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August Goll

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CRIMINAL TYPES IN SHAKESPEARE¹

JUDGE AUGUST GOLL²

Translator's Note

In presenting the American reading public with an English rendering of "Criminal Types in Shakespeare," by Judge August Goll, Attorney General of the Kingdom of Denmark, the translator is conscious of the fact that there are few phases of human activity which have not in one way or another been aligned with what the great dramatist has given to the world. In view, however, of the all-absorbing question of crime, and how to combat this menace to society, it seemed worth-while to present the views of one of Europe's outstanding criminologists, who at the same time is known as a Shakespearean scholar of note.

Judge Goll, in his selection of six criminal types from among the great number occurring in the Shakespearean dramas, has revealed a condition which, barring the passing of centuries, might be found applicable to the present day and modern customs. In Brutus and Cassius he gives us what he terms the political criminal. Macbeth he presents as the man of ambition, while Lady Macbeth, as a type of the woman criminal, does not commit crime for her own benefit, but to elevate her husband to power. In Richard III, we have the born criminal, due in some way to his deformity; and as for Iago, he is the personification of the criminal of pure malice.

Judge Goll's career has been one constant association with legal efforts to combat crime and reform the criminal. As a former chairman of the Police Commission of the City of Copenhagen he has known crime in all its various aspects. His elevation to the post of Attorney General of Denmark, is sufficient evidence of his ability as a member of the profession of law. His passion for Shakespeare he has utilized in the present work, which is unique, it is believed, among Shakespeareana.

The translation has been undertaken with the authorization of Judge Goll and the foreword by Lewis E. Lawes, warden of Sing

¹ Translated from the Danish by Julius Moritzen, 4003 Foster Avenue, Brooklyn, N. Y. Mr. Moritzen's translation will appear in three parts of which this is the first.

² Late Attorney General of Denmark.

Sing Prison, was written after Warden Lawes had given the manuscript careful consideration.

J. M.

Foreword

Crime is in one or more of its many phases the principal theme of history and literature. Crime is as old as mankind, and as universal. References to crime abound in the Bible, and is the plot of every great epic poem, the world's best novels and its finest operas. Crime is a part of daily life and touches directly and indirectly the lives of all.

And yet, we probably know less of it than we do of almost any other fact of life. Why is this? Largely I think because man in his egoism and pride has foolishly tried to persuade himself that crime was something essentially of the devil, and therefore a thing apart from himself.

The average man does not think of himself as a possible murderer, although as a matter of fact, he may often have murder in his heart. Nor does he think of himself as a thief, although he has probably "taken" many things that were not his by the law of right, however legal the acts may have been. He thinks of the murderer and thief as different sorts of men from himself, when in truth we are all murderers under the skin and thieves at heart, if not in fact.

And so, blinding ourselves to the real facts, we have built up through the centuries a criminal theory and a criminal procedure which have become a Frankenstein striking at the very roots of our modern civilization. Either it must be destroyed, or civilization will be. And to destroy this monster the facts must be made clear to all—we must get down to fundamentals. And when we do, we will find that crime like any other fact of nature is the result of natural law—has a cause—and that we must wherever possible remove the causes instead of dealing only with results; must strike at the roots instead of merely clipping at the branches.

"Criminal Types in Shakespeare," by August Goll, is a unique and important work, which should, if it receives the wide circulation I hope it will, do as much or more than any other I know to stimulate clear thinking on crime.

In the characters which Judge Goll analyzes the thinking reader will see himself and be made to realize that had he been in the place of Brutus, Cassius, Macbeth, etc., he would, all other things equal,

have done just as they did. He will be made to realize, as he probably never has before, that human nature is human nature the world over and in all crimes and times, and that given certain conditions as causes, and these conditions in relation to certain facts, results must inevitably be the same.

This is not the place for a discussion of the abstractions of free will and determinism, which after all are in a practical sense only half-truths. Man is in some respects free and in other respects bound. Crime is the interplay of both. We have too long over-emphasized free will and underestimated the part that time, place and circumstances play in our lives.

A careful reading of "Criminal Types in Shakespeare," translated by Julius Moritzen, will give one more food for thought on these phases of the criminal problem than a dozen volumes of ordinary criminology. I commend it to the reader.

LEWIS E. LAWES,

Warden of Sing Sing Prison.

