

Essay on The Happiest Day in My Life

When I was first asked the question, I was frankly puzzled. Is there any such day? It is possible to have one in a life like mine, bound by routine, punctuated by the performance of duties-most of them unpleasant, – varied only by adventures which are a private treasury of pleasing memories, not incidents to be gloried in. these thoughts rambled through my mind, as I alternately scanned a blank horizon and dived into a chaos of memories. And then it flashed through my mind: of course, there is such a day which yet lives as the happiest in my life. It was the day when I learned that I had passed the school final examination. Strange I should have forgotten it, for was I not in the habit of recalling the joyousness of that day wherever a pleasant thought was wanted.

I was in my village home after the school final examination was over. I was in a happy mood of relaxation from the laborious months of preparation that had proceeded it. After that any change would have been pleasant; and this retreat into our rural home was heavenly indeed, – only to be disturbed now and then by doubts and fears and hopes all centering around the result of the all-important examination. But as I never dreamt that the publication could be so early, this reflection left no impression on my mind.

Then suddenly good eight-hours sleep was broken by shouts and laughter, and my mother and aunts and brothers and sister were all calling out my name in various tones of endearment and ecstasy. I jumped up and rushed out of the room, and there were all of them and a telegram passing from hand to hand, and much laughter and more congratulations. It was thus that I learn that I had passed the all-important school final examination – the goal of my ten years schooling, the passport to career, the hope of my parents, and the dream of my brothers. I had done it, and no mistake and a strange

feeling of bliss wrapped me around. “Bliss was it on that day to be alive, but to have passed was very heaven!”

The rest of the day passed off in a blaze of glory. Friends and relations came to congratulate me; I went to pay my respects to and earn the blessings of my village teachers and elders. I was patted and pampered by the women as if I was some wonder – boy; and in-between, the men who their superior knowledge- (had they not all passed through it once in their lives!) stressed the irony of it all, and advised and warned me about what was yet to come, pujas had to be offered to the village and household deities, blessings had to be received with due solemnity and seriousness; – but I must say I like it all, for I would not be human if this unanimity of goodwill did not touch my heart.

And yet, as I recall that red-letter day, I ask myself if indeed I should have been so happy, had I been, wiser, I would have seen a through the hollowness of that joy, and assessed my first academic success not as a passport to fame, but as a forerunner of much tears and gnashing of teeth. How much better were the days when there were no public examination, to depress, no career to think of, no future to anticipate. This is, of course, getting wise after the event. But still, the fact remains: I knew not what happiness really meant till I felt it on the day I passed the school final examination.