

THE CITIZEN MAN HEARS BILLY SUNDAY AT HIS BEST

(Continued From Page One.)

This gives one the impression for a moment that he is gazing into the faces of an audience of men; but closer scanning shows that the sexes are quite evenly divided.

Ah! The unexpected! To the left, quite well to the front, is one face that seems to be familiar. Yes, we know that man. It is a Wayne county man. It is John S. Welsh, the Hawley merchant. But attention is now directed to the platform. Hymn No. 245 is announced, and almost immediately thousands of voices unite in singing.

"Jesus, Savior, pilot me Over life's tempestuous sea,"

and as the great prayer in song rolled forth from the multitude of voices there came the indefinable and indescribable sense of flying, of being wafted up and away among the fleecy clouds in the quiet blue of the heavens.

The Memory of An Applauseless Concert.

Billy Sunday made his own announcements. Among other features of the week he pressed home the fact that Friday, (the day this article will be published), will be observed in Wilkes-Barre as Mothers' Day. He urged that all people, especially young people, clerks, students, employees—wear a white flower or a white ribbon for mother.

Among the announcements was one that a certain individual who was present, and whose name the writer did not catch, would sing an original composition of his own. A fine-looking, tall gentleman sang beautifully. There was something that seemed familiar about the personage, but no, I had never seen him before, surely I had not, and so the singing was enjoyed, and I was prepared to dismiss the singer from my thoughts.

"What was the singer's name?" was the inquiry, made in a listless, nonchalant, matter-of-fact way.

"D. B. Towner," came back the answering whisper, and immediately somebody sat right up and took notice; but there was no further opportunity to look at the man. Yes, we had previously seen the man, and had heard him sing. It was thirty-nine years ago this winter, and we saw and heard him in the Presbyterian church in Bethany. It was a strange experience. Mr. and Mrs. Towner were announced to give a concert in Rev. E. O. Ward's Presbyterian church. Both of the Towners sang beautifully. They sang solos, duets, and everything else that two young people with trained, sweet voices could sing. The audience appreciated what they sang, too, but for some reason, who shall say why? no action of applause was made. There was no clapping of hands, and no stamping of feet. Number after number was rendered, and the suspense became awful. Finally Mr. Towner said, "If we sing anything that pleases you, it is requested that you give no sign of appreciation," or words to that effect. The rebuke was stinging, but quietly made. I am sorry to say the concert closed as it opened, without applause; but everybody present felt ashamed, humiliated and humbled. Nobody could explain the reason for the action. Surely it was not because they did not appreciate the efforts of the Towners, and that I know, because the next day I heard through the scholars, (I was the teacher), that the people were all puzzled and genuinely sorry. Mr. Towner went out into the world and became famous. Camp meetings and conventions have sung his beautiful compositions with wonderful effect, and one of the brightest and most effective Christian Alliance conventions that Scranton ever held was keyed to his wondrous gospel song.

"Years I spent in vanity and pride, Caring not my Lord was crucified, Knowing not it was for me he died O Calvary!"

Billy Sunday Begins To Preach His Sermon.

Billy Sunday is a middle aged man. He is of medium height. His hair is of a brownish shade, and, like the majority of men, he is beginning to wear a round bald spot on the rear of his head. His actions are very quick, and he thinks and speaks quite as rapidly as he moves. He is in earnest all the time—intensely in earnest, and he acts out his subject in a way that makes you see the picture just as he sees it. At times he will pound the desk in front of him as if he were saying as rapidly as he could, "Take that! and that! and that! and that!" etc., with every blow uttering some decidedly plain and telling truth.

Opening his Bible and standing before the plain little desk that stood on the platform, Billy announced for his text a clause from the 25th verse of the 26th chapter of the Gospel of Matthew, "Master, is it I?" He began his discourse by declaring that the words were uttered just previous to the greatest tragedy God ever saw or the brutality of man ever countenanced, the murder of Jesus Christ.

Although ten thousand people were present, absolute silence reigned and every eye was directed towards the speaker's stand. I have many a time witnessed more confusion in an audience of less than two score of people.

