

himself, but nobody else must have anything. He is jealous of Cæsar's power and popularity; he belittles him to his friends and tries to make them jealous, too. He sarcastically calls him "a Colossus that doth bestride the narrow world"; he thinks to arouse Brutus' jealousy by shaming him:

" * * * * * we petty men
walk under his huge legs and peep about
To find ourselves dishonorable graves."

He compares "Brutus" and "Cæsar," attempting thus to arouse in Brutus a spirit of petty rivalry. He make Cæsar out a weakling, a man who cried "Help me Cassius or I sink," and whose "lips did from their color fly," who "did groan," and who "cried as a sick girl." He tells Casca that Cæsar is "a man no mightier than thyself in personal action." Cæsar says of him:

"Such men as he never at heart's ease
whiles they behold a greater than themselves;"

and it was Cæsar's judgment of men that had made him the foremost man of the Empire. Cassius' motives for organizing the conspiracy are summed up when he says,

" * * * * * and this man
Is now become a god; and Cassius is
A wretched creature, and must bend his body,
If Cæsar carelessly but nod on him."

He was cruel and unscrupulous. So strong upon him was the grip of his selfishness, that for him no crime seemed too great to attain his end. He was the "power behind" Brutus and the other conspirators in the assassination of Cæsar. For Brutus, there are extenuating circumstances. He knows that as a rule, homicide is a terrible crime, but his intelligence shows him how, in this case, it is justifiable. Brutus is not a "butcher" but a "sacrificer." But Cassius sees that this crime is an enormity and deliberately he sets about its consummation. We are horrified not so much by the crime itself, as by the cold-blooded manner in which he sets about it. For weeks he has been organizing, tempting, and arousing the passions of his companions in crime; and when the moment arrives like a Judas, he fawns on Cæsar: