

An orderly world with idleness

The author is of the opinion that every thing wrong in this world is caused by the people who like to stay busy. Although they always wish to remain busy, they lack the clarity as to which activity should they be performing. The world is in chaos and it is certainly not the idleness that ^{has} caused the world to be in disarray. The author argues that had prominent historical leaders taken sometime to relax instead of indulging in wars and politics, the world would have been a somewhat better place. However, they adhered to the idea of a busy life and caused the world to be in ruins. Even now, should the politicians start dawdling, the world would benefit from it. Similarly, instead of holding conferences in opposition of insignificant issues, religious leaders should loosen up and improve their mental health.

Approx: words in passage: 442

words in précis: 142

All the evil in this world is brought about by persons who are always up and doing, but do not know when they ought to be up and what they ought to be doing. The devil, I take it, is still the busiest creature in the universe, and I can quite imagine him denouncing laziness and becoming angry at the smallest waste of time. In his kingdom, I will bet, nobody is allowed to do nothing, not even for a single afternoon. The world, we all freely admit, is in a muddle, but I do not think that it is laziness that has brought it to such a pass. It is not the active virtues that it lacks but the passive ones: it is capable of anything but kindness and a little steady thought. There is still plenty of energy in the world (there never were more fussy people about) but most of it is simply misdirected. If, for example, in July 1914, when there was some capital idling weather, everybody, emperors, kings, archdukes, statesmen, generals, journalists, had been suddenly struck with an intense desire to do nothing, just to hang about in the sunshine and consume tobacco, then we should all have been much better off than we are now. But no, the doctrine of the

strenuous life still went unchallenged; there must be no time wasted, something must be done. And, as we know, something was done. Again, suppose our statesmen, instead of rushing off to Versailles with a bundle of ill-digested notions and a great deal of energy to dissipate, had all taken a fortnight off, away from all correspondence and interviews and what not, and had simply lounged about on some hill side or other apparently doing nothing for the first time in their energetic lives, then they might have gone to their so-called Peace Conference and come away again with their reputations still unsoiled and the affairs of the world in good trim. Even at the present time, if half the politicians in Europe would relinquish the notion that laziness is a crime and go away and do nothing for a little space, we should certainly gain by it. Other examples come crowding into the mind. Thus, every now and then, certain religious sects hold conferences; but though there are evils abroad that are mountains high, though the fate of civilization is still doubtful, the members who attend these conferences spend their time condemning the length of ladies' skirts and the noisiness of dance bands. They would all be better employed lying flat on their backs somewhere, staring at the sky and recovering their mental health.