

19. (17) Paper. IV

130.07.2024

Dr. Hemant K. Thakur (G)

Dept. of English

V.S.T. College, Rajnagar

PLEASURES (A. Huxley)

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V.S.T. College, Rajnagar

"Pleasures" is a criticism of the modern civilization written by Aldous Huxley. His main points in the essay is that the real dangers of modern civilization are not external but internal. There are several things described as dangers to modern civilization. The rise of Prussian (German) military power, years of stupid peace, and some other things have been described as threat to modern civilization. But the real dangers to civilization come from within. There is something wrong with the state of modern man. The mind of modern man has become mechanical. It does not like intelligent pleasures. It relishes organised ready made distractions which is a dangerous sign. In the past, people enjoyed intelligent pleasures. In the seventeenth century, all sections of the people mental entertainment. The Elizabethan music was highly complex. even then people appreciated it. The royal personage wanted mental pleasure. Debates were organised on the occasion of the marriage of Prince. But in the present age, pleasures have come to stand for mechanical and ready made distractions. The modern forms have lowered the taste of the people. Dancing was a highly subtle art in the past but now it has become purely mechanical.

The essayist wants to convey that modern civilization is doomed. It is self-poisoned. It is on the verge of destruction through its inner weaknesses. It may go on the line of Roman civilization. The Romans had lost the taste for intelligent pleasures. They tried to satisfy themselves with cheap source of entertainment.

in violent ways. As a result, they become very cruel in their pleasures. modern man may get bored because his pleasures do not demand any personal participation, He will like to have cruel pleasures by becoming a member of a secret society like Ku Klux Klan.

Huxley, in this essay, makes a searching criticism of the bases of modern civilization. He sounds a note of warning to modern man. Man is becoming a machine even with regard to his pleasures. It must have something to do with the mind. Otherwise, they are sure to lead to mental boredom. Thus, the essayist has tried to express his experiences of vast learning in reference to public taste in various periods with to the point illustrations.

