

We have also received the 'Berkleyan,' 'Varsity,' 'Colby Echo,' 'Acta Victoriana,' 'Academian,' 'Oberlin Review,' 'University Gazette,' 'Haverfordian,' 'Adelphian,' and 'Niagara Index.'

EXCERPTA.

Success does not consist in never making blunders, but in never making the same one a second time.

Who can know how much of his most inward life is made up of the thoughts he believes other men to have about him until that fabric of opinion is threatened with ruin.—George Eliot.

It is amusing to detect character in the vocabulary of each person. The adjective habitually used like the inscriptions on a thermometer indicate the temperament.

A long experience has taught me that advice can profit but little, that there is a good reason why advice is seldom followed; this reason, namely, that it is so seldom, and can almost ever be, rightly given. No man knows the state of another; it is always to some more or less imaginary man that the wisest and most honest adviser is speaking.—Carlyle.

Like the rainbow, Peace rests upon the earth but its arch is lost in Heaven! Heaven bathes it in hues of light—it springs up amidst tears and clouds—it is a reflection of the Eternal Sun—it is an assurance of calm—it is the sign of a great covenant between man and God. Such peace is the smile of the soul; it is an emanation from the distant orb of immortal right.—Sir E. Bulwer Lytton.

A law, a profound, a benign law of our being it is, that every blessing we bestow upon others is a blessing to ourselves. The love that flows out of us in benefaction weaves a warming halo of smiles around our own life; while self love, flowing inward becomes a smouldering fire without radiance, around which crouch unrest and ennuï, scorns and hates, and coldnesses, that darken the daily being of ourselves and of those nearest us. Blessings, like curses, come back to roost at home.—Calvert.

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE.

This story, which has been regarded by many able critics as Shakespeare's brightest gem of dramatic art was first published about 1598. The story itself was not entirely new. The device of the caskets was familiar to many in the romance of Barlaam and Josaphat, and allegorical tales entitled *Gesta Romanorum*. The incident of the pound of flesh was even more familiar to the lovers of fable than that of the caskets. It first appeared in the *Il Piccone*, a collection of Italian plays more than a century before the time of Shakespeare. Thus we see that in this play at least Shakespeare did not originate the story, but with consummate art, moulded out of the rude materials, furnished by humbler workmen a monument of genius which has challenged the admiration of scholars and critics for three hundred years. The question might here arise, does not this appear like a lack of originality in our poet? Does it not impair his reputation, and lessen his claim to perfect mastery of poetic art? This question may be answered by asking another. Does it diminish our admiration for the sculptor to learn that he has taken the rough stone hewn from the rock by the rude hands of the quarryman, and fashioned it into a beautiful statue, perfect in every limb, life like in every feature and almost rivalling the human form in symmetry and beauty? The evidence of genius which the statue displays loses none of its power, even after we have discovered that the sculptor did not quarry the stone himself, so the genius of Shakespeare still demands our homage although we find him employing material originally provided by other hands. But if the ground work of the plot previously existed, what has Shakespeare done? Much every way! His was the genius that moulded the crude, unshapely marble of mediæval romance into the splendid statue of dramatic art; his was the magician's wand that inspired a mass of worthless fable with almost immortal life; his was the touch that drew deathless harmony from an instrument once voiceless and tuneless. In this play, perhaps more than any other, Shakespeare has shown himself a perfect master of characterization. Antonio, Shylock, Portia do not appear like poetic creations, but living identities described with marvellous vividness and dramatic power. The portraiture of such a character as Shylock reveals the hand of a master. Shylock is emphatically a Jew. His speech, his manners, his avarice all betray his nationality; yet he is a Jew of no ordinary type. The cringing timidity, the fawning obsequiousness, so characteristic of his oppressed and exiled race is wanting in him. Well-marked traces of that haughty and vindictive spirit for which his people were distinguished in their earlier history are revealed in him, especially during his paroxysms of passion. His is exemplified in his sneering allusion to Antonio: "How like a fawning publican he looks." His