

Chapter 8. The Bet

Passage 1

Question 1.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

The old banker was walking up and down his study and remembering how, fifteen years before, he had given a party one autumn evening. There had been many clever men there, and there had been interesting conversations. Among other things they had talked of capital punishment.

Who had thrown a party?

Answer:

An old banker had thrown a party fifteen years ago.

Question 2.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

The old banker was walking up and down his study and remembering how, fifteen years before, he had given a party one autumn evening. There had been many clever men there, and there had been interesting conversations. Among other things they had talked of capital punishment.

Who attended the party?

Answer:

The party was attended by many clever men who engaged in interesting conversations.

Question 3.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

The old banker was walking up and down his study and remembering how, fifteen years before, he had given a party one autumn evening. There had been many clever men there, and there had been interesting conversations. Among other things they had talked of capital punishment.

What is capital punishment? When is it used?

Answer:

Capital punishment is punishment by death sanctioned by government. Capital punishment is used by the government to punish criminals who have committed capital offenses.

Question 4.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

The old banker was walking up and down his study and remembering how, fifteen years before, he had given a party one autumn evening. There had been many clever men there, and there had been interesting conversations. Among other things they had talked of capital punishment.

What did the banker think about capital punishment as against life imprisonment?

Answer:

The banker thought that capital punishment was better than life imprisonment. While capital punishment killed a man at once, life imprisonment meant a slow death. He felt that life imprisonment drags the life out of a person in the course of many years.

Passage 2

Question 1.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

"Both are equally immoral," observed one of the guests, "for they both have the same object – to take away life. The State is not God. It has not the right to take away what it cannot restore when it wants to."

What was equally immoral? Why?

Answer:

According to one of the guests, both capital punishment and life imprisonment were equally immoral. Both form of punishments had the same objectives – to take away life.

Question 2.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

"Both are equally immoral," observed one of the guests, "for they both have the same object – to take away life. The State is not God. It has not the right to take away what it cannot restore when it wants to."

What was the banker's opinion on the two forms of punishments?

Answer:

According to the banker, death penalty was more humane and moral than imprisonment for life.

Question 3.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

"Both are equally immoral," observed one of the guests, "for they both have the same object – to take away life. The State is not God. It has not the right to take away what it cannot restore when it wants to."

Why did the banker feel that death penalty was more moral than life imprisonment?

Answer:

The banker was of the opinion that while capital punishment killed man at once, life imprisonment meant a slow death. He felt that life imprisonment drags the life out of a person in the course of many years.

Passage 3

Question 1.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

"It's not true! I'll bet you two million you wouldn't stay in solitary confinement for five years."
"If you mean that in earnest," said the young man, "I'll take the bet, but I would stay not five but fifteen years."
"Fifteen? Done!" cried the banker. "Gentlemen, I stake two million!"
"Agreed! You stake your millions and I stake my freedom!" said the young man.

Where and between whom did the above conversation take place?

Answer:

The conversation above took place between the banker and a young lawyer at a party which the banker had thrown.

Question 2.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

"It's not true! I'll bet you two million you wouldn't stay in solitary confinement for five years."
"If you mean that in earnest," said the young man, "I'll take the bet, but I would stay not five but fifteen years."
"Fifteen? Done!" cried the banker. "Gentlemen, I stake two million!"
"Agreed! You stake your millions and I stake my freedom!" said the young man.

What were the terms of the bet?

Answer:

The banker placed a bet of two million which he would give the lawyer if he stayed in solitary confinement for five years. The lawyer claimed that he would stay alone for not five but fifteen

years and still win those two million.

Question 3.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

"It's not true! I'll bet you two million you wouldn't stay in solitary confinement for five years."

"If you mean that in earnest," said the young man, "I'll take the bet, but I would stay not five but fifteen years."

"Fifteen? Done!" cried the banker. "Gentlemen, I stake two million!"

"Agreed! You stake your millions and I stake my freedom!" said the young man.

What led to the two men betting their money and freedom respectively?

