# "The Merchant of Venice."

ENCOURAGED by its last year's success, in "Twelfth Night," the Dramatic Society last month undertook a more arduous task in presenting *The Merchant of Venice:* and their efforts were crowned with even greater success.

In the two main characters the Society were fortunate in being able to enlist the services of Miss Elsie Logan and Mr. Johnson. *Portia*—a difficult part requiring no little versatility and resource in the player—was interpreted by Miss Elsie Logan with no mean skill and charm: her firmness and dignity in the Trial Scene, her refined restraint in the rest of the play, together with her mock-heroic petulance in the last Scene were equally effective and delightful.

Mr. Johnson's *Shylock* was a real contribution to the study of one of Shakespeare's most complicated and difficult characters: in his rendering there was no gesture, no intonation, that had not its definite purpose in the development of the part: it was in effect a stirring and thoroughly artistic performance.

As *Bassanio,* Evers shewed both in his lighter and his more dramatic moments that he possessed not only considerable dramatic power, but also a very sound and workmanlike conception of the way in which a lover and a friend should be played. Miss Lesley Weddell invested the character of *Nerissa* (which is apt to be somewhat colourless) with an amount of life and verve that was as captivating as it was graceful.

Mr. Thompson (*Gratiano*) as was to be expected, rendered his part with a swing and a confidence, that are peculiarly his own. The two foils to *Bassanio*—Mr. Foster as *Morocco,* and Hunter as *Arragon*—were both excellent. Mr. Foster was a triumph of barbarous, and Hunter of polished, egoism. We knew Hunter's talent in representing the fop; but Mr. Foster's barbarism came as a revelation to us.

Rule as *Antonio* had plainly devoted much care and thought to a somewhat ungrateful part, and delivered his lines with a dignity and seriousness that bade fair to obliterate the dissatisfaction which most people feel with that "tainted wether of the flock."

Mr. Davies in two small parts—*Tubal* and *the Clerk*—had an opportunity of shewing his many-sided talent—his *Tubal* was thoughtful and picturesque—his *Clerk* a masterpiece of the high and dry legal manner.

I'Anson (*Salarino*) and Futers (*Salanio*) provided an admirable contrast: the former as the man of action, the latter as the man contemplative, I'Anson's description of the Jew's despair at his daughter's flight being particularly good. We hope to see both these promising recruits again.

Hunter also appeared as the *Doge of Venice*—a character to which no actor can impart a thrilling interest—with adequate solemnity. Ison, as *Lorenzo*, played a small part, into which he was able to infuse more than one flash of humour.

The *personæ mutæ*—including Miss Mona Evers and Miss Kathleen Bookey, to both of whom the Society owes a debt for consenting to look charming without speaking—and the attendants, Silburn and Darnell, were a great success. The crowd surged and howled in a most blood-curdling and right-minded way, but was restrained by the alertness of the soldiers. The two smaller ladies-in-waiting were very effective and displayed a very proper alarm at the impassive assassins who came in the train of *Morocco*.

In fine, the Society may be heartily congratulated on having produced a highly successful play.

---

## Notes and News.

IN the name of the school we welcome back Mr. Byrde, whom we congratulate upon his safe recovery from a very severe illness.

---

We extend a hearty welcome also to the new master of the new form, Mr. Minter, B.A., of the University of London.

---

We are extremely sorry to learn that since the night of the School Play Mrs. Kidson has been seriously ill, and is not yet recovered.