



# **The Gilded Age: By Mark Twain & Charles Dudley Warner (Illustrated + Unabridged + Active Contents)**

*Mark Twain, Charles Warner*

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## ***'The Gilded Age' by Mark Twain***

The Gilded Age: A Tale of Today is an 1873 novel by Mark Twain and Charles Dudley Warner that satirizes greed and political corruption in post-Civil War America in the era now referred to as the Gilded Age. Although not one of Twain's best-known works, it has appeared in more than one hundred editions since its original publication. Twain and Warner got the name from Shakespeare's King John (1595): "To gild refined gold, to paint the lily... is wasteful and ridiculous excess." Gilding gold, which is already beautiful and not in need of further adornment, is excessive and wasteful, characteristics of the age Twain and Warner wrote about in their novel. Another interpretation of the title, of course, is the contrast between an ideal "Golden Age," and a less worthy "Gilded Age," as gilding is only a thin layer of gold over baser metal, so the title now takes on a pejorative meaning as to the novel's time, events and people.

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