

Sometimes my mind wanders back in time to joyful memories of attending a great school led by an inspiring head mistress. Lady Sivaswamy Ayyar Girls Higher Secondary School, Mylapore was where I did my class 6 to 12th. Normal school days, sports days, exhibitions, seva sangam activities, mid-day meals, medical camps, school annual days, competitions, dedicated teachers and to top these memories are those of my headmistress Sathyabama teacher.

To me my headmistress was very special. We used to long for her classes. When I was in class 10, she taught us an English poem. She came only twice that year and could complete only one poem. Both her classes were very lively, explaining to us each and every word, giving practical examples. I still remember her explaining the difference between childish and child-like, asking us what we would like to be called – Childish or child-like ? That particular class exceeded 40 minutes and the entire corridor was quiet as none would dare make noise as the headmistress was still taking class during lunch time. There was silence, not because of fear but out of respect.

Every Monday we used to have a flag hoisting event and each class would take turns to hoist the National Flag. One Monday, it was the turn of our class and we sang the National Anthem with mistakes. She politely stopped us, told us the meaning and encouraged us to sing again with passion and without mistakes.

Editor's Note:

This is a tribute to Ms. Sathyabhama, Principal of Lady Sivaswamy Ayyar Girls Higher Secondary School, Mylapore, of which the author was a student.



There was no corporal punishment in our school those days. We were taught moral values through lovely stories during moral science period. We had Blue Cross, Red Cross and Seva Sangam units, each of which groomed students for life in different ways.

Her pleasant and smiling face, tidy cotton saris she wore and her simplicity continues to inspire! I have seen her traveling by the city bus most of the time. I am proud to say that all my friends are well settled in life because of the great school and the wonderful headmistress we had. To this day, I don't think I have ever come across such a fine human being and inspiring teacher in my life.

These memories kindle in me the same joy that William Wordsworth paints in his Daffodils:

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

