

Quality

Q.1. 'That tenement had a certain quiet distinction'. Whose tenement was it and how could it be identified?

It was the tenement owned by the Gessler brothers. Two little shops had been let into one. It was situated in a small by-street in West End. The tenement had a certain 'quiet distinction'. There was no sign upon its face, except his own German name of Gessler Brothers. In the window, pairs of unvarying boots were arranged systematically.

Q.2. Why was it inconceivable for the author to imagine that Gessler had bought the boots that were placed in the window?

Gessler made fine boots of unvarying top quality. They hardly appeared to be the creation of human hands. The narrator wondered if he bought them from outside and placed them in the window. But it was inconceivable. He couldn't tolerate in the shop leather on which he had not worked himself.

Q.3. When do you first get the inkling that the author loves boots?

We first get the inkling that the author loves boots when he was promoted to Gessler. He was hardly fourteen at that time. Even at that age he had some inkling that Gessler and his brother were not ordinary shoemakers. They possessed both dignity and quality. The kind of boots, Gessler made demanded some wonderful and mysterious art of shoe-making.

Q.4. The shoe-maker's face is compared to leather. Describe the comparison.

Gessler was a little man. His crinkly face looked like leather. So were his 'quick crinkly reddish hair and beard.' The folds slanting down his cheeks were similar to the folds that appeared in leather. Like leather he was 'stiff and slow of purpose.' But his eyes were different. They were grey blue and reflected simple gravity.

Q.5. How is the author able to differentiate between the two brothers?

It was very difficult to differentiate between the two brothers. The elder brother was so y like him. Both had crinkly faces and crinkly reddish hair. The elder brother also looked pale like him. The narrator was not quite sure of him until the meeting was over. He could recognize that it was his elder brother when he would utter: 'I will ask my brudder.

Q.6. Why was it not possible to buy boots more often from Gessler?

It was not possible to go to Gessler very often. He made wonderful tough shoes. They lasted terribly long. They were not like the other ordinary shoes. They were 'something beyond the temporary'. They were the finest specimen of shoe-making. Looking at them one felt as if the very 'essence of boots' had been 'stitched into them'.

Q.7. What kind of feeling was generated when one entered Gessler's shop?

As one entered Gessler's shop a unique feeling was generated. The shop was different as it didn't reflect the mood of 'Please serve me, and let me go!' The shop reflected the quietness and peace of a church. Gessler could be seen sitting on the single wooden chair waiting for a customer. Hardly anybody came there. The shop smelled smoothly of leather.

Q.8. Why did the author order three pairs of boots when he wanted only two?

It was the only time when Gessler ever discussed the conditions and difficulties of his trade. He told the author that he was struggling hard to survive. The business was very low. On the other hand, big companies were minting money. They could attract customers through publicity and advertisement. The author ordered three pairs of boots though he needed only two. It was done to express his sympathy and patronage to him.

Q.9. Why did Gessler's bill for the four pairs of boots shock the author?

Gessler usually sent his bill on the quarter day. It was the first day of the legal quarter of the year. All three monthly accounts were settled on that day. But when he found the bill in one of the four pairs that were sent to him in a parcel, he was in for a shock. Gessler had never sent the bill in such a fashion ever before.

Q.10. Gessler, the shoe-maker is destroyed. What brought about his death?

Gessler, the shoemaker, is destroyed by the fierce competition. He was the finest shoe-maker in London. But the poor shoe-maker couldn't stand the competition posed by the big shoe-companies. They could attract customers through publicity and advertisement. Moreover, he was too slow and the customers couldn't wait for him. He had to sell one portion of his shop. He was not left even with a penny. Slowly and surely starvation led to his slow death.

Q.11. Gessler was destroyed but not defeated. Do you agree with the statement? Justify with instances from the text.

Certainly, Gessler was destroyed but not defeated. He made the finest shoes of top quality. Unfortunately, people didn't patronise him. Gessler couldn't compromise with the quality. He took his own time to make shoes. He was too slow and the customers wouldn't wait for him. He was starved to slow death but worked all his life on his own terms.