

Edward II. I cannot give a better idea than is contained in this quotation from Charles Lamb, who says:—"The reluctant pangs of abdicating royalty in England, furnished hints on which Shakespeare scarce improved in his Richard II.; and the death scene of Marlowe's king moves pity and terror, beyond any scene, ancient or modern, with which I am acquainted." Faustus is written with such terrible power, the blood almost curdles in the reader's veins as he reads. And yet there is a strange fascination about it. Once begun it cannot be laid aside. You cannot tear yourself away. You are as if spell-bound, till it is finished. The genius of Marlowe, the weird bent of his mind, the infidel nature of his life are well given in the words of Hazlitt:—

"There is a lust of power, a hunger and thirst after unrighteousness, a glow of the imagination, unhallowed by anything but its own energies. His thoughts burn within him like a furnace with bickering flames, or throwing out black smoke and mist that hide the dawn of genius, or like a poisonous mineral, corrode the heart. Faustus himself is a rude sketch, but a gigantic one. This character may be considered as a personification of the pride of will and eagerness of curiosity, sublime beyond the reach of fear and remorse."

As an illustration of his deep tragic power, of the appalling spirit he can breathe into his work, take the following passage from *The Jew of Malta*. The Jew has taken vengeance on his oppressors, but has not escaped their hands. Brought to bay, he triumphs in the crimes he has committed. I do not know of any passage in which the very essence of hatred and defiance is so terribly portrayed. The Jew says:—

"Then, Barabas, breathe forth thy latest fate,
And, in the fury of thy torments, strive
To end thy life with resolution: