
Chapter - 1

The Last Lesson

by Alphonse Daudet

Franz is afraid of going to school as he has not learnt participles. He wants to enjoy beauty of nature. The bright sunshine, the birds chirruping in the woods, Prussian soldiers drilling but resisted. Bulletin board: all bad news, lost battles, the drafts and orders of the commanding officers: wondered what it could be now. The changes he noticed in the school.

- Instead of noisy classrooms everything was as quiet as Sunday morning
- The teacher does not scold him and told him very kindly to go to his seat
- The teacher dressed in his Sunday best.
- Villagers occupying the last benches- To pay tribute to M. Hamel for his 40 yrs of sincere service and also to express their solidarity with France. M. Hamel making the announcement that that would be the last French lesson; realizes that, that was what was put up on the bulletin board. Franz realizes that he does not know his own mother tongue. Regretted why he had not taken his lessons seriously.

Also realizes the reason why teacher was dressed in his Sunday best and villagers sitting at the back. M. Hamel realizes that all three, the children, the parents and he himself are to be blamed for losing respect and regard for the mother tongue.

Always keep the mother tongue close to your heart as it is the key to the prison of slavery.

Atmosphere in class: teacher teaching sincerely and patiently, students and others studying with utmost sincerity.

Franz wonders sarcastically if Prussians could force pigeons to coo in German. M. Hamel overcome with emotions could not speak and wrote on the black board "Long Live France".