Answer:

There was a discussion at the party over which form of punishment – capital punishment or life imprisonment was better. The banker felt that death penalty was better than life imprisonment. However, the lawyer said that if he had to choose, he would choose life imprisonment as he felt that it is better to live anyhow than to not live at all. This led to an argument, which transformed into a bet.

Passage 4

Question 1.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

The agreement provided for every detail and every trifle that would make his imprisonment strictly solitary, and bound the young man to stay there exactly fifteen years, beginning from twelve o'clock of November 14, 1870, and ending at twelve o'clock of November 14, 1885.

Between who was the agreement signed? What did it say?

Answer:

An agreement was signed between the banker and the lawyer. According to the agreement, the young lawyer had to stay in solitary confinement for fifteen years beginning from twelve o'clock of November 14, 1870, and ending at twelve o'clock of November 14, 1885.

Question 2.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

The agreement provided for every detail and every trifle that would make his imprisonment strictly solitary, and bound the young man to stay there exactly fifteen years, beginning from twelve o'clock of November 14, 1870, and ending at twelve o'clock of November 14, 1885.

What would happen if the lawyer broke any condition of the agreement?

Answer:

In the event of the lawyer breaking any condition of the agreement, he would lose the bet and also the two million decided upon.

Question 3.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

The agreement provided for every detail and every trifle that would make his imprisonment strictly solitary, and bound the young man to stay there exactly fifteen years, beginning from twelve o'clock of November 14, 1870, and ending at twelve o'clock of November 14, 1885.

What were the conditions of the solitary confinement?

Answer:

It was decided that the lawyer would stay in one of the lodges in the banker's garden all alone under strict supervision. The lawyer would have no contact with human beings in any form. He would not talk to humans or hear their voice, or even receive letters and newspapers. The lawyer, however, was allowed to drink wine and to smoke, to write letters, and to have a musical instrument and reads books.

Question 4.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

The agreement provided for every detail and every trifle that would make his imprisonment strictly solitary, and bound the young man to stay there exactly fifteen years, beginning from twelve o'clock of November 14, 1870, and ending at twelve o'clock of November 14, 1885.

How did the lawyer complete his first year of solitary confinement?

Answer:

During the first year of confinement, the lawyer suffered severely from loneliness and depression. He was being referred to as a prisoner now. He played the piano continually day and night. The prisoner refused wine and tobacco as according to him, wine excited the desires. And it was very dreary to drink wine and meet no one thereafter. The tobacco, he said, spoilt the air of his room. In the first year, the books he sent for were principally of a light character; novels with a complicated love plot, sensational and fantastic stories, and so on.

Passage 5

Question 1.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

In the fifth year music was audible again, and the prisoner asked for wine. Those who watched him through the window said that all that year he spent doing nothing but eating and drinking and lying on his bed, frequently yawning and angrily talking to himself. He did not read books. Sometimes at night he would sit down to write; he would spend hours writing, and in the morning tear up all that he had written. More than once he could be heard crying.

How did the lawyer become the prisoner? How many years did he have to spend in the prison?

Answer:

The lawyer entered into a bet with a banker in which he agreed to spend fifteen years of his life in solitary confinement. He was to receive two million at the end of the fifteen years if he kept all the clauses of the bet.

Question 2.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

In the fifth year music was audible again, and the prisoner asked for wine. Those who watched him through the window said that all that year he spent doing nothing but eating and drinking and lying on his bed, frequently yawning and angrily talking to himself. He did not read books. Sometimes at night he would sit down to write; he would spend hours writing, and in the morning tear up all that he had written. More than once he could be heard crying.

What did the prisoner do in the second year of his confinement?

Answer:

The prisoner stopped playing the piano in the second year and asked only for classics to read.

Question 3.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

In the fifth year music was audible again, and the prisoner asked for wine. Those who watched him through the window said that all that year he spent doing nothing but eating and drinking and lying on his bed, frequently yawning and angrily talking to himself. He did not read books. Sometimes at night he would sit down to write; he would spend hours writing, and in the morning tear up all that he had written. More than once he could be heard crying.

