

BILLY SUNDAY'S
ANTI-"BOOZE"
SERMON

As Preached in Boston, MA
by Billy Sunday

I am the sworn, eternal and uncompromising enemy of the liquor traffic. I have been, and will go on, fighting the damnable, dirty, rotten business with all the power at my command. I shall ask no quarter from that gang, and they shall get none from me.

After all is said that can be said on the liquor traffic, its influence is degrading on the individual, the family, politics and business and upon everything that you touch in this old world. For the time has long gone by when there is any ground for arguments of its ill effects. All are agreed on that point. There is just one prime reason why the saloon has not been knocked into hell, in that is the false statement "that the saloons are needed to help lighten the taxes."

It costs fifty times more for the saloon than the revenue derived from it.

I challenge you to show me where the saloon has ever helped business, education, church morals or anything we hold dear.

You listen today and if I can't peel the bark off that damnable fallacy I will pack my trunk and leave. I say that is the biggest lie ever belched out. The wholesale and retail trade in Iowa pays every year at least \$500,000 in licenses. Then, if there were no drawback, it ought to reduce the taxation 25 cents per capita. If the saloon is necessary to pay the taxes, and if they pay \$500,000 in taxes, it ought to reduce them 25 cents a head. But no, the whiskey business has increased taxes \$1,900,000 instead of reducing them, and I defy any whisky man on God's dirt to show one town that has the saloon where the taxes are lower than where they do not have the saloon. I defy you to show me an instance.

Crime and Idiocy

Listen! Seventy-five per cent of our idiots come from intemperate parents, 80 per cent of the paupers, 82 per cent of the crime is committed by men under the influence of liquor, 90 per cent of the adult criminals are whiskey made. The Chicago Tribune kept track for ten years and found that 53,438 murders were committed in the saloons.

Archbishop Ireland, the famous Roman Catholic of St. Paul, said of social crime “that 75 per cent is caused by drink and 80 per cent of the poverty.” I go to a family and it is broken up and I say, “What caused this?” Drink! I step up to a young man on the scaffold and say, “What brought you here?” Drink! Whence all the misery and sorrow and corruption? Invariably it is drink.

Whiskey and beer are all right in their place, but their place is in hell. The saloon hasn't one leg to stand on.

Five Points, in New York, was a spot as near like hell as any spot on earth. There are five streets that run to this point, and right in the middle was an old brewery, and the streets on either side were lined with grog shops. The newspapers turned a search light on the districts, and before they could stop it the first thing they had to do was to buy the old brewery and turn it into a mission, and today it is a decent and respectable place.

Look at Kansas. It is dry. In 85 of 105 counties in Kansas there is not one idiot. In 38 counties they have not a single pauper in the poorhouse, and there are only 600 dependents in the whole state. In 65 counties in Kansas they did not have a single prisoner in the county jails in the year 1912, and in some of the counties the grand jury hasn't been called to try a criminal case in 10 years.

Sum of All Villainies

The saloon is the sum of all villainies. It is worse than war or pestilence. It is the crime of crimes. It is parent of crimes and the mother of sins. It is the appalling source of misery and crime in the land and the principal cause of crime. It is the source of three-fourths of the taxes to support that crime. And to license such an incarnate fiend of hell is the dirtiest, low-down, damnable business on top of this old earth. There is nothing to be compared to it.

The Legislature of Illinois appropriated \$6,000,000 in 1908 to take care of the insane people in the state, and the whiskey business produces 75 per cent of the insane. That is what you go down in your pocket for to help support. If I remember rightly the Legislature appropriated nearly \$9,000,000 to take care of the state institution. Do away with the saloon, and you will close these institutions. The saloons make them necessary, and they make the poverty and fill the jails and the penitentiaries. Who has to pay the bills? The landlord who doesn't get the rent because the money goes for whiskey; the butcher and the grocer, and the charitable person who takes pity on the children of drunkards, and the tax payer who supports the insane asylums and other institutions that the whiskey business keeps full of human wrecks.

Do away with the cursed business and you will not have to put up to support them. Who gets the money? The saloon keepers and the brewers, and the distillers, while the whiskey fills the land with misery and poverty and wretchedness and disease and death and damnation and it is being authorized by the will of the sovereign people.

Last year the corn crop was 2,553,732,000 bushels, and it was valued at \$1,250,000,000. Secretary Wilson says that the breweries use less than 2 per cent; I will say that they use 2 percent. This would make 51,000,000 bushels, and at 50 cents a bushel, that would be about \$25,000,000. I'll be generous with the dirty, rotten gang.

