

Things I see-As told by a Clock on a Railway Platform

I am a clock of the railway platform. I am awake throughout day and night. Nothing escapes my eyes. Life is in motion here I watch the movement of things as with unlinking eyes. My tick sound is the proof of my alertness. All sorts of people ticks sound is the meeting place of people from all parts and provinces of the country. I have a great recognizing power. I can recognize from the dress of the people what and who they are. I can recognize a farmer from his dhoti kurta and turban. I can recognize a Sethji from his loose garments. I can know a govt. officer from in stiff tie, coat and pants. I have recognition of men from different provinces. I know the difference between a Bengali and a Punjabi. The former is dressed in loose dhoti and kurta and the latter is dressed in shirt and salwar. I have an understanding of different accents and languages.

I see a variety of life here on the platform. People of all tastes and tempers come here. Some are in hot hurry. Some are easy going. Some have the services of coolies for carrying their luggage. Some carry their loads themselves. Some lose their temper with the coolies or with one another. Some do not speak a word. Some are single and some have their families with them. Some are rich, while others are poor.

I can know from the looks of the people whether they are anxious or placid and whether they are going somewhere in search of a job or in connection with business of meeting their relatives. I do not want to hide my weakness. I am utterly illiterate. When I look at the tickets of the people, I cannot say where they are going.

On one side of the platform there is a ticket window. People stand in a queue before the window and buy their tickets in turn. When there is a rush, the queue breaks and there is pushing and jostling. Some passengers curse the ticket babu for his sloth in dealing with them.

At the other corner of the platform there is a parcel office. Her things move slowly and quietly. I suspect that here sometimes palms are greased.

There is a lively and exciting scene on the platform when a train comes or leaves. There is getting in getting down and getting about. The coolies and hawkers rush seeking for customers. There is a great hustle and bustle. It is like the scene of a battle field. What shouting and crying there is!

In fact, I feel that I lead a more pleasant life than clocks in other places. I am proud of myself. Their train moves at my command. It gets the green signal to move after

the Station Master and the Guard have seen my hands. People are guided by me about their time. They look at me and pass their time. I am fully satisfied with my lot.