

160 QUESTIONS ON "THE MERCHANT OF VENICE"

is bid forth to supper ; (iii) in Act III., Scene 1., where Shylock discovers the flight of his daughter ?

(b) What are the merits of Portia's speech on *Mercy* that make it so widely known ?

5. Give an estimate of the character of Bassanio as represented in *The Merchant of Venice*.

6. "That such a bond should be proposed, that when proposed it should be accepted, that it should be seriously entertained by a court of justice, that if entertained at all it should be upset on so frivolous a pretext as the omission of the reference to the shedding of blood ; these form a series of impossible circumstances that any dramatist might despair of presenting with even an approach to naturalness."

State in a sentence or two in each case how Shakespeare succeeded in overcoming each of these difficulties in connection with the story of the pound of flesh in *The Merchant of Venice*.

7. Point out the various means whereby in *The Merchant of Venice* Shakespeare (a) evokes in the reader a measure of sympathy with Shylock, and (b) excites detestation of him.

8. (a) Refer to any indications of Portia's feelings with respect to each of the three suitors.

(b) State the important details of that portion of the scene following Bassanio's successful choice.

9. "Shylock is great in every scene where he appears, yet each later scene exhibits him in a new element or aspect of greatness."

By reference to the various scenes in which Shylock appears, estimate the truth of this statement.

10. (a) Show how the main stories of *The Merchant of Venice* are woven into a unity.

(b) What is contributed to this unified plot by the Lorenzo and Jessica story ?

11. Show that the scene in *The Merchant of Venice*, in which Bassanio makes his choice, is the meeting place of the four stories in the play.