

hours of valuable time in discontented repining against that all-wise Providence for suffering, unwisely as you think, evil to exist in the world. I repeat, Francis, had you been born in a humbler station of life, you would have been a wiser and a better man. The time so unprofitably wasted would have been constantly employed in business and the necessary avocations attending on employment. Your thoughts would early have been directed to the profession or calling you were destined to fill, and the hours allotted to exercise and pleasure would have been thankfully received and truly enjoyed."

"You have convinced me that I am at present a very useless being," replied Francis, beginning to feel the folly of his past conduct.

"You might be quite the reverse; it rests entirely with yourself," returned Mr. Irvin. "But since we are upon the subject, allow me to ask you how you spend your time?"

"In reading and contemplation."

"What books are most suited to your taste?"

"History, biography, poetry; works of imagination, commonly denominated novels, and the drama.—But what please me most, and completely captivate my attention, are the writings of the French philosophers."

"I thought as much," said Mr. Irvin with a