Previous to beginning his appeal, however, a collection was taken, and Billy told the audience that at least three hundred dollars ought to be raised. He declared that such an audience should be good for one thousand dollars, as it only meant ten cents a head all around. He told the people that it was up to them to pay the bills, that it would be useless for them to expect the brewers, the saloon keepers or that class of people to pay for the salvation of souls, for that was not their line of business.

"Putting Things in the Papers: It Makes Me Sick!"

Sunday had only been preaching a few minutes when suddenly a piercing scream cut the air like a knife. It came from some point near the southern section of the great choir of singers. The speaker paused for an instant. There was a slight craning of necks in the direction of the sound. A newspaper reporter just in front of me turned quickly in his seat and looked back, then hastily arose and began to pass out and back. Sunday saw him, and fire flashed from his eyes as he spoke up sharply, "Why don't you sit still?" Then he continued, as the reporter vanished from sight. "Putting everything in the papers! It makes me s-s-sick!" Then he went right on with his discourse.

"People Do Not Like To Hear the Truth!"

Billy Sunday briefly told the story that led up to the words of his text, "Master, is it I?" He recited the incidents of the supper at which the Master and his disciples sat when the words were uttered. He had told those about him that one of them would betray him. Immediately they began to ask him the question, their voices full of quivering anxiety. Finally he said that old Judas had the nerve and the consummate gall to ask the question, "Master, is it I?" when he knew that he was right in the very midst of his dastardly deed of betrayal. The traitor thought that perchance he could deceive God.

The Master told the traitor the truth.

"People don't like to hear the truth," declared Sunday. "They don't like to have the doctor tell them the truth when diphtheria is in the home, when they have the appendixitis, or when they are told about hell. He declared that Judas represented a large class of church members, and they hated the truth. He declared that those who told the truth would not be popular, that they would have many enemies, and that the very worst thing the preacher could say over you when you lay in your coffin is that you had no enemies. "Woe unto you when all men speak well of you!" he declared is God's way of stating truth.

In speaking of the power of sin he said that one act of a man might cause much sorrow; one act would break a wife's heart; one act might break Christ's heart. Christ shed his blood that men would serve him. He wanted active, earnest service. "If you won't serve, then get out of the church!" he fairly shouted. He declared that the churches of to-day are great social organizations; that more time is given to the social than to the spiritual; that what mankind needs is more of God and less of dress.

A woman went to her pastor and wanted to know what she could do to win souls to Christ. He told her, "You can't win anybody for Christ the way you live!" She didn't get angry, but got right, and after her husband became one of her converts she asked him to tell her why he had not started sooner. He said: "You asked me to go to church, to prayer meetings, to the church suppers and socials, and I went. I asked you to go to the theatre, the card party, the select dance and to places where we had fine wines, and you went. In short, I went where you went, and you went where I went. Where was there any difference in our lives?" She saw! He said anybody who couldn't turn a card party to go to prayer meeting should get out of the church. He declared that this is the age of the fashionable church with religion left out, and that people shouldn't shout any louder than they lived.

The Three Groups in the Garden of Gethsemane.

From the supper scene Billy Sunday carried his hearers out into the garden of Gethsemane. There he divided the disciples and himself into three groups. He took eight and placed them down in one part of the garden. He said to them, "Sit ye here!" He said no more to them that night. He knew that was all they would do, anyway. There was no need of telling them to do anything else. He said the eight represented the great bulk of Church members.

The second group was composed of three—Peter, James and John, his chosen ones, his very best members, the ones he had a right to think he could depend on. They represent another, a smaller part of the church. He told them that His soul was exceeding sorrowful, and that they should watch and pray. They were his best, his chosen members, and they were a disappointment to him, for they did not pray, but went to sleep.

He, all alone, represented the third group, and He prayed. First He prayed that if it were possible the cup might pass from him. Then he prayed the prayer of submission, "Nevertheless, not my will but thine be done!"

