

Mr. Sober's chief pleasure is conversation there is no end of his talk or his attention : to speak or to hear is equally pleasing ; but he still fancies that he is teaching or learning something, and is free for the time from his over reproaches.

Ans : This is an extract quoted from the essay On Idleness, by Samuel Johnson. Here, the writer gives a vent to the character of Mr. Sober, an idle man, but a good friend of the writer.

Mr. Sober was a man of strong desires and quick imaginative talent. But his love of ease turned all his qualities to ashes. He was an ardent follower of idleness and tried to pass his time in useless conversation busy in either speaking or listening attentively. Sober did this only to pacify himself that he was either teaching or learning something by getting involved in conversation. He saved himself from his over reproaches by mere fancy that the conversations helped him to pass his time with great utility.

Through the character of Mr. Sober the writer points out the very characteristic features of a man of idleness who often invents some mere excuses practice idleness. Johnson belonged to an age of materialistic pleasure and drainage of moral values. Therefore, the essay is only a reaction of the writer to the most common human vice of his time.

*3. Some are always in a state of preparation occupied in previous measures, forming plans, accumulating materials and providing for the main affair. These are certainly under the secret power of idleness.*

Ans : These lines have been quoted from the prose piece, on Idleness, by Samuel Johnson. In these lines, the writer brings to light the features of idleness in its varied forms.

Idleness, like an epidemic has spread almost among the

whole of humanity. There are very few people who can claim to have escaped from its power. There are some idle men who pretend to be busy all the time making large preparations, drawing out plans and procuring materials for carrying out some activity. But, in reality, though their mind is always active it lacks the power to practice the actions in reality. These groups of idle men pretend to remain ever engaged in preparations and thoughts instead of materialising them into actions.

The writer in this regard cites the examples of a workman and a painter who are only seeking tools and colours instead of being interested in carrying out their work practically.

4. *Idleness is a silent anti-peaceful quality, that neither raises envy by ostentation, nor hatred by opposition; and therefore nobody is busy to censure or detect it.*

Ans : These lines have been taken from the essay, On Idleness, by Samuel Johnson. In these lines, the writer reflects on the brighter side of idleness which can be regarded as perhaps the most harmless of the human vices.

Idleness, though can be regarded as the greatest of the human vices, stands only next to pride. This is because it takes into its fold almost every individual only to differ in forms. But the writer professes that it cannot be denied that like pride, idleness too is an evil human vice. Thus, it also cannot be ignored that unlike pride it is harmless and hardly causes any injury to others. Idleness might be anti-peaceful but it is not aggressive and violent in quality. On the other hand, it acts like a slow and silent poison to infect the mind with the disease of idleness. Idleness neither gives birth to envy by mere display of its power nor does it lead to hatred by opposition. Thus, people are hardly aware as and when idleness slowly creeps into their mind to make them dull, oblivious and devoid of the power to fulfil any activity.