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LEWIS & CLARK, August 10 1896.

CURRENT COMMENT.

My friend, Rev. Byron Beall, asks space for the following communication: To THE EDITOR:

My old antagonist, Colonel Smith, editor of THE COURIER, asks a question in last week's issue of this paper, which I take great pleasure in answering. No young man of his evident sincerity shall thirst after light which I may possess, and have such light refused. He says, "Lectures and sermons for men only are a late invention," and he asks "since when, I would ask Mr. Beall, has it become necessary to exclude women from religious services in the house of God on the Sabbath day?"

I fear the Colonel's intense labors on his paper has not given him that leisure to read his Bible that I trust he longs for, or he would not have made the statement that meetings "for men only are a late invention." Let us go back some 1000 years in the history of the world, and opening our Bibles at 2 Samuel, chapter 11, we shall find an account of a minister by the name of Nathan who had a service to which but one man came, but he was a king by the name of David. The preacher's subject might have been well called, "Some Guards Broken Down in Jerusalem by a King," or "Adultery Exposed." And by the use of a parable he caused his audience of one to pronounce a hot judgment against himself for the murder of Uriah that he might secure his wife, the one spot on the otherwise fair name of Israel's great king. Would God that all lectures to "men only" were as effective as this one. "Thou art the man," said the Rev. Nathan, and David replied, "I have sinned against the Lord," and bowed his head in penitence and shame. Here is a meeting for "men only" and the results were good. Col. Smith says, "It is questionable if any good comes from these so called lectures for men only." Ministers who are responsible for them are liable to criticism." I dare say that when it became known throughout Jerusalem that Parson Nathan had charged home upon King David his crime of murder and

adultery there was criticism. But this case will at least set aside the statement that sermons for "men only are a late invention." Not a very late, believed.

But let me give one more case; this time let us go back a little more than 1000 years. The preacher is John the Baptist, an awfully sensational preacher. The whole country was moved by his preaching. He had an audience with King Herod one day, and he chose for a text, maybe, Lev. 24:11. "If a man shall take his brother's wife it is an ancient thing." And he preached "a sensational sermon" that cost him his head, for "this was precisely the sin of Herod. Another illustration of your statement, perhaps, that "it is questionable if any good comes from these so called lectures for men only." John surely found out that "ministers who are responsible for them are liable to criticism." Herod clearly was of your opinion that "there has been far too much said about this subject in this city." And as you say, he felt that "it is desirable to call a halt," and he called it. If John was trying, as you quote from Philip Brooks, "to keep himself before people's eyes by some kind of intellectual fantasticalness," he failed, because that sermon for "men only" buried him.

This instance disposes, at least, of Editor Smith's statement that "sermons for men only are late inventions." But let us come a little closer. There is no man of his generation that stands higher in the religious world as a sound gospel preacher than D. L. Moody, and he holds services for men only everywhere he goes. I attended such a service at Omaha. And so does almost every prominent evangelist in America, with thousands of pastors. I trust this time Colonel Smith was so industriously studious of his Bible that somehow he failed to read the papers of this city which have teemed with notices of such meetings. Evangelist Chapman held meetings here from which all women were "excluded," which is not such a hardship when you stop to consider that there are always a score of churches to which women can go during the time of the special meetings. Why, bless you, Colonel, there are two "separate services held for the two sexes" each Sabbath and have been for years, the F. W. C. A. holding one and the Y. W. C. A. conducting the other. Wake up!

Let no one think that I object to honest criticism. I welcome it, and at any time that Colonel Smith may think that I am going astray as a preacher, I trust he will not fail to call me back to the path of duty. At the same time, to quote Philip Brooks on sensational preaching "I think there is a great deal of serious messiness" on the part of a few editors about their brother's of the ministry that is uncalled for. When you intimate that there was many boys to my services for men as you do when you say, "when young boys flock to hear etc." you are mistaken. In that large audience there were not, I think, five boys under eighteen. I lay down this proposition. Sensational, perhaps. A minister who has taken the full theological course, and has had from ten to twenty years in actual work, while by no means above criticism, is as likely to know how to preach the gospel as the average newspaper man.

BYRON BEALL.

Lincoln, Neb., Aug 5, 1896.

CYCLE CONTEST

THE COURIER this week inaugurates another of its popular contests. This time it is two valuable high grade bicycles.

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The light which Rev. Beall would give me comes darkly and ungrammatically. I would hardly feel safe in taking it as a lantern unto my footsteps. It is uncertain. Mr. Beall does not credit me with a knowledge of the Bible and presuming on my ignorance and the ignorance of the public he takes liberties with the Scripture that are deserving of rebuke. In seeking to disprove the statement that religious meetings for "men only" are a late invention he makes two Biblical citations that are conspicuously absurd. Mr. Beall says: "In Samuel we shall find an account of a minister by the name of Nathan who had a service to which but one man came, but he was a king by the name of David." What are the facts? Did Rev. Nathan really prepare a meeting for "men only," and advertise his sensational performance for weeks in the daily papers, and seek to attract the multitude? There is nothing in the Scripture about any meeting for men only or any sensational advertisement. The minister was sent. The Bible says: "And the Lord sent Nathan unto David and he came unto him," etc. The Rev. Nathan's conduct was seemly, and there was nothing in the confidential interview with David to suggest a comparison with Rev. Beall's widely advertised bombastic public performance for "men only." Rev. Nathan appears to have had something like an adequate conception of ministerial dignity. Mr. Beall says: "Would God that all lectures for 'men only' were as affective as this one." It ought not to be necessary to ask a minister to read his Bible carefully; but Mr. Beall could probably



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make no better use of his time than in giving a more thorough study to the Scripture which is the foundation of his teaching. The Rev. Nathan's confidential talk with David is comparable to the lectures for "men only" in only one respect—in that it had no effect whatever. The Rev. Nathan's conversation with David took place in 1034 B. C., and the king lived in sin until he died nineteen years later. He did not, after hearing what Rev. Nathan had to say depart from Bath Sheba. Uriah's wife but continued with her, and Solomon was born unto them. How was Rev. Nathan's talk effective?

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J. A. SMITH - - - - - 113708 Street