

THE PROCRASTINATOR.

Disbelieve you cannot; brave it out you dare not; then must you hope, at some more convenient season, to reform. So hoped the five virgins who slumbered and slept without oil in their lamps; and you know how they fared. Neither have you forgotten how the merchant, and the farmer, and the sons of pleasure, who refused the invitation to the marriage feast of the king's son, were consumed with fire from heaven. What is your life, that you should trust in it? is it not even a vapour that speedily passeth away? What security have you that heaven will warn you beforehand, or that heaven will help you to repentance whenever you please?

Will the resolution of your mind gather strength as your other faculties of body and mind decay? Will sin grow weaker by being a while longer indulged, or God grow more friendly by being a while longer spurned, or the gospel more persuasive by being a while longer set at naught? I adjure you, beware of this thief of time,—**PROCRASTINATION**. This day is as convenient as to-morrow; this day is yours, to-morrow is not; this day is a day of mercy, to-morrow may be a day of doom.

But the work is not the work of a moment that it should be put off like the making of a will, or the writing of a farewell epistle. It is the work of a life-time, and too great a work for a lifetime. And if St. Paul, after such ceaseless labours and unwearied contentions with his nature, had still his anxieties, and speaks of the righteous as being hardly or with difficulty saved, how do you dare to defer it from time to time as a thing that can at any season, and in any space be performed?

And, O heavens! is God thus to be treated by his creatures—are they to insist, for their own convenience, and put off the honour of his friendship from time to time, preferring this indulgence, that engagement, and trifling downright with his proffered invitations! And being thus put off, will the King of the Universe endure it patiently? Yes, he endures it patiently—that is, he leaves you to yourselves, and does not cut you off with prompt and speedy vengeance. But he leaves you to yourselves; and every refusal hardens you

a little more, and every resistance closes up another avenue of grace, and every postponement places farther off the power of acceptance; and though God changeth not his mercy, we change our capacity of mercy, cooling more and more, till old age, with its lethargy and fixed habits, steals on apace, and feeble-mindedness, and sickness which brings the routine of sick bed attendance; but little or no repentance, no opportunity for new obedience, no space for trying the spirit we are of—and death to such a penitent becomes a leap in the dark; but, as such penitents are rare or never, death to such procrastinators rivets up the closing avenues of grace, and presents him to the judgment seat, fixed, finished, and incurable.—*Edward Irving.*

PERSONAL POWER OF THE BIBLE.

This collection of books has been to the world what no other book has ever been to a nation. States have been founded on its principles. Kings rule by a compact based on it. Men hold the Bible in their hands when they prepare to give solemn evidence affecting life, death, or property; the sick man is almost afraid to die unless the Book be within reach of his hands; the battle-ship goes into action with one on board whose office is to expound it; its prayers, its psalms are the language we use when we speak to God; eighteen centuries have found no holier, no diviner language. If ever there has been a prayer or a hymn enshrined in the heart of a nation, you are sure to find its basis in the Bible. There is no new religious idea given to the world, but it is merely the development of something given in the Bible. The very translation of it has fixed language and settled the idioms of speech. Germany and England speak as they speak because the Bible was translated. It has made the most illiterate peasant more familiar with the history, customs, and geography of ancient Palestine, than with the localities of his own country. Men who know nothing of the Grampians, of Snowdon, or Skiddaw, are at home in Zion, the lake of Genesareth, or among the hills of