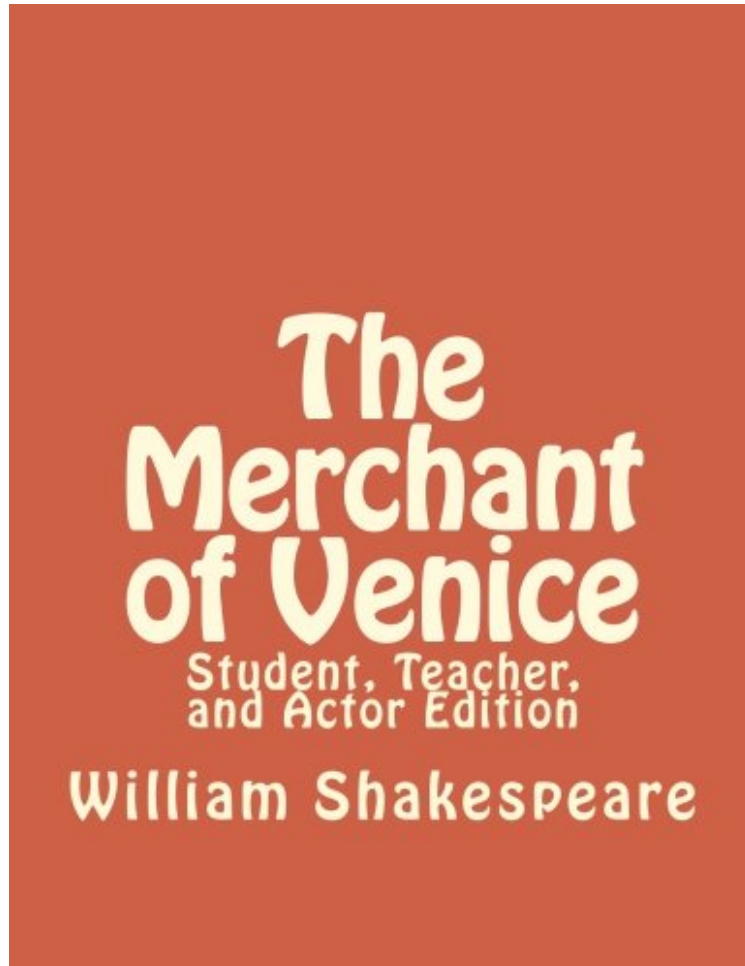


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## The Merchant of Venice: Student, Teacher, and Actor Edition

*William Shakespeare*

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**William Shakespeare : The Merchant of Venice: Student, Teacher, and Actor Edition** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Merchant of Venice: Student, Teacher, and Actor Edition:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Hoity-toityBy HHG. R. Hibbard's introductory essay, while hostile to those speculations by "scholars spending their days in the British Museum", is warmly appreciative of the play in the theater, and comments interestingly on the remarkable revival in LLL's theatrical fortunes since 1927. He suggests (questionably) that Modernism, and particularly the prestige of James Joyce, prompted a reevaluation of punning wit: "Good puns were being recognized for what they are, a means of bringing two diverse kinds of experience into a sudden, unexpected, and illuminating juxtaposition with one another." Hibbard rightly emphasizes the play's sustained feminism and its readiness both to carry linguistic ingenuity to surrealist extremes and to challenge such exuberance by the unexpected late reminders of the realities of death and labor outside the Arcadian park-land. After examining

evidence for the existence of the possible sequel, "Love's Labour's Won", Hibbard concludes: "It seems beyond doubt, therefore, that it did exist, that it was published, and that it has since disappeared. Further than that it is not possible to go." Here Hibbard's reluctance to speculate seems rather severe: the strikingly open-ended structure of LLL strongly portends a sequel in which the four lords meet after their year of probation and, after fresh contretemps, finally win the ladies' hands in marriage. Hibbard's footnotes in the text of the play are somewhat austere, in keeping with his general emphasis on the empirical and verifiable. He frequently deploys readings from OED and anthologies of proverbs; he concisely deciphers the arabesques of punning and the bawdy allusions; and he offers fewer evaluative, thematic, and argumentative comments than became customary in the Arden editions.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Creditable, lucid, and practical edition  
By HH  
The general introduction to this Oxford edition begins appropriately with a discussion of the possible anti-Semitism of "The Merchant of Venice". The editor Jay Halio claims that the treatment of Shylock is highly ambivalent, so that the character "transcends the type, shatters the conventional image with his appeal to our common humanity, and leaves us unsettled in our prejudices, disturbed in our emotions, and by no means sure of our convictions" (p. 13). After a detailed survey of stage productions through the ages, Halio concludes, "Whether the play is itself anti-Semitic or not depends largely upon one's interpretation, on the stage as on the page" (p. 83). While this is obviously true, and while Halio properly draws attention to a range of ambiguities in the play's depiction of both Shylock and his Christian adversaries, the word "largely" raises a question to which many scholars have offered a challenging, hostile answer. The general introduction also includes: a survey of sources and analogues, enlivened by a summary of Freud's interpretation of the three caskets; a brief account of the 'myth' of Venice, particularly its reputation for impartial justice; an estimate of the play's date (1596-7); and a helpful critical analysis which gives prominence to the theme of "bondage and bonding". Halio's annotation of the text is generally proficient and admirably frank in rendering sexual double entendres and is frequently illuminating in its references to modes of staging; the lengthy note on "Nerissa's ring" is exemplary in both these respects. As with other volumes of the Oxford World's Classics Shakespeare series, there is a good range of pictorial material and a very useful index.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Best version  
By Fyoder Larue  
Best version. Why? Because it's the closest to Shakespeare. Two Gents was never published in quarto form prior to the First Folio from whence this text comes, except this is cleaned up and in a modern font; none of those 's's that look like 'f's, not cramped into the minimum space possible because paper was hand made and expensive. Later editors would place a high value on consistency, aiming for a product that would be easily digestible by a solitary reader, with correct punctuation, flattening verse into prose where verse pops up unexpectedly. The text of the First Folio, on the other hand, still echos the spoken word, the words of a playwright writing for actors and the stage.

This special edition contains edits specifically aimed at assisting readers in understanding the classic text, preparing students for examinations, or providing lesson plans for teachers. This book is ideal for readers in high school, college, or otherwise seeking an easier understanding of a classic text. Original additions may include notes, lessons, and activities designed to foster understanding at key points in the story and at critical chapters. As an educator, I believe that older works of literature must be introduced into new generations. This belief has guided my editing of the original source material. Enjoy this classic piece of literature with an appreciation fostered by greater understanding and insight!

From the Back Cover  
The Merchant of Venice is best known for its complex and ambiguous portrait of the Jewish moneylender Shylock--and of European anti-Semitism. Fascinating in its engagement with prejudice, the play is also a comedy of cross-dressing and disguise, and a dramatic exploration of justice, mercy, and vengeance. This volume contains the full text of the play with explanatory footnotes and marginal glosses for contemporary readers. A well-rounded selection of background materials not only illuminates anti-Semitism in early modern England but also provides context for other facets of the play, including its comic plot of love and marriage, its examination of usury and international trade, and its themes of revenge and the law.

About the Author  
William Shakespeare was an English poet, playwright, and actor, widely regarded as the greatest writer in the English language and the world's pre-eminent dramatist.