How was the prisoner's conduct different in the first and the fifth year of his imprisonment?

Answer:

In the first year, the prisoner suffered severely from loneliness as one could judge from his brief notes. He played the piano continually and refused to have wine or tobacco. However in the fifth year, he asked for wine and those who watched him said that he spent all his time eating, drinking and lying on his bed. He would talk angrily to himself while frequently yawning

in his bed. Sometimes at night he would sit down to write and after having spent hours writing, he would tear up all that he had written in the morning.

Question 4.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

In the fifth year music was audible again, and the prisoner asked for wine. Those who watched him through the window said that all that year he spent doing nothing but eating and drinking and lying on his bed, frequently yawning and angrily talking to himself. He did not read books. Sometimes at night he would sit down to write; he would spend hours writing, and in the morning tear up all that he had written. More than once he could be heard crying.

How did the prisoner's behaviour change during the sixth year?

Answer:

In the second half of the sixth year the prisoner began to study languages, philosophy and history with zeal. The prisoner was so engrossed in his studies that the banker got very busy to get him the books that he ordered. In four years the prisoner asked for six hundred volumes and learned six languages perfectly.

Passage 6

Question 1.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

"My dear Jailer, I write you these lines in six languages. Show them to people who know the languages. Let them read them. If they find not one mistake I implore you to fire a shot in the garden.

How was the prisoner able to write in six languages?

Answer:

In his sixth year, the prisoner took serious interest in studying languages. He engrossed himself in studying languages, philosophy, and history. It was because of this that he was able to write in six languages.

Question 2.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

"My dear Jailer, I write you these lines in six languages. Show them to people who know the languages. Let them read them. If they find not one mistake I implore you to fire a shot in the garden.

Why did the prisoner ask the banker to fire a shot in the garden?

Answer:

During the second half of the sixth year, the prisoner learnt many languages among other disciplines. To test if he had learnt well, he wrote a letter to the banker, whom he addressed as "Jailer" and in it wrote lines in six languages. He wanted the jailer to show them to people who knew those languages. He asked the jailer to fire a shot in the garden if all that he had written was correct. It was a signal that he had learnt the languages perfectly.

Question 3.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

"My dear Jailer, I write you these lines in six languages. Show them to people who know the languages. Let them read them. If they find not one mistake I implore you to fire a shot in the garden.

What did the prisoner understand after learning many languages?

Answer:

The prisoner understood that although geniuses from different lands speak different languages, the essence of their communication is the same. He was elated to have been able to understand the languages of the world.

Question 4.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

"My dear Jailer, I write you these lines in six languages. Show them to people who know the languages. Let them read them. If they find not one mistake I implore you to fire a shot in the garden.

What did the prisoner read in the last two years of imprisonment?

Answer:

In the last two years of his confinement, the prisoner read innumerable books indiscriminately. At one time he was busy reading natural sciences while at the other moment he would ask for Byron and Shakespeare. He demanded books on chemistry, a manual of medicine, a novel, and some treatise on philosophy or theology all at once.

Passage 7

Question 1.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

The old banker remembered all this, and thought:

"To-morrow at twelve o'clock he will regain his freedom. By our agreement I ought to pay him

two million. If I do pay him, it is all over with me: I shall be utterly ruined."

Who is the 'he' in the above extract? Why would his regaining freedom ruin the banker?

Answer:

The word 'he' in the above extract refers to the lawyer. The agreement of 15 years of imprisonment was going to come to an end a day later as mentioned in the extract. The lawyer would win the bet and the banker would have to pay him two million. Fifteen years ago two million meant nothing to the banker. However, years of bad investment and gambling had made the banker poor. If the banker gave two million to the lawyer, he would go bankrupt and this would ruin him.

Question 2.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

The old banker remembered all this, and thought:

"To-morrow at twelve o'clock he will regain his freedom. By our agreement I ought to pay him two million. If I do pay him, it is all over with me: I shall be utterly ruined."

