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Class 11 English (Hornbill) Notes

SILK ROAD

Key Notes and Important Questions with Answers

8. Silk Road

- Nick Middleton

The lesson 'Silk Road" is an extract from the author's travelogue. Here the author describes only a small part of his journey form Ravu, a small mountin mountain village to Darchen which is at the foot of Mt. Kailash. The journey describes the scenic beauty of the mounting, the nomads in splendid isolation and the Tibetan mastiffs which were popular in China as hunting dogs. The author's experience at Lake Mansarovar was in stark contrast to the experience of other travellers. For him the place was depressing, dispersing and uninspiring. The sanctity and spirituality of Lake Masarovar fails to make an impact on the author. The authors stay in Darchen is marked by his nocturnal fear of death, his visit to Darchen Medical College and undergoing a five-day course of Tibetan Medicine. The second thoughts author had been developing about the Kora were dispellel after his meeting with Norbu, a Tibetan, working in Beijing at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, neither was he a practising Buddhist nor was he well-equipped for the pilgrimage.

Shoret Answers Type Questions

1. Why were Tibetan mastiffs popular in China's imperial courts?.
2. Why had Hor been described as a miserable place by the narrator?
3. Who was Norbu? How did Narrator feel on meeting him?
4. How did cold and altitude effect the narrator?
5. Why was the narrator's experience at Darchen disappointing?
6. Justify the title of the Lesson "Silk Road"?
7. What was the purpose of author's journey to Mount Kailash? How did Tsetan help him during the journery?
8. Compare the narrator's experience at Hor to the earlier accounts of the place given by travellers?
9. Describe the difficulties faced by the narrator during his journey to Mount Kailash?

Q.1. Who was Lhamo? What farewell gift did she give to author?

Ans. Lhamo was a Tibetan women who had set up a tent fore pilgrims near Raru. She was honest and helpful. She offered a long sleeved sheep skin coat as a farewell gift.

Q.2. Who did the party come across after leaving Raru?

Ans. From the gently rolling hills of Raru, the author's car came to vast open plains. They saw a few antelopes grazing and further on, they saw a heard of wild ass raising a pall of dust. As the car approached them, they galloped away.

Q.3. What does the author tell you about Tibetan mastiffs?

Ans. The Tibetan mastiffs were huge block dogs with rough hair. They were very ferocious. They barked furiously and appeared fearlessly in front of the vehicle for there very qualities they became popular in China's imperial courts as hunting dogs.

Q.4. What impression did the two towns Hor and Darchen leave on the author's mind?

Ans. Hor was a small town, close to Mansarovar lake. It was a miserable place, with no greenery. The author found the place in contrast to the accounts he had read about lake Mahasrovar. He drank some herbal tea in the cafe there.

The author's next half was at Darchen. It was also a dusty place with heaps of rubble and litter lying here and there. His cold had become worse and he could not breathe. He stayed awake all right. The town had a couple of general stores which sold Chinese goods.

Q.5. Who was Norbu? How did the other strike friendship with Norbu?

Ans. Norbu was a Tibetan scholar who used to write articles about holy lake. He was working at an academy in Beijing. It was his first to the place. He knew a bit of English. This brought him closer to author. He was n't practising Buddhist. He suggested that they should hire some yaks to carry their luggage and start their journey. He turned out to be an ideal companion.

Long Answers Type Questions

Q.1. What difficulties did the author encounter and overcome when he set out to reach Mount Kailash?

Ans. The author set out from Ravu to complete the Kora. to the destination "Mount Kailash, "beyond Mansarovar lake he had to face many difficulties. Rocks, snow and height problems made the journey risky.

On the way, the came across gazelles grazing drokbas minding their sheep. He saw

normals tents with huge Tibetan dogs guarding them. The author had his first physical problem when he felt the pressure mounting up in his ears. The Tsetan saw snow lying across the tracks. Tsetan spray dirt on the frozen surface to make it rough and safe.

By afternoon they reached the small town of Hor. It was dusty, dry and rocky At Darchen he had an cold attack. He took some medicine from Tibetan doctor. The next day he met Norbu, who could speak English. Both decided to continue their "Kora" together.