At this point Sunday told his audience in a very graphic manner where the majority of church members fall. He spoke very rapidly, repeating over and over the expression, "Not my will, but—" and there he substituted what they said, or did not say but acted, in such expressions as these: "There they rung off! There they hung up the receiver! There they struck out! There they quit! There they went to sleep! There they forgot to say any more! There they took the road for hell!" and many other forceful expressions of the age.

Step by step he carried his audience through the garden scenes and experience until finally he came to the betrayal by Judas. He seemed to become angered with indignation at these points in the tragedy. As he described how they struck Him

and told Him to prophesy who it was that had inflicted the blows, and when they spat in His face, he shouted: "Oh, I wish I'd been there when they spat in His face!" He made as if he was grasping a ball club, and one could close his eyes and hear the swish of the willow bat as it whizzed through the air and went "cr-r-racksh!" into the skull of a Roman soldier! At this point the audience was fairly carried away, and broke out into applause.

"Yes," he shouted, "I'm ready to pull my coat off and die for Jesus Christ!" and he suited the words by his action by pulling off his coat. He declared that men are not in earnest but that they are just playing with God.

"Hurry! Hurry! Papa! Hurry! Hurry! Papa!"

Billy Sunday closed his discourse, which was a masterful exposition of a rugged gospel breathed forth by a man very much in earnest, by telling of a true incident that occurred in the South in the family of one of his friends and acquaintances. The man took his son out in the woods where he was cutting down trees. After felling a huge tree he sat down on the fallen titan of the forest to rest, and his little son came for permission to wade in the lagoon. He gave permission, coupled with words of caution, and the little fellow began wading in the water. A small hillock hid the child from the father's sight. Suddenly the father was startled by hearing the lad call, "Hurry! papa, hurry! Hurry! papa, hurry!" Grasping his ax he ran with the childish shout coming to him, "Hurry! Hurry! Papa! The alligator has me!" The man plunged into the water towards the monster that was bearing away the lad to its feeding ground. He caught up to it, and swinging back his ax was about to crash it into the reptile's skull when with its tail it rapidly churned the water, and as the lad called in terror to his father the brute disappeared from view and the water choked out the cries of anguish. Men sought all that day for the alligator, but it was finally found and slain, but its death could not soothe the broken hearts of the father and mother.

"For days," said Sunday, "I could not get away from the cries of the lad who thus perished; and at night, I heard them in my sleep!" And yet, he declared that the powers of sin right in Wilkes-Barre were far more terrible than the jaws of alligators, and the victims who are going down to hell are calling to Christians for help, crying out in their agony and terror, "Hurry! Hurry! Hurry!"

Then followed the invitation, and many men, women and children came forward and shook hands with Billy, showing that they intended to begin living active, earnest Christian lives. Tears were flowing down the cheeks of many of those who came forward.

Why There is a Call For Billy Sunday.

There are those who wonder why Billy Sunday is thus called upon to come to talk to the public. The reason is plain. Listen!

A young minister became convinced that his congregation needed a plain talking to. He had heard Sam Jones talk very plain, telling his congregation that they were lop-eared hounds, and if they didn't like it they could get up and shack out. They smiled, but sat still. That appealed to him as being the correct way to preach and he resolved to try it. He called his audience the following Sunday lop-eared hounds, and said if they didn't like it they might get up and shack out. To his astonishment they got up and "shacked out."

Billy Sunday can say what no minister dare say, but probably wants to, to his little congregation. Hence, in order to get rugged truth before the congregation, Sunday is the most available and effective evangelist that can be obtained.

He preaches a very unique gospel, and draws people to hear him because he tells them the truth and is fearless. There is an old saying that "all the world loves a lover" and an equally true saying may be summed up in the expression, "All the world likes to hear a brave man."

To those who complain that people do not care any more to hear the gospel, that only the few will go to hear a sermon, while the multitudes will flock to the shows and the offerings of the world the writer hereof points to the great Billy Sunday crowds, greater than can be gathered to witness any form of amusement, any political movement or any literary efforts, and asks that an explanation be offered.

Do we not witness an exemplification of the gospel statement of the Master himself—"And I, if I be lifted up will draw all men unto me?"

