

Too Dear Questions and answers

1 MARKS QUESTIONS:

1. Mention any one of the commodities that was taxed by the king of Monaco in 'Too Dear!'.

Answer: The commodities taxed in Monaco were tobacco, wine, spirits and a poll-tax.

2. Name the special source of revenue in the kingdom of Monaco in 'Too Dear!'.

Answer: Gaming house was the special source of revenue in the kingdom of Monaco

3. What business does the King of Monaco monopolise in 'Too Dear!'?

Answer: The king of Monaco Monopolize Gaming houses business.

4. What was the initial punishment given to the criminal by the council in 'Too Dear!'?

Answer: The council suggested that the criminal's head be cut off as directed by law.

5. Mention one of the reasons for altering the death sentence to life imprisonment in 'Too Dear!'?

Answer: Because they could not afford a guillotine nor an executioner.

6. How many soldiers were there in the kingdom of Monaco in 'Too Dear!'?

Answer: There are only sixty men in the army of Monaco.

7. How much did the king spend on the criminal annually in 'Too Dear!'?

Answer: The king spent 600 francs on the criminal annually.

8. Where is Monaco situated in 'Too Dear!'?

Answer: Monaco is situated near the borders of France and Italy.

9. How much would a guillotine and an executioner cost if supplied from France in 'Too Dear!'?

Answer: Guillotine machine and an executioner cost 16000 francs if supplied from France.

10. What is the population of Monaco in 'Too Dear!'?

Answer: Population of Monaco is about seven thousand.

11. How much money did the Italian Government demand to supply guillotine and an executioner?

Answer: Italian Government demanded 12000 francs to supply guillotine and an executioner.

12. Name the 'Toy Kingdom' mentioned in 'Too Dear!'.

Answer: Monaco is the 'Toy Kingdom' mentioned in 'Too Dear!'.

13. How much did the criminal receive as advance before leaving Monaco in 'Too Dear!'?

Answer: The criminal received one-third of his allowance in advance before leaving Monaco.

4 MARKS QUESTIONS:

1. How does the narrator describe the 'Toy Kingdom' in 'Too Dear!'?

Answer: Monaco was called a toy kingdom because it had such a tiny landmass that if all the land in the kingdom were divided, there would not be even an acre for each of its seven thousand inhabitants. The commodities taxed in Monaco were tobacco, wine, and spirit. The people also paid a poll tax.

2. Why did the authorities in Monaco fail to carry out the death sentence in 'Too Dear!'?

Answer: The authorities in Monaco failed to carry out the death sentence because there was neither a guillotine for cutting heads off, nor an executioner. Though they tried to borrow a machine and an expert from their neighbouring countries France and Italy, they realized that it would cost the kingdom a huge sum of money and the king would be forced to collect nearly two francs more per head on the taxes.

3. What made the king of Monaco alter the death sentence to life imprisonment in 'Too Dear!'?

Answer: The king of Monaco sent two letters of inquiry to France and Italy so as to borrow a guillotine machine and an executioner to execute the criminal. The French Government wrote to Monaco that it would cost them 16000 francs. Therefore, the king changed the death sentence to one of imprisonment for life.

4. Describe the efforts of the ministers in carrying out the death sentence in 'Too Dear!'.

Answer: The ministers discussed the matter and sent a letter of inquiry to the French Government asking whether they could lend them a machine and an expert to execute the criminal and also inform the cost involved. Then a similar inquiry was sent to the King of Italy. The Italian government offered to lend a machine and an expert at a cost of 12000 francs which included travelling expenses also. Therefore, the council discussed the issue and asked the General of the Army whether a soldier in the Army would be ready to cut off the man's head.

5. Why does the criminal in 'Too Dear!' refuse to escape from the prison? Explain.

Answer: The prisoner was reluctant to go out of the prison because his character had been ruined by the death sentence given to him and he had nowhere to go. Secondly, by being imprisoned and given food in his cell every day, he had given up working to earn his living.

6. Why did the criminal finally get a pension in 'Too Dear!'? How did this benefit him?

Answer: The criminal told that he had nowhere to go and no work to do. At last the criminal agreed to go away from the kingdom on the condition that he has to receive his pension regularly on time. So they offered him a pension.

Then he bought a bit of land and started market-gardening. He visited the gaming tables and staked two or three francs, sometimes winning and sometimes losing. He lived comfortably and peaceably like the others.

