

BILLY SUNDAY USES MASS PSYCHOLOGY TO SWAY AUDIENCE

Noted Revivalist's Methods in Big Meetings Caught by Times Correspondent.

Let us attend a Billy Sunday meeting!

These meetings are not the whole of Billy's campaigns, as is generally supposed. But they are the backbone of his efforts.

What does he do? How does he preach? Do the crowds go to be amused or to hear about Christ? Are his prayers irreverent, and his sermons a mere string of back-slit adjectives?

These questions, and others, are answered in this article.

And tomorrow readers of this series will be taken into the home of Billy Sunday, and given a close range view of the evangelist, his wife and his other co-workers in the busy, eventful routine of their daily living.

By J. R. HILDEBRAND.

Blend the word pictures and tender pathos of Dwight L. Moody with the picturesque slang of George M. Cohan. Combine the spontaneous grace of Mikail Mordkin with the raucous voice of Hughie Jennings. In your imagination is strong, you have a faint picture of Billy Sunday in action.

In action, "is right. That is the only way you could catch Billy Sunday. It takes a rapid shutter camera to land him in a moving picture machine could do him justice.

Get the picture in one of his big tabernacle meetings. Take last Sunday afternoon when I heard him preach to men in Scranton. He was at his best, for it is men he is trying to reach.

If there is a heaven for folks," he shouted, "the man who thinks he will go to glory on his wife's religion will be there in a front seat. And a little later, "If the womanhood of America had been no better than its manhood, the devil would have had the country fenced in long ago."

It is an hour before Sunday will ascend the platform. But the auditorium is filled, with men only, mind you, and the ushers are turning late comers away.

And look at the men. Not the down-and-outers, the ragged, the occasional converts of that type. But the prominent business men, lawyers and physicians, heads of city departments.

And wonder of wonders, last Sunday two reporters, next to doctors reputed to be the most unemotional specimens of mankind, walked out of the press box and "hit the trail."

They grasped Sunday by the hand and jumped back to their seats. Reporters cannot take much time off, even to be converted, and kept on scribbling the names of well-known citizens piling pell mell down the aisle.

Mayor Leads Trail Hitters.

"There's the son of the fire chief, whispered one. "And there's Rine with another bunch of his engineers," interposed another. He referred to George Rine, general manager of the Lackawanna Railroad, whose shops and offices employ thousands in Scranton, who had hit the trail earlier in the week and who, ever since, had headed delegations of shop workers and engineers and firemen down the sawdust trail.

"There's the mayor," the mayor was not a trail hitter, but he headed a group of city employees, and himself grasped Sunday's hand in appreciation of his work despite the impetuous set-toe with him earlier in the game over five regulations for Sunday work not to arrive for half an hour yet, contrary to popular belief. There is no applause. Sunday's crowds are too reverent for that, contrary to popular belief. Instead, there is a hush. And "Roddy" begins to lead the choir of 100 members in a militant gospel song.

"Roddy" is the popular nickname for Homer Roddaway, trombone player and choir director, whose musical direction is a big feature of the Sunday campaigns. There's no milkop sentiment about the songs at Sunday's meetings. "Forward, Christian Soldiers," "Why Not Now," and other militant gospel hymns make up the musical program.

At the piano is B. D. Ackley, for seven years Sunday's private secretary and virtually the business manager of the Sunday campaigns. Conducting the music is the least part of his and "Roddy's" troubles. These two work out the details for the big meetings, from furnishing plans for the tabernacle that has to be built for the crowds to training the ushers, arranging for the hos-

BASEBALL EVANGELIST IN SOME OF HIS TYPICAL POSES

"BILLY" SUNDAY, As He Appears In Characteristic Attitude While Preaching.



pital for those who may faint or be overcome in the jam, and establishing the children's checking station, where nurses are provided for babies while mothers attend the meetings.

Then Sunday appears on the platform. In the early part of the campaign his arrival is apt to be the occasion for shouts and a noisy ovation. But he discourages that, "seriously twitching his fingers, pacifying, about, or shifting restlessly as he tries to sit still. Sunday waits as long as he can, and then suddenly shuts off the song and takes command.

"Open the windows," is apt to be his first command. "God made the fresh air. The devil thrives on foul air," he proclaims. Moreover Sunday is going to send for himself all the fresh air he can get for the next strenuous hour, and he warns against coughing and sneezing. A stray usher wanders about.

"You will have to sit down, old man," he says, and that quaint smile takes off the sting of the remark. Personally, as we shall find when we accompany him to his home, Sunday is as gentle as a child. He is bashful and diffident.

Angered by Devil Only.

The only thing that can make Sunday hopping mad is the devil," remarked one of his helpers. "But he uncorks his wrath then in great style."

Facing up and down like a thoroughbred for a race, with nostrils quivering and his keen eye taking in every movement in the vast crowd of 12,000 before him, Sunday waits for them to get quiet.

His knowledge of crowd psychology stands him in good stead. It accounts, perhaps, for his unique ability to hold his auditors' attention in a vastlike grip. Occasionally during the sermon, if there is any restlessness, he will pause abruptly, not for lack of words, but to regain attention, and this trick always has the same effect. Every eye is fixed on his figure and off is gone at the verbal pace which is the terror of stenographers.

"On the ball field Sunday was noted for his base stealing and quick work on bases. "If he had stayed with us he would have been another 'Ty Cobb,' one of his team mates lamented many seasons after Sunday quit the diamond.

In a sermon Sunday loses no time "winding up." When he starts he is off like a shot.