Introduction

Observing the administration of justice of the present day, as well as the effect of punishment, it must be admitted that the old-time machinery has lost its effectiveness. The mechanism seems disjointed; the hands at the wheel show less assurance than in times past.

This is not merely an assumption. The old understanding as to what constitutes crime, and what is to be accomplished through punishment, has lost its force. New interpretations are asking to be heard, and cry aloud for attention. Withal, the better tools with which to work still await their inventor. The old implements must still be used, minus the former confidence in the result to be achieved.

The basis for the existing system of punishment rests on the belief that crime is a moral guilt, a sin, an ethical perversion, the root of which is to be looked for in the free human will. This will, therefore, purposely prefers to do wrong, while it could just as well do that which is right. And in explanation of this phenomenon it is customary to point back to the original sin supposed to have come into the world through the choice of the free human will at the time of the Fall.

The criminal, according to this theory, is a sinner, and as a deserved punishment, suffering must correspond to the character-

and degree of the sin. The real object of punishment, then, is to balance guilt with suffering. Therefore, the heaviest punishment must equal the greatest crime, and thus, by the law of subtraction the lesser and lesser offenses carry with them the lighter punishments, until zero is reached. It is for the courts to undertake this ethical weighing process, and for the authorities vested with the power of carrying out the sentences imposed, to make suffering a part of life. Then, when this has been accomplished, guilt disappears, purified through suffering, it is assumed, and society regains its peace and equipoise.

This whole supposedly "harmonious" system has in our day been undermined by the acceptance and application of the law of causation as a spiritual factor in the domain of reason. Natural science owes its great rise to the insistence that each phenomenon has its fixed reasons which must be located, and that these stamp the entire thinking of modern man. It is simply impossible to think of mundane affairs except in their relation to the law of causation. In no domain does it suffice to say categorically, It is thus!—The Question must be, Why is it so?

It is with this "why" that man has succeeded in finding cohesion where none was believed to exist; to construct bridges across mental abysses; to penetrate solid walls, to bring light where darkness formerly ruled. And through his immense cumulative knowledge man has attained to a position of power where in the face of nature and its laws he has been able to regulate his own existence and the relations of humankind. Even within the inner functions of society itself he brings about order and influences its course to a degree which a few generations ago would have seemed impossible.

Why, then, should this law, which everywhere in nature is so absolute, not also apply to man's thinking and feelings, his instincts and passions? Why should his great and small acts not be governed by the law of causation? Is not each act determined by motives; these again by more deeply-rooted impulses, by the individual's entire mentality, which again is conditioned on the general state of mind; by the experience and influences to which man has been subject, yes, by the experiences and influences of his parents and of his ancestors even further back?

These influences are like the stars which, illuminating the universe centuries ago, only now are able to reach this earth to throw their light over the motley life of man.

It is the belief in the subjective law of causation which in recent

years has displaced the belief in the perfect freedom of the will, and which with regard to crime and punishment has overthrown time-honored conceptions and furnished a new basis for needed knowledge. If the will is causatively fixed, then it becomes no longer an accident whether a person shall commit a crime or not. It comes as the necessary result of the fact that the determining causes were present. To study crime in that light becomes something quite different than to find out what are the external peculiarities of each separate criminal act; something more than to describe and classify this act as coming within a particular criminal law. It is most essential, then, to get at the reason that determined the genesis of this act. Combating the crime becomes not only a matter of discovering more or less ingenious methods of punishment, but to react against these very causes, to fight them, and if possible to conquer them.

It is here that a great field opens before our vision. Crime is placed under the microscope of reason, like a diseased part that must be examined in its innermost nature; whose origin must be known, and the conditions under which it existed; its states of development and in what way it became transmitted.

These investigations are still in their embryonic state. And yet they already show far reaching results. They have changed our manner of looking at legal punishment and our entire administrations of justice. They have opened our eyes to the great advantage of preventive efforts preceding the committing of crimes. They have also shown us what parts degeneration, imbecility, alcoholism, insanity, etc., play in the creating of the crime.

This is not the place to point out what are the results of existing conditions, but rather to investigate the criminal himself. How is it with this criminal "I," its physical and psychical nature, the criminal's mode of thinking, his feelings, passions, his intelligence, his character in general? The psychology of criminality here presents itself as a task to be seriously considered. How are we to combat a danger when we do not know what the danger is? How regulate our attitude, influence a person, guide him, if we do not know his soul? No educator considers himself capable of influencing a child before he has learned to know it, and how much more difficult must this not be in the case of an adult.

