Study of Shylock

English Literature
A. M.
1904
Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2013

http://archive.org/details/studyofshylock00youn
A STUDY OF SHYLOCK

BY

SADIE YOUNG, B. S.,
(UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA) 1902

THESIS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS
IN ENGLISH LITERATURE

IN THE

GRADUATE SCHOOL

OF THE

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS.

1904.
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

May 27 1904

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT THE THESIS PREPARED UNDER MY SUPERVISION BY

Sadie Young, B. S.

ENTITLED A Study of Shylock

IS APPROVED BY ME AS FULFILLING THIS PART OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

of Master of Arts

Daniel Kilham Dodge

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT OF The English Language and Literature
A STUDY OF SHYLOCK

In the portrayal of his characters, Shakspere holds "as 'twere the mirror up to Nature" and in the case of many it is not the nature of any particular age, but of all ages, universal nature. Accordingly, as in men and women of nature's own making, different people form different ideas of them and have different feelings toward them at different times, and it is not without a degree of correctness that several opinions of some of the characters may be formed. This is particularly noticeable in the character of Shylock; he is both an individual and a type; to one age he appears a villain, to another a half-pathetic creation, a victim. In a word, he is a great Shaksperean creation which may be studied almost as a human being.

Even in Shakspere's time the Jewish usurer was a conventional character. Shylock, therefore, is not an original creation. In writing the Merchant of Venice Shakspere probably made use of an earlier play, The Jew, of which nothing is known save its name and the fact that in it the bond and casket stories were united. The hero's principal prototype is Marlowe's Jew of Malta. And Shylock, Shakspere's humanized portrait of the Jew, embodied distinct reminiscences of Barabas, Marlowe's caricature. Among the many resemblances in detail between the two plays, the following may be selected as the most striking:
The Jew of Malta  
Act I, Scene I.  
The first appearance of Barabas. He enumerates his argosies.

Ib.  
"These are blessings promised to the Jews."

"Hercin was old Abraham's happiness."

Act I, Scene II  
"You have my goods, my money, and my wealth. ... you can request no more unless you take my life."

Ib.  
"What, bring you Scripture to confirm your wrongs?"

Act II, Scene I  
"Oh, my girl, My gold, my fortune, my felicity;  

The Merchant of Venice  
Act I, Scene III  
The first appearance of Shylock. He enumerates Antonio's argosies.

Ib.  
The whole passage about Jacob, with a reference to Abraham, ending: "This is the way to thrive, and he was bless'd. And thrift is blessing, if men steal it not."

Act 10, Scene I  
"Nay, take my life, and all ... You take my life when you do take the means whereby I live."

Act I, Scene III.  
"The devil can cite Scripture for his purpose."

Act II, Scene VIII  
"My daughter!—0, my ducats!—0, my daughter! ... Justice! the law! my ducats,
Oh, girl, oh, gold, oh, beauty, oh, my bliss!"

**Act II, Scene III**
"I learned in Florence how to kiss my hand,
Have up my shoulders when they called me dog,
And duck as low as any bare foot Friar."

**Act II, Scene III**
Barabas and Slave against hearty feeders in general.

and my daughter!"

**Act I, Scene III**
"Still have I borne it with a patient shrug:
For sufferance is the badge of all our tribe."

**Act II, Scene V**
Shylock says of Launcelot Gobbo, "The patch is kind enough; but a huge feeder."
Nevertheless, in this as in every instance where Shakspere makes use of the labor of his predecessors, the transforming power of his genius is plainly evident. It is needless to comment upon the artistic difference between the two plays. Avarice, cruelty, revengefulness, with no softening element but that of paternal love, are the elements of which the two principal characters are compounded, the psychological distinction in their conception consisting not in the elements themselves, but in the manner in which these are combined. Shakspere shows the immeasurable superiority of his art to that of Marlowe in not allowing either avarice or desire for revenge to attain to such a pitch in his Jew as to take the character entirely out of the range of human nature. In contrast to the unrelieved blackness of Barabas, Shylock's character remains truly human and within the range of dramatic possibility. Shylock in the midst of his savage purpose is a man, his motive, feelings, resentments have something human in them, "If you wrong us, shall we not revenge?" But Barabas is a mere monster who kills in sport, poisons whole nunneries and invents infernal machines. He says:

"........... I walk abrod a nights
And kill sick people, ............
Sometimes I goe about and poison wells."

Yet there are some softening features in his portrayal. He gives in defence of his conduct the following plea:
"It's no sin to deceive a Christian,
For they themselves hold it a principle,
Faith is not to be kept with heretics,"

which contains a suggestion of Shylock's, "if a Christian wrong
a Jew, what should his sufferance be by Christian example?
Why, revenge." And his paternal love is much greater than
Shylock's. It is also noteworthy that he refused to become a
Christian. Shakspere was undoubtedly well acquainted with the
Jew of Malta, but a careful comparison of the characters of
Barabas and Shylock shows that he caught from it only a few
trifling hints.

Brandes suggests that the name, Shylock, was taken from
the Hebrew Schelach found in the Old Testament, Genesis X:24.(1)
Ward, that "It was taken from a pamphlet of unknown date,
called Caleb Shillock, His Prophecie." (2) However, the former
explanation is rather forced, and the latter may be regarded as
doubtful.

From the fact that the Jews were expelled from England by
Edward I, in 1290, and were not permitted to return until 1650,
it has been inferred that Shakspere could have acquired no
personal knowledge of the Jews unless he obtained it abroad,
and that the original of the astonishingly faithful portrait
of the Jew, Shylock, must have been studied out of England.
However, the researches of Sidney Lee have shown that this
general belief, that the decree of Edward I was strictly car-
ried into effect, and that no Jew was permitted to set foot
upon English soil, until its repeal during Cromwell's Protectorate, was false, even though it was founded upon the authority of learned historians. No doubt, a large number of Jews were expelled from England during Edward I's reign, but it is improbable that the entire race was weeded out. On the evidence of contemporary manuscript, we can safely assert that Jews were living in England during Shakspere's lifetime. "In the State Papers relating to the marriage of Katharine of Aragon with Arthur, Prince of Wales, we are told that Henry VIII had a long interview with the Spanish envoy to discuss the presence of Jews in England. Similarly in a very rare tract descriptive of English society and evidently written within the first period of the seventeenth century, we are informed that 'a store of Jewes we have in England; a few in Court; many in the City, more in the Country.'" (1) And Elizabeth's personal physician, Roderigo Lopez, was a converted Jew. Shakspere, therefore, had an opportunity of studying Jewish character without leaving England, and the original of Shylock may have been some Jewish banker or merchant in London.

