

ISSN 0976-8165

The Criterion



The Criterion

An International Journal in English

Bi - Monthly Refereed & Indexed Open Access eJournal

April 2014 Vol. 5, Issue- 2

5th Year of Open Access

Editor-in-Chief

Dr. Vishwanath Bite

Managing Editor

Madhuri Bite

www.the-criterion.com

criterionejournal@gmail.com

Our Inspirations are the Will of God

Ramesh Tiwari

The world consists of different sorts of beings, each with a unique feature but inextricably linked, each with their own way of going on but in an environment of threats and challenges, some too fragile to be anything more than a commodity and some so competent as to interfere with nature but not too much to violate the specific area of an action. Moreover, none of them can do, nor can anyone else make one do, anything devotedly unless one is inclined to do that, and this is something that makes one obey God. Even lifeless things do as they are told by Him. Water, for example, goes up in the sky and then rains on land. The story 'Our Inspirations are the Will of God' thus conveys how God manages and controls the world and how He is concerned about both good and bad as either of them keep the world running.

He was out for a walk in the morning, lost in thought. "One of my children will one day be a professor at a university," he said to himself. "When he leaves home I will send his mother with him so he won't feel alone. The younger one will stay with me here at home. Yes, he is very sharp, though a bit less diligent. I am sure he will be much in demand by foreign organisations, but I will ask him to work for the land. Our sons are obedient; they'll do as we wish. After my retirement I will go to live with one and their mother with the other, then we will keep exchanging according to our choice. When they transfer to different places, we will go with them to enjoy different cultures. They may, on occasion, go overseas – we will accompany them on trips to a foreign country and gad about new places. I will then have a lot of free time so prefer to go on a long walk in the morning and after coming back, I will sit to worship free from work commitments. I will pray to God for the well-being of my children. Then, after breakfast I will go to the garden where I will sit under a tree and spend hours in meditation. I will keep a diary in which to write about my experiences. I'd prefer to have a catnap at noon. Then in the evening I will go shopping to get my daughter-in-law fresh vegetables. On returning from there, my grandchildren will come running to me, asking for sweet. I will offer them chocolates and fruit and play with them in the courtyard. Then, after sunset, I will sit down to teach them. Under my full-time guidance, they will grow to be more intelligent than even my sons. They will earn name and fame for the family and I am sure I will be held in high esteem by those who treat me like a down-and-out clerk."

All of a sudden, Dayanand jolted out of his reverie as he felt a hand on his shoulder. When he paused to look back, he saw a man from his village who had been hurrying after him for company. They said hello to each other, then began to walk together, talking animatedly.

"Dada, you're here?" asked Dayanand.

“An important matter made it necessary for me to be here in the town today, so I thought it would be better to walk a few miles down the road early in the morning,” the elderly man replied.

“That’s not what I mean! It’s time you should be with your son, now a high-ranking government officer, I mean.”

“Oh, I see,” he smiled. “Well, he sent for me and almost insisted that I spend the rest of my days with him. But you know I could not make myself at home there.”

“You have certainly become senile! You still choose to live in the same old way, working like a labourer in the field, when God has given you an opportunity to spend your old days comfortably. In my opinion, you are so used to living a simple life that you couldn’t adapt to your aristocratic new environment. If you had had the patience to stay there for a few months, you’d have slowly got accustomed to.”

“But then no pain is as severe as when the door of your room is closed for the rest of the family.”

“What?”

“Then listen to it. I went to my son’s in the belief that I would spend the rest of my life in the same way as I had been enjoying it earlier with my family. I’d not say he didn’t receive me warmly, but at the same time he recommended a separate house to me. You know, I had gone there to enjoy the company of my grandchildren, and not to live on his charity.” Then, after a brief silence, the old man added, “Bhaiya Dayanand, as you know, I’ve spent all my life in my services to your family and farming a small piece of land which your father once gave me as a reward. I think I’ll be happy to continue with that to the end. Oh, by the way, you seldom visit your home village since you have built your house here?”

“No, no, I often go to see my parents there. Only I don’t stay there for long. My younger brother, as you know, is very obedient to them and takes proper care of them.”

