

with benevolent compassion towards his fellow-creatures.—Yes, he felt he was changed—that he was no longer the Francis Stanhope of former years; yet this alteration he imputed to the companions with whom he had associated, instead of the vanity and deceitfulness of his own heart, which felt an unusual degree of agitation as he crossed the lawn in front of the parsonage, and approached the house where he had spent the best and happiest hours of his life.

He found Mr. Irvin in his study, preparing a discourse for the ensuing Sabbath. At the sight of his old pupil, the vicar resigned his pen, and welcomed him with his usual kindness.

“I fear I intrude, my dear sir, for I perceive you are engaged.”

“You have long been a stranger, Francis, where you should be most at home.—When did you ever find me too busy to welcome an old friend? I have long wished to have some private conversation with you.”

“And I, sir, am almost afraid to encounter the lecture I richly deserve for my neglect.”

“You have sinned more against yourself than me,” returned the vicar; “but candidly tell me to what circumstance I am indebted for your visit to day.”

“Mr. Irvin, I am sick at heart!” exclaimed