

Time in time's visitors  
by f. sladen smith  
essay



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In "Time's Visitors" F. Sladen Smith brings to lime light a universal fact that existence of every entity is impermanent. Life and death are not eternal either. Only time is permanent and it heals up the sorrows and grieves of man. In this play the writer has delineated the importance of time by the statue of time. The statue of time, located in a small public garden, is always being cursed by the visitors. Everyone despises the statue of time as they consider it to be callous because it snatches all happiness and gives nothing. The statue of time is something agonizing for all of them except Collins, the park keeper.

Besides him all other people harbour feelings of hatred for it. Everyone finds fault in time. The statue of time bears all the hostility. Only Collins like the statue and appreciates it. He feels sorry for the statue and remorse about the ill-feelings of the people for the statue. The play presents a picture of peculiar conversation. The playwright has employed many ways to speak out his mind. The prominent one is the statue in the park. The statue reminded his visitors about his importance. In the beginning of the play two business men, Mr. Shapstake and Mr.

Whittlenip, are concerned about their business and discuss about the importance of time in their field. " We can't afford to miss any opportunity or to waste a single moment. " They both want to avail the time but find it impossible. Whittlenip does not want any delays as a single minute's delay in business matters cause an irrecoverable loss. But still he wastes his time in only thinking and doing nothing. They are always running short of time and blame time for going fast. They do not realize that their business and its matters are only temporary and only time is permanent.

The three children Nellie, Harold and Cissie, do not like time either. Harold declared his hatred for time and desired to go to a place free of the limits of time. He was even willing to go to the prison thinking perhaps there would not be any time. They do not know that only time is permanent and their childhood and its pleasures are short-lived and soon they will face the difficulties of practical life. The second youth was anxious to know the results of the Beauty Coupon Competition for which he gave the name of the six most beautiful bathing belles.

He also disregarded the clock and wanted the “blasted hands” to strike three so that he would not have to wait for two and a half hours for the results. He was being avid and wanted the time to pass quickly. He was cocksure that he would win the contest. HE also does not realize that the money he will gain can not last long like the everlasting time. Arthur and Evie are only concerned about love and want to spend time together. Arthur, a victim of large scale unemployment caused by economic slump, is full of frustration. For him, time do not pass when Evie is not with him.

Similarly, Evie admits that during her work it seems to her as if time has halted: “the hands scarcely seem to move at all— specially from ten o'clock to twelve and from three to five.” She, like the outgoing second youth, complains about the sluggishness of time during her duty hours at the shop. Arthur wants that there should have been any hours as the division of hours meant “prison” for Evie and “hell” for Arthur. For Arthur, time has not left life “worth living”. They do not understand that time can not be ceased, it is perpetual.

The eighty two years old lady also disapproves the statue. She assumes that she has been boldly facing the attacking and pursuing of time as she can not escape from it. " It keeps that horrible gentle man behind me at bay. " She thinks that time has no influence on her. She is endeavouring to stand up to time and overpower its impact. " I just won't give in to time. " She assumes that she has been successful in struggling to subjugate time. She desires to cease " the mad rush of day and night" unknowing that time is eternally constant and no one can get rid of it.

Youth will change into old age and one can not run away from the timely processes. Collin is amazed at the Statue's tolerance for the resentment he has to confront. The statue of time exhibits extra patience in facing the animosity of the people and tell Collins that the derision will not make him speak to the people. He only speaks to Collins as they are old chaps. At the end of the play, the statue consoles an old woman named Harriet who had lost her son. The statue of time elucidates to her that nothing is permanent in this world. " The greatest of all illusion is permanence.

There can be no permanence; birth and death; order and chaos jostle each other incessantly. " The statue of time lulls her to sleep so that the sorrow of her bereavement may turn into peace. Consequently Harriet is seen sleeping soundly as if time has healed her heart and mitigated her sorrow. The statue wants to make her understand that everything comes to an end. How much a person may strive, he can not make things live eternally. Man is himself immortal, so are the things around him. " Nothing is permanent in this wicked world - not even our troubles. Charlie Chaplin, The " trivial pursuits" for which man has grown into a tensed and fidgety creature are actually a

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mountain of fugacious aspirations that are here today and gone tomorrow. Time is permanent like flow of an ocean. It passes like the twinkling of an eye. What you think as present fleets within seconds to vanish into the past. As time is never-ending it must not be wasted. It must be fully utilized as a single minute's delay cause an irrecoverable loss. People do realize its importance but still waste it and then put the blame on time. The play thus suggests that one must mould oneself according to the time.

Instead of wasting their time in rebuking time, they must amend their ways. " Make use of time, let not advantage slip". -Shakespeare It is a mistaken assumption of the people that time is the one that brings affliction and miseries. The writer has thus conveyed a message which is the purpose of the play, i. e. one must not blame time. " Do not squander time for that is the stuff life is made of. " -Franklin The worldly possessions: money, fame, success, happiness, sorrow, youth, old age; are all evanescent. All the pleasures of the world are transient.

Human joy is but a momentary and feeble perception of our true nature, which is unbounded joy and bliss. True happiness can only exist in that which is permanent. Only the Power of Time is permanent; it alone can grant happiness. When one looks deeply, one realizes that there is nothing that is everlasting and constant, nothing, not even the tiniest thing on earth. This is not merely a theory, but something one can actually come to know and realize and see, even, with ones very own eyes. Everything is in a state of perennial flux. Things keep on changing and situations keep on altering. Life is itself transitory.

The world is temporary. Our pleasures, our pains are ephemeral. The conditions prevailing today may not exist tomorrow. Birth and death, order and chaos, all are temporary. One can not live forever. Neither the world can remain perpetually in harmony nor in disruption. Merry and melancholy, tranquility and tumult, gaiety and gloom thrust away one other and make their own way. The statue of time explains to the old woman that one must not feel that the tough circumstances which have befallen on them would remain forever. With time they will conceive that the conditions in which they are dwelling change with time.

If they are suffering, they will not suffer always. When one dies, the sorrow of his death subsides with time and his kith and kin automatically learn to endure and persist. Time is a healer and an “ eternal physician”. The statue of time has emphasized on the same notion that people consider him to be the callous one “ forgetting that without my greatest attribute, they could not survive. ” Time grants us wisdom as with its passage the imprudent realize their follies. It bestows with peace after agitation and lightens a ray of hope in the hearts of despondent people.

If it takes away, it gives again. Time compensates for any sorrows it has brought. If it puts to death, it also vouchsafes life. “ Time can even soothe away death’s howling gap; if it takes away life, it has also the potentiality to give hope and strength, faith and even more life. ” The water of time’s “ unfathomable sea” cures one. “ Time is the wisest counselor. ” –Pericles. With time “ the sharpest sorrow can melt into a gentlest memory”. The time thus, via declaring permanence a faulty perception, heals the wound by making the afflicted understand that the injury will not remain forever.

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