7. MARATHON

Six months before the London Marathon, my special running leg was at last ready. I went to the local sports ground and tried it out. Learning how to run was much harder than I had imagined. At first, I couldn't keep my balance. Then the weight of my body caused my leg to swell and it bled. But by repeatedly running short distances, I gradually got better at it.

During those six months, I twice had to have a new artificial leg made. To make matters worse, the bone in my severed leg had grown again and now stuck out from the muscle. I returned to hospital and had the bone shaved and the leg sewn together again. As a result, by the time I was fit again, there was only one week left before the race. On top of that, I was busy with work and had little time to sleep. Still, as the day of the marathon drew near, I felt I could do it.

I ran the marathon within a year of my accident in Mozambique. This story was taken up by the media, and the marathon became a charity event to raise money for landmine victims in Cambodia. As a result, although I could no longer work to remove mines, I was able to raise funds for this work by running in the marathon with an artificial leg. This made me happy.

I had four aims in the race. The first was to show people the horror of landmines. The second was to show both healthy and disabled people that it is possible to overcome one's limitations and reach new goals. The third was to teach children that life is not fair. The fourth was to experience more deeply the joy and courage of living by rising above my own limitations.

As the race started, I promised myself to cross the finishing line at all costs. Hundreds of spectators lined the roads. They did not seem to realize that I was running with an artificial leg. But as I passed in front of them, they noticed it and cheered me on enthusiastically.

In the early stages, the marathon went better than I had expected. But my troubles started when I reached the 29th kilometre. Dehydrated by the intense heat, I began to feel faint. My back hurt and my left leg got swollen from trying to keep the weight of my body off my right leg. The space between my knee and the artificial leg was full of blood and pus. Yet I refused to give up.

I pictured to myself the scene around Buckingham Palace, the finishing line. I thought of how lucky I was to take part in such a big event and run in front of so many people. Somehow, I managed to keep running.

My time in the race was 5 hrs 29 min --- not bad for a first attempt. I was more than satisfied with the result.

EXERCISES (7)

Ａ　本文の内容に合うものにはＴ、合わないものにはＦを書きなさい．

(1) At first it was difficult for me to keep my balance with my special running leg. ( )

(2) When the day of the marathon came, I was in good shape. ( )

(3) I was able to collect money for landmine victims in Cambodia. ( )

(4) I did not give up the race despite the difficulties. ( )

Ｂ　日本文の意味に合うように、（　）に適語を入れなさい．

(1) さらに悪いことに、雨が降り出した．

To ( ) matters ( ), it started to rain.

(2) 入試が近づくにつれ、緊張してきた．

As the day of the entrance examination ( ) near, I felt nervous.

(3) 彼はもうチームで野球をすることができなくなった．

He could ( ) ( ) play baseball on the team.

(4) どんなことがあってもあなたに会いに行きます．

I will go to see you at all ( ).

(5) なんとか今まで生計を立ててきました．

So far we have ( ) ( ) make a living.