

Its drift is toward the irrational in violation of laws of reason as well as rules of hygiene and decency. There are numerous instances where it has run to immodesty, impurity and sin. Husbands and wives have been separated. Minds have been wrecked, and at the present time, there are numbers of its victims in insane asylums.

We have observed also this sad fact that persons who have gone far under its sway, when awakened to their error and danger, have to fight through the densest darkness and most intricate mists of Satan's net to get back to normal, mental and spiritual condition.

The Tongues Movement repudiates the Wesleyan doctrine of Entire Sanctification; and, though not a few good holiness people have been drawn into it, it is not even at its best any part of the Holiness Movement, but is rejected and disapproved by our Holiness evangelists and schools.

HEARING BILLY SUNDAY.

By Rev. W. E. Smith.

Have you ever heard Billy Sunday?

Of course you have heard of him. He is the most talked about preacher in the world today. His striking sayings are quoted everywhere. His face and figure in startling variations stare at you from the pages of both rural and metropolitan papers.

The writer, like many others, often said, "I would like to hear him," and being near Paterson, N. J., recently, where the evangelist was holding forth, we went for all day. I confess to having had preconceived ideas and prejudices, but went fully determined to see and get all the good I possibly could out of the meetings.

No service was held in the morning, but Billy preached in the afternoon at two o'clock. At twelve people began to come. Like myself, most of them were from out of town. They were full of curiosity and expectation. By two o'clock about five thousand people were gathered in the great auditorium capable of seating 10,000. A lady who sat in front of me was almost feverish with excitement. She watched like others for the evangelist's appearance on the platform. A gentleman appeared who looked like Billy and immediately she began to clap her hands vigorously, many others joining in, only to be disappointed in finding that their applause was misdirected. Mr. Sunday came on the platform while a song was in progress, and there was no demonstration; he also rose to speak during a song and this made applause inappropriate. After hastily making some announcements, he gave out his text, "Follow me and I will make you become fishers of men." In physique the evangelist is not large, but well proportioned. His voice is husky but capable of great power and long sustained effort. There was little relation between the sermon and the text. The former was a proclamation of salvation. He did not gradually work up in energy and movement, he was off at the start. He had to be, for Billy Sunday always finds his audience tuned to a high key. He meets them where he finds them. The sermon was full of good things. Some of his expressions were startling. He paid his compliments to higher critics who mutilated the Bible and preach to "paint and varnish." He had his Ms. before him and turned page after page, but that did not hinder his movements nor interfere with his liberty. From the first there was something very fascinating about the man. We felt at once we were listening to a preacher of exceptional gifts. The ser-

vice lasted just an hour; the sermon was thirty minutes long.

But in the evening came the big meeting. At six o'clock the people began to flock in. A considerable area was reserved in the centre of the auditorium for the employees of the city. By half past seven the place was packed and the approaches well filled. There was more than half an hour of singing led by Mr. Rodehever, supported by a choir of a thousand voices. Most everything was applauded but the preliminary prayer about one minute and a half long, offered by Dr. Jesse Hurlbut. When Billy took the platform the applause was tremendous. His text was Romans XII and I. He said in part: "This is a call for volunteers. God has no conscript army. I beseech you, not command you. I beseech you by the mercies of God, not by the justice and power and wrath of God. The mercies of God! You can't enumerate them. The blessing of sight, of hearing, of talking, of taste. Thank God when you eat; you don't have to hold your nose because your food tastes like garbage. Present your bodies! Your hands to lift burdens you have never touched; your eyes to see needs to which you have been blind. If God could get your feet he would send you perhaps to carry back stuff you have stolen, and to apologize to people you have lied about."

