbed up into a tree and sat on a limb. Then he remembered that cougars climbed trees, and fancied he heard one stirring in the branches overhead. He slid down the tree and raced back to a cabin he had passed on the trail. The owner

A Knightly
Answer

The Long,
Dark Night

was away and the door locked, but he broke it in with his axe, piled all the furniture against the door, and sat shuddering till morning, when he returned to the city, resolved to go land-hunting no more. Count the cost before you start to follow Jesus. Perhaps you can march with the crowd through the city street at noon. Can you go on alone at night?

Bury my father, v. 59. There was once a housewife who refused to leave her home unless she could leave it spotlessly clean and neat behind her. She and Her Own Gaoler ways found something to arrange or polish or wipe, and so she never got away from home. It is true that her home was spotless and orderly. But the woman made herself a prisoner, and her home her prison. She had sentenced herself to lifelong incarceration, and she had become her own gaoler. Now, do not be so tied to the thing that is that you cannot find the better thing that may be. One of the great world-forces which resists all improvement and progress is this attachment to things as they are. Even some church folks have feared "innovations." It is good indeed to make sure before taking up with new things. And, having made sure, it is good to take up with them.

And looking backward, v. 62. We have two eyes, but they look at the same object. The advantage of having two is not to enable us to see two things at once, but

A Roving Eye to see one thing better. We are not equipped with double vision but with superior single vision. In the game of golf the essential rule is, "Keep your eye on the ball." The player who forgets this wholesome instruction and succumbs to the temptation to look up before his club-head hits the ball is apt to spoil his stroke. It is the same in tennis, baseball, cricket, quoits, and all athletic sports. Blind, or partially blind people, can hardly be successful athletes. It is the same on the farm, whence Jesus draws this proverb. It is the same everywhere. A roving eye means a wandering attention, a slack will, a feeble purpose. Christ asks for concentration, simplicity of aim, downrightness, single-heartedness: "Be all Mine, or not at all."