Drink and Bankruptcy

Now listen! In 1912 the income of the United States government and the cities and towns and counties from the whiskey business was \$134,000,000. That is putting it liberally. You say that's a lot of money. Well, last year the working men spent \$2,200,000,000 for drink, and it cost \$1,200,000,000 to care for the judicial machinery. In other words, the whiskey business cost us \$3,400,000,000, I will subtract from that the dirty \$350,000,000 which we got, and it leaves \$3,000,000,000 in favor of knocking the whiskey business out on purely a money business.

And listen! Last year we spent \$600,000,000 for our paupers and criminals, insane, orphans, feeble minded, etc., in the United States, and 82 per cent of our criminals are whiskey made and 75 per cent of the paupers are whiskey made. Our national increase in wealth was only \$5,000,000,000, so you can figure out how long it will take us to go into bankruptcy with that cursed business on our backs. The average factory hand earns \$500 a year, and it costs us \$5,200 a year to support each of our whiskey criminals. There are 335,000 enrolled criminals in the United States and 80,000 in jails and penitentiaries. Three-fourths were sent there because of drink, and then they have the audacity to say the saloon is needed for money revenue. Never was there a baser lie.

"But," says the whiskey fellow, "we would lose trade, the farmer would not come to town to trade." You lie. Say, when you put up the howl that if you didn't have the saloons the farmer won't trade-say, Mr. Whiskey Men, why do you dump money into politics and back the Legislatures into the corner and fight to the last ditch to prevent the enactment of county local option?

Scared of Farmers

You know if the farmers were given a chance they would knock the whiskey business into hell the first throw out of the box. You are afraid. You have cold feet on the proposition. You are afraid to give the farmer a chance. They are scared to death of farmers.

When the whiskey gang tries to say its business is not falling off it lies. I've got the last annual report of the government right here. I tell you I have an inside track on that dirty gang. This report says that there were 10,741,738 less gallons of whiskey made last year than there were in 1913. It says there were 127 fewer registered distilleries in 1914 than in 1913 in our land, which means a lot when you consider there are only 743 in the United States. Also, it says there were 33 fewer breweries in 1914 than there were in 1913.

Don't put any stock in the man who gets up in Congress, says he is a temperance man and in the next breath says prohibition is a state affair. If it is a state affair why doesn't the United States government divide the \$225,000,000 revenue it collected last year with the States?

Pennsylvania produced 8,800,876 gallons of beer last year, more than any other state in the union except New York. It ranked fifth in the production of whiskey producing 8,489,062 gallons. I say the temperance question is as much a national question as slavery was in the days of '61. And if the politician hasn't the manhood to stand up and defend, then somebody else will get his job in Washington before long.

Saloon vs. Government

The saloon is strong against good government. It supports the boodle aldermen, the political boss and the political machine. And all it asks for the \$30 it hands out is that it be left alone. It says, "Keep your hands off and let me go on with my business of making drunkards out of the country's youth, and filling the jails and the penitentiaries and the asylums and the poorhouses."

The saloon is never identified with any movement for good government, and there was never one started that the saloon didn't oppose, tooth and nail. All the slanders and lies out about me crawled out of a grog shop. The liquor gangs press bureau has got my itinerary, just as well as I have got it, and they send out there dirty, rotten, stinking lies ahead of me. Yes, and there's always a dirty, rotten, stinking newspaper or two that will print them. But don't you think that scares me a bit. I'm not afraid of the worst old scoundrel that ever dipped his pen in the inkbottle.

I tell you, gentlemen, the American home is the dearest heritage of the people, for the people, by the people, and when a man can go from home in the morning with the kisses of his wife and children on his lips, and come back at night with an empty dinner bucket to a happy home, that man is a better man, whether white or black. Whatever takes away the comforts of home - whatever degrades that man or woman - whatever invades the sanctity of the home, is the deadliest foe to the home, to church, to the deadliest foe to the home, the church and the state, on top of God Almighty's dirt.

And if all the combined forces of hell should assemble and conclave, and with them all the men on earth that hate and despise God and purity and virtue - if all the scum of the earth might mingle with the denizens of hell to try to think of the deadliest institutions to home, to church and state, I tell you sir the combined hellish intelligence could not conceive of or bring an institution that could touch the hem of the garment of the open licensed saloon to damn the home and the manhood, and womanhood and business and every other good thing on God's earth.

"But," you say, "we will regulate it by high license." Regulate what by high license? You might as well try to regulate a power mill in hell.

Worse Than a Thief

It is my opinion that the saloonkeeper is worse than a thief and a murderer. The ordinary thief steals only your money, but the saloonkeeper steals your honor and your character. The ordinary murderer takes your life, but the saloonkeeper murders your soul.

