

and Cincinnati and other cities of our land are fast becoming centers of tremendous forces and agencies of evil, which the patriot and the Christian cannot contemplate with complacency. The opening of the next century will find New York, Brooklyn, Philadelphia, Chicago, Cincinnati, St. Louis, San Francisco and New Orleans, *the dominant force* in the government, and in the moral, social, and religious life of from ninety to one hundred millions of souls spread over this vast national domain, speaking, for the most part, one language, and living under one system of laws.

What is to be the character and influence of these cities thus destined to overshadow and shape our political, social, and religious development as a nation in the near future is, therefore, a vital question. The problem, confessedly, is one of tremendous proportions, and the solution of it is proportionately difficult and momentous. It is a problem which presses more and more every day upon the attention of the thoughtful patriot, the Christian, and the social and political economist. We *must* grapple with it in dead earnest, and solve it in the interest of law and order and sobriety and good morals and Christianity, or it will solve itself in the overthrow of our institutions and the reign of lust, communism, and anarchy in their worst forms. We sound no trumpet of the vain alarmist. But we cannot shut our eyes to facts which are patent to observation—to a state of society already existing in our chief cities and towns, and daily growing worse and spreading throughout the country, and permeating society everywhere, which, unless checked and remedied, must at no distant day imperil, if not actually subvert, state and church alike.

I. The first matter for consideration is the enormous growth of our cities, and the character of this growth.

1. There is a *marked tendency in our day to gravitate toward great centers* of life—to mass in cities and large towns—and this tendency becomes more and more general and intensified every year. The census of the last few decades shows that our cities are growing with unprecedented rapidity in population, as well as in wealth and luxury, and consequently in power and influence on the body politic—growing so rapidly, indeed, as to essentially change the elements, conditions, and relations of the social problem. This marvelous increase of *city* life and wealth and power is at the cost of the *rural* population, wealth and influence. Notwithstanding the importation of so many foreigners into our manufacturing towns and districts, the growth of the city population is much faster than that of the country districts. In fifty years the ratio of city growth has advanced from 4 1-2 per cent. to 22 1-2 per cent. The next census (1890) will show that *one-fourth of our entire population is massed in our cities!* So great is the drain to the city that very many of the country districts of New England, of central and western New York, and of other of