

Poetry.

THE HAND OF TIME.

The hand of Time is a mighty hand,
For it lays the mighty low;
It does not, like a conqueror, stand:
Its grasp is sure and slow,—
And lingering in its victim's breast,
Till thoughts and passions sink to rest.

That hand was busy in other years—
That withering hand of Time;
For empires—smouldering dust appears—
In palaces sublime.

The owl shrieks from its moss-grown tower,
And ruin smiles on wrecks of power.

The dead are sleeping so cold and low,
Beneath the sweet spring-time sod;
And some far down in the depths below,
Their graves by friends untrod;
And some, whose hearts once warmly beat,
Now meet as only strangers meet.

O, hand of Time! 'tis enough for thee
To level the works of art—
To trace decay on land and sea,
But spare, O spare the heart!
Let Love, and Hope, and Friendship be
Holy and sacred e'er to thee!

Go, hand of Time! on the beautiful
Write letters of grief and care,
Till her roses fade, and wan and pale,
She is no longer fair:
Let Genius' records be forgot,
And those that knew them, know them not!

But Time himself is now growing old—
His hand is a palsied hand!
He may fill the earth with wreck and mould;
Earth shall not always stand!
Time, Earth, and Sky shall pass away,
And be but things of yesterday.

The Family.

[FOR THE CHRISTIAN VISITOR.]

The subjoined extract from a private letter, written by an eye-witness of the Great Exhibition, on the day of opening, may be interesting to juvenile readers of the Christian Visitor.

"We soon reached the glittering palace, which looked splendid in the morning sunshine, and found ourselves within the walls with much less crowding than we sometimes encounter in getting into an ordinary meeting in Exeter Hall. Of course there was a large concourse of people, but they consisted of ladies and gentlemen, and behaved most truly as such. The latter as they came to the last entrance kept continually joining hands, so as to keep the crowd from pressing on the ladies, by permitting them to go in first, indeed nothing could exceed the politeness manifested by all throughout the day. To attempt to give any idea of the *coup d'œil* at first entering would be impossible, you seem so bewildered with the numbers of brilliant and beautiful objects that court your eye. Wherever you move or turn some new object seems to sue for attention; one feels almost inclined to say to them, "pray do not come before me yet; let me enjoy these lovely things first. I'll look at you presently." And when you do arrive before them, from that point numbers of other things present themselves, equally telling you how worthy they are of admiration. But to return to the first of May. All the arrangements were most beautifully made. There was a dais raised in the centre of the transept where the Queen and her illustrious party were stationed during the prayer and presentation of the commissioners. A throne was erected for Her Majesty upon the carpet which had been worked for her by 150 ladies. After that part of the ceremony was over, the whole procession walked entirely round the building, a walk, you must know, of a mile altogether. It was the most interesting sight of the kind I ever expect to witness. The Queen held the little hand of the Prince of Wales, and Prince Albert that of the Princess Royal, all four walking together. The little Prince looked rather timid, and his mamma held him as carefully as you would your little boy. The Princess looked very happy—it was very amusing to watch the dear children; sometimes they could not help looking about them and forget to bow, and then remembering themselves went on again so vigorously. There was broad matting laid down all round where the procession was to walk, making a path of about

three yards wide, on which no one was allowed to stand. A double row of seats was arranged round this, on which the ladies sat, and the gentlemen stood behind so that all could see. There was the same arrangement in the galleries, so that there were about three unbroken miles of ladies within the walls, who, most elegantly dressed in every imaginable delicate hue, showed to great advantage on a background of the other sex. Of course the cheers were deafening, and the effect of an organ near which I sat was to me so overwhelming, that I quite pitied the Queen, as whenever she passed one of the numerous musical instruments, it sent forth its loudest tones to bid her welcome. However she did not need my sympathy for she looked as blithe and happy as possible.