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So talking, they reached a fork. The old man bore left, saying goodbye to Dayanand, and with a wave of his hand Dayanand, too, turned back towards his home. “All in all, the peasant is lucky,” he began to think again. “He could never afford the school fees of his son, nor even his basic necessities. His son had still been selected for the most desirable job and now holds public office. Anyway, I have every reason to be sure that my children will achieve the success hoped. I’ve got sufficient money and time and ability to guide them – yes, I’ll lift them to the height of their career.”

Lost in the daydream, Dayanand reached home earlier than usual, but as he found his sons in the bed, he started to suspect that they had always been sleeping till late in the morning. He also remembered that he had found them watching TV when one day he came home from work earlier. Perhaps his sons did not dedicate themselves to their studies, he thought. All he dreamed about them was mere his dream and it was not going to come true.

He, however, woke them up gently and started to coax them into rising early in the morning, but the boys listened to him quite listlessly. After they had padded into the bathroom, he sat quietly, thinking about what to do. Then he decided that he would postpone every assignment and stay at home to watch their every move as it was a Sunday and he had the day off.

The children made their way into the dining room for breakfast and sat at the table for over an hour waiting for their father to leave home as they wanted to go out to enjoy their holiday with their friends. But when their father did not budge from the house, they got up, disappointed, and walked over to their desks. They pretended to flick through their books for a few minutes then they slowly slipped out. One of them sat by a plant in the courtyard, looking worried, watching its leaves. The other one leaned agonizingly over the gate and started to watch people coming and going in the street.

When Dayanand came out of his room to see if his sons were doing their stuff, he found them absent. He made for the courtyard. But as the boys heard him coming, they soon bestirred themselves and started watering the plants in the garden. The father turned back without saying a word, thinking that they were doing something useful and would soon be back to their desks.

After they had finished that job, they came in under the impression that his father was not going out that day. Shrestha, the elder of the two, went to his mother and reminded her of the out-of-town vegetable bazaar which is held on every Sunday morning. “Oh yes,” his mother said, “You’d better go there and buy some fresh vegetables and fruit.”

His eyes brightened up to listen to it, and straight after that he grew so anxious that he did not want to waste time on anything else. He soon took some money from her, got onto his motorbike and rode off. The younger one, however, could not manage to escape – besides, he could not but choose to ply his books.

The father came out of his room once again and strolled up to him, looking very happy. But as he saw that the elder son was not there, he enquired, “Where’s Srestha?”

At which point, their mother felt extremely annoyed with him. “Mind you don’t coerce the boys all the time,” she cried. “What if he’s gone to get vegetables?”

Anshu grew more jaded after being left alone. He imagined practising shooting in a gallery, hitting at targets while pretending to read his books. Then he thought of a fighter aircraft, which led him to picture himself attacking enemy aircraft; but as he had the image of his father, he was consumed with self-pity. A sweet wind from yon hills, meanwhile, rolled forward, carrying the fragrance of wild flowers, and passed dancing through the room. His eyelids lowered. He forced open them and gave his head a shake but everything seemed blurred to him. Then he felt as though a gentle hand had slowly placed his forehead on the book. Anyway, the future of the family finally fell into a deep sleep.

Srestha had been gone for over two hours now, so his mother started to grow agitated. She went into the room and asked her husband to phone him. Dayanand was unhappy with what his sons were getting up to, but as he knew that his elder son had not yet returned home, he switched off

and started to press the numbers on his mobile phone anxiously. “Hello, hello - Shrestha!” he said fretfully.

“Hullo, dad...,” replied Shrestha.

“Where are you? We’re worried sick about you, my son.”

“I’m riding on my bike, Daddy, and I’m afraid I just can’t talk more to you at the moment.”

Then he turned to his friends, putting his mobile phone into his pocket. “Friends,” he said, addressing them, “Gandhi Jayanti falls on Saturday. As you know, we are going to spring a surprise on our teachers that day by entering the college, holding a rally in honour of our granddad Gandhiji; and, you know, we need a good gathering in the college compound early that morning to make it a success – so don’t forget, each one of you, to persuade more and more of our friends to join us.”

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What with Anshu slept till his mother woke him up at lunch time and Shrestha still did not return home, their father began to feel hopeless about their career again. Then, a few minutes later, while they were waiting for Shrestha to have lunch together, they heard him come in with a bag full of vegetables and fruit.