FRANK P. WOODWARD.

WARNING

Since its introduction into the United States, the sales of Parisian Sage have been phenomenal. This success has led to many imitations. Look out for them, get the genuine. See that the girl with the Auburn hair is on every package.

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Mch. 7 & 14.

HOW BIG DAM WAS BUILT IN JUNGLES

Four American Engineers on Project.

USE 300 NATIVE LABORERS

Odd Experiences Met in Construction Work Through Wild Country—Colombians Ape Clothes and Actions of Newcomers—Odd Labor Troubles Arise—Many Alligators Found.

Broadway, New York, looks good to four engineers who recently returned from the Colombian jungle, where they spent two years among a thousand laborers of all nations building a big concrete dam and power house in connection with a project to develop the mining wealth of the region. S. H. Gifford told the story of their experiences:

"Labor troubles? You don't know what they are until you tackle a job, as we did, of building a dam across San Juan creek, 375 miles from the Atlantic coast.

"There were fifty Americans on the job, and we put up a dam 85 feet high, 290 feet across the crest and containing 18,000 cubic feet of concrete. A similar job would have taken one year in the States, but it took two down there.

"To begin with, we had about 300 natives, but it was impossible to do anything with them. They never had seen a piece of machinery before, and every time we swung a derrick around they'd take fright and run half a mile, and it would take 'em half an hour to recover sufficiently to return to work.

"We finally educated them by bringing down laborers from the canal zone, who had been trained in American methods. These men we put in responsible positions, and as the natives were good imitators they soon 'caught on' to the American way, and things began to hum.

Natives Great Imitators.

"The natives carried their passion for imitation further, often with humorous results. For example, at first they wore very few clothes. After we had imported the men from the canal, all of them reasonably well clad and wearing shoes, every native on the job took to watching them closely. They soon found out that the invaders were getting more money, and they figured out a connection between wages and clothes.

"At once it became the ambition of every native to own a pair of shoes, and all of them promptly bought, traded for or stole a pair. Ostentatiously they would wear the shoes out to work so that their American bosses could see them, but when they arrived on the job they would take them off. They couldn't stand the pinch of civilization.

"Those natives were finished performers in the drinking line. They would drink anything they could get their hands on and would spend almost every cent of their pay envelope to get the stuff. Their favorite beverage was 'aguadente,' which is mostly alcohol flavored with anise.

"And this particular brand of 'booze' had a very interesting effect on them, though an inconvenient one for a laborer's camp. As soon as they had had three drinks they would start out at once in search of those whom they disliked. They all carried machetes or revolvers, and I never knew a pay day to pass but what three or four of them were killed.

Big Alligators.

"One of the sights that impresses an American in penetrating into the interior of Colombia is the populous colony of alligators on the banks of the Magdalena river. They literally cover the sandbars. I counted 200 on one bar alone. Here and there along the river the natives have built little half moon shaped stockades into the water, made by driving stakes into the sand, where their women can come down to fetch water and bathe safely.

"It's so commonplace for people to be eaten up by alligators that no one thinks anything about it.

"There in the heart of Colombia, 375 miles from the Atlantic, is an immense area that is a wonderfully rich mining proposition. But it is not a poor man's country; it will take a lot of capital. Development must be on an immense scale. It is low grade placer mining, but the vast area of gold bearing 'dirt' will make it a paying proposition. For 300 years the district has been mined by the Spaniards by hand.

"The dam and power house which we built was in connection with the first large modern dredge in Colombia for gold dredging purposes.

"Colombia needs to reform some of her laws. She wants to open her country to foreigners more. The freight rates on the steamers up the Magdalena river are exorbitant, and, in addition, the Colombians levy a tax of \$4 a ton for dredging the river—which is never dredged. Every piece of our stuff—derricks, cable ways, donkey engines and electrical equipment—was brought from the United States."

Italy to Have Panama Show.

The Italian government has announced in the chamber of deputies that Italy would participate officially to the Panama-Pacific exposition at San Francisco and asked for an appropriation of \$400,000.

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