It has also been established that the passionate outburst of Anti-Semitism which the conspiracy of Dr. Lopez aroused led to the production of the Merchant of Venice. This fact may have suggested to Mr. Sidney Lee his idea that Lopez was the original of Shylock. "After showing almost convincing ground of probability that Lopez is well known both to Shakspere and to Burbadge, who sustained the character of Shylock, (1) Furness, p. 393.
Mr. Lee, then, refers to certain important points connected with the story of Lopez and the Merchant of Venice, which he finds; first, in the name Antonio; secondly, in the date of Henslowe's 'Venesyon Comodey' which Lee supposes to be the first rough draft whose existence was surmised by Hunter, brought out hastily in August, within three months of Lopez' execution in May. Thirdly, in their devotion to their family, says Lee, the two Jews resemble each other (perhaps the least emphasis that is laid on this point in Shylock's case the better.) Fourthly, and lastly, the reference to the wreck, which is noteworthy, Gratiano's reference to the twelve jurymen to send Shylock to the gallows; and in the allusion by Gratiano to the wolf who was hanged for human slaughter.” (1) And that the fact of Lopez being a Christian may have suggested the forcing of Christianity upon Shylock. However, except in the last, there is little or no force in any of these arguments; for there is no resemblance either in the character of Shylock or in any other feature of the plot to any of the circumstances which contributed to Lopez' notoriety.

Lopez' early history is hidden in obscurity. All authorities, however, are agreed that he was descended from a Spanish-Jewish family. He probably obtained his medical education at some southern University. Returning to England soon after he rapidly gained a reputation in his profession and in 1586 became sworn physician to Queen Elizabeth. An accomplished linguist, in 1590 at the Earl of Essex' request he acted as inter-

(1) Furness, p. 399.
preter to Antonio Perez whom Essex, had brought to England in order to stimulate the national hostility to Spain. Don Antonio proved querulous and a quarrel between Lopez and Essex soon occurred. Taking advantage of this, Spanish agents offered Lopez a bribe to poison Antonio and the Queen. Whether or not he agreed to the proposal is unknown. A letter from one of the agents to him was discovered and Lopez was arrested. At first it seemed as if he would be able to clear himself, for there was very little evidence against him. The Queen told Essex that he was "A rash and temerarious youth to enter into a matter against a poor man that he could not prove. Nevertheless, a most substantial jury found him guilty of all the treasons and judgment was passed with the applause of the world." (1) But his conviction may justly be ascribed to political intrigue and religious prejudice, as to the weight of any evidence against him. At the gallows he cried out that he loved the Queen and Antonio as well as he loved Jesus Christ. The people greeted this irony with loud peals of laughter and shouted, "He is a Jew." Lopez, however, was converted when a boy, and adopted the Christian religion. In Leicester's Commonwealth, a libel on his patron, Lopez is described as "Lopez, the Jew, and is accredited with all skill in poisoning and other arts." (2) On the other hand a friend of Leicester's speaks of him as a very honest person, and Bacon who was never well disposed toward him, wrote of him as, "A man very observing and officious and of a pleasing and pliable behavior." Perhaps the fact that

(1 & 2) Furness, p. 398.
Queen Elizabeth treated him with consideration may furnish some data for the estimation of his character.

Like any masterly artist Shakespeare introduced into his drama touch after touch of the kind which makes works of art endlessly suggestive to ages more and more remote in thought and feeling to the age which produced them. Yet more strongly than any of Shakespeare's plays, The Merchant of Venice emphasizes the remoteness from ourselves not only of Elizabeth's England, but also of Shakespeare, the Elizabethan playwright. For The Merchant of Venice of today can hardly be called The Merchant of Venice of Shakespeare's time, so greatly has the gradual change in the conception of the character of Shylock altered both the character and effect of the drama. Instead of being a popular bugbear, "baited with the rabble's curse," he has become a half failure, at least with the philosophical portion of the audience who are disposed to think that Jewish revenge is at least as good as Christian injuries. If he is conceived of as a grandly Hebraic figure, a representative of his suffering and oppressed race, not as a comic personage with a long nose and red baird, the play becomes a tragedy, is not a comedy as it was considered in Shakespeare's time.

In order to understand the effect which the character of Shylock produced upon an Elizabethan audience it is necessary to revive at least two dead sentiments which in the time of Shakespeare still survived; the abhorrence of interest and the abhorrence of the Jewish race. Although a lingering trace of the first feeling survives in the fact that the taking of a
high rate of interest is still regarded as a technical crime, yet except in some palpably monstrous case it has never impressed any living human being as being essentially evil. In Shakspere's time this feeling was quite reversed, people had been taught by centuries of ecclesiastical policy that whosoever took interest on money was essentially vile. According to the doctrine of the church usury was regarded as a grievous sin, nay, as a crime amenable to the ecclesiastical tribunals, which doctrine was confirmed by Benedict XIV even as late as the middle of the seventeenth century. This popular sentiment is expressed in Lord Bacon's Essay of Usury. To such a state of mind Shakspere's frank avowal that he takes interest on money amounts to a cynical boast of rascality which once for all repels sympathy.

Then, too, the Jew had been represented by centuries of churchly teaching as a living type of a race that had murdered an incarnate God. Consequently an aversion amounting to hatred and horror was indulged to this persecuted people; they were robbed, maimed, banished, most foully villified with the universal consent of the powerful and the lowly, the rich and the poor. Therefore the picture which Shakspere has drawn exhibits not only a faithful representation of Jewish sentiments and manners, the necessary results of a singular dispensation of Providence, but it embodies in colors of almost preternatural strength the Jew as he appeared to the eye of the shuddering Christian.

An imaginative effort to revive these old sentiments, to place ourselves in the position of an Elizabethan audience helps
us in some degree to understand Shylock's character. For he is first, the product of the original Jewish character, he acts according to his views of life and these are essentially Judaistic; secondly, he is that character in a strange country persecuted and outlawed by society.

Shylock is one of Shakspeare's most perfect characters. In richness, concreteness, and completeness of characterization he is unapproached and unapproachable. Complete in every respect, his activities embrace quite the sum of life. We see him in the business world, and in the bosom of his family, his relation with his enemies, the Christians, and his relations with his friends, the people of his own race. In a word, he is brought into contact with every form of society and brings his principles to the test through them all. Though we see thus every phase of his character, and feel as if we knew him better than we could have done in real life, comparatively little space is devoted to the elucidation of his character, only three hundred and seventeen lines, about one-fourth of the amount devoted to the development of Hamlet's character. However, this condensation is, in a manner necessary, since Shylock is not the principal character, only one of the principal characters in the play. The poet produced this condensed yet perfect whole by setting forth one side of his character, forthwith dismissing that and proceeding to another. For example, Shylock's keen penetrating sagacity and his malignant, remorseless guile are finely delivered in the scene with Antonio and Bassanio, where he is first solicited for the loan. And the strength and vehemence
of his passion are, if possible, even better portrayed in the scene with Antonio's friends, Solarino and Solanio, where he first betrays his intention of exacting the forfeiture.