"Every word a picture," is the best description of his method. When preaching he is never still. And he never seems to make a forced gesture. He is a born actor. One Pittsburgh critic said he was worth \$2 a night to any lover of good acting. One famous actor offered him a berth as a leading man. And he suits the action in the word with an unconsciousness that confuses his chief appeal.

He describes a street fight, and his arms give swift, sharp blows to an imaginary opponent. He paints a word picture of a sailor plunking to the rescue of a drowning man, and off jumps Billy from his six-foot-high platform to the sawdust, to illustrate the sailor's act. He tells in a thrilling bit of word-painting, of the conversion of Evan Roberts, the Welsh miner, and he has probed on the platform as he illustrates God's

call to the worker far down in the bowels of old mother nature.

Converts Throng To Sunday.

Sunday's methods of appeal for converts are unique. Other evangelists will plead, and cajole, and beg, Sunday stops abruptly, the "trail hitters" crowd forward, and he says not another word. And ushers toward the close of his sermon, have moved up to keep the crowd in line as it files swiftly by the platform.

The close of his sermons usually is highly dramatic. Last Sunday night he had been telling a lifetime story and flinging an imaginary life-line over the heads of his audience with realistic gestures.

"And now," he concluded, with one mighty heave of his little body, and an arm shot out with a force that almost carried him off the edge of the platform, "I am throwing that life line to YOU!"

And the crowd surged forward, threatening to wreck the platform but for the quick work of scores of ushers in getting them into a long line.

There was no "gates of Heaven ajar" for you" matter in his sermon to men. There was no picture of a rosy place of ease in the life hereafter. Instead his challenge was: "Come on you old shifter, will you parley with thunder peals and lightning flashes!"

"Come on you prayerless buffoons who give a 'hs, ha,' at the Bible!" And that "hs, ha" in its cultural mockery spoke louder than more meaningful words.

"Come on you bar room loafers! Come on you blasphemers! Come on you bunch of bull necks and cowards, you've got to give us local option."

Wonder of wonders! They came! They came! They came! They came! They could not get to him fast enough.

Much objection has been found to Sunday's prayers. He is accused of irreverence. But they do not give that impression when heard. He seems to be talking to God in the same offhand, earnest way he talks to men. There are no "thees" or "thous."

Prayers Are Conversational.

He stops anywhere in his sermons and prays. Generally he begins with a persuasive "Now, Lord," and goes on in an ordinary conversational tone.

For example, he had been asking for the Divine blessing on a number of institutions in Scranton, and he continued, "But don't bless the breweries, Lord; damn the breweries. Don't damn the men who work for them, Lord; that wouldn't do at all. Bless the saloonkeepers, too. You know what to do with the saloons, Lord; there's no use of my telling you."

prayer," he says. "If I went to a grocery store and asked for a 'pound of BUT-ter' and a 'half DOZ-en of eggs' in the tone of voice some men use when they pray they would drive me out of the place."

"The biggest face in the church is the average prayer meeting. There is no denying that Sunday is a master of biting, cutting invective. His knockers he recently termed "whisky soaked, card playing, beer guzzling, smug, rambunctious inps of the cohorts of hell."

In a political sermon in Scranton, he said: "Clay, Henry, and Lincoln have been forsaken for a ward heeling, lickspittle, whisky soaked, hog jowled, weasel eyed gang of back alley low browes."

Side by side with the city hall reporters, who penciled the names of politicians, bankers, and business men "hitting the trail" on Sunday night, were the society editors, no longer needed for dances, what parties, or tea, for prayer meetings in Scranton have supplanted these for the time being, and these society editors were busy garnering the names of social leaders "hitting the trail."

Here are a few things he told society women when he had them to gether in Scranton: "Jesus Christ had no use for a slaty, penciled-brow, fudge-eating, card-playing, champagne-sipping society woman."

"I am more afraid of high-toned gambling church members, sitting on Persian rugs, quaffing wine and playing cards, to see who shall carry home a dinky cream pitcher, than I am of all the dirty barroom loafers in Scranton."

Tender In Talks To Women.

When talking to women alone, it is said that Billy can be wonderfully tender. Stories of mother-love abound in all his sermons. On one Sunday afternoon he had a special meeting for women. Twelve thousand packed his tabernacle to its capacity, and twelve thousand more waited outside. He preached one sermon to those inside, and then, though seemingly exhausted, he dismissed that audience and preached the same sermon over again to those who had been waiting without.

Many incidents like this attest his wonderful vitality, his quick recuperative power, which mark his evangelism, as well as his former work on the ball field. "Pop Anson, who took him straight from a small town team to a major league outfit, tells in a book of baseball reminiscences of this faculty of his mind."

"I am as hard as nails now," he will tell you as he loiters about with his trainer. "You occasionally will be admit what his friends sadly assert that his present pace is telling on his wonderful constitution."

"Sincere," he told a Scranton audience after it had been intimidated merely was "bluffing" at Christianity. "Sincere? Do you think I would be shortening my life every time I preach if I did not believe it? I love to preach. I could not stop if I wanted to," he told me later in his home.

for his party while he is in Scranton, will be given in another article. And Sunday's unique personality will be studied at close range. He will answer personally many of the criticisms of his work. And the part "Ma" Sunday, almost as unusual a personality as her husband, plays in his work will be related, as well.

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The executive committee of the American Society of Marine Draftsmen, is preparing reports to be submitted to the convention tomorrow and Saturday.

To Speak on Vaccines.

Dr. J. R. Stewart will speak before the District Branch of the American Pharmaceutical Association at the National College of Pharmacy this evening on "Vaccines and Antitoxins."

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