

spirators until his defeat at Philippi he is responsible for a series of mistakes which bring disaster to himself and his friends. He will not bind the conspirators by an oath; and he persuades them not to break their plans to Cicero; he refuses to include Antony in the same fate with Cæsar, and he not only gives Antony leave to speak at Cæsar's funeral but he urges the Commoners to stay to hear him. He is guilty of an error in judgment in marching to Philippi, and he makes the mistake of bringing his army down from the hills and of beginning the attack before the forces of Cassius are ready.

But in spite of these mistakes of judgment his spirit of patriotism and his lofty ideals place him at once on a higher level than the other characters in the play:

"This was the noblest Roman of them all;
All the conspirators, save only he,
Did that they did in envy of great Cæsar;
He only in the general honest thought
And common good to all, made one of them."

It is because Brutus stood for what was "noblest,"—for freedom, honour, and the "common good," that we feel that he indeed has "glory by this losing day."

Brutus is a stoic, and it was a part of his philosophy to endure all things, evil as well as good, with patience and courage; and throughout the play his stoicism shows itself in an outward calmness and self-control which is in harmony with his lofty ideals and noble purposes. Only once in the play—in the Quarrel Scene—does his stoicism break down, and his "ill-temper" in this scene has been caused by the news of Portia's death. We should have thought less of Brutus if his stoicism had not given way under the strain of a grief so great and so personal as this.

But it is neither the ideals nor the philosophy of Brutus that appeals to us most strongly, but rather those personal touches of gentleness and tenderness which are revealed in all his words and actions, but most of all in his relations to Portia and Lucius. The highest praise which Antony can give to him, at the close of the play, is a tribute to this mingling of gentleness and strength in his nature:

"His life was gentle, and the elements
So mixed in him that nature might stand up
And say to all the world, 'This was a man'."

Cassius. In forming the conspiracy against Cæsar, Cassius is moved by his envy of Cæsar, rather than by purely patriotic motives. In his efforts to persuade Brutus and Casca to join the conspiracy he is thinking not so much of the fact that Rome will suffer from the