With a wonderful degree of accuracy and verisimilitude, the manners and associations of the Jews are mingled with everything that Shylock says and does. In his portrayal, Shakespeare has filled the individual life and peculiarity the broad, strong outlines of the nation type. He is a Jew in character as well as in nationality; a type of national sufferings, sympathies, antipathies. Yet personal traits equally strong are interwoven with these strong national traits. He is not more a Jew than he is Shylock.

Shylock is, "a representative of the Jewish, national character in general, not of that venerable, grand, even though one-sided, misled spirit which animated the people in the days of ....... the Prophets, but of that low, degenerate, way of thinking into which the people had sunk during their dispersion ....... Their grand endurance and steadfastness, strict adherence to religious custom and law, had during those times changed into obstinacy and selfwill; their shrewd intellect into finesse and a talent for speculative combination; their love for inheritance which was insofar praiseworthy as it was united with a religious devotion to the land which God had given them, had gradually sunk into covetousness, into revolting avarice, a feeling of superiority over all other nations ...... had degenerated into bitter hatred and contempt and heartless cruelty toward their persecutors; nothing had escaped the universal
degredation except ....... that dry mummy-like tenacity of the Jewish nation." (1) Since Shylock possessed all these traits he may be said, "to be the pitiful ruin of a grand past, the glimmering spark of a vanished splendor which though it can no longer give warmth and light can burn and destroy." (2)

Shylock's two most prominent characteristics, desire for revenge and love of money are not essentially Jewish traits. They are common to all humanity. But in Shylock his nationality and the peculiar circumstances attending it cast over these purely personal traits a national tinge, and in him these traits are both individual and typical. His desire for revenge in so far as it is a longing for revenge upon Antonio as his personal foe, as it is the natural, human desire to injure one who has injured him is purely individual. But he hates Antonio not only because he, "has disgraced him and hindered him half a million," but because he has, "scorned his sacred nation," and in so far as he hates Antonio simply because he is a Christian and wishes as a Jew, a representative of the Hebrews, to injure a Christian, a representative of the Gentiles, his desire for revenge is national, typical.

There is undoubtedly this racial element in Shylock's hatred of Antonio and his consequent desire for revenge. But how much influence this element has it is hard to estimate, for his religion, patriotism, avarice, and affection all reinforce his personal and national hatred. Himself a Jew he hates Antonio as a Christian, himself a miserly usurer he hates him.

as a lender of money gratis, above all it was Antonio who had aided one of his race to steal away his daughter laden with his "precious, precious jewels."

The ardor which Shylock displays for his religion and his strong statements of the wrongs done to his people are found principally in the earlier portion of the play. However, even then religious feeling is not his principal motive, he plainly says;

"I hate him for he is a Christian
But more that in low simplicity
He lends out money gratis."

Yet racial feeling is evidently one of his motives and a prominent one. Later he repeats, "Antonio hates our sacred nation."

It had become so much a matter of course for a Jew to hate a Gentile, that in speaking of his reasons for hating Antonio he naturally thinks of this racial motive first. Then, too, he does not refer to Antonio and his friends by their individual names, but classes them all under the head of Christians.

Christians represent the oppressors of his people, his personal foe stands before him as the worst even of Christians, and is within the fangs of his power, the mal-treated Jew, now has the opportunity, for which he has long been watching, of throwing off by one desperate act the burden of shame and oppression heaped upon his people and himself. He will repay those injuries and with a rate of interest higher than he had ever imagined possible even in his wildest dreams. Religious feeling is thus not his most impelling motive, and later in the
play, when the injuries which the Christians have done him personally culminate in the seduction of his daughter he never mentions this motive.

Shylock's lust for vengence is not a Jewish but a universal, human characteristic. It is symbolical of the terrible effects which oppression and cruelty will have not only upon the Jews, but upon any unfortunate race. It is an aspect of character made possible by persecution and degradation.

Although avarice is not peculiar to the Jews it has been popularly ascribed to them as a racial characteristic; for they seem to have the faculty of accumulating wealth, even under the most adverse circumstances. And it is well for them that they possess this faculty, for money has been their sole source of power and the main factor of their survival. Since this is the case, Shylock's avarice may be regarded as typical. But the very fact that it is typical makes a virtue of a vice, it imparts to his avarice a smack of patriotism; money is the only defence of his people as well as himself, he desires it for their sake as well as his own.

Shylock was thoroughly saturated with the morality of the Old Testament, Judaism taught that the Jews were God's own peculiar people, that the world was for them and the fullness thereof, that the manifestation of God's favor was prosperity, Shylock beholds in his growing wealth the blessing of God, hence he well states his end in life to be thrift, and his motto, "Thrift, but no theft." Thrift was the offspring of his moral and spiritual being, of his religion. His avarice, therefore, is one of the
virtues of his religion carried to excess.

Possibly one of the most striking features of Jewish life was the prevalence of a deep respect for learning. The history of Judaism is really the history of its scholars. It was not unusual to find the humblest, most unlikely individuals possessed of keen, dialectical powers. Hence the logical forcefulness which Shylock displays in argument is one of his racial heritages.

"But what is the most surprising, doubtless, is the instinct of genius with which Shakspere has seized upon and reproduced racial characteristics, and emphasized what is peculiarly Jewish in Shylock's culture. While, Marlowe, according to his custom, made his Barabas revel in mythological similes, Shakspere indicates that Shylock's culture is founded entirely upon the Old Testament, and makes commerce his only point of contact with the civilization of later times. All his parallels are drawn from the Patriarchs and the Prophets. With what unction he speaks when he justifies himself by the example of Jacob! (1) He swears by "Jacob's staff" and "Father Abraham." "My deeds be upon my own head" sounds like an echo of that terrible invocation by which his nation centuries before drew down the curse upon themselves.

A close study and knowledge of the Old Testament are displayed in Shylock's allusions to it. He calls Launcelot "That fool of Hagar's offspring," and this allusion is particularly appropriate, Hagar having been bondswoman to Sarah, the wife of (1) Brandes, Vol. 1, p. 197.
Abraham, and having left her as Launcelot does Shylock under the supposed grievance of insufficient indulgence. One would rather have expected that he would have said a Solomon instead of a "Daniel come to judgment," but an examination of the subject shows that a Daniel is really the more fitting. Daniel was a "young youth" when he convicted the elders by their own mouths of false witness, Ezekiel XXVIII.