Still, for centuries society has concerned itself with the criminal, without taking the trouble of penetrating the outer shell of his action in order to reach his soul. To the judge he was merely

the criminal who had to be punished; to the prison keeper an individual who had to expiate his crime. No one thought of him as a man to be understood. And yet there is not a merchant, a minister, a politician but what each had an opinion ready at hand as to what makes a criminal, and what methods were best to bring the perpetrator of the crime to his senses.

How does it come that with mankind's available means for satisfying desires and cravings one individual chooses the path of crime as the most natural thing in the world, while the majority does not offer it a thought? Why is it that one criminal may commit a single crime, while another continues further and further along that same road? What is the reason that a person who has lived a long and honorable life suddenly is thrown to earth, as if swept off his feet by a storm, while his neighbor, living under apparently similar conditions, remains untouched? And why, again, do the bacteria of crime rise up like a cloud at certain times, producing an entire epidemic of crime of a particular kind, only to disappear as suddenly as they came? What takes place within the inner consciousness of these beings? In fact, how are we to understand the criminal mind?

Lombroso has tried to find an answer. According to him, the criminal is a variance of humankind, a special genus within the zoological group of *homo sapiens*, marked with a number of physical characteristics firmly fixed through interminable measurements and weighings to which correspond the psychical aberrations that distinguish the criminal from the normal person. But against this generalization we may raise decisive objections. Lombroso's characterization may be correct enough in the case of a small group of degenerate criminals closely related to the feeble-minded and insane. In other instances he is wholly wrong. It will never do to class criminals as an entity. Crime itself is nothing more than an array of accurately fixed facts, of such varied character and meaning that when it occurs it has been carried out, as are all other human acts, to gain a human end, and through purely human motives.

The criminals themselves, therefore, are not much different from other people in their thinking, feeling, volition. Their numbers are recruited from everywhere, high and low, cultured and uncultured, clever and stupid, strong and weak, energetic and slothful, honest and dishonest; the most different kind of individuals who are alike in only the one thing; namely, having committed a

crime. It is for this reason that the criminal is of so extraordinary, almost personal interest to all of us, the non-criminals. To form a common concept of the criminal is therefore pure abstraction, an artificial synthesis on which a general psychology can no more be built than, for instance, in the case of smokers or tee-totalers.

It is not even possible to set up a special psychology to govern certain groups of criminals. True, attempts have been made to make separate psychological divisions for murderers, for thieves and swindlers, for offenders against morality. But we find constantly that the same crime is committed through motives leagues apart, and by persons the very opposite in character. On the other hand, it so frequently depends on mere circumstances what crime a restless, passionate or cunning individual commits.

Of course, Garofalo is right when he says of murderers and similar criminals that they are without the normal feeling of human sympathy, and of thieves and swindlers that they possess less rectitude than people in general. But what value attaches to such assertions? Do we understand the 'soul-life' of these individuals any better than before because of such statements?

At its present state of development the psychology of criminology can do no better than work for a thoroughgoing investigation of specialization in all its branches and ramifications. Instead of looking for artificial resemblances between crimes of a certain class we should try to discover what are the differences between separate criminal individualities. The data secured should be noted and classified in the manner of the physician in the case of sickness. Some day there may appear the superior intellect who can unite all these separate strands into a consistent fabric.

Criminologists throughout the entire world are today occupying themselves gathering these statistics, not only with crimes out of the ordinary, but minute aberrations that may have led to a particular crime. Physicians have exceedingly valuable records bearing on the criminal instinct in man. Court cases are invaluable in this respect, and prison officials are in particularly fortunate positions to study subjective and objective phases of criminality coming under their observation. Criminals themselves are now and then writing autobiographies that frequently are considered on a par with the texts of historical events.

It is true that all these studies and investigations have clarified much that formerly was obscure. They have shown society its former shortsightedness in treating alike all those who have com-

mitted crimes. They have proved the old distinctions regarding crime a very poor rule of average, and what matters is not the distinctions between crimes, but between criminals. The real germ, however, the inner life of the criminal himself is not revealed by these studies. At most we gather in this manner scattered impressions.

