

The Future: A Note

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A very, very, very long time in the future some very intelligent and perhaps humanlike creatures, only more intelligent and more technologically advanced creatures than us now living creatures, on another planet will take a look at our planet and see just a huge barren round rock, much as Mars is now observed by us. These future observers of our planet will view the just visible tangled ruins of what was once Tokyo, Beijing, Mumbai, Kinshasa, New York City, Toronto, Montreal, London, Buenos Aires, Paris, Rome, etc. They will conclude that what they are looking at are the ruins of structures once made by some kind of reasonably intelligent creatures perhaps in some way something like themselves. This, as sun heat diminishes (as Bertrand Russell once observed), is what our planet will be like. But as their equivalent of our scientists study this huge round rock with the remnants of the structures we have made and of the for them present conditions of our planet generally on view, they will conclude that some intelligent creatures must have made these structures. But they *may* speculate that these creatures became extinct long ago *perhaps* by their own actions and made themselves extinct long before conditions on this planet (the Earth) would have made their non-existence necessary by the heat diminishment from the sun. These observers might well conclude that these earthlings were an irrational lot to be so self-destructive early in the day. Moreover, they would surely be right. Is this the course we are foolishly and destructively taking? It looks like it. But we human animals will never know. Our non-existence, our demise, may be like that of the dinosaurs except theirs which was caused by non-human sources. Perhaps, for example, by a clash with a very big meteor? But more likely it will be caused for us by human-induced climate

change, something we humans will have once had control over. If human-induced climate change doesn't get us, diminished sun heat eventually will. But the time dimension will be radically different. *Now* we can take responsibility for our lives. But greed and short time convenience gets in our way. It is not 'Oh, what a wonderful world' but 'Oh, what an irrationally peopled world!'