NCERT Solutions for Class 12 English Flamingo Chapter 5

Question 1.
Choose the correct options.
(a) Rajkumar Shukla was
(i) a sharecropper
(ii) a politician
(iii) a delegate
(iv) a landlord
Answer:
(i) a sharecropper

(b) Rajkumar Shukla was
(i) poor
(ii) physically strong
(iii) illiterate
(iv) poor
Answer:
(iii) illiterate

Question 2.
Why is Rajkumar Shukla described as being “resolute”?
Answer:
Rajkumar Shukla was a “resolute” man. He was determined to take Gandhi to Champaran, to champion the cause of the poor sharecroppers. When Gandhi said that he had a prior arrangement to go to Kanpur and to other parts of India, Shukla went everywhere with him. He also followed Gandhi to his ashram near Ahmedabad and stayed there for weeks and begged him to visit Champaran. Gandhi finally agreed to go with him, and asked him to take him to Champaran from Calcutta.

Question 3.
Why do you think the servants thought Gandhi to be another peasant?
Answer:
Shukla took Gandhi to the house of Rajendra Prasad who was out of town, but the servants knew of Shukla as a poor farmer. They, therefore, presumed Gandhi to be another peasant.

Question 4.
List the places that Gandhi visited between his first meeting with Shukla and his arrival at Champaran.
Answer:
Gandhi met Shukla in Lucknow. From there, Gandhi went to Kanpur and to other parts

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of India. Then Gandhi returned to his ashram near Ahmedabad. He later went to Calcutta and from there to Patna in Bihar. Gandhi then decided to go to Muzzafarpur, which was en route to Champaran, and finally to Champaran.

Question 5.
What did the peasants pay the British landlords as rent? What did the British subsequently want and why?
What would be the impact of synthetic indigo on the prices of natural indigo?
Answer:
Most of the cultivable land in the Champaran district was divided into large estates owned by Englishmen where Indian tenants worked. The chief commercial crop was indigo. The landlords forced the tenants to plant fifteen per cent of their land with indigo and give up the whole indigo harvest as rent. The landlords had learned how Germany had developed synthetic indigo. Thus, they forced the sharecroppers to sign agreements to pay them compensation to be released from the fifteen per cent arrangement.

The sharecroppers, who refused this arrangement, engaged lawyers, and to counter them, the landlords hired thugs. But, when the information about synthetic indigo reached the peasants who had signed the agreement, they wanted their money back.

Question 6.
The events in this part of the text illustrate Gandhi's method of working. Can you identify some instances of this method and link them to his ideas of satyagraha and non-violence?
Answer:
Gandhi visited the secretary of the British landlords' association to collect information about his cause of assisting the indigo sharecroppers. They refused to give information to an outsider but Gandhi stated emphatically that he was no outsider.

When the British official commissioner of the Tirhut division asked Gandhi to leave Tirhut, he refused. Even when the messenger served him with an official notice to quit Champaran, Gandhi signed a receipt for the notice and wrote on it that he would disobey the order. He disregarded the order to leave, "not for want of respect for lawful authority, but in obedience to the higher law of our being, the voice of conscience".

He organised a gathering of peasants at Motihari, around the courthouse, which was the beginning of their liberation from fear of the British. Nevertheless, Gandhi cooperated with the officials to regulate the crowd. He was polite and friendly. He gave them concrete proof that their might could be challenged by Indians.

He inspired the lawyers to fight the injustice meted out to the sharecroppers. He organised them in pairs and formulated the order in which each pair was to court arrest. He demonstrated by his own example how peaceful protest and non-violence could be

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useful tools to achieve results. He used similar philosophy when he carried out satyagraha later in his political career.

Question 7.
Why did Gandhi agree to a settlement of 25 per cent refund to the farmers?
Answer:
After the inquiry committee report, the peasants expected the refund of the entire sum of money but Gandhi asked for only fifty per cent of the sum. However, when the representative of the planters offered to refund twenty-five per cent, Gandhi accepted it.

Gandhi felt that money was less important at that stage. What was more important was that for the first time, the landlords had been made to surrender their self-esteem. Moreover, the peasants realized that they had rights as citizens and the agitation taught them their first lesson in courage.

Question 8.
How did the episode change the plight of the peasants?
Answer:
The episode made the landlords surrender their self-esteem. Till then, the planters had behaved as lords, above the reach of law. The peasants were made to realise how they could fight for their rights. It liberated them from their fear of the British.

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