

A few weeks later, one evening he and his wife at home started to serve the Master, and gave their hearts to him.

Of the origin of this movement for young men we quote Mr. Hudson's own words in description:—

'In July, 1890, the First Baptist Church was undergoing repairs and the Sunday-school had to meet as one class in the chapel. As I was passing the church to go to this class, I noticed fifteen or more young men lounging in the front; some were playing with their knives. I stopped and visited them. All at once the thought came to me that these would never come into our large class, and I at once resolved to have a class of these boys; so we talked it up. The result was that in ten minutes eighteen young men were sitting on the backs of the pews, under the scaffolding, amid the paint, and I stood on the front seat, Bible in hand. One of the fellows being a Christian, was called on for prayer, and the first lesson of the first class in Baraca was given. We agreed to meet the next Sunday, and the class grew until the church was finished, and we were obliged to leave our "perch"—as the boys called their seats in the dirt on the back of the seats. The next Sunday my class and six new members decided to have a class organization, and the next Monday evening, with much noise and enthusiasm, we selected a class name and elected our officers and committees.'

The class was a success. During nine years over a thousand young men have been connected with Mr. Hudson's class and 115 of these have joined his church and over 150 have been hopefully converted, all told, many of them going out as ministers, missionaries and Christian workers.

The platform is most simple, namely, 'Young men at work for young men, all standing by the Bible and the Bible school.' To this end the class is officered from among its own members, but has no constitution, and each one makes its own rules and regulations. It meets with the school for opening exercises, but is at liberty to return or not as the exigencies of class work may indicate, for closing services. All this on the supposition that the class can have a room of its own.

After reaching its room, the following order of exercises is usually observed:

1. Call to order.
2. Prayer.
3. Class song.
4. Passing memberships by assistant secretary.
5. Notices of the week by secretary.
6. Anyone sick or in distress.
7. Collection by treasurer.
8. Lesson by teacher (30 minutes) who closes by prayer.
9. Secretary's report of attendance to-day.
10. Treasurer's report for to-day.
11. 'Friendly shake' service. Every man in the room is expected to shake hands with every one, and to introduce visitors and strangers. Adjourn.

The 'memberships' referred to in above is a register slip, often in the following form:—

MEADVILLE
BIBLE BARACA CLASS.
Members.

Name

Address

Attending Church.

This morning

Last Sunday Evening

Have Bible With Me

Visitors.

(We are glad to have you with us.)

Name

Address

Are you a member of any class?

If you are not a member of any other class, and you would like to join us, apply to the teacher or social committee.

From these the secretary makes up his ledger account of attendance, etc., and also a list of new members and visitors for the president, who calls on them, or sends them a hearty letter, before the next meeting. One Sunday in each month—usually the first—is called 'Rally Day,' and by the use of postal cards and personal work an effort is made to have every member present. Often special features are introduced on such days, such as an address by some one personally qualified to speak to young men. As already indicated, the aim of the Baraca is to find the likes and dislikes of a young man, and then, if right, get in sympathy with him, and through these lead him to Christ. To this end, reading-rooms, gymnasiums, baseball teams, mandolin clubs, cycle clubs, debates, etc., are organized in various classes, as local conditions suggest. Each class must work out its own destiny.

The spiritual results of this movement most concern the church so we take pleasure in quoting Mr. Hudson again upon this point:—

'After teaching the Baraca class several years, and making a study of men, I came to a point where I was discouraged at the small number of conversions for the large amount of work. After much thought I called into the pastor's study the four Christian men of the class for consultation. I told them I was much gratified with the large attendance (nearly one hundred), but discouraged in that no conversions had occurred for three months. The Secret Service League was then organized with five members. I had provided five pocket memorandum books, inside of which was written the following pledge for them to sign:

MY SECRET SERVICE.

Matt. vi., 6; John xiv., 13, 14.

1. I pledge to pray for the unconverted Baracas every day at noon, or as soon thereafter as I remember this pledge.
2. I pledge to make a list of those to whom I will speak, and to work and pray for them.
3. I will meet the Secret Service members once a month, and pray aloud with them, and do all in my power to help them bring Baracas to Christ within the next six months.

Signed

Dated

'To my surprise they all willingly signed the pledge, and agreed to keep the work secret from the class. The meeting closed with an audible prayer from the five members, some of whom never offered a prayer aloud before in their life. That Sunday afternoon the list spoken of in the second paragraph of the pledge was written in the little books by each member. It so happened that our Baraca treasurer for the class was not a Christian, although a very moral and exemplary young man, and one of whom we were all fond. It also happened that each one of us placed his name first on our list. Accordingly we prayed particularly for "Charlie" on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday at the noon hours. On Wednesday evening at our church prayer service, one of the first to speak was "Our Charlie."

He was converted, and the next Sunday joined our "Secret Service League."

'Our prayers soon bore fruit in the conversion of scores of men, who to-day rejoice on its account. This secret service work is now an integral part of every properly organized Baraca class; and every day at noon, from Maine to California, prayers are ascending to God for our Baraca brothers who are not saved. We soon found we were stronger Christians for this definite time to ask God for definite things. After twenty or more of the boys had come to Christ, it dawned upon us that our faith had been strengthened by the direct answer to our prayers, and we praised the Giver every time we erased a name from our books. In time the league had so many members that an assistant teacher was elected to take charge of this branch of our work. We are very happy in this secret work, and, while Baraca means "happy," we never fully realized its full import until we formed this league. Every month we meet together secretly after Sunday-school, and every one prays aloud as his turn comes, as we kneel in a circle. Once every six months we all return the books and sign a fresh pledge. Any Baraca class will be supplied with a limited number of these pledges, beautifully printed, for the asking, by enclosing a stamp to M. A. Hudson, Syracuse, New York.'

The Young Ladies' Philathea Bible Class has been organized upon similar lines to the Baraca class, and is doing much good. Further information will be furnished by Mr. Hudson upon application, and printed matter touching methods of work in work for both young men and young women.

Only a Joke.

The practical joker, says the 'Epworth Herald,' is still at work. At least two recent jokes had a tragic end. In one case a woman was killed by the shock of looking upon the closed eyes of a wax doll, which had been substituted in jest for her own little baby. For an instant she thought that her child was dead, and though she realized almost instantly that 'it was all a joke,' and tried to laugh at the jest, the shock proved fatal within a few days. In the other case, a farmer's wife in Pennsylvania put on a hideous false face with the idea of scaring a little girl, the child of a neighbor. The little girl was so terrified that within a week she died.

The practical joker is not usually a malicious individual. But he is a public nuisance. The difference between a person of humor, whose spontaneous sallies of wit amuse and refresh, and the perpetrator of painful practical jokes is very great. The first is a benediction, and the last an abomination.

The Find-the-Place Almanac

TEXTS IN THE PSALMS.

- July 7, Sun.—I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart.
- July 8, Mon.—The Lord shall endure forever.
- July 9, Tues.—The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed.
- July 10, Wed.—Thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee.
- July 11, Thur.—He forgetteth not the cry of the humble.
- July 12, Fri.—The Lord is known by the judgment which he executeth.
- July 13, Sat.—The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.