The very form and manner of his mental processes are Hebraic. "His course of thought perpetually takes the form of question and answer, a characteristic, but subordinate trait which appears in the style of the Old Testament, and reappears to this day in the representatives of primitive Jews." (1) One can feel though his words that there is a chanting quality in his voice. But it is only in moments of intense excitement when this trace of dialect or rather Jewish coloring appears. One, also, feels that he possesses that Jewish trait of expressing his thoughts or rather assisting their verbal expression by gestures. Then, too, there is that Hebraic quickness of thought and utterance in short, sharp, disconnected sentences. In interpreting his character Irving makes use of this characteristic. In scarcely more than a whisper Irving utters "How like a fallen publican he looks," but such concentrated malignity is breathed into this whispered snarl that it never fails to compel the awed attention of his hearers, who marvel that so much of loathing, of offended dignity, of petty spite can be conveyed in so brief a line, and it is in this very elaboration of brief

lines and broken sentences that Irving's Shylock is an unending marvel." (1)

Another Hebraic trait is his intense passionateness. Shylock is passionate in action, calculation, sensation, everything. Yet he possesses that fortunate mixture of obstinacy and submission which has kept the Jews from being annihilated and absorbed. He yields and is saved. From this passionateness arises his hatred of idleness. "To realize how essentially Judaistic this trait is we need only refer to the so-called Proverbs of Solomon. Shylock dismisses Launcelot with the words, 'Drones hive not with me.' Oriental rather than especially Jewish are the images in which he gives his passion utterance, approaching as they so often do to the parable form. Specially Jewish, on the other hand is the way in which this ardent passion manifests itself, and employs its energies, and parallels in the services of a curiously sober rationalism, so that a sharp biting logic which retorts every accusation with interest is always the controlling force." (2)

Shylock remorselessly rests his claim upon the letter of the law. According to his code he is strictly honorable, he will do nothing if it is not "so nominated in the bond." Mr. Lloyd thinks this insistence upon lex talonis, imexacting, the forfeiture of the bond is the epitome of the very history and genius of Judaism ...... bigoted upon the fulfillment of precept by the letter ...... The iron of this slavery has entered

(1) Record-Herald, Feb. 10, 1903.
(2) Brandes, Vol. 1, page 189.
into the very soul of Shylock and his appeal to his bond as identified with justice embodies the very soul and being of ceremonialism." (1) My. Philipson, on the other hand, says, "If it be pointed out that the fierce spirit of retaliation which Shylock shows .... is Jewish, because lex talonis is embodied in the Mosaic law we need only refer to later Jewish law books .... wherein it is expressly noted that no literal interpretation of the law was ever implied or intended, that retaliation in money was all that could be asked or required. When the money, therefore, is offered to Shylock had he acted in the sense of the Jewish law he would have accepted it. But Roman law permitted the creditor to beat, maltreat or mangle the debtor to his heart's content, for he was his property and on the Roman law the case rests." (2) These statements are not so conflicting as they at first seem. A high degree of formalism is embodied in the Mosaic code, but the Jews' well known habit of grasping after money makes it reasonable to suppose that had Shylock followed the usual custom of his race he would have accepted the ducats.

The strength and purity of their domestic ties has always formed one of the most prominent features of Jewish life. However, the picture given of Shylock's home life is not very inviting; to him his home is an object of care and to his daughter a "hell." But this is rather the result of unfortunate circumstances caused by his nationality and Jessica's selfishness

(1) Furness, p. 429.
(2) Philipson, p. 48.
than by any lack of fatherly feeling on his part. It would have been incongruent, nay impossible for the house of Shylock, the persecuted representative of an oppressed race, to be anything except "sober." The cloud which hangs over his race darkens his home. The beauty of his domestic life must necessarily consist not in gaiety, but in deep, sympathetic love which would soothe and in a manner atone for the injuries receives in the outer world. Unfortunately we do not find this, he loves his daughter deeply, inwardly a deep nature all his passions are intense. But he is reserved and does not manifest his love. His intense love creeps out even after his daughter has deserted him.

"Would any of the stock of Barabas

Had been her husband rather than a Christian."

However, we feel a lack of that sympathy and confidence between Shylock and Jessica which should exist between father and daughter, their relations are outward and formal. But this is Jessica's, not Shylock's fault, he tells her his troubles and entrusts her with the guardianship of his house and treasure; while she deceives, robs, and deserts him, goes over to his enemy without a single tinge of compunction, only anxious that her fortune "be not crost" in losing her father, and afterwards she does not even ask about him although she knows his life was in danger. Once only does she speak of him, and that is in order to aid his enemies.

Shylock has been called a heartless father, tyrannical and suspicious. It is true that he does not, and can not, for it is too deeply engrafted, leave the suspicious bitterness which
constant ill-treatment and deceit have engendered on his threshold. But a careful examination of the text shows that these accusations are almost, if not entirely, groundless. His command, "do not thrust your head into the public street," is not an exhibition of a tyrannical nature, but simply the outcome of his reverence for the customs of his people. And had Jessica been a true daughter of her race she would not have wished to look upon "the Christian fools." The passage, "What says that fool of Hagar's offspring?" which is quoted in proof of his being indicates suspicions not of his daughter, but of his servant. His confidence in her is shown by the fact that she easily induces him to believe that Launcelot is only paying her the ordinary courtesies of service. And it is surely no unloving father who in reply half blames himself for having parted with a servant who has shown such fitting respect to his child. Very effective is this reply when we remember how little Launcelot deserves his kindness and how cruelly his unworthy daughter was deceiving him.

In proof of the fact that he is a heartless father his angry words in Act III, Scene II are quoted. But are they not perfectly natural? Have not even Christian fathers disowned and disinherited daughters who have married against their will? The very intensity of his love makes the wound all the greater and increases the malignity of his denunciation. Reflect for a moment upon the profound bitterness of the old man, his only child, the one person in the world whom he loved and trusted, has deceived and abandoned him. Moreover, lost to all moral
sense, she has stolen his ducats and his jewels, the hated Christian will enjoy his hard earned wealth. It is not that Shakspere meant to represent Shylock as a suspicious, heartless father, nothing of this is in the text. It is simply that the demands of the plot make it necessary that this side of his character should not be strikingly portrayed.

Like Barabas, Shylock shows two minor yet typical traits in his abhorrence of pork, and in his denial of his wealth.

Not only are typical and personal traits so united in Shylock as to make of him both an individual and a type, but these different elements are so attempered and fused together as to make it almost impossible to determine their respective influence.

