

28th June 2024

Disappointments

**“Will you remember the famous men
Who had to fall to rise again?
So take a deep breath, pick yourself up,
Dust yourself off, and start all over again.”**

Dorothy Fields and Jerome Kern, *'Pick Yourself Up'*, from *'Swing Time'* (1936)

I promised myself I'd avoid the Euro Football Tournament in Germany in my "Thought for the Day" pieces. Football isn't everyone's cup of tea, so I might alienate some folk. I *promised*. But I've failed – because Scotland have been eliminated from the competition, and I'm broken-hearted. Given the high expectations of the success of our national team, I am now trying to cope (once again, sadly) with the bitter taste of disappointment.

In every aspect of life – and not just in sports – we don't always get what we desire. Mostly it's because of factors beyond our control. But in truth, we all know disappointments are hard to bear. So how do we deal with that? I'm no guru or expert in such things, and you'll have your methodologies, as I have mine. But I *do* know that we should never allow disappointments, whatever they are, to define us completely.

The 17th century English writer, statesman and politician, George Savile, Marquis of Halifax, write in *Moral Thoughts and Reflections*: [forgiving the gender-specific writing of his day]

There can be no entire disappointment to a wise man, because he maketh it a cause of succeeding another time. A fool is so unreasonably raised by his hopes, that he is half-dead by a disappointment: his mistaken fancy draweth him so high, that when he falleth, he is sure to break his bones.

Disappointments should never be "entire", for there is always the "cause of succeeding another time". If we are half-dead (as I and many others were after Scotland's elimination) it's because our "mistaken fancy" drew us too high. Hopes and dreams, expectations and future facies will always be part of our outlook on life. But don't let them take over our thinking so much that, when they fail to be fulfilled, we end up half-dead.

And our national team and Tartan Army, after the disappointment of Scotland's failure? We'll just have to pick ourselves up, dust ourselves off and start all over again – as we've had to do so *many* times before.

A prayer for today

Today, as with every day, is our chance to start over – thank God! Amen