7. How did the criminal spend his life after he was given a pension in 'Too Dear!'?

Answer: When the criminal told the ministers that he had nowhere to go and no work to do, they offered him a pension of 600 francs and sent him away. The criminal received one-third of his annuity in advance and emigrated to another country just across the frontier. There he bought a bit of land and started market-gardening. He visited the gaming tables and gambled two or three francs, sometimes winning and sometimes losing. He lived comfortably and peaceably like the others.

6 MARKS QUESTIONS:

1. The king of Monaco is a man without a decisive stand. Do you agree with this? Substantiate your answer with reference to 'Too Dear!'.

Answer: No, I do not agree with the statement, because there is enough evidence to prove that he had to act according to the needs of the situation. The King of Monaco kept changing his mind in dealing with the criminal because, every time he took a decision, he faced a problem to execute it. First, the king ordered the execution of the criminal, but he cancelled it and changed the sentence to imprisonment for life. Because there was neither a guillotine machine nor an executioner in his country.

He had decided to borrow one from the King of Italy, he would have been forced to levy 2 francs per person as additional tax which he did not like. Secondly, after keeping the criminal in prison for one year, he realized that he had to spend 600 francs on the maintenance of the criminal until his death,

Therefore, as advised by his council of ministers, he dismissed the guard hoping that the prisoner would run away. But the prisoner refused to run away. Once again the king faced a new problem. Then, as suggested by his council of ministers, the king ordered payment of 600 francs a year as pension and got rid of the criminal

2. 'Too Dear!' ridicules the foolishness of rulers. Discuss.

Answer:

The story 'Too Dear!' exposes the dilemma of a ruler who is forced to revise his own judgement not out of mercy but out of financial pressures. The narrator seems to ridicule the foolishness of rulers who make rules unmindful of the real situation in which they are placed.

The system of governance is only a make-believe system and it can boomerang or collapse at any point in time. As long as life goes on smoothly, there is no need for the king to prove to the people that he is their ruler and they must obey him. But, it so happens that a crime is committed, and the king being the moral authority has to exercise his authority. Herein lies the crux of the whole story.

The king behaves like a king of a big kingdom in terms of both money and muscle power and announces a death sentence, which cannot be implemented and, instead of punishing the criminal, gives him a pension. This ironical situation is created because of the foolishness of the king. The king ought to have arrived at his final decision about the criminal only after examining the ground reality.

3. You can't earn stone palaces by honest labour. Justify this statement with reference to 'Too Dear!'.

Answer: 'You can't earn stone palaces by honest labour'. It only means that if one wants to live beyond his means, honest labour alone cannot fetch him enough money for his luxuries.

By just an honest means of earning, one cannot go beyond a certain limit. The king of Monaco had many people to feed. What he earned from the tax was a lit amount in which he had to take care of many people. The revenue he earned from the gambling house was more than enough which was major source of income not just for him but also for the other people. If one has to go beyond certain limits, one has to start other ways of income too, which might not be an honest one. For the sake of the people and kingdom, and its maintenance, he had no other choice but to retort to dirty business like gambling.

'You can't earn stone palaces by honest labour'. This statement is true with reference to the context the king of Monaco lived in. He knew it very well that gambling is a dirty business. He also understood that by charging taxes on drink and tobacco for revenue was not a good idea. But, he had to resort to it for the survival and sustenance of his kingdom.

4. 'It is a good thing that the criminal committed his crime in Monaco.' Why does the narrator in 'Too Dear!' feel so? Explain.

Answer:

Monaco is a tiny kingdom with only seven thousand inhabitants. It has a real kinglet who lives in a palace with courtiers, ministers, a bishop, generals and an army of only sixty men. The king lives by collecting taxes on tobacco, wine and spirits and a poll tax. As the revenue collected from the people is too meagre to feed himself and his people, the king permits a gaming house where people play roulette. From the profits of the gaming house, the king gets a large sum of money.

It so happens that a crime is committed, and the king being the moral authority has to exercise his authority. Herein lies the crux of the whole story. The king behaves like a king of a big kingdom in terms of both money and muscle power and issues a death sentence, which cannot be implemented and instead of punishing the criminal, ends up giving him a pension. This ironical situation is created because of the foolishness of the king. The king ought to have arrived at the final decision only after examining the ground reality.

That is why, the narrator says, "It is a good thing that the criminal committed his crime in Monaco" to ridicule the king because despite being the king he has no power to exercise his authority.

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