23rd May 2024

Comfortable

"You canna expect to be baith grand and comfortable."

J M Barrie, *Little Minister*

We lost our dog. In our holiday cottage, with the familiar comfort of her bed from home, she was settled there after supper, while my wife and I busied ourselves with our chosen holiday pursuits – a book for one, a crossword for the other. All was well with the world … I looked down to check our dog was OK – and she'd disappeared. I looked under the table, behind the sofa, in the bathroom on the under-floor heating. No dog! I checked the bedroom. *She surely can't be on the bed. She knows she's not allowed,* I thought. But there was no sign of her. "Did you take the dog out?" I asked my wife. "Yes!" she replied. "Did she come back in again," I probed. "I'm sure she did," my wife responded. "Well, WHERE IS SHE THEN?" I asked. Now we were *both* searching. It was a small cottage, and after we'd checked everywhere twice more, I decided to explore the bedroom again. No luck. I was just about to close the door, when I heard a gentle snoring. I investigated the far side of the bed. And there was the dog, fast asleep on one of my pillows which had fallen off the bed – looking very comfortable indeed, thank you very much.

I have no idea whether, in J M Barrie's terms, our dog considers herself "grand" or not (though she sometimes acts as though she does) but I *do* know that she likes to be comfortable and will find comfort anywhere she can. *Ah! A random pillow which has my master's smell on it will do just fine, thank you. And, anyway, hasn't it been dropped on this bedroom floor for the sole purpose of giving me somewhere I can feel most comfortable?* Mmm…

The Bible is full of stories of people who sought comfort in their distress, or who thanked God for the comfort faith had provided. For there *is* a metaphysical comfort we all desire. But I'm thinking of more basic needs today. I'm thinking of what my dog teaches me: that whatever life throws at us, and maybe because we know that life is tough sometimes, we surely need places of comfort, retreat, restfulness, healing, renewal.

What's yours? If not a pillow on a bedroom floor, what's your comfortable place? Worth a thought – a comforting thought, perhaps?

A prayer for today

In my place of comfort, I find rest and renewal. Too comfortable? Oh, not yet …

An original reflection © Tom Gordon *Also available at* https://swallowsnestnet.wordpress.com