

Avariciousness is indeed a characteristic of the Jew, but it were unjust to say that in this Shylock is a true representative of his nation. Greediness in his predominant passion. He makes money his God and sacrifices to this deity time pleasure and happiness. He knows no friend but his purse; for him other men are not fellow-creatures but tools which he uses in building up his fortune. Greed has extinguished in his heart almost every spark of humanity, and has made him a burden to himself, a cause of misery to his household, and a subject of odium to his fellow-men.

The Jew's greed for gold is even stronger than his love for his daughter. It is interesting to behold the contest which takes place between these two affections after Jessica's departure. At first, the thought of having lost his daughter fills the loving father's heart with bitter sorrow. When he finds that she has carried off several precious jewels and other articles of value, his feelings are undecided which course to take. His daughter is indeed dear to him, but jewels are the master of his heart. Consequently, after a short struggle, the demon, avariciousness, overcomes fatherly love, the miser becomes frantic with rage and utters most frightful imprecations against his daughter and her lover. His occasional out-bursts of sharp sarcasm, his ready wit, his subtle arguments, his deep-seated hypocrisy, all prove that Shylock was a man of great intellect. But the curse of God on his race effects likewise this man's noblest gift in Shylock. His intelligence, his knowledge of human nature, all his talents and abilities serve him but as weapons by which he is enabled to wring dollars and cents from those around him.

The poet admirably depicts the usurer's covetousness in all its different phases and with all its evil results. The scene wherein Antonio solicits the loan is the first in which we meet the Jew. When he hears the rap at the door, he rises with a smiling countenance. Full well does he know what the visitor requires, since no one ever calls upon him save for the purpose of borrowing money. As Antonio enters the door, a dark cloud over-shadows the old man's brow, but in a moment it passes away and all is sunshine again. In the conversation that follows between the two the baseness and malignity of the

Jew's heart is laid bare. He admits, nay even boasts, that he has enriched himself at the expense of poor mortals who scarcely had the wherewith to live. But his baseness of heart is equalled by his deceit. Intense is the hatred which he cherishes against Antonio, but that hatred is now carefully concealed beneath the shroud of hypocrisy. Long has the old miser entertained the wish of one day placing a yoke on the neck of this wealthy merchant, his bitterest enemy, and he is determined to make the most of the opportunity which now presents itself. Note the consummate guile he makes use of in inducing Antonio to sign the deed: note again the malicious joy that over-spreads his countenance when he has attained his object.

The poet does not explicitly state that the false reports concerning the shipwreck had their source in Shylock, yet he seems to have left the reader to infer that such was the case. At all events the Jew knew that these reports were coming before they had arrived, and there can scarcely remain a doubt but that he himself caused them to be circulated; since it does not seem probable that one so miserly would lend three thousand ducats free of interest for three months on a mere chance. For it must be remembered that it was Antonio's life, not the sum loaned which the miser sought so eagerly. The last scene in which Shylock figures places the climax on all his baseness and wickedness of heart. All that was human in him has now vanished. He appears in the court-room a blood-thirsty monster. On seeing Antonio, the object of his hatred, the muscles of his face contract, his teeth grind, his eyes seem to start from their sockets. How he hates him who is now a victim at his feet! Greediness which holds so much sway over the wretch's actions, is the originator of this hatred. He hates Antonio because the latter professes a religion which condemns the one who amasses wealth by fraudulent means; hates him because oft has the kind-hearted merchant lent money free of interest to the poor of Venice; hates him because he, who carried off his daughter Jessica, professes the same faith as Antonio; hates him finally, because Antonio is virtuous and Shylock is vicious. The cruel wretch cannot be deterred from satisfying