

3<sup>rd</sup> May 2022

## Tirravee

**“And there I’ll rest, as, after much turmoil  
A blessed soul doth in Elysium.”**

*William Shakespeare, Two Gentlemen of Verona*

**Tirravee** NOUN *Scots*

A tantrum, display of bad temper, or a turmoil.

I learned the word *tirravee* from my Granny. Its origins are obscure, though Walter Scott used it in his “Waverley Novels”, so it must be legit! Other examples are Jamie Welsh to Thomas Carlyle in the 19<sup>th</sup> century: “Say that you forgive me, that you love me not a whit less for yesterday’s *tirravee*”, and John Innes in *Till a’ the seas gang dry* a century later: “What a *tirravee* the Dominie was in.” But my Granny used the word in a different context. It was never about a rumpus caused by someone else, it was always about a personal turmoil, such as: “He’s taken a *tirravee* tae himsel’.” In other words, there were times when a personal “tantrum” caused a person to take stock, give themselves a shake, come to their senses, look at themselves in the mirror, and sort themselves out. Such a moment of turmoil could be personally generated or identified as important by someone else, as in: “Awa’ an’ tak’ a *tirreeve* tae yersel’.” But a “*tirravee*” was always important, a moment of change in someone’s life.

Have you ever had a personal display of bad temper, a tantrum, a turmoil, not about something or someone else, but about you, changing tack, coming to your senses? Have *you* had to “take a *tirravee* to yourself”? How quick we are to get into a strop about someone else’s behaviour. How easy it is to exhibit a display of bad temper about someone else’s faults. Yet are there not times when *we* should take stock, have our own “*tirravee*”, deal with a moment of change before we move on?

Jesus said we shouldn’t attempt to take a speck of dust out of someone else’s eye when we have a great beam in our own. Maybe my Granny would have suggested we take a good long look at ourselves first before we set about criticising other folk – have your own *tirravee*.

My blessed soul may not “rest in Elysium” after my time of turmoil, but having a “*tirravee* to myself” might be just what I need to find my own moment of clarity and rest, and be the better for it.

### **A prayer for today**

*Change me, Lord, for the better. And if that’s a “tirravee”, so be it. Amen*

*An original reflection by @ Tom Gordon* Also available at <https://swallowsnestnet.wordpress.com>