

# **A sense of scale; orderly use of the mind and its absence.**

Amid the parade of worst-ers in the natural and manmade spheres, I suggest a humble instrument for coping, at least to some extent, that of a sense of scale. As we live our daily lives, historic developments are going on at almost incomprehensible speed, and our highly developed means of communication do a remarkable job of keeping up. It is our minds that buckle under the strain, not to mention our morale (that familiar feeling that there is nothing we can do.)

To begin with, the populations involved in anything that happens are several times larger than even half a century ago; but it isn't exciting to keep introducing such factors into the coverage which, however, can be warped without them.

We were told to teach all nations; but many of us don't spontaneously LIKE all nations. A Christian has to bring himself or herself, by the grace of God, to relate as well as possible to all, and not to let the effort show. As the years fly by, in inverse proportion to our aging ability to adjust, it is a long way from Hampden. Still, what a blessing to live in the religious community with people who we would never have known, men from Cuba, Vietnam, the Philippines, and paradoxically African-Americans, the only ones who didn't have to come a distance geographically.

Remember how we used to say, adjusting for inflation ... We still do, but not with an awareness of the relativity this factor brings about over time. Shoe, in the treetop village, remarked the other day that he had just spent \$100 on a tank of gas, whereas his first car had cost only \$75. That is still, I think, a great one liner; in a comic context. But an awareness of scale reduces the potential influence of any one group or institution, humanly speaking; and the "great man" theory of history has

about had it.

Is it too easy to lose contact with the rising generation, above all with their ways of using their minds. Impulse, hunch, flashes of insight seem to loom larger than plodding along in an orderly rational fashion. But that is a typical reaction from one generation to another, I am told.

Orderly thought is seldom as rewarding as swashbuckling along for a cause, or cooking up cute headlines with tired alliterations. So, at the risk of aligning myself with one generation compared to others, I enter a plea for an awareness of scale.

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