Shylock has, indeed, strong grounds for hating Antonio personally. The proud merchant has insulted him in the Rialto. The sensitiveness of merchants to the opinion of the Exchange is illustrated in Johnson's "Every Man in His Humor," where Kitley, the rich merchant in old Jewry, exclaims, "Lost is my fame forever, talk for th' Exchange." Antonio has also touched him in his weakest point, hindered him half a million, but above all Antonio aids in the seduction of his daughter.

Shakspere has taken pains to make Shylock's vindictiveness perfectly natural, even excuseable. Antonio indulges in such malicious race prejudice, is so bitter toward him that we almost unconsciously take Shylock's part. Shylock inherits a nature embittered by centuries of vile abuse and outrage, and his own wretched experience has only exaggerated the bitterness. A strong
tinge of right and justice is mixed with his gull and bitterness.

"Thou call'st me dog before thou hadst a cause;
But, since I am a dog, beware my fangs!"

The longing for revenge is almost inseparable from a sense of wrong. And during the whole of his life Shylock has received nothing but rebuffs, injustice, harshness, and contempt, stood around his cradle, hatred and persecution obstructed every path in his career. He is entirely lacking in the freedom and carelessness which distinguish a ruling class.

A strong element of pathos surrounds the lonely figure battling against so many odds. Shylock is entirely isolated. His daughter, the one person whom he loved, and who should have aided and comforted him, deserts him. Although clannishness is a prominent Jewish trait, he has no friends among the members of his own race: Tubal, who seems to be his warmest friend, joins his enemies in teasing him. The Christians habitually and universally treat him with contempt. Even men who in other respects are good hearted show him no mercy. Antonio, who is exceedingly benevolent and generous, continually pursues with injustice the subjected man he has been taught to loathe; Solarino, who within his own circle is the pleasantest of men, seems to enjoy taunting the suffering Jew with his daughter's flight; Solarino, Gratiano, Launcelot, and the rabble all join in reviling him even when it seems as if the feelings of mere common humanity would prompt them to have some mercy upon a fallen foe.

However, Shylock has become serenely indifferent to abuse, when he did not deserve it it had been heaped upon him and now
that he does deserve it it has no effect. Then, too, his pride prevents the atmosphere of odium which he breathes from sickening him. Though he cringes and appears as servile as a dog, yet the lowest opinion which the Lords of Venice have of him is reverence itself compared with his highest opinion of them. He is an aristocrat in every drop of his blood, and sets more store upon any drop that trickles in a Hebrew beggar's veins than upon the richest strain they can boast from their upstart sires.

We cannot help sympathizing with the proud nature forced to bear insults and injuries without any means of redress. With no escape valve, and in his loneliness, constantly brooding over his wrongs, it is not strange that he is so fiercely malignant and clings so tenaciously to his long delayed opportunity for revenge. "It is the wrath of many years condensed into one heated thunderbolt against one devoted head." (1)

When the play opens Shylock is at the point where he can no longer restrain himself, his wrath must have vent in words if in nothing more. Just when he has given up all hope, an opportunity for revenge came. In this first scene, his intense hatred of Antonio and the beginning of his scheme for revenge are shown. Also, the treatment which he receives from Antonio, this serves to make the relentless hatred which he displays later on more credible and not altogether unnatural. In a very effective manner he is contrasted with Antonio, and the grounds of the hatred, racial as well as personal which he cherishes against the wealthy merchant are given. Antonio is forced to ask a favor of the

(1) Giles, p. 122.
hated Jew, to him the interview is intensely repugnant; but to
Shylock it is a triumph, the most insolent of his Christian
foes is in a suppliant attitude before him. He seeks for some
means of prolonging the delightful sensation. The speech, "I
had forgot .... you told me so," is in the manner of one ab-
sent. Their previous conversation suggests a subject, he will
try to prove to Antonio that it is not wrong to take interest
on money.

Since it was a familiar phenomenon the ancient mind could
understand how cattle could by the agency of time increase, but
how could lifeless metal increase? In explanation Shylock cites
the patriarch Abraham's clever trick in cattle dealing. Anto-
nio, however, cannot see it in this light, and interrupts, "Is
your gold and silver ewes and lambs?" With this notion then of
flesh versus money floating in the air the interview goes on to
outbursts of mutual hatred which reach a climax in Antonio's
challenge to Shylock "to do his worse." This challenge suddenly
combines with the root idea of the conversation "to flash into
Shylock's mind the suggestion of the bond. In an instant he
smoothes his face and proposes friendship. He will lend money
without interest in pure kindness, nay more, he will go to that
extent of good fellowship and understanding implied in joking,
and will have 'a merry bond;' while as a particular joke (he
says in effect), since you cannot understand interest in the case
of money, while you acknowledge it in case of flesh and blood,
suppose I take as my interest in this bond a pound of your flesh.
In such a context the monstrous proposal seemed almost natural."(1)
(1) Moulton, p. 64.
Bassanio, however, mistrusts it, but Shylock has so worded the proposal that the proud Antonio cannot refuse; besides Shylock's argument "If he should break his day what should I gain," seems reasonable.

Shortly before the three months have elapsed, the Christians, Antonio's friends, and assisted by him seduced Shylock's daughter, and it is when he is most overcome with rage and grief at her loss that he gives the first intimation of his savage purpose. Solanio is taunting him with his loss, when he suddenly remembers the rumor in regard to Antonio's losses, and asks him about it, Shylock savagely replies, "Let him look to his bond."

Yet we cannot blame Shylock, for, stung beyond endurance with masterly eloquence and unanswerable logic, he sets forth the right and justice which he has on his side, "Hath not a Jew eyes? etc." Here if anywhere Shylock appears as the deputy and avenger of his race. In his tones we hear the protest of a cruelly maltreated nation. It is no mere outburst of personal hatred, but a logical statement of irrefutable facts; no appeal to the emotions, but to the intellect; he would not lower the dignity of his race by trying to excite commiseration in the breast of a Christian, but he portrays their actions in such a manner as to reveal their hypocrisy, their utter lack of the true spirit of Christianity. Into the last portion of his speech the personal element enters, he gives an intimation of his deadly purpose, "The villany you teach me I will execute." This excuses his implacableness, the denunciation is justifiable, whatever it be it will no more than equal his instruction.
In the scene with Tubal the opposing passions of grief and exultation are exhibited in the deepest intensity and quickest succession. Yet his outbursts of sorrow and rage at the elopement of his daughter alternating in such sharp contrast with his diabolical expressions of joy at the losses experienced by Antonio produce a decidedly comic effect. He is so impatient for revenge that he can hardly wait, "Go, Tubal, fee me an officer; .... a fortnight before. Go, .... and meet me at our synagogue." Hugo interprets this line as implying that Shylock thinks, "It is his sacred duty to insist upon the fulfillment of the bond. Just a little while before he has invoked the ancient of days ..... Henceforth his vengeance assumes a consecrated character, his bloodthirstyness against Christians becomes sacredotal." (1) But the fact that Shylock after a pause for making up his mind drops the knife to clutch the money destroys this argument. This action of Shylock's is disappointing, ceaseless ruin has fallen upon him, why then does he not redeem his vow and drag his enemy down with him? Antonio's gushing blood would hide all former stains on his Jewish gai-

