

He was accustomed to say his prayers before he disrobed for the night; but on this occasion he departed from his usual course. He proceeded with great deliberation to prepare for bed; and when no further time could be thus employed, he knelt down by his bed-side, and in a low voice began his supplications. He was not accustomed to confine himself to a set form of prayer, except that he always closes his brief devotion with the Lord's prayer. He repeated it on this occasion with great propriety and apparent sincerity, till he came to the petition "forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors." When he came to the latter clause of this sentence he paused, and omitting the latter part of it, went on with the prayer till he came to its close. He then threw himself on his bed, but was much longer than usual in getting asleep.

Why did he omit the words "as we forgive our debtors?" I will tell you. In the morning, as he went to school, he found the countenances of his fellow-pupils changed towards him. They did not meet him with smiling faces and welcome him to their sports. On the contrary they were silent, and disposed to avoid him. When school began he noticed that the eye of the teacher was upon him, and that an expression of pain rested upon the teacher's countenance. This unusual reception had a very perceptible effect upon James. He felt uncomfortable and restless, and instead of fixing his attention on his lessons, kept wondering what was the cause. After a portion of the exercises of the school had been performed the teacher called James into his private room and said, "James, your behaviour in school has always

been very good, and your reputation for good conduct out of school has always been good heretofore. On that account I was very slow to believe anything to your disadvantage, but the evidence is so strong that I cannot set it aside."

"What have I done?" said James in great astonishment.

"Do you not know to what I allude?"

"No, sir."

"Where were you last evening?"

"I was at Mr. Gordon's after tea, and when I set out for home, the moonlight was so pleasant that I walked around the square."

"Did you not stop at Mrs. Colt's garden?"

"No, sir."

"I have been told, on what I supposed to be good authority, that you did, and that you robbed her peach tree."

"Mr. Hedges, do you believe I am a thief?"

"No, I do not," said Mr. H., convinced by James' manner that he had been deceived.

"Have you ever had any difficulty, James, with Mr. Murdoch?"

"No, sir, he has always treated me well, and appears to be a very nice man."

"I can't understand it. Mr. Murdoch told me he saw you getting Mrs. Colt's peaches last night. I asked him if he was not mistaken, and he said he could not be, because he spoke to you and remonstrated with you."

"Will you please sir, let me go and see him immediately?"

"I will go with you as soon as school is out."

"Will you allow me to stay in this room sir, till school is out? I see that the boys have heard this story, and I cannot bear their looks."