What did the banker decide to do to avoid paying the lawyer two million?

Answer:

The banker decided to kill the lawyer in the dark of night to avoid paying him the amount. He decided to go to the lodge and stifle the lawyer with a pillow and imagined that it would be easy to kill the already half-dead man. He also thought that since the watchman guarded the lodge, the suspicion would fall on him.

Question 3.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

The old banker remembered all this, and thought:

"To-morrow at twelve o'clock he will regain his freedom. By our agreement I ought to pay him two million. If I do pay him, it is all over with me: I shall be utterly ruined."

Where was the watchman when the banker came to the lodge?

Answer:

When the banker came to the lodge the watchman was inside the kitchen or the greenhouse seeking shelter from the rain.

Question 4.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

The old banker remembered all this, and thought:

"To-morrow at twelve o'clock he will regain his freedom. By our agreement I ought to pay him two million. If I do pay him, it is all over with me: I shall be utterly ruined."

Describe the scene when the banker set out for the lodge.

Answer:

When the banker stepped outside to meet the lawyer, everyone was asleep in the house and nothing could be heard outside but the rustling of the chilled trees. It was dark and cold in the garden. It was raining and a damp cutting wind was racing about the garden, howling and giving the trees no rest. The banker strained his eyes, but could see neither the earth nor the white statues, nor the lodge, nor the trees.

Passage 8

Question 1.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

Then the banker cautiously broke the seals off the door and put the key in the keyhole. The rusty lock gave a grating sound and the door creaked. The banker expected to hear at once footsteps and a cry of astonishment, but three minutes passed and it was as quiet as ever in the room. He made up his mind to go in.

With what intention did the banker open the door of the lodge after 15 years?

Answer:

The banker went to the lodge with the intention of killing the lawyer so that he wouldn't have to pay him two million for winning the bet.

Question 2.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

Then the banker cautiously broke the seals off the door and put the key in the keyhole. The rusty lock gave a grating sound and the door creaked. The banker expected to hear at once footsteps and a cry of astonishment, but three minutes passed and it was as quiet as ever in the room. He made up his mind to go in.

Describe the financial condition of the banker at the end of the fifteen year period.

Answer:

The banker had been very rich when he had placed the bet fifteen years ago. However, after fifteen years, desperate gambling on the Stock Exchange and wild speculation had made him finally unstable to the extent that from a confident millionaire he had become a banker of middle rank.

Question 3.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

Then the banker cautiously broke the seals off the door and put the key in the keyhole. The rusty lock gave a grating sound and the door creaked. The banker expected to hear at once footsteps and a cry of astonishment, but three minutes passed and it was as quiet as ever in the room. He made up his mind to go in.

What did the banker see when he peeped into the lodge?

Answer:

The banker peeped through the little window of the lodge and saw a candle burning dimly in the prisoner's room. The prisoner was sitting at the table and the banker could see nothing but his back. There were open books lying on the table, on the two easy-chairs and on the carpet near the table.

Question 4.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

Then the banker cautiously broke the seals off the door and put the key in the keyhole. The rusty lock gave a grating sound and the door creaked. The banker expected to hear at once footsteps and a cry of astonishment, but three minutes passed and it was as quiet as ever in the room. He made up his mind to go in.

What did the banker expect would happen as soon as he unlocked the door of the lodge? What actually happened?

Answer:

The banker thought he'd hear the footsteps of the lawyer whom he expected to come to the door in astonishment on hearing it open after 15 years. However, even after three minutes the room was as quiet as ever and there was no sign of the lawyer anywhere near the door of the lodge.

Passage 9

Question 1.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

"To-morrow at twelve o'clock I regain my freedom and the right to associate with other men, but before I leave this room and see the sunshine, I think it necessary to say a few words to you. With a clear conscience I tell you, as before God, who beholds me, that I despise freedom and life and health, and all that in your books is called the good things of the world.

Between whom is the above conversation taking place?

