

Memories of a Chota sahib

Prose section

Textual question & answers :

A. Very short answer type questions :

Q.1. Who was John Rowntree ? Or, What position did John Rowntree hold before leaving Shillong a few days after independence?

Ans : John Rowntree was the last British senior conservation of forest of Assam till the date of independence of India.

Q.2. How did John Rowntree find the weather when he arrived at Guwahati ?

Ans : On arriving at Guwahati John Rowntree found the weather cool and pleasant.

Q.3. Where did Rowntree go a few days after independence of India and what did he do there for his livelihood ?

Ans : A few days after independence of India, John Rowntree returned to England and there he took up

work as a journalist and media commentator for his livelihood.

Q.4. Where from is the lesson 'memories of a chota sahib' extracted ?

Ans : The lesson 'memories of a chota sahib' is extracted from John Rowntree's famous book 'A Chota Sahib : memories of a Forest Officer'.

Q.5. Where was the first home of John Rowntree in Assam? Or, Where did John Rowntree and his family make their first home at Guwahati ?

Ans : John Rowntree 's first home in Assam was in Guwahati, on the bank of the river Brahmaputra.

Q.6. What do you guess the name to be of the dome of a Hindu Temple as mentioned in the lesson ?

Ans : The dome of the Hindu Temple is situated at an island in the middle of the Brahmaputra; so, we can guess it to be the Umananda Temple.

Q.7. Which place is called the gate-way into the North-East region ?

Ans : Guwahati is called the gate-way into North - East region.

Q.8. Find out a few words from the lesson 'Memories of a Chota Sahib' that are borrowed from Assamese. Give three of the words in English.

Ans : Words that are borrowed from Assamese are Mar, bheel and cheetal. Mar: It is one kind of boat made by the Assamese people. Either a host of bamboos or wood planks are tied up with strong cable and it is used for crossing a river paddling or connecting by a running cable to another stretched across the river, are propelled from one side to the other by the force of the current.

Bheel : This is a vast pond which is naturally built and full of various fishes.

Cheetal : Cheetal is one kind of flat fish. It is very costly and favorite for the Assamese people.

Q.9. Find out the option that best explains the meaning for the underlined words:

(a) The pug marks of the large cat were clearly traceable.

(1) Stripes on the body.

(2) dots or spots

(3) footprints.

(4) scratch marks left on the body.

Ans : (3) footprints.

(b) The rivers were full of mahseer.

(1) sand banks.

(2) large reptiles like crocodiles.

(3) tortoise.

(4) fresh water fish.

Ans : (4) fresh water fish.

(c) I once forded one of these rivers on horseback.

(1) jumped across.

(2) crossed the river without using a bridge.

(3) swam across.

(4) crossed the river by using a bamboo bridge.

Ans : (2) crossed the river without using a bridge.

(d) It was an eerie spot where trees skeletons still rose out of the water.

(1) very charming.

(2) causing a strange fear.

(3) noisy.

(4) very quiet.

Ans : (2) causing a strange fear.

B. Short answer type question :

1. Where is the plot of 'memories of a chota sahib' based on ?

Ans : The plot of 'memories of a chota sahib' is based on Guwahati and its neighbouring areas on the eve of independence of India. It is a light hearted account of the contemporary period as seen through the eyes of a British forest officer making the account not only local, specific but also relevant to the present time.

2. What was the belief of the people regarding a channel in the river Brahmaputra ?

Ans : During winter the Brahmaputra shrinks and the distance between Peacock Island and the mainland grew less until, by the end of the hot weather only a narrow dividing channel remains. There was a belief among the people that if that channel ever dried up completely it would mean the end of the British Raj in India.

3. What did a European couple do for their private profit ?

Ans : A European couple had leased a piece of land from the forest department with view to growing simul trees for the nearby match factory that they can earn some money. For this purpose they managed fraudulently miles of electric fencing in an attempt to remain the deer outside, but all their efforts went in veins as the deer's jumped over it. Hence, their enterprise was in no sense a very profitable one.

4. What happened to the author when once he forded a flooded river on horse-back ?

Ans : Once, when the author forded a flooded river on horse-back, it fell him onto much difficulty. He slipped over the but lock of the horse and hung on to his tail, which he was able to use as a rudder. When the author pushed the horse to the right it changed its direction to the left and the other way round, and somehow, ultimately they made a safe landing on the other side of the river.

5. What is a Mar? How are these made and used for crossing a river ? Or, what is a marboat and is it operated ?

Ans : Mar is also one kind of boat. These are made of host of long bamboo or wood planks tying these tight that can't move or go out floating in the river water.

These are either paddled across the river or connected by a running cable to another stretched across the river, we're propelled from one side to the other by the force of the current.

6. Why was a journey on the North Bank hazardous ?

Ans : Really driving on the roads on the North Bank was distinctly dicey. Most of the main roads were built on top of embankment to raise them well above the normal flood level, they were narrow, single-tracked and dusty in dry winter. As a result, the roads were greasy and became risky for driving because the surface of the roads were almost invisible under a cloud of dusty at one place, road work had been in progress, a ramp lay concealed from sight under the dust cloud. Since, driving on the North Bank became very risky and difficult, and one's destination became uncertain.

7. In what sense the South Bank of Assam was more homely to the author ?

Ans : The South Bank of Assam is a country of low hills and valleys, the sal trees and others scattered with villages and cultivating fields; and the forest itself bore the characteristics of English woodland. On the south Bank, the reserve forest were mostly in one block, since, distance were less and the stretch of land was smaller. Besides these two comfortable forest bungalows served the author's needs there.

On the above grounds the South Bank became more homely to the author.

8. Who is the ' Chota Sahib' in the 'Memories of a Chota Sahib' ?

Ans : John Rowntree himself is the 'Chota Sahib' in the Memories of a Chota Sahib.

9. What does Rowntree say about Rajapara ?

Ans : Although Rajapara was a ecric place, yet it was a pleasant place to work in for the poet; because at Rsjapara the jungle fowl gleaned the grain of the paddy fields after harvest, and sometimes found their way into the pot, we're cheerful, sunny and open spaces.

10. What does Rowntree say about the river banks in the manas Sanctuary ?

Ans : Rowntree says that the banks of river manas were full of dense forest and wild animals including rhinos and many birds.

11. Give an account of the bungalow in which the author used to stay.

Ans : After John rowntree arrived at guwahati, they made their home on the bank of the brahmaputra. He used to stay in a bungalow with his family. This bungalow was situated at the bank of the

brahmaputra and its walls had a coat of fresh lime wash and the public works department had painted its woodwork with earth oil. In front of the bungalow, there was a raised portico which served as a car port. From the bungalow peacock island was visible with the dome of a Hindu temple, situated at it.

12. Give a brief description of peacock island ?

Ans : The peacock island is situated in the mid stream of the brahmaputra. There is a Hindu temple visible through the trees. There are monkeys in the island. During winter the brahmaputra shrinks and only a narrow dividing channel remains between the island and the mainland.

13. What happened with the river brahmaputra during cold weather ?

Ans : As the cold weather advanced, the river shrank and the distance between the peacock island, (which was visible from the author's bungalow) and the mainland grew less. By the end of the hot weather. Only a narrow dividing channel remained between the island and the mainland.

14. Describe, in your own words the north bank of the brahmaputra.

Ans : The north bank of the brahmaputra had a character of its own-a vast, remote stretch of flat,

ageless land between the sandbanks of the river and the Himalayan foothills. During the cold weather, this bank of the river was delightful. In the rainy season, on the other hand it became a hot bed of malaria. Traveling during this season was really tedious and the travelers had to take risk during these days and the tracks became unusable for normal cars.

15. what happened to the author when he touched with his family on the north bank of the river ?

Ans : When the author was touring with his family on the north bank, they left their return rather late. Although the roads could be still used by motors, driving became distinctly dicy. The road, they used became greasy in which one skid would definitely lend to the other one. Finally, they slithered over the edge into a paddy field some six feet below the road before finding a way back onto the road, this journey was full of bumpy rides.

16. "It was a strange place, where the rivers dried up in the hot weather or suddenly disappeared in the ground." In what context does the author say so ? Discuss.

Ans : The author narrates the characteristics features of the North and the South Bank of the Brahmaputra. While describing the South Bank, he presents the characters of it by saying that this bank was really a strange place where the rivers dried up in the hot weather and suddenly disappeared under ground.

17. How did the author describe the South Bank ?

Ans : The author remarks that the South Bank was more homely with its reserve forests which were mostly in one block. It was a country of low hills and valleys. In it, the trees interspersed with villages and cultivation. The forest which had sal trees had the character of British woodland. In this way, the South Bank appeared homely whenever the author went to it.

18. Describe, in your own words, the activities of bats in and around Rajapara forest bungalow. Or, What unusual visitor did Rowntree have in his Bungalow one night ?

Ans : The bats used to stay in the roof of Rajapara forest bungalow. There were droppings from their dwelling place and these droppings reminded their presence constantly. If someone stayed in this bungalow, he smelt the fusty smell of the bats. A part from them, there were some huge bats that used to stay in a tree outside the bungalow. They went out at dusk in search of food.

19. What does Rowntree state about the large 'Bheel' close to the bungalow at Rajapara ?

Ans : Rowntree says that the 'Bheel' close to the Bungalow at Rajapara was caused by earthquake that once lowered the surface. As a result of lowering down the lands was inundated with water. It was an errespot.

Tree skeletons still rising out of water reminds one that once it was a dry land.