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I Heard a Rumour

by Nancy Bertenshaw

I heard a rumour. A young person in the family, heard from someone, who heard from someone else, who reads the papers, who watches the news, who looks at their mobile, constantly; that 'THEY' were planning to do without cash money.

'What!' I screeched, 'What do you mean going? No more cash? But how will we cope? I don't have a Smartphone, all singing all dancing mobile, nor apps.' I stroked the little, old fashioned, reliable Nokia, in my pocket, to protect it from the terrible news. 'I can barely use the computer,' I wailed.

Since that day, I've thought about it more. So what, if there's no cash? Now we are happy to 'do contactless' with or without receipts. Happy to let the utilities take money from our bank accounts each month, raise prices when they say it's necessary. What's the difference? I suppose the difference is, we are being more and more, controlled. Big Brother is here. But then, hasn't he always been? Tithes, spying on the home, especially in Holland...Lutherans...no curtains at the windows...'might be hiding something indoors'....

But cash money. Does the whole world do without it? No currency exchange at borders? It's bad enough being out of the Euro and changing and losing, money each time you want to go to Europe, let alone other countries, USA, Norway, Botswana, New Zealand...India.

I went to a Friends of Town talk, last night, in a church. Free for members, £3 for non members. Money in the dish, contributions for a welcome, and rather good, cuppa at half time. How do you pay for all that, without cash? 'Oh, excuse me Vicar, do you take contactless?' OK for Sweden perhaps, but here in Britain?

What happens to the Post Office and Money Exchange places? No more cash exchanges for them. They will surely lose business.

And, how do you pay individuals for tickets, small errands etc.? Stash cash under the mattress? Or save £2 coins, in a bottle, for the holiday?

Long ago, whilst living and working in London...I came off the tube at my stop and found a £5 note on the platform. Whoopee! I thought, no one around, so it's mine. At that moment a nun appeared, saw me pick up the note and said something in passing...I can't remember what. That was enough to prick my conscience. I gave the £5 in to the ticket vendor. Stupid, I thought later, if it hadn't been for the nun and my education, I'd have been £5 richer! And, I bet the ticket vendor put it in his pocket, I thought, unkindly.

If the rumour is true, no more lucky finds; but the demand for cash is still strong, so let's hope the rumour is just that.