Answer:

The conversation is taking place between the prisoner and the banker in the above passage.

Question 2.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

"To-morrow at twelve o'clock I regain my freedom and the right to associate with other men, but before I leave this room and see the sunshine, I think it necessary to say a few words to you. With a clear conscience I tell you, as before God, who beholds me, that I despise freedom and life and health, and all that in your books is called the good things of the world.

Why did the banker go into the prisoner's lodge a day before the 15 year-period finished?

Answer:

The banker went into the prisoner's lodge with the intention of killing him so that he wouldn't have to pay him the two million which he had promised 15 years ago.

Question 3.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

"To-morrow at twelve o'clock I regain my freedom and the right to associate with other men, but before I leave this room and see the sunshine, I think it necessary to say a few words to you. With a clear conscience I tell you, as before God, who beholds me, that I despise freedom and life and health, and all that in your books is called the good things of the world.

How did the prisoner spend 15 years of solitary confinement?

Answer:

The prisoner spent 15 years of imprisonment by reading innumerable books from various disciplines, playing the piano, drinking wine, and writing letters.

Question 4.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

"To-morrow at twelve o'clock I regain my freedom and the right to associate with other men, but before I leave this room and see the sunshine, I think it necessary to say a few words to you. With a clear conscience I tell you, as before God, who beholds me, that I despise freedom and life and health, and all that in your books is called the good things of the world.

Why did the prisoner write a letter to the banker?

Answer:

The prisoner wrote a letter to the banker to tell him how his perspective on life had changed after spending 15 years alone. He said that he intently studied earthly life for fifteen years and

experienced everything inside the lodge that he could do in the free world outside. In the books he had flung himself into a bottomless pit, performed miracles, slain, burned towns, preached new religions, and even conquered whole kingdoms. He explained that the books had given him immense wisdom to understand that the blessings of the world are all worthless, fleeting, illusory, and deceptive, like a mirage. He said that he was going to renounce the two million of which he once dreamed of as paradise and go out from the lodge five hours before the time fixed to break the agreement.

Passage 10

Question 1.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

The banker went at once with the servants to the lodge and made sure of the flight of his prisoner. To avoid arousing unnecessary talk, he took from the table the writing in which the millions were renounced, and when he got home locked it up in the fireproof safe.

What did the watchman inform the banker the next morning?

Answer:

The watchman informed the banker that he and the others had seen the prisoner fleeing from the lodge in the morning.

Question 2.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

The banker went at once with the servants to the lodge and made sure of the flight of his prisoner. To avoid arousing unnecessary talk, he took from the table the writing in which the millions were renounced, and when he got home locked it up in the fireproof safe.

How did the prisoner lose the two million eventually?

Answer:

The prisoner decided to leave the lodge five hours earlier than the time decided in the agreement between him and the banker. By doing this, he lost the two million.

Question 3.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

The banker went at once with the servants to the lodge and made sure of the flight of his prisoner. To avoid arousing unnecessary talk, he took from the table the writing in which the millions were renounced, and when he got home locked it up in the fireproof safe.

What did the banker do after reading the letter addressed to him?

Answer:

The banker was overwhelmed after reading the letter addressed to him. After reading the note, he kissed the prisoner on the head and went back to his house weeping. He felt strangely defeated despite having won the bet. He had a feeling of self-contempt and guilt in him for having lured a young man into a bet that cost him his entire youth.

Question 4.

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

The banker went at once with the servants to the lodge and made sure of the flight of his prisoner. To avoid arousing unnecessary talk, he took from the table the writing in which the millions were renounced, and when he got home locked it up in the fireproof safe.

What is the essence of the story?

Answer:

The story concludes with the lawyer renouncing the two million that he had almost won in the bet. It also shows that the banker isn't happy either after having won the bet. The moral of the story is that material wealth is short-lived. All the wealth and the leisure in life are illusory and fleeting. True happiness doesn't come from what and how much you can amass. It comes from the ability to have a peaceful soul.