



The Root of All Evil: The Protestant Clergy and the Economic Mind of the Old South

Kenneth Moore Startup

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In *The Root of All Evil* Kenneth Moore Startup looks to the sermons and writings of Protestant clergy to better understand the driving forces behind the antebellum southern economy. During this period of unprecedented American expansion, he finds, clerics of all denominations on both sides of the Mason-Dixon line displayed a remarkable unanimity in their condemnation of mammonism--the open pursuit of wealth, conspicuous consumption, lack of charity, and contempt of honest labor. This trend, the clergy argued, was diverting both North and South from their best interests and would ultimately destroy the nation. *The Root of All Evil* represents a challenge to any notion of an economically disinterested southern mind and culture by revealing an Old South in line ideologically with the mainstream of nineteenth-century capitalism, and also provides useful insights into southern religious life.



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