

partment, where the youthful penitent employed the lingering hours in reading the sacred volume, which till now had been a sealed book; while, with bitter tears, and in broken accents, he fervently implored peace and pardon to his afflicted soul. He continued the same devout exercises for several successive days.

As yet his friends were unacquainted with the latent workings of his mind; for to no one, save his God, had he disclosed the sorrows of his breast. It is impossible, however, that this moral improvement, so sudden and so agreeable, could long be concealed from the several members of the family. All contemplated the change, which was so visible in his deportment, with feelings of complacency; and all felt equally anxious to ascertain the primary cause by which it had been produced.

William was one morning seated alone in the parlour, reading the Bible, when his father entered, and thus addressed him:—"William, I have observed, with much satisfaction, the recent improvement in your general conduct. Formerly you were wild and dissipated; and I became painfully apprehensive that your dissolute habits would lead you to a premature grave. You seldom returned home till midnight, and generally in a state of intoxication. The servants used to sit up for you; and your continued profligacy occasioned the greatest uneasiness to the family. But of late your conduct has been the reverse of this. You have forsaken your sinful associates; you have abandoned the vice of intemperance; and the servants, no longer required to wait so many hours for your return, have been enabled to retire to rest at a seasonable hour. Tell me, my son, who it is to whom I am indebted for this salutary change. I have talked to you faithfully and repeatedly; I have often warned you of the awful consequences of your guilty practices; and with the affection of a father have urged you to forsake your evil ways. But all my remonstrances have been in vain. I could never make the least impression on your mind. I am sure, therefore, that some friend, commiserating my misfortune in having such a disobedient son, has kindly interested himself in effecting the pleasing change, which I am happy to discover in your character and proceedings. Tell me his name, William, that I may thank him."

William, knowing his father's intense dislike of the Methodists, and indeed of all who are not in communion with the Episcopal church,—respectfully declined an answer. The father insisted; and the son as peremptorily refused. At length, a frown gathering on his countenance, the former exclaimed, "As a father, I command you to tell me."