The message of the speaker was simple and plain. The most remarkable thing about the sermon was the speaker's physical and mental gymnastics. He read considerable from a Ms., and yet he was all over the platform, going through motions and antics that would be ridiculous for any body else, but perfectly appropriate to Billy Sunday. His words came in a torrent, and yet his articulation was perfect. We sat well back in the auditorium and yet did not lose a word. He quoted no scripture, but made references to Shakespears, Dante, Socrates, Homer Gladstone, Carlyle, Bishops Fowler and Taylor. He drew some illustrations, however, from scripture and reached the climax of his sermon by saying, "God asks us to do hard things, but never unreasonable things." He referred to the experiences of Joseph, Moses, Job, Jesus, Paul, Savonerola, and finished by referring to himself—the cross he had to endure of being reviled and abused for preaching as he did. "But," he cried, "When I get to glory Jesus will say, Bill, here is your mansion I have been saving for you; and I will say, thank you, Jesus, I am well satisfied."

The speaker had reached a tremendous pitch of earnestness, and with the words "I am well satisfied," dropped into his chair, while the crowd clapped and stamped its approval.

He then called for folks to "strike the trail." We waited a few moments and saw a good many respond, but we had to hasten to catch our train.

What were our impressions?

We went away not saying what a wonderful Christ we have, but what a wonderful man is Billy Sunday. While the preacher preached the truth as far as he went, with tremendous earnestness, yet the spirit of the meeting seemed more like that of a political convention or a baseball game, than any religious meeting I had ever attended. The atmosphere did not seem at all favourable for sinners getting to God. It has become a most popular thing for people to go down the aisle and shake the hand of Billy Sunday. Some go home no doubt to pray through to God. How many, eternity will reveal.

We came away feeling that the hand-clapping, hip-hip-hurrahing, brass band, spectacu-

lar big tabernacle meetings were more divine than human, we failed to see it. Billy Sunday is a man of tremendous force and energy, and remarkable gifts. He says he is preaching for the church of his day. He deals some sins sledge hammer blows, but knows the best of any man in the evangelistic field how to win popular applause. He hits worldliness, yet commends all manner of clubs and secret orders; he condemns worldliness and yet praises Sabbath desecrating, law-defying, gambling organized baseball. We noticed that nearly all his references to the devil and hell, while delivered with force, were greeted by the people with a good natured laugh.

We feel that his very popularity and notriety will be his undoing. For example, outside the tabernacle they were selling "Billy" book marks. They are getting up the "Billy Sunday waltz," and soon we will hear of the Billy Sunday saloon and the Billy Sunday cigarette. The American people have the weakness of booming a hero until he becomes nauseating and then they drop him speedily. Dewey was the great naval hero; the greatest sailor that ever sailed the seas, so the papers said. Today he is a joke. Theodore Roosevelt was once the uncrowned king of America; today he is only T. R. And when a preacher is ruled by a time-serving, whiskey-ruled, sensuous press, the way Billy Sunday is, we may expect a tremendous reaction.

The humblest preacher may well pray — "Let he that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." But the preacher who is making several times ten thousand times ten thousand dollars a year preaching the gospel of Him who was so poor, "He had not where to lay his head," and was reviled, rejected and crucified by the popular church of his day, can well afford to stop and ask if he is truly in the apostolic succession.

A preacher can say tremendous things about some sins if he will only smooth it off and a little sting is taken away; but let him dig down into carnality, and declare that inbred sin can and must be destroyed by the power of the precious blood, neither the secular or the ordinary religious press will give him much prominence. We thought while in the tabernacle what a thinning out there would be of the preachers under such messages night after night—and the choir too would be thinned. The crowds would grow perhaps small, but instead of hand-clapping, praises would soon be springing up from hearts filled with the love and power of God.

But the big meeting with all its show is what the popular church wants. God gives us what we want. There will spring up a great crop of Billy Sundays, with great deal smaller gifts and less grace, but spectacular success. But the success of such movements does not show that the church is taking the word for Christ, but the world is capturing the church. People are being taken in by the thousands who have simply confessed Christ by taking the hand of an evangelist, but do not know that Christ has saved them from sin. The great revivals that have blessed the world have not been worked up—they have been prayed down. People have groaned and wept and repented because of sin. May we all pray that God will send His church a genuine pentecostal revival, such as Wesley, Edwards and Finney saw.

When people turn their backs on you because you drew the line very straight, remember the words of our Lord to his disciples when the crowd forsook him, "Will ye go also?"