I scarcely know what to say about the place itself it is so truly wonderful. There is nothing you can imagine that is curious or rare or useful or beautiful of which the very best specimen is not there. It is not only the combined beauty of the whole that is so admirable, but of every individual part. Every thing is so disposed as not only to exhibit itself to the greatest possible advantage, but to add to the general effect. The carpets, for instance, of which there are most magnificent specimens, are hung up all round the building as banners. There are enough to go completely all round, and of course there could be no better way of displaying them in a manner ornamental to the place. The specimens of painted glass, also, are put up to form inimitable places, splendid gothic windows, and even painted window blinds are put up just where they seem wanted. Of the wonders there is the famous diamond called "the mountain of light," the largest in the world, the value of which cannot be estimated. It is about the size of a pigeon's egg. Of course one must think it very beautiful, but in my humble opinion a magnificent crystal fountain, 20 feet high, far surpasses it in appearance. There is a large case near containing a set of jewels sent by the Queen of Spain to be exhibited, which were surpassing; amongst other ornaments there was a large bouquet, the flowers of which were composed of diamonds and the leaves of emeralds, the flowers being as large as nature, and all real stones, they are only lent by the Queen of Spain, and will be returned when the exhibition is over. Of the useful things, there was everything from railway carriages and engines, beds and furniture, down to gloves and pocket handkerchiefs.—There is a suit of five rooms containing Austrian productions all fitted up in their national style, but though noble apartments, they seem to take up but a trifling part of the immense palace. And the great steam engines and railway carriages seemed to occupy in their own department no more space than two or three reels of cotton in a large work box. The almost unanimous opinion now that the exhibition has really commenced, is, that it will undoubtedly do good on every hand, and many who entertained great fears before are now quite delighted. There are many hopes that it will even tend greatly to the spread of the Gospel. There is worship every Sunday in Exeter Hall, and various other rooms are opened for the benefit of foreigners, where services are held in different languages. The whole affair does Prince Albert great honour, there were 25,000 present on the day of the opening; how much more glorious to head such an assembly than to lead so many to battle."

Human Harps.

"Strange, that a harp of thousand strings,
Should keep in tune so long."

So saith Watts, speaking of the human frame. The words have been ringing in my ears all day long, and have given rise to the following reflection, derived, it is true, rather more from the sound than from the sense of the poet's lines.

How differently different people are tuned.
There are human harps, the strings of which seem to be stretched all awry, and will give forth no harmony, strike them as you may. In truth, they were never in tune. Some jar they must have received at a very early period of their existence, which no subsequent care or skill could remedy.—Beware of these. Touch them as seldom as possible. Leave them for a higher and better state, in which the parts may be all newly adjusted by the Great Maker.

Some have harmony enough in them if you do but know how to get it out. They will "discourse excellent music," in the hands of skilful performers. Many a sweet-toned and

well-tuned instrument has, in bad hands, received much of that blame which ought to have been laid upon the player.—Look well to your playing. Study the nature and touch of your instrument before you go on. "Use all gently." Do you think a rough hand, rudely swept over the strings of the human heart, will be likely to bring much music out of it? It will bear no such performances.

You are a player, my dear friend. You strike some living harp every day. Are your touches such as to bring out its harmony, or such as to jar, or perhaps break its strings? Nay more, you are a harp yourself, played on daily. Are you in tune? Do you give out sweet sounds, or discordant notes? Some are as fitful as the Æolian lyre; now soft, and rich, and pleasing, and now wild and startling, you know not what chord will come out next. May the Great Maker adjust our harp strings, and keep us in tune from day to day, that we may well sustain our parts in the great orchestra of life, and be fitted to aid in the harmonies of heaven!

THE CHINESE DOCTORS.—The Chinese Doctors are not paid for the number of doses they give their patients and the length of their sickness, but are paid to keep their subjects from being sick; the sick days of the subject are deducted from the doctor's yearly salary. The Chinese may well laugh at our barbarism, in the way of paying our doctors; but if we were to adopt the Chinese rule, our doctors would be very scarce, unless they had perfect command of our diet, labor and exercise.

HOW THE LADIES WERE SCANDALIZED.—In "ye olden tymes" the meeting houses were fitted with two galleries, one for each sex. A minister at Newbury was interrupted one Sunday by a talking. He stopped short in his discourse, and remarked that he "wished that talking would cease in the gallery," at the time directing his eye to the women's side—whereupon a venerable spinster arose and said it was not in their gallery, but on the men's side. "I'm glad of it, then," replied the parson, "for it will stop the sooner."

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