

the close of the trial. When she returns again to Belmont she appears for the moment in a reflective mood. Perhaps she has been subdued by the events of the day, for the light of the candle shining in the distance reminds her of 'a good deed in a naughty world,' or perhaps she too has fallen under the spell of the music and the moonlight. But when Bassanio returns, her light-hearted raillery shows that she is the same Portia as of old, whose gaiety and vivacity of spirit are not least among "the wondrous virtues" which Bassanio had foretold.

"A perfect woman, nobly planned
To warn, to comfort, and command;
And yet a spirit still and bright
With something of an angel light."

Shylock. In the picture which Shakespeare draws of Shylock he has represented him, in the main, as having the traditional qualities of the Jewish money-lender,—on the one hand a passion for his own race and religion, and on the other, a mean and sordid way of living which is the result of his miserly disposition. But while these are the outstanding features in Shylock's character, Shakespeare has so portrayed them that they seem to be natural qualities belonging to a real human being, with human weaknesses and human passions, rather than either a type or a caricature of a real individual.

We first meet Shylock in the Borrowing Scene, in circumstances that cannot fail to bring out his long-standing, racial and personal prejudices. His hated enemy Antonio has come to him to borrow three thousand ducats, and Shylock sees in this occasion the opportunity of satisfying "the ancient grudge" which he bears Antonio. The causes of that grudge are made plain to the audience in the soliloquy of Shylock at the moment when Bassanio goes forward to greet Antonio:

"I hate him for he is a Christian,
But more for that in low simplicity
He lends out money gratis and brings down
The rate of usance here with us in Venice.

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He hates our sacred nation, and he rails,
Even there whose merchants most do congregate,
On me, my bargains and my well-won thrift,
Which he calls interest."