“Where on earth have you been?” his father rasped.

“Pa, you know Sushil – he phoned to ask if I could help him with his maths homework,” replied Shrestha, inventing a plausible excuse. “I thought I’d do that for him in a trice but the problem was so complicated that I had to puzzle over it for hours.”

His father nodded and looked convinced. But as the family sat round the table to have their midday meal, the father warned his sons, “You are going to get on with your homework after lunch; and let this be a warning to you not to waste a single minute - you’ve already spent too much time doing worthless things.”

“All right, Papa, we’ll be studying hard all noon,” Anshu assured him. “But can I just make a request?”

“Of course.”

“Would you let us go out to play in the evening?”

“Okay,” his father smiled, “But you have to prove to be assiduous first.”

After the boys had finished their lunch, they went to their desks and started doing their schoolwork, this time meticulously. Since they were quick to learn and their performance was speedy, the face of their father brightened as he watched them. “My sons are a little careless, but they are bright nevertheless,” he thought to himself, pulling up a chair, sitting down opposite

them and comforting himself with the thought that geniuses often lack application. He sat there for about fifteen minutes, lost in thought, then got up and went upstairs for his afternoon siesta as he was now sure that his sons would keep plying their books even in his absence.

The boys continued until they felt certain that their father was fast asleep then tiptoed to the drawing room where they switched the TV on, turned the volume down and started watching it. But a few moments afterwards, as Shrestha felt tired, he reclined on the sofa and fell asleep.

Dayanand, after having a rather long nap, walked downstairs cheerfully, assuming that his sons were deep in their books. But as he reached there, he was shocked to find that the TV was on instead. "So you have been watching TV since then?" he shouted at Anshu.

"No, Dad! Well, you know, we got bored so we thought it'd be good to amuse ourselves for a few minutes," replied Anshu. "Look, Shrestha was so tired that he fell asleep."

"Anyway, you'd better go back to your desk."

Their conversation eventually stirred Shrestha from sleep. He stretched lazily but as he saw his wrathful father standing there, he got frightened and ran off to join Anshu.

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It was late in the afternoon. Dayanand, too, got bored with staying indoors, so he got ready to go out. When he was about to leave, he was asked by the boys if he would mind if they went out to play with their friends for a short time. He did not reply at once, and then saying, "Yes, of course, but after an hour of serious study," went out.

Now the boys had a great feeling of release. They waited until they believed that their father had gone a long way from home, then shut their books and crept through the door.

It was dark when Dayanand returned home, but the boys were still out with their friends. "Where're the kids?" he asked his wife.

"They have gone out to play somewhere in the street," She replied, 'and will probably be coming back.'

The father afterwards went into the lounge, with a worried expression on his face, and sat there to watch the news on television. Shortly after that, the boys too arrived, quarrelling with each other; but as they caught sight of their father's grim scowl, they rushed to their desks and started reading their books.

Sitting in front of the TV, Dayanand watched an old man of 75 being honoured with the Nobel Prize for literature, an illiterate breaking the word record for the long jump, paintings realizing millions of dollars at auction, the best cartoonist of the year, a reckless person taking the oath of office of the chief minister, a soldier being awarded a medal for gallantry, an air pilot saving the lives of his passengers then a bloody civil war with slaughter and destruction. After watching all these things he thought of Archimedes, Addison, Sant Kabir, Shakespeare etc; and then about the

world and the variety of jobs in it and about how even destructive things stimulate the society and ultimately bring about change – a change in the form of a better social order. He went on to think if any of the jobs were unwanted and soon came to the result that perhaps God wants all of them - right from the governance to the sweeping, from the terrorism to the swearing, from the high social reformation to the begging or from the astronomy to the stealth – done and that it is the reason that He sends man with a mind-set that could conform to a specific vacancy of job in the world.

Then he turned his attention to the TV screen again and saw a group of lionesses and their cubs being headed by an old lion that gets wounded in a fierce battle with a young one and is finally chased away from the herd, which led him to think that God makes everything that is required running the world and destroys all that has become worthless and that the real father is He and is responsible for anything that happens in the world.