In the trial scene Shylock's character reaches its highest development, his lust for vengeance its highest pitch. He is exultant, for a long time the obtaining of revenge has been his leading motive, and at last his deadly foe is within his power. But there is no real joy in his exultation, joy is a thing apart from Shylock. In Shylock we see the remains of an originally

(1) Hugo, p. 43.
noble nature out of which all the genial sap of humanity has been pressed by constant abuse and injury. Once, when Leah was alive, love was not unfamiliar to him, and the wealth of his ideas and the felicitous language in which they are expressed show that he is endowed with many intellectual gifts. But so hardened has he become not even flattery can beguile him into accepting the Duke's ingenious plan for gracefully retiring from his stand. His anger blinds him to the fact that the proud Antonio would far rather die than be indebted for his life to the magnanimity of a despised Jew. However, Shylock is no wild animal. He manages to keep his anger within the bonds of the law.

The Duke's conciliating speech shows that Shylock has the law on his side. This is the one vestige of right granted to the poor Jew. No wonder that he clings to it. His money has bought him so much of power, should the Jews, the controllers of commerce, refuse to trade with Venice, should it be noised abroad that strangers were not protected by its laws, its commerce would be ruined. The Duke gets up in the middle of the night in order to search for Jessica, and he is compelled to make at least a pretence of following the law, of doing justice to Shylock.

Even unto the last Antonio cannot resist the temptation to abuse Shylock:-

"You may as well do anything most hard,

As seek to soften that-- than which what's harder?--

His Jewish heart."
The noble, magnanimous merchant resents the ill treatment which he receives from Shylock, and never considers its cause. He seems to expect the despised Jew to bear patiently and forgive all injuries, to be more Christlike than himself. Shylock cannot understand that he is in the wrong, and his deep sense of injury and this consciousness of being in the right give force to his arguments. As the law acknowledges no principle of equity toward him he will acknowledge none in his interpretation of it. Its spirit being avowedly his foe he does not scruple to make its letter his friend. He has long looked to others for mercy, and has not received even justice, and therefore when others look to him for mercy he will not give even justice. He will vouchsafe no reason for taking the pound of flesh other than, "It it will feed nothing else it will feed my revenge," a reason all the more satisfactory to him because he knows that those to whom he gives it can neither allow nor refute it. He is simply carrying out the terms dictated by Antonio.

"..... lend it rather to thine enemy
Who if he break thou mayst with better face
Exact the penalty."

After that it is the rankest hypocrisy for Antonio to expect any mercy at Shylock's hands.

Shylock's most strongly marked characteristic in the trial scene is his malignant malice, his intense, all-absorbing desire for revenge. Even his avarice sinks into insignificance, and the passion must indeed be strong which can overcome the force of years of devotion to money. Until his enemies, "can rail
the seal off his bond, all their railings are but a foretaste of
the revenge he seeks. In his eagerness to taste that morsel
sweeter to him than all the luxuries of Italy, his recent af-
flictions all fade from his mind. In his inexorable and imper-
turable hardness at the trial there is something that makes the
blood to tingle. It is the sublimity of malice. We feel that
the yearnings of revenge have silenced all other cares and all
other thoughts. In his rapture of hate the man has grown super-
human, his eyes seem all aglow with preturatural malignity.
Fearful, however, as is his passion, he comes not off without
moving out pity. In the very act whereby he thinks to revenge
his own and his brethren's wrongs, the national curse overtakes
him. In standing for the letter of the law against all the
pleadings of mercy, he has strengthened his enemies' hands, and
sharpened their weapons against himself; And the terrible Jew
sinks at last into the poor, pitiable, heartbroken Shylock." (1)

In spite of the fact that we plainly see Shylock's moral
deformities he yet strongly appeals to our sympathies. Shaks-
pere arouses this generous feeling by making Shylock's nature
comprehensible, he shows us his inmost being, and prompts us to
put ourselves in his place. Shylock is a Jew, a member of a
chosen race which has borne the curse of bondage for centuries.
By placing it in this historical light the poet elevates his
figure and at the same time renders it humanly comprehensible.
His motives, religious hatred, avarice and revenge, justify in a
manner his actions. While portraying Shylock as a monster Shaks-

(1) Hudson, p. 75.
pere secures for him a hold on our sympathy by representing him as the victim of intolerable ill-treatment. And because Shylock is created with so much sympathetic objectiveness we feel dissatisfied with the denouement. Our reason tells us that even if he is prevented from carrying out his bloody purpose, is remorselessly punished and mortally wounded in what he holds most dear, this is nothing more than poetic justice. But our sympathies do not permit us to be reconciled to the idea that his fate which moves us so tragically should not be considered as a tragedy.

Shylock believes that at last he has the law on his side, and Portia confirms him in this opinion, until he is almost in the very act of taking his enemy's life. When he recovers from his surprise he takes refuge in his one stronghold, the law. But even the law now fails him. Quickly he grasps the fact that he is defeated, and accustomed all his life to disappointment and the acceptance of the next best thing he hastily says, "I take his offer." But this is now denied him, not only that, he is also, mulcted of his fortune, and his life is in danger.

But the Duke in order to show him the difference of the Christian spirit pardons him his life before he asks it. Shylock, however, did not appreciate this kindness, without his wealth life is nothing to him. Neither do we, "Instead of treating him well they should have made him walk in order to heap coals of fire on his head, and thereby heaping coals of fire on his head."

(1) In pursuance of this policy Antonio forgives Shylock the half of his fortune, but under conditions which are almost worse than the

loss of the fortune itself. Probably, the fact that Dr. Lopez was a converted Jew suggested the insertion of the condition that Shylock become a Christian.

