



TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS SOLVED

Question 1. Match the following:

<i>ryot</i>	<i>village</i>
<i>mahal</i>	<i>peasant</i>
<i>nij</i>	<i>cultivation on ryot's lands</i>
<i>ryoti</i>	<i>cultivation on planter's own land</i>

Answer:

<i>ryot</i>	<i>peasant</i>
<i>mahal</i>	<i>village</i>
<i>nij</i>	<i>cultivation on planter's own land</i>
<i>ryoti</i>	<i>cultivation on ryot's lands</i>

Question 2. Fill in the blanks:

- (a) Growers of woad in Europe saw as a crop which would provide competition to their earnings.
- (b) The demand for indigo increased in late eighteenth century Britain because of
- (c) The international demand for indigo was affected by the discovery of
- (d) The Champaran movement was against

Answer: (a) indigo

(b) industrialisation

(c) synthetic dyes

Question 3. Describe the main features of the Permanent Settlement.

Answer: The main features of the Permanent settlements were:

- (i) The amount of revenue was fixed permanently, that is, it was not to be increased in ever in future.
- (ii) It was felt that this would ensure a regular flow of revenue into the Company's coffers and at the same time encourage the zamindars to invest in improving the land.
- (iii) Since the revenue demand of the state would not be increased, the zamindar would benefit from increased production from the land.
- (iv) Under this system revenue had been fixed so high that the zamindars found it difficult to pay.
- (v) Even when the income of zamindars increased with the expansion of cultivation, the company had no chance of gain because it could not increase a revenue demand that had been fixed permanently.
- (vi) The system proved oppressive for the cultivators.

Question 4. How was the Mahalwari System different from the

permanent settlement?

Answer: (i) Under the Permanent Settlement the rates of revenue was fixed permanently, that is, it was not to be increased ever in future. But in Mahalwari System it was decided that the rate of revenue would be revised periodically, not permanently fixed. (ii) Under the Permanent Settlement, the zamindars were given the charge of collecting revenue from the peasants and paying it to the Company. But in the Mahalwari System this charge was given to the village headmen.

Question 5. Give two problems which arose with the new Munro system of fixing revenue.

Answer: Two problems:

- (i) Revenue officials fixed a very high revenue demand and peasants were unable to pay it.
- (ii) Ryots fled the countryside and villages became deserted in many regions.

Question 6. Why were ryots reluctant to grow indigo?

Answer: The planters usually forced the ryots to sign a contract. Those who signed the contract got cash advances from the planters at low rates of interest to produce indigo. But the loan committed the ryot to cultivating indigo on at least 25% of the area under his holding. The planter provided the seed and the drill, while cultivators prepared the soil, sowed the seed and looked after the crop. When the crop was delivered to the planter after the harvest, the ryots got another new loan. In this way, they were trapped in the cycle of loan from which it was difficult to come out. Soon, they realised that this was a harsh system. They did hard labour day and night and got a very low price for the indigo they produced. Other reason was that the planters usually pressurised the ryots to cultivate indigo on the best soils. But the ryots preferred to grow rice on these soils. Indigo had deep roots and it exhausted the soil rapidly. After an indigo harvest the land could not be used for rice cultivation.

Question 7. What were the circumstances which led to the eventual collapse of indigo production in Bengal?

Answer: The ryots in Bengal got fed up with the coercive methods the planters used with them and finally refused to grow indigo. They became violent. They not only refused to pay rents to the planters, but also attacked indigo factories armed with swords and spears, bows and arrows. Meanwhile the local zamindars and village headmen also began to favour the indigo ryots. They mobilised the indigo peasants and fought pitched battles with the lathiyals, the lathi-wielding strong men maintained by the planters. In other places even the zamindars went around villages urging the ryots to resist the planters. Worried by the rebellion, the government brought in the military to protect the planters from assault, and set up the Indigo commission to enquire into the system of indigo production. The commission held the planters guilty and criticised them for the coercive method they used with indigo cultivators. It declared that indigo production was not profitable for ryots. The commission asked the ryots to fulfil their existing contracts but also told them that they could refuse to produce indigo in future. After this revolt, indigo production collapsed in Bengal.

Question 8. Find out more about the Champaran movement and Mahatma Gandhi's role in it.

Answer: Students are suggested to visit their library and collect information about it.

Question 9. Look into the history of either tea or coffee plantations in India. See how the life of workers in these plantations was similar to or different from that of workers in indigo plantations.

Answer: Students may collect information about it from library.

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