

**THE GREAT
EXHIBITION
PRIZE ESSAY**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649596904

The Great Exhibition Prize Essay by J. C. Wish

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Cover @ 2017

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LONDON:
LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN AND LONGMANS.

1851.

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TO
HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS PRINCE ALBERT,
AND
HER MAJESTY'S COMMISSIONERS,
BY
WHOSE PHILANTHROPIC EXERTIONS,
AND UNWEARIED ZEAL,
THE PALACE OF INDUSTRY
HAS BEEN COMPLETED, AND
NOW EMBRACES, WITHIN ITS CRYSTAL WALLS,
THE MANUFACTURES AND NATURAL PRODUCTIONS
OF ALL THE COUNTRIES OF THE WORLD,
THIS EFFORT,
TO SHOW
IN WHAT RESPECT THE UNION OF ALL NATIONS
IS CALCULATED
TO PROMOTE THE MORAL AND RELIGIOUS
WELFARE OF MANKIND;
AND THUS CONDUCE TO THE
GLORY OF GOD,
IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED, BY THEIR MOST
OBEDIENT HUMBLE SERVANT,
J. A. EMERTON.

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PREFACE.

THE circumstance which led to the offer of a Prize for the best Essay on the Moral and Religious Tendency of the Union of all Nations at the Great Exhibition, will appear from the correspondence at the commencement of the work.

This proposition was made when the anticipations of a large portion of the community were adverse to the undertaking itself, although its original proposal had been most readily received by many of the first cities and towns of the Empire, and nobly responded to by the Princes and

People of almost every nation of the civilized world.

The general impression seemed, at that time, to have been, that we were about to open our manufactories, as we had already done our markets, to the foreigner: That the great probability was, that others would obtain the benefit, without any equivalent advantage accruing to ourselves: and many pronounced the Exhibition, even in its commercial aspect, as likely to prove a failure.

The Landed Proprietors almost universally regarded it only as another advance in the direction of Free Trade; and consequent ruin to them and their dependents.

If such were the feelings and opinions of a vast majority of both these important sections of the community, there were certainly few of any class who, if they contemplated the Moral and Religious bearing of the question, did not dread the contagion of foreign manners, and the more general introduction of foreign habits.

It was with the desire of turning public feeling into a different channel; of showing, that, instead of being the precursor of ill, the Great Exhibition would, by the blessing of God, be productive of the highest good, the Prize was at first proposed: and there was an endeavour so to word the question, that even those