

English notes ...

Lesson- 2 - 'Too Dear'

Comprehension 1

1. Why was 'Monaco' called a 'Toy Kingdom'?

'Monaco' was a 'Toy Kingdom' because it was a little kingdom with a population of only seven thousand people,

2. Name the commodities taxed in Monaco.

The commodities taxed in Monaco were tobacco, wine, spirits and a poll – tax,

3. What was the source of the king's special revenue? Who were its beneficiaries?

The source of the king's special revenue was from a gaming house called Roulette. Both the keeper and the king of Monaco were the beneficiaries.

4. Why did the Germans stop gaming houses in their country and how did it benefit Monaco?

The Germans stopped the gaming houses because these gaming houses did so much harm to the people. A man would come and try his luck, then he would risk all the money he had and lose it, then he would even risk money that did not belong to him and lose that too, and then in despair, he would drown or shoot himself.

The Germans forbade this game and only the king of Monaco remained with a monopoly of the business and thus it benefitted Monaco.

5. What was the punishment given to the murderer?

Death sentence /execution /cut off the criminal's head, was the punishment given to the murderer.

6. The death sentence was converted into life imprisonment because

- Monaco had abolished death penalty.
- Carrying out death sentence was expensive.
- Monaco wanted to show mercy on the criminal.

7. How much did the king spend on the criminal, annually?

The king spent six hundred francs on the criminal, annually.

8. On what condition did the criminal agree to go away from the prison? Why was his demand fulfilled?

On the condition that the king undertakes to pay the pension regularly, he would agree to go away from the prison. His demand was fulfilled because they wanted to reduce the expenses spent on maintaining him in the prison and wanted to get rid of him somehow.

COMPREHENSION II

1. Though gambling is a dirty business, why does the king of Monaco resort to it?

Though the king knows that Gambling is a dirty business, he has to resort to it because he has to feed his courtiers, officials, ministers, bishop, generals and an army.

He has his coronation, his levees, he rewards, sentences and pardons, and he also has his reviews, councils, laws and courts of justice, just like other kings, only all on a smaller scale. To live and reign and to hold his court with all the ceremony of a real king, he rakes in the money from gambling.

2. Why did the king of Monaco keep changing his mind in dealing with the criminal?

The king of Monaco at first declared death sentence to the murderer. But there was only one hitch in the matter that they did not have a guillotine or an executioner to cut off the criminal's head. So they decided to write a letter to the French government to ask if they could lend them a machine and an expert. The French government replied that they would lend the machine and an executioner, but that would cost 16000 francs. But the king it expensive that it is more than two francs a head on the whole population. The people would not stand it and it may cause a riot.

Then they wrote to the Italian government. The Italian government wrote to them that they would lend both the machine and an expert; and the whole cost would be 12,000 francs including the travel expense. Though this was cheaper but it still seemed too much. It meant nearly two francs more per head on the taxes.

So the king decided to ask one of the soldiers to cut the man's head off. But the soldiers said that they did not know how to do it; and that was not the thing they had been taught.

Then at last they decided to alter the death sentence to one of imprisonment for life. But this too did not work out cheaper. As there was no proper and a strong prison, the king placed a guard over him who had to watch the criminal, and also fetch his food from the palace kitchen. But after a year, the king noticed a new item of expenditure. It had come to more than 600 francs for the keep of the criminal. So, the king dismissed the guard, and waited for the criminal to run away from the prison. But the criminal went to the palace kitchen to fetch food for himself, locked himself in the prison and stayed inside. He never showed the least sign of running away from the prison, and also refused to run away from the prison. Finally, they offered him a pension of 600 francs, to run away from the prison

As the king found the death sentence and life imprisonment were very expensive to deal with the criminal, it was inevitable for the king to keep changing his mind in dealing with the criminal.

3. Why was the criminal reluctant to go out of the prison?

When the criminal was asked to run away from the prison, he said that he had nowhere to go, that they had ruined his character by their sentence and people would turn their backs on him. Besides, he had got out of the way of working. They have treated him badly which was not fair. In the first place, when once they sentenced him to death, they ought to have executed him; but they did not do it. And he did not complain about that.

He then said that they sentenced to imprisonment for life and put a guard to bring him his food; but after a time they took him away and the criminal had to fetch his own food. Again he did not complain. But then they actually wanted him to go away and he could not agree that. Thus all these reasons made the criminal reluctant to go out of the prison.

4. How did the criminal lead his life after his release?

The criminal having received one third of his annuity in advance, left the king's dominions. It was only a quarter of an hour by rail; and he emigrated, and settled just across the frontier, where he bought a bit of land, started market-gardening, and lived comfortably. He always went to the gaming tables, stakes two or three francs, sometimes wins and sometimes loses, and returns home. He then lived peaceably and well.

### COMPREHENSION III

- 1 'You can't earn stone palaces by honest labour,' in what context is this statement made?

Though the king of Monaco collected taxes from various sources, he found hard put to it to feed his courtiers, officials and to keep himself. So he had to find a new and a special revenue. This special revenue comes from a gaming house where people played Roulette. Some of the little German sovereigns kept gaming houses of the same kind, but they were forbidden to do so. The reason they were stopped was because these gaming houses did so much harm. A man would come and try his luck, then he would risk all he had and lose it, then he would risk money that did not belong to him and lose that too, and in despair, he would drown or shoot himself. So the Germans forbade their rulers to make money by this way. But the prince of Monaco remained with the monopoly over the business.

So then, anyone who wants to gamble would go to Monaco. Whether they win or lose, the king of Monaco was benefitted. Here, at this situation, the statement 'you can't earn stone palaces by honest labour' holds apt. Though the king knows that gaming is a dirty business, he had no other way. He had to rake in the money to live and reign and hold his court with all the ceremony of a real king. It seems that he was not concerned for the lives of the people. He might have felt that if at all he is concerned for their lives, then he cannot rule like a real king.

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### ASSIGNMENT

A word which is spelt and pronounced like the same but has a different meaning and origin is called homonym. E.g. the word orange can mean for the colour as well as a fruit.

Bark. A tree's outer layer / the sound a dog makes

Write five homonyms and frame sentences for each

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