

## *In praise of idleness*

*May 7, 2024*

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One of the commonest things to do with savings is to lend them to some government. In view of the fact that the bulk of the expenditure of most civilized governments consists in payments for past wars and preparation for future wars, the man who lends his money to a government is in the same position as the bad men in Shakespeare who hire murderers. The net result of the man's economical habits is to increase the armed forces of the State to which he lends his savings. Obviously it would be better if he spent the money, even if he spent it on drink or gambling

what is work? Work is of two kinds: first, altering the position of matter at or near the earth's surface relatively to other such matter; second, telling other people to do so. The first kind is unpleasant and ill paid; the second is pleasant and highly paid. The second kind is capable of indefinite extension: there are not only those who give orders but those who give advice as to what orders should be given. Usually two opposite kinds of advice are given simultaneously by two different bodies of men; this is called politics. The skill required for this kind of work is not knowledge of the subjects as to which advice is given, but knowledge of the art of persuasive speaking and writing, i.e. of advertising.

Modern technic has made it possible for leisure, within limits, to be not the prerogative of small privileged classes, but a right evenly distributed throughout the community. The morality of work is the morality of slaves, and the modern world has no need of slavery.