

English Précis & Composition

English Comprehension Paragraphs

Read the following passage and answer the questions given at the end in your own words. (20 Marks)

Veracity: Truthfulness
abatement:-

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The vitality of any teaching, or historical movement, depends upon what it affirms rather than upon what it affirms rather than upon what it denies, and its survival and continued power will often mean that positives are insufficiently regarded by opposing schools. The grand positives of Bentham were benevolence and veracity: the passion for the relief of man's estate, and the passion for truth. Bentham's multifarious activities, pursued without abatement to the end of a long life, were inspired by a "dominant and comprehensive desire for the amelioration of human life"; they were inspired, too, by the belief that he had found the key to all moral truth. This institution, this custom, this code, this system of legislation-- does it promote human happiness? Then it is sound. This theory, this creed, this moral teaching -- does it rightly explain why virtue is admirable, or why duty is obligatory? The limitation of Bentham can be gauged by dismissal of all poetry (and most religion) as "misrepresentation"; this is his negative side. But benevolence and veracity are Supreme Values, and if it falls to one of the deniers to be their special advocate, believers must have long been drowsed. Bentham believes the Church teaches children insincerity by making them affirm what they cannot possibly understand or mean. They promise, for example, to fulfill the undertaking of their god--parents, that they will "renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world" etc. "The Devil" Bentham comments: "who or what is he, and how is it that he is renounced?" Has the child happened to have any dealings with him? Let the Archbishop of Canterbury tell us, and let him further explain how his own "works" are distinguished from the aforesaid "Pomps and Vanities". What king, what Lords Temporal or Spiritual, have ever renounced them? (Basil Willey)

Questions:

- a) What does the writer mean by the following expressions: Multifarious activities, amelioration of human life, it is sound, be their special advocate, Renounce the devil, drowsed, gauged, aforesaid.
- b) On what grounds does Bentham believe that the Church teaches children insincerity?
- c) What is Bentham's philosophy based upon?
- d) What according to the writer is Bentham's limitation? Teaches children insincerity?
- e) In what context has the Archbishop of Canterbury been quoted i.e. is he praised or condemned?

a) What does the writer mean by the following expressions:
Multifarious activities: It refers to the diverse efforts of Bentham.

Amelioration of human life :- to improve or bring improvement in human life

It is sound: The questions are raised or people demand the answer of some questions

Drowsed: Being asleep or unaware of the idea.

Gauged: To measure or estimate the limitations of Bentham's idea.

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aforsaid :- mentioned earlier before.

Renounce the devil :- To give up or deny to follow devil.

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To provide support to a cause.

b) ⇒ Bentham believes that the Church teaches insincerely to the children by preaching them what is difficult for them to comprehend and practice. Moreover, he says, such teachings, for example denying to follow devil and self-love, are not even practised by the rulers and the clergy, as a result children become insincere to their promises made at the church.

c) ⇒ Bentham's philosophy is based on improvement of human life through benevolence and truthfulness.

d) ⇒ What according to writer is Bentham's limitation?

According to the writer, Bentham's

d) limitation is that on one hand it promotes some Supreme moral values such as truthfulness and benevolence and on other hand regards religion as misinterpretation.

e) ⇒ The Archbishop of Canterbury has been condemned in the paragraph for preaching what they do not even themselves practise. The reason of the condemnation is actually their actions contrary to their preachings.

Vocabulary

Words

Meaning

veracity :- Truthfulness

Abatement :- declining, subsiding.

Pomp :- showy

Vanity :- self-love
excessive pride in one's own appearance or achievements.