

A dance festival on the day before the feast of tabernacles was instituted by the Macabees. All the people carried branches and

torches lighted from a central sacred light, and old and young danced enthusiastically to music and the chanting of Psalms.

THE LESSON APPLIED

"Have we made any calves?" writes Parker. "Ah, many. We have been great at idol-making. Can I count the calves we have worshiped? The unholy catalogue: pride, fashion, gluttony, self-indulgence, wealth, station, influence, appearances,—all calves of our making, calves of gold." There is no idol more commonly set up than that of self-indulgence. For it men will sacrifice wealth, health, happiness, home, honor, everything precious and enduring. The miserable sight that greeted Moses as he came upon the people frenzied as they wildly danced around the calf Aaron had made, is practically repeated a thousand times to-day at the door of the modern bar-room.

Even Aaron is implicated in this horrible degradation. And before the indignant demand of Moses for an explanation, he indulges in the usual weak excuses to justify himself. "I cast it into the fire, and there came out this calf." Nature was to blame. His environment was at fault. So men plead to-day who yield to the liquor habit. "It's my weakness, you know, don't be hard on me," they say. If only nature had endowed them with a different physical frame, if only they had grown up in a different environment, all would have been well with them. "They said unto me, Make us gods," Aaron blames the crowd for his downfall. So men say to-day, "Well, really, I got among the boys and they asked me to drink with them, and I did. I would have been all right if they had not encouraged me."

But we know that Aaron could have listened to the voices within that counseled better things, rather than to the lower solicitations of his nature. And he could have resisted the people if he had chosen. Moses did so when he appeared on the scene. And many a man to-day, by the grace of God, has conquered the strong passions and appetites of his nature, and has followed his convictions whether his course was popular or not.

All may do the same. Evil may be resisted, temptation may be overcome, a man may hold the integrity of his character against all the powers of Satan, if he will. The grace of God is sufficient for our every need.

In the modern bar-room is centred one of the greatest evils of the present. The influences that go forth from it are harmful altogether. If Aaron serves as a warning to us in relation to the liquor habit, Moses is an example to us in the attitude we ought to assume to the whole traffic. His attitude to the idolatry of his people was one of uncompromising hostility. He held no parley with it. He made no allowance for it. Neither threats nor entreaties moved him aside from his purpose to overthrow it as far as he could. It stirred him to a mighty indignation. It aroused him to vigorous and sustained action. When we remember that the bar-room strikes at the sanctity of life, the happiness of the home, that it degrades character, that it poisons the pure affections of the heart, and is the foe of true religion, ought it not to arouse in us a righteous anger and move us to a relentless warfare against its very existence?

And in Moses we see the great influence of one man when he is stirred by deep convictions and aflame with the love of God. The multitude pause in the presence of a man whose principles are right, and whose loyalty to them is open and uncompromising. If behind them is a mighty religious enthusiasm, who can measure the extent of his influence, the work for good that he may accomplish? When men and women are willing to stop to think and look the liquor traffic in the face until they really feel how great and unjustified a curse it is, surely a consuming zeal will be kindled in their hearts to cast it out root and branch! And if they are Christian men and women, and if love for God and their fellow man is the great constraining force that urges them to the warfare, how long could the traffic stand against their onslaught?