The saloon is an infidel. It has no faith in God, has no religion. It would close every church in the land. It would hang its beer signs on the abandoned altars. It would close every public school. It respects the thief, and it esteems the blasphemer; it fills the prisons and penitentiaries. It despises heaven, hates love, and scorns virtue. It tempts the passions. Its music is the song of a siren. Its sermons are a collection of lewd, vile stories. It wraps a mantle about the hope of this world to come.

It is the moral clearinghouse for rot, and damnation, and poverty, and insanity, and it wrecks homes and blights lives today. The saloon is a liar. It promises health and causes disease. It promises prosperity and sends adversity. It promises happiness and sends misery.

I tell you that the curse of God Almighty is on the saloon. Legislatures are legislating against it. Decent society is barring it out. The fraternal brotherhoods are knocking it out. The Masons and Odd Fellows and the

knights of Pythias and the A. O. U. W. are closing their doors to the whiskey sellers. It is on the downgrade. It is headed for hell, and by the grace of God, I am going to give it a push, with a whoop, for all I know how. Listen to me – I am going to show you how we burn our money. It costs 20 cents to make a gallon of whiskey; sold over the counter at 10 cents a glass it will bring \$4.

We dumped nearly four times the value of the national bank stock in the United States into the whiskey hole last year, and we didn't fill the hole up at that. What is the matter? Whenever the day comes when every Catholic and Protestant whose name is on a church record votes against the saloon, that day will saloon go to hell. I charge the church as being responsible for the saloon, for it is strong enough to do away with it. Hell will be so full of whiskey-voting church members that their feet will stick out the windows.

Say, hold on a bit. Have you got a silver dollar? I am going to show you how it is burned up. We have in this country 218,000 saloons, and allowing 50 feet frontage for each saloon. It makes a street from New York to Chicago, and 5,000,000 men, women and children go daily into the saloon for drink. And marching 20 miles a day, it would take 20 days to pass this building and marching five abreast they would reach 500 miles. There they go; look at them!

Half Million Enter Grog Shop

On the first day of January 500,000 of the young men of our nation entered the grog shop and began a public career, hellward, and on December 31 I will come back here and summon you people and ring the bell and raise the curtain and say to the saloon and breweries: "On the first day of January I gave you 500,000 of the brain and muscle of our land, and I want them back and I have come in the name of home and church and school; father, mother, sister, sweetheart: give me back what I gave you. March out."

I count, and 18,000 have lost their appetite and have become muttering, bleary-eyed drunkards, and I say: "What is that I hear, a funeral dirge?" What is that procession? A funeral procession 3,000 miles long and 600,000 hearses in the procession. One hundred and ten thousand men die drunkards in this land of the free and the home of the brave. Listen! In an hour 80 men die drunkards, 2,000 a day and 110,000 a year. One man will leap in front of a train, another will plunge into a river, another will plunge from the dock into a lake, another will throw his hands to his head and life will end. Another will cry "mother!" and his life will go out like a burnt match.

Like Hamilcar of old, who swore eternal enmity against Rome, so I propose to perpetuate the feud against liquor traffic until the white-winged

dove of temperance builds her nest on the dome of the Capitol at Washington and spreads her wings of peace, sobriety and joy over our land, which I love with all my heart.

Two Uses of Dollar

I hold a silver dollar in my hand. Come on, we are going to a saloon. We will go into a saloon and spend that dollar for a quart. It takes 20 cents to make a gallon of whiskey and a dollar to buy a quart. You say to the saloonkeeper: "Give me a quart." I will show you, if you wait a minute, how she is burned up. Here I am, John, an old drunken bum with a wife and six kids (thank God it's all a lie). Come on, I will go down to a saloon and throw down my dollar. It costs 20 cents to make a gallon of whiskey. A nickel will buy a quart of booze. Who gets the nickel? The farmer, for corn and apples. Who gets the 95 cents? The United States government, the big distillers, the big corporations. I am John, a drunken bum and I will spend my dollar. I have worked a week and got my pay. I go into a grog shop and throw down my dollar and I get a quart of booze. Come home with me. I stagger and reel in my wife's presence and she says: "John, what did you bring home?"

"A quart."

What will a quart do? It will burn up my happiness and my home and fill my home with squalor and want. So here is the dollar. The saloonkeeper has it. Here is my quart. There you get the whiskey end of it. Here you get the workingman's end of the saloon.

