

Babylon, Rome and other fallen empires has an emphatic warning voice which should not be unheeded. The same righteous hand which smote with vengeance these nations is still powerful against similar folly. Men may think that there are no higher problems than those that can be solved by the grocer, the distiller, and the clothier, and they may eagerly ask, "What shall we eat, what shall we drink, and wherewithal shall we be clothed?" They may enviously vie with one another in loading their tables with the richest products of all lands, they may travel in order to boast of the thousands of miles they have passed over and the grand hotels and theatres in which they feasted to satiety and lavishly squandered their money, they may fill their costly mansions with statuary and pictures bought by the yard, and their libraries with books chiefly remarkable for fine binding and for their contents being wholly unknown to their possessors, they may cover themselves, their wives and daughters with fabrics of the finest texture, bedecked with flashing jewels, they may—as the vulgar custom now is—advertise the shape and color and almost the cost of every article of dress they wear on certain great festive occasions or revelries, and call all this national glory, high life, elite and cultured society or any other delusive name they please,—it is in truth a deplorable exhibition of weakness, ignorance, and low selfish disregard of the fundamental principles of Christian living.

Allied with these forms of degeneracy we have the worship of Mammon, which is widely prevalent on this continent, probably more so than in the old world. There a cultured hereditary aristocracy exists who do not need to assert themselves, as their position is conceded, here we have an arrogant plutocracy, constantly making itself obtrusive in order to be seen and revered of men. The golden calf is the god of multitudes in the new world. The man with the gold ring and goodly apparel has usually unlimited deference shown him, irrespective of culture morals or piety. Given sufficient capital and a man can do pretty much what he pleases. He can gather crowds round his festive board to consume his flowing bowls and join in the giddy whirl of nocturnal revels, even if they do laugh at the ignorance and vulgarity of their host. He can become a bank director, a railway magnate, an alderman, a mayor, a member of parliament, an honorable senator, a knight, a church warden, and elder, an aesthete and a critic of art poetry and sermons.

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