The scope of the play immensely widens with the entrance of Shylock. The secret wisdom of the East, the stubborn patience of a persecuted, imperishable race, hoarded wrath for personal wrongs, burns beneath his Jewish gaberdine. He is mysterious and suggests unanswerable questions. Did he cause the reports of Antonio's losses to be spread? Early in the play when Shylock is bid forth to Bassanio's supper, and Launcelot urges him to go because my master, "doth expect your reproach," Shylock replies, "So do I his," "Of course, he expects that reproach through the bankruptcy of Antonio. This would seem to infer that Shylock has some hand in getting up the reports of Antonio's losses at sea; which reports, at least some of them, turn out false in the end. Further than this, the poet leaves us in the dark as to how these reports grew into being and gained belief. Did he mean to have it understood that the Jew exercised his cunning and malice in plotting and preparing them? It appears, at all events, that Shylock knew they were coming before they came, yet I suppose the natural impression from the play is, that he lent the ducats and took the bond on the mere chance of coming at his wish. But he would hardly grasp so eagerly at the bare possibility of revenge, without using means to turn it into something more. This would mark him with much deeper lines of guilt. Why, then, did not Shakspere bring the matter forward more prominently. Perhaps it was because the
doing so would make Shylock appear too deep a criminal for the degree of interest that his part was meant to carry in the play. In other words, the health of the drama, as a work of comic art, required that his criminality be kept in the background. He comes very near overshadowing the other characters too much, as it is. And Shylock's character is essentially tragic, there is none of the proper timber of comedy in him." (1)

Defeated, Shylock goes home to brood alone over his defeat, to upbraid himself for having left a loophole in the bond by which the hated Christian could escape. Does he lash himself into such a fury that he commits suicide? He would not give his life even in exchange for the life of his bitterest foe, would he therefore wantonly sacrifice it?

German criticism to the contrary, it is not necessary to suppose that Shakspere had any special views in regard to the removal of Jewish disabilities in his portrayal of the character of Shylock. Shakspere was not a doctrinaire; but essentially a dramatist in an unusually high degree the faculty of entering into the feelings of his characters. The sympathy aroused by Shylock's character is merely the result of the unconscious tact with which it was humanized by its author.

In Shylock, Shakspere retained the grotesquerie which might please the rabble, while at the same time turning their scorn to laughter. Even, when Mr. Irving is giving his powerful and pathetic impersonation, the occasional laugh reminds us how easily some parts of the text might lend themselves to a farcical

interpretation, if the painted nose and comic gesture were present. However, except for a reference to the "red haired Jew" in "A Funeral Elegy on Burbadge" we have no ground for the belief that Shylock was presented on the Elizabethan stage in a comic light.

"No records of any performance of the Merchant of Venice have been discovered, earlier than 1701. In that year a much altered version by the Marquis of Lansdowne was produced in London. The Shylock of this version was a broadly comic person, with the huge nose and red wig of the traditional Judas. Forty years later Macklin revived Shakspeare play and played Shylock in something resembling the modern manner. From that time to this Shylock has looked not like a Hebrew but like a Jew." (1)

Hazlitt says, "When we first went to see Mr. Kean in Shylock, we expected to see what we had been used to see, a decrepit old man, bent with age, and ugly with mental deformity, with the venom of his heart congealed in the expression of his countenance sullen morose, inflexible, brooding over one idea, and fixed on one unalterable purpose, that of his revenge. We were disappointed because we had taken our ideas from other actors, not from the play. There is no truth there that Shylock is old, but a single line, 'Bassanio and old Shylock both stand forth,' which does not imply that he is infirm with age— and the circumstance that he had a daughter marriageable which does not imply that he is old at all. It would be too much to say that his body should be crooked and deformed to answer to his mind, which

(1) Furness, p. 70.
is bowed down and warped with prejudices and passions. That he has but one idea is not true, he has more ideas than any other person in the piece, and if he is intense in the pursuit of his purpose, he shows the utmost elasticity, vigor, and presence of mind in the means of attaining it." (1)

Edwin Booth says, 'My notion of Shylock is of the traditional type, a strongly marked and somewhat grotesque character ..... I believe, that Burbadge, Macklin, Cooke, and Kean made Shylock 'a character part', - grotesque in makeup and general treatment, not so pronounced perhaps as my personation has been sometimes censured for. ..... As a martyr and avenger ..... he does not cast a shadow sufficiently strong to contrast with the sunshine of the comedy, ..... His refusal to accept thrice the amount he loaned seems to have given some critics the idea that he was a great avenger of his wronged people ...... but had he accepted what a lame and impotent conclusion it would have been. ..... this un-Jewish action was necessary for stage effect.' (2)

"The basis of Irving's conception is simplicity. His Shylock is a stern, greedy, irascible, old man, very shrewd, altogether unforgiving, but capable of any degree of dissimulation."

"Peculiarly interesting is the extravagance of gesture and utterance with which Irving treats the role, when Shylock's plot against Antonio's life is taking form in his mind. They increase with the ebbing of his fortune ..... but these evidences of agon-

(1) Hazlitt, p. 276.
(2) Furness, pp. 383-4.
izing mental stress subside when victory seems within his grasp."

(1)

Shylock is everything but a common Jew; he possesses a very determinate individuality, yet we perceive a light touch of Judaism in everything that he says and does. A comparison of Shylock with some of the best efforts of later authors illustrates this point. This is particularly noticeable in Molière's L'Avare. Shylock is a man complete in every respect, we see every aspect of his life and character. He is something more than mere avarice which is but one of the manifestations of his deeper nature, it is really the outcome of his religious nature, his motto, is "Thrift, but no theft." Shylock is avaricious but hardly a miser; while Harpagon is a miser in the harshest sense of the word and we see only this one phase of his character. Cut off from the world in obscurity, dirt, and rags, he holds fast to his money bags. When you say that he was tyrannical in his family, niggardly in his household, an extortionate usurer, you express quite all there is to him. He is almost like an abstract personification of vice, while Shylock is a concrete individual.

In his portrayal of the Jew, Scott evidently had Shakspere's Jew in mind, for several chapters in Ivanhoe are headed by quotations from the Merchant of Venice. But there is no essential resemblance between the two characters. More miserly than Shylock, always trembling for his hoard, lying and deceiving in order to retain his wealth, Isaac is represented chiefly as the

(1) Record-Herald.
guardian of his treasure. Unlike Shylock, scarcely once does he speak of the sufferings of his people, or resent the indignities heaped upon him because he is a Jew. Although in reality, Isaac possesses more redeeming traits than Shylock he does not arouse so much sympathy, because he does not possess Shylock's strength and power, he is forever cringing and fawning. Once he rises above himself, the heart of a father conquers avarice. When he discovers that his child is in danger even to him money is naught; he throws off the hypocritical guise and appears in all the strong anger, intense anguish of a father whose child is threatened with evil, "Reduce me to beggary if thou wilt ... but spare my daughter."