But come on. I will go to a store and spend the dollar for a pair of shoes. I want them for my son, and he puts them on his feet, and with the shoes to protect his feet he goes out and earns another dollar, and my dollar becomes a silver thread in the woof and warp of happiness and joy, and the man that owns the building gets some, and the clerk that sold the shoes gets some, and the merchant, and the traveling man, and the wholesale gets some, and the factory, and the man that made the shoes, and the man that tanned the hide, and the butcher that bought the calf, and the farmer that raised the calf, and the little colored fellow that shined the shoes, and my dollar spread itself and nobody is made the worse for spending the money.

Gang Has His Money

Say, wife, the bread that ought to be in your stomach to satisfy the cravings of hunger is down yonder in the grocery store, and your husband hasn't money enough to carry it home. The meat that ought to satisfy your

hunger hangs in the butcher shop. Your husband hasn't any money to buy it. The cloth for a dress is lying on the shelf in the store, but your husband hasn't the money to buy it. The whiskey gang has his money. Why didn't the United State Congress vote to let the people have a shot at the whiskey gang? I'll tell you. The whiskey gang has a Congress backed into a corner, and is squeezing the gizzard out of it so it can't even peep.

I would like to do this. I would like to see every booze fighter get on the water wagon. I would like to summon all the drunkards in America and say:

Boys, let's cut it out and spend the money for flour, meat and calico; what do you say? Say! \$500,000,000 will buy all the flour in the United States.

Say, if the man that drinks the whiskey goes to hell, the man that votes for the saloon that sold the whiskey to him will go to hell. If the man that drinks the whiskey goes to hell and the man that sold the whiskey to the man that drank it goes to heaven, then the poor drunkard will have the right to stand on the brink of eternal damnation and put his arms around the pillar of justice and say, "That isn't a square deal." If you vote for the dirty business you go to hell as sure as you live, and I would like to fire the furnace while you are there.

Some fellow says, "Dry the saloon out and the buildings will be empty." Which would you rather have, empty buildings or empty jails, penitentiaries and insane asylums? You drink the stuff and what have you to say? You that vote for it and you that sell it? Look at them painted on the canvas of your recollection.

"We will make laws for you. We must have lumber for houses."

He goes up to another mill and says: "Hey, what kind of a mill are you?"

"A grist mill?"

"What do you make?"

"Flour and meal out of wheat and corn."

"Is the finished product worth more than the raw material?"

"Yes."

"Then come on. We will make laws for you. We will protect you."

He goes up to another mill and says: "What kind of mill are you?"

"A paper mill."

"What do you make paper out of?"

"Straw and rags."

"Well, we will make laws for you. We must have paper on which to write notes and mortgages."

He goes up to another mill and says: "Hey, what kind of a mill are you?"

"A gin mill."

"I don't like the looks nor the smell of you. A gin mill? What do you

make? What kind of a mill are you?"

"A gin mill."

Growing Boy Is Raw Material

"What is your raw material?"

"The boys of America."

(Here the evangelist summoned five small boys to the platform.)

The gin mills of this country must have 2,000,000 boys or shut up shop. Say, walk down your streets; count the homes and every fifth home has to furnish a boy for a drunkard. Have you furnished yours?

"What is your raw material?"

"American boys."

"Say, saloon, gin mill, what is your finished product?"

"Blear-eyed, low down, staggering men and the scum of God's dirt, that have gone from me and taken the count."

Go to the jails, go to the insane asylums and the penitentiaries and the homes for the feeble minded. There you will find the finished product for their dirty business. I tell you, it is the worst business this side of hell; and now you know it.

They don't even give you the pure stuff. If ever there was a jubilee in hell, it was when lager beer was invented. Not 3 per cent of the beer sold is made exclusive from barley, malt, hops and yeast. Look at the breweries. What are those sidetracks for? Why, to bring in the carloads of gincose and sugar and other things they put into the stuff. Pure beer is dark in color and bitter in taste. You poor idiot, you never drank pure beer.

Not 15 per cent of the whiskey on the market is pure stuff. When it is first distilled and pure, whiskey is the color of water. It gets its color in the aging process. Legitimately, that takes from four to eight years. But now they stick a steam pipe into the stuff and "age" it in 20 hours.

What is your raw material, saloons? American boys. Say, I would not give one boy for all the distilleries and saloons this side of hell. And they have to have 2,000,000 boys every generation. And then you tell me you are a man when you will vote for an institution like that. What do you want to do, pay taxes in money or in boys?

Say, will you line up for the prohibition? Men of Boston, Massachusetts and our nation, how many of you will promise that by the help of God you will vote against it? Stand up. Let me have a look at you!