

is the bard, the prophet (which we are told is not the man who predicts, but the man who speaks out), and he is emphatically the voice and the champion of the man, occupied with externality. If Rachel, bereaved of her children and refusing to be comforted because they are not, could be induced to go forth and rouse all bereaved mothers to listen to her voice and share her thoughts, she would have been their bard and the bard of all bereaved motherhood. Had she been left to

her own sorrow and to a loneliness into which no one else could enter, not God himself, and had the gift of utterance been bestowed upon her, she would have become for all time the *poet* of bereaved mothers.

Well, I do not know how to say what I would say, but I remember Blake's doggerel: 'A picture should be like a lawyer presenting a writ,' and Bacon wrote that it is not enough that a thing be beautiful, it must be wonderful.

The Irish Statesman

## DREAMS

BY ARTHUR E. LLOYD MAUNSELL

DEAD leaves that scatter in the wind,  
 You once were green.  
 Faint scents that bring old loves to mind  
 That might have been.  
 Years have forgotten you, and yet  
 You stir between.

Old notes of song, those bygone years  
 Once heard and knew,  
 Weak, striving things that move to tears,  
 As dream songs do:  
 You weave a subtle discontent;  
 Ah! why do you?

Dream loves that creep into the heart,  
 Who loves you so.  
 You rest with us awhile, then part,  
 Why do you go?  
 The hours are vain and weary then,  
 As well you know.

The Anglo-French Review

## A NEW SHYLOCK

BY W. L. COURTNEY

MR. MAURICE MOSCOVITCH'S signal success as Shylock at the Court Theatre has, I see, raised all the old controversies concerning the character of the Jew and his behavior in *The Merchant of Venice*. Two things always astonish one in Shakespeare's treatment of this much-discussed play. The first is his knowledge of Italy, and the second is his appreciation of certain aspects in the Jewish character. Gobbo, for instance, is a genuine Venetian name; and Shakespeare also knew that the Exchange was held on the Rialto Island. And the other passage which seems to indicate that our Elizabethan dramatist had a personal acquaintance with the city of lagoons is the directions given by Portia to her servant Balthasar with an important message to Padua, bidding him ride quickly and meet her at 'the common ferry which trades to Venice.' Such intimate acquaintance with the topography of the place would only belong to a man who had seen with his own eyes — so, at least, it is argued — some of the scenes which he depicted.

But the really marvelous thing is Shakespeare's knowledge of the Jewish character. One would have thought that such a study was impossible in England, for no Jews were permitted by law to reside here since their expulsion, which was begun in the time of Richard Cœur de Lion and completed in 1290. It was not till Cromwell's time that the embargo was removed. In Venice about this time there were more than 1,100 Jews. Ben Jonson, in the fourth act of his *Volpone*, tells us that the first procedure of a traveler who arrived in Venice was to rent apartments, and his second to apply to a Jew dealer for the furniture.

In this way some opportunity would be offered, which was wholly lacking in England, of studying Jewish idiosyncrasies, and that is sometimes urged as another reason why Shakespeare must have visited Italy.

What Shakespeare has done in *The Merchant of Venice* is precisely what a number of enthusiasts do with regard to famous or infamous characters like Nero or Richard III. He has accepted the facts at their face value and has sought to go beneath them to discover the real lineaments of humanity buried under a mountain of prejudice. The ordinary Elizabethan regarded the Jew as an outcast, as a man capable of a variety of different crimes, as a usurer at an exorbitant interest, as an enemy of the human race, only of value to necessitous noblemen and others who could extract from him some of his ill-gotten wealth. We may be sure that the sympathies of an Elizabethan audience were entirely with Antonio, with Gratiano, with Bassanio, and they would not think to criticize the extraordinary injustice with which Shylock was treated, and the sad lack of good breeding among his persecutors.

Bassanio, who goes out of his way to assure Portia that he is a gentleman, is a man whose primary desire to marry the lady of his choice is based on the fact that she could relieve him of his debts. Gratiano in the Court scene is an amusing and worthless little cad, no more and no less; while it is the solemn and dignified Antonio who decides that part of Shylock's punishment must be his conversion to Christianity. Conversions of this kind could hardly have been considered very serious matters if Lorenzo and Jessica and Launcelot could make a jest of the future that awaited Jessica now that she had abjured her father's tenets.

Shakespeare has been at work here, as on many other occasions, as a psy-