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## What the Master Found.

The night was shading the landscape with winter twilight when the man entered this town. He was no common man, and was bent upon no ordinary mission. An empire was to be overthrown, and upon its ruins a new kingdom established. It was an enterprise envied with peril. Already it had cost precious lives and priceless fortunes. The man bore himself as one who journeys through a hostile country, knowing that his enemies swarmed about him, vigilant, fearless, powerful. He took from his breast a little book and glanced at the list of names written therein.

'I have in this community,' he said, 'a band of five hundred friends, who have vowed ever to be loyal to me, faithful to my cause. They know that it is in danger. This is the night of their own appointment for meeting me, that I may instruct and encourage and strengthen them.'

The deep tone of the bell broke upon the air. 'It is the signal for their gathering,' said the man, and hastened forward. Soon he paused before a large building, which, save for one dimly lighted room in the rear of the basement, was empty, and silent. A man, evidently on guard, stood near the door. He started as the stranger saluted him.

'I am expecting to meet some friends here to-night.'

The janitor looked suspiciously at him.

'You'll have to wait, then,' he said presently. 'There won't be anybody around here for half an hour yet.'

'You are a member of the band that assembles here?'

'Um,' replied the janitor.

'Is there great zeal among the brethren of the fraternity? Are you united, loyal, eager, aggressive?'

'Well,' replied the janitor cautiously, 'things are a little quiet with us at present. Times are hard, and there's a good deal of opposition. We have had a great many things to discourage us. Maybe in a couple of months we may get some outside help and shake things up a little; but we don't feel justified in making any effort right now. Will you walk in?'

The stranger entered the room indicated by a sweep of the janitor's hand. Presently an old woman came in, glanced timidly about her, and sat down as far away from the stranger as she could get. By and by came two women. Then a bevy of young girls fluttered in, sat down, bent their heads together for a convulsed giggle, and lapsed into silence. A lame man limped to a seat behind the stove. After a while a group of women rustled in, one of them leading a reluctant boy. A tired-looking man, in laborer's garb, sank wearily into a seat apart from the rest. After a long interval there entered a man in black, who stealthily tip-toed his way to a seat behind the others. Others came dropping in, until twenty-three were assembled in or rather scattered through the room. They were evidently there in peril of their lives. Everything disclosed a sense of half-restrained fear. The repeated glance at the clock; the painful intenseness with which they listened to every

approaching footfall until it passed; the quickness with which all eyes were turned toward the door as often as it was opened, deepened the impression that this was an unlawful assembly.

The stranger softly passed out, no one barring his way. Glancing at his book by the wind-shaken light of the street lamps he went searching for his absent friends. Three of them he found on a street corner discussing the political problems of the government under which they lived. Seven men he found in a club-room, reading, chatting, smoking. A score he found at public entertainments; a few at their places of business laying in wait for belated customers; a half-dozen at a progressive euchre party. Some were in a neighbor's house whiling away the hour by social intercourse. Many were at home, some too tired to go out, because they had been out all day and were planning to go out again to-morrow, and some doing nothing and wearily tired of it. A few were sick; a few ministering to them. Some were curing convenient headaches by reading the latest novels. So in the course of the evening the band of five hundred was accounted for. Twenty-three at the rendezvous

—four hundred and seventy-seven here, there and elsewhere; dawdling, sleeping—a discouraging outlook for a struggling revolution.

'And what is all this ancient history?' you ask.

Oh, nothing much. And not so very ancient, either. Only, Jesus Christ dropped in at a recent prayer-meeting in your church. That was all. And where did he find you?—Robert J. Burdette in 'Zion's Advocate.'

## The Family.

In view of the fact that the family is the fundamental unit of society, it has always seemed to us that it receives a very inadequate attention from the pulpit. The significance of the function of the family, the duties of its members, and whatever may ennoble its life, seem to be overlooked in general by the ministry. Preaching is to individuals, but it may be with reference to institutions. We once knew a pastor who established a family service every two months, holding it on the month in which the communion service did not occur, on the first Sunday of the month. It was an opportunity for the baptism of chil-



—'Children's Friend.'