

concern and the special effort under it.

The average young man seems to drift away from the regular mixed Sunday School very much in the same way, and at the same age as he leaves his week day school, and he usually drops then all church attendance also. Many of these young men have been held by the Boys' Meeting during its nearly fifty years existence through the regular attendance and devoted work of its teachers long after the danger period mentioned above, and have only disappeared from their classes when they have married and entered into church relations which have interfered with their attendance at the Boys' Meeting.

The exact date when the Boys' Meeting was organized is in doubt, though this occurred somewhere between the years 1855 and 1857. Within that period an earnest warm-hearted Christian man, William C. Palmer, having a special sympathy for boys, organized with the help of others, three of four Boys' Meetings, as he called them, in different parts of the City, one of them being on Federal Hill, in which Richard M. Janney and Dr. James Carey Thomas took an active part, and largely through their work and interest the Federal Hill Boys' Meeting survived and prospered while the others disappeared, and it gradually came under the control of Friends. Its first meeting place was in Armstrong Hall, a large room on the third floor of a building corner of Light and Montgomery, then for a few years it met in Winter's Hall, on the corner of Hanover and Montgomery, then in Ingham's Hall, corner of Hill and Hanover Streets, then back to Armstrong Hall, where it remained until 1871, when the present property, #1010 Light Street, now occupied by Friends' Gospel Mission, was purchased.

During the earlier years of the Boys' Meeting the boys sat en masse, as the name implies, and were addressed briefly from the platform in the intervals between the hymns, the singing of which occupied the greater part of the evening.

Not long after Dr. Thomas took charge of the work, he induced young men, and then young women, from Eutaw St. Meeting and other churches up town to take charge of classes, thus breaking up the mass of rough boys, which it had been found very difficult to keep in order and instruct. It thus brought them into closer contact with persons of refinement, education and Christian character, and as stated above, was the means of tying them closer to the meeting through the personal influence of their teachers. The result was a marked improvement in the boys. Roughness and disorder began to disappear. The practical addresses of Dr. Thomas and others were listened to, and made deep impressions on hundreds of young lives that are now in their turn an influence for good in different parts of our City and elsewhere. It is not an unusual occurrence for the old teachers to come across their old boys in positions of trust, and even independence, and at the same time showing the religious influence which had molded their lives so that they are now taking an active part in the work of their church.

Dr. James Carey Thomas was Superintendent of the Boys' Meeting for about thirty-five years, until his death in 1896. Isaac Brooks Jr. who had been a teacher there almost as long, then became Superintendent, until his resignation in 1904, and was succeeded by