

During the festivals, held in honor of Bacchus, the god of wine, Plato asserts that he has seen the whole of the city of Athens drunk at one time.

The feasts, called the Anthesteria, continued three days, during which time the most disgusting scenes of drunkenness took place; and rewards were held out as inducements to excessive debauchery.

Similar ceremonies existed among the Romans, in which the greatest drunkenness prevailed, and the basest acts of immorality were committed.

Indeed the whole of the nations of antiquity were addicted to these unhallowed practices; and their idolatrous worship principally consisted in the most lascivious and debasing scenes of intemperance.

The Jews themselves were frequently led astray into these abominable vices; and forgot amidst their intemperate habits, "the God of Israel." During their journeyings in the wilderness, when Moses was absent, "they made for themselves false gods," and prepared a feast to offer sacrifice to the golden calf, which was made from the earrings worn by the people, and set up, as an object worthy of Divine adoration, in place of the true God,—"the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, who had brought them up out of the land of Egypt."

Such were the depths of wickedness and moral darkness into which the ancient world had fallen. Infatuation had usurped the place of reason; religion had given way to fanaticism, and the ceremonies of Divine worship were superseded by the obscene rites of Bacchus and Cotyto.

And the moderns are as deeply engulfed in these abominable debaucheries as were the ancients.

These drunken festivities are thus described in one of