No portrayal of Jewish character in the real of fiction is more widely known or has been the subject of so much discussion as Shylock, no creation of Shakspere's with the exception of Hamlet has received greater attention than the Jew as by him portrayed. He has been regarded from all points of view: as the incarnation of wickedness on the one hand, as the injured party seeking redress on the other; as the villain by this critic, as the justifiable plaintiff by that; as the Christian baiting fire-eater by one, as the ardent champion of his religion and his nation by another. His motives, his actions, his character, his every word have been examined and criticised and every one has found something to censure, to excuse, to reprove, to justify, to condemn, to condone.

It seems plain that the outburst of Anti-Semitism aroused by the trial and execution of Dr. Lopez impelled Shakspere to
write the Merchant of Venice. Lopez, however, was not the original of Shylock. Nor was Marlowe's Barabas Shylock's prototype, although a few trifling resemblances between the two characters are discernable. The play contains a veiled acknowledgment of the Jew's humanity, but this was not discerned by Shakspere's contemporaries. For we know that the first impersonator of Shylock was made up to represent Judas in the old miracle plays, presumably in order to impress the spectators with his villâny. After the Restoration Shylock was degraded into a grotesque comic character. From this shameful misconception of Shakspere's purpose the character was rescued by the great tragedian Macklin, and in our own time the pendulum has swung to the opposite extreme and the tendency is to portray him as the defendant of his race.

It is not a difficult task for the poet or player to exhibit a caricature of national sentiments, modes of speaking and gestures. Shylock, however, is not a caricature, but a generical exemplar of Judaism; his nationality is not made known through the continual repetition of a few superficial traits, but his every action is the outcome of his moral nature which is essentially Judaistic. We see a light Hebraic touch in everything that he says and does. And what shows even more skill in his creation, he is not only thoroughly and intensely Jewish, but he also possesses a very determinate individuality. One of Shakspere's masterpieces, intense in every word and action, all his speeches reveal his strongly marked and complex character. He is the strength of the play. The poet did not endow him with
a single really admirable trait, yet the strength of his purpose, the intensity of his passions, and his intellectual vigor dignify his avariciousness, mercilessness, bloodthirstiness, and arouse our interest; while the ill treatment which he receives, in a degree, justifies his passion, and arouses our sympathy. Thus though Shakspere has put no limit to the blackness of his character he still provides against its being repulsive, and keeps it within the range of human probability by representing him as the victim of intolerable cruelty. When we balance his wrongs against his rancor we feel that the intensity of his hatred was justifiable. Shakspere makes Shylock his own defendant and in all his answers and retorts upon his enemies, the Christians, he has the best, not only of the argument, but also of the question, reasoning from their own principles and practices. All imaginable injuries are heaped upon him, vile abuse and contempt against himself, curses against his nation, insults against his religion, scorn and invective against his daily mode of life and business, this serves to make the relentless hatred which he displays natural and credible. Long compelled to bear insult and injury with a patient shrug his pent up passions at last burst their bounds, and his outraged feelings express themselves in words that cannot be gainsaid; we do not wonder that he so eagerly snatches and so desperately clings to his one opportunity for revenge. He is simply obeying a natural, human instinct. Some passages in the play seem to indicate that his nature was originally noble but had been warped and blighted by unfortunate circumstances. There is at least a reminiscence of
tenderness in his allusion to his wife, Leah, and though he is not represented as being a very loving father, very little can be found in the play really to justify the assertion that he was a harsh, suspicious parent. He possesses a genuine enthusiasm for his ancient religion, race and law. Christian bigotry restricted his activity to dealings in money. Being inwardly a strong nature, and having but the one field in which to exercise his enormous fund of energy he consequently becomes avaricious and a usurer, in the harshest sense of the word; yet he can hardly be called a miser. Highly intellectual, his thought is Hebraic, both in form and expression. Deserted by his daughter, despised and persecuted by the Christians, with no friends even among his own people he stands entirely alone, a pathetic figure. The prejudiced or superficial reader, however, is apt to overlook the extenuating circumstances in his conduct, and to regard him as a bloody minded miser, as such he was regarded by Shakspere's contemporaries. Today, on the other hand, perhaps too much of the odium which belongs to his actions is laid upon the several circumstances by which he was haunted into madness. The present tendency is to regard him as a martyr, who suffered for the sake of his race and religion. As is the case with all extremes this view contains only an element of truth, he was to some extent influenced by religious feeling, yet personal hatred was the impelling motive in his lust for vengeance. A conservative and juster view is that he was deeply wronged, not indeed in the trial scene, when his vengeful purpose was withstood and his intended crime punished, but in all the circumstances which made
that crime possible, wronged by the society that stole his money, spat on his beard, and called him dog, wronged by the law that made him an alien among the Venetian citizens, that these wrongs furnished an excuse for his savageness and kept him from being an inhuman monster.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Ten Brink, Berhnard: Five Lectures on Shakespeare, New York, 1895.

Dowden, Edward: Shakespeare, His Mind and Art, New York, 1881.


Drake, Nathan: Shakespeare and His Times, Paris, 1839.


Moulton, Richard G.: Shakespeare as a Dramatic Artist, Boston, 1898.
Philipson, David: The Jew in English Fiction, Cincinnati, 1903.
Rushton, William L.: Shakespeare Illustrated by Old Authors, St. Louis, 1877.
Snider, Denton J.: System of Shakespeare's Dramas, St. Louis, 1877.
Wilkes, George: Shakespeare from an American Point of View, New York, 1877.

Periodicals

The Nineteenth Century. 7:828
Lytell's Living Age. 49:145
The Chicago Record Herald, Feb. 10, 1904.

Editions

Hudson, Henry M., Boston, 1901.
The Student's Series of English Classics, Boston, 1894.
Of these criticisms, Hudson's is probably the best and most exhaustive, Brandes' is incisive and sympathetic, although he frequently reads more into a passage than the text warrants. Ordish and Lee give very satisfactory discussions of the circumstances which lead to the production of the Merchant of Venice. For the purpose of this paper the most valuable portion of Ward's criticism is a comparison of Marlowe's Jew of Malta with Shylock. Moulton gives a detailed study of Shylock as a dramatic character. The criticisms of Drake, Elze and Giles are very harsh, Philipson, being himself a Jew, goes to the opposite extreme and over-estimates the nobler side of Shylock's character, Wendell, Ten Brink, and Hazlitt give a more conservative and at the same time sympathetic and juster estimate of his character. The criticism of Irving's impersonation of Shylock in the Record-Herald is exceptionally good. The Variorum Edition is of inestimable value.