The fact is that these investigations are undertaken with the criminal in the hands of the law, during the trial or when he has been committed to prison. But the sentenced criminal is not a fully reliable means of enlightenment about the criminal at liberty. As soon as he finds himself behind prison walls it frequently happens that entirely new and unexpected sides to his character show themselves, while characteristics that he possessed while free seem to disappear without the prisoner himself being able to account for the change.

The prisoner may not himself be clear in his mind as to his own "I," looks upon himself as a different individual, and for this reason is unable to furnish reliable information about his thoughts and feelings, the causes that drove him to commit the crime and what he expected to gain from it ultimately. Again, he may purposely tell an entirely false story about the happenings. It is all too easily overlooked that the criminal not seldom is just as clever and probably wiser in some respects than his interrogators. This is especially so when he comes before the hated representatives of the law. Instead of telling the truth he frequently says what he believes is best in accord with his own interest in the premises. He may be resentful, trusting, open-hearted, cringing, impudent; very often he is a past-master in knowing the kind of people that confront him.

Great psychological skill and insight are required to here find out what is genuine or spurious, and it is not to be expected that every magistrate, police officer or prison warden is in possession of conspicuous acumen in that direction. The prison doctor is, perhaps, more fortunately placed than these others, since the prisoner quickly comes to look upon him as a disinterested friend in whom he can confide without risk. If the physician is himself at home in psychiatry he naturally possesses proper qualifications for judging psychologically, so that he can see clearly and correctly what passes in the mind of the prisoner. But only a minimum of criminals come under this psychiatric observation.

There is reason, therefore, to proceed from life to literature, to supplement other knowledge with what imaginative writing can

provide in the way of getting at the root of the question. However, here, again, it is a question of what kind of literature should be considered as measuring rods in the case of crime. There exists, as we know, a literature both of crime and of criminals. To the first group belong the novels of Eugene Sue, Conan Doyle, Edgar Allen Poe, etc. But no matter how much these excite the imagination, they contain as a rule little of actual criminal-psychological weight because that which chiefly interested the reader, no less so than the author, was the crime and not the criminal. It is either the crime's secretiveness or its horror which underlies the plot, while the actors,—the criminals, detectives and others, are merely the pegs on which the events are hung. They are the lay figures in the hands of the author, able only to do the will of their progenitor and unable to conduct themselves as living personalities.

Literature written by the criminals themselves is of not much value to the psychology of crime. As we know, a number of criminals have appeared in literature, Oscar Wilde, the Marquis of Sade, Cassanova, Villon, and others, and Lombroso has, besides, collected a great number of poems, proverbs, and self-revelations by anonymous criminal authors. But neither are these of any particular value to psychologic criminology. Criminal literature frequently shows how careful one must be in placing faith on the written word of the criminal.

Of a somewhat different character is the literature by those who without being criminals themselves have lived among them as their comrade, and then have made a record of what they have seen and experienced. In this class belongs the Parisian depictions of Vidoq, Josiah Flynt's picture of American vagabonds, Hans Leuss' account of German prisoners. Books of this kind furnish considerable light as to the inter-relations of criminals, and their attitude toward the law. But at most, such writings do not go very deeply into the subject. They are mostly concerned with anecdotes, loosely-joined events, fugitive personal impressions. As a rule they are designed more to agitate and surprise than to present a true picture, a natural result of the fact that nearly always their publication is for a consideration of money.

There remains, then, the literature by those who possess the wonderful ability to shed their mental skin at will, to make their own "I" identical with another's; to think, feel, reason as does this other "I." These intellectual grandees, these delvers into the psychological realm are to the knowledge of the human soul what a

Newton, Darwin, Pasteur stand for in relation to natural science. To them the mind of the criminal is laid bare as if it were an open book. They point out to us the motive and its origin, the tension it produces, the gradual growth of the criminal thought, how the decision when once made is carried out, the mental oscillations both during and after the deed is done. Such writers follow the criminal at home and abroad, at work and at rest, when with companions, as he confronts his victims, in love and hate, in storm and calm. This they do not only as just spectators and critics, but as if they themselves were the criminal, yes, looking deeper into the crime and its effect than can the criminal himself.

It is to such that psychologists of criminology turn in confidence. But there are not many to whom it is given to be able to transform themselves to such a degree that their leadership is conclusive. Of the several authors who in our own day have occupied themselves with criminal-psychological subjects there is in reