Ch.6 My Childhood (Beehive)

Q: Where was Abdul Kalam’s house?

A: Abdul Kalam’s house was on Mosque Street in Rameswaram. It was a fairly large pucca house made of limestone and brick.

Q: What do you think Dinamani is the name of? Give a reason for your answer.

A: The fact that Abdul Kalam used to read headlines to know about the World War and the fact that he assisted his cousin in collecting newspaper bundles thrown from the train indicate that Dinamani is the name of a daily newspaper.

Q: Who were Abdul Kalam’s school friends? What did they later become?

A:Abdul Kalam’s friends were Ramanandha Sastry, Arvindam and Sivaprakasan. One of his friends Ramanandha Sastry became a priest in Rameshwaram. Arvindam went into the business of arranging transport for visiting pilgrims. Sivaprakasan became a catering contractor for the Southern Railway.

Q: How did Abdul Kalam earn his first wages?

A: It was the time of World War. The stoppage of trains was suspended at Rameswaram. His cousin Samsuddin asked him to help him in collecting newspaper bundles thrown from the moving train. Abdul got money for this work. In this way he earned his first wages.

Q: Had he earned any money before that? In what way?

A: The world war started. There was suddenly an unusual demand of tamarind seeds in the market. Abdul used to collect tamarind seeds and sell the day’s collection to a provision shop. He earned one anna every day.

Q: How does the author describe : his mother, father and himself?

A:(I)Father: His father Jainulabdeen, was not much educated. He was a generous and kind man. He was not rich but provided a secure childhood to him, his brothers and sister. His father avoided the unnecessary things of luxury . He learnt honesty and self discipline from his father.

(II) Mother: His mother Ashiamma was a large hearted and generous woman who used to feed every one visiting the household. She used to tell him the stories from Ramayan at bed time.

(III) Himself: Abdul has described himself as a short and thin boy who was not good looking although his parents were tall and handsome.

Q: What characteristics does he say he inherited from his parents?

A:He inherited honesty and self-discipline from his father. He inherited a sense of kindness and faith in goodness from his mother.

Q:Why did Abdul Kalam want to leave Rameswaram?

A: Higher education was available in the city . So, he wanted to leave Rameswaram.

Q: What did his father say to this?

A:His father encouraged him to leave Rameswaram. He gave Abdul the example of young seagulls who leave their parents’ nest to learn to fly.

Q: What do you think his words mean? Why do you thin he spoke those words?

A: The father’s words had a very deep meaning. Unlike human beings, most animals grow on their own after a certain age. This makes them more independent. Even in the plant kingdom, most of the seeds can’t germinate if they are left lying under the mother tree. They get spread by various means and then they are able to sprout to become a new plant and ultimately a tree.

In humans also, after a certain age, a certain degree of responsibility and independence is always helpful in making a better adult.