

30th July 2021

Rarity

“To be really great in little things, to be truly noble and heroic in the insipid details of everyday life, is a virtue so rare as to be worthy of canonization.”

Harriet Beecher-Stowe, author of Uncle Tom's Cabin

On a recent holiday in Morayshire, we explored the “Speyside Malt Whisky Trail”. Given our timings, we only visited two of the seven Single Malt distilleries on the trail, but we were rewarded with excellent tours and, of course, several samples of the Single Malts produced by each distillery. (<https://www.visitscotland.com/see-do/food-drink/whisky/speyside-malt-whisky-trail-itinerary/> will give you all the information you need.)

In the gift-shop at the conclusion of a one of the tours (I won't mention the distillery in case of accusations of favouritism) not only were there “standard” and “special” Malts available for sale, but some “unique” whiskies were also on display, for purchase by the discerning *and* wealthy connoisseur. And the prices? While the whisky I bought was ... well ... reasonable for my pocket, one forty-year-old Malt was on sale for £2,700.

I can tell the difference between a twelve-year-old at £25 and a fifteen-year-old at £40 – though I'm not convinced that the latter is almost twice as better. But is a forty-year-old *really* considered to be a hundred times better than the basic Malt? Of course not! It's to do with its rarity value. The fewer there are of something – like a forty-year-old bottle of a rare Single Malt – the more its value will increase over time.

Special things are rare and should be valued as such – and I'll leave it to the Malt Whisky aficionados to argue the value of a forty-year-old Single Malt at £2,700. “Special” people have a value too because of their rarity. A Mozart, a Wordsworth, a Marie Curie, a Wesley, a Maria Callas only come along once in a while. Their gifts, and their contribution to history, are rare, and valued as special. It's all subjective, of course. You'll have your list as I have mine. But don't let “rarity value” transcend the “ordinary”. Let the special be lauded, but let the rest be valued too. Don't allow the rare gifts of some overshadow the valued contributions of all.

Maybe someone *did* buy the Malt valued at £2,700. But the more “ordinary” dram I'm off to enjoy now will do me just fine, thank you.

A prayer for today

Loving God, if I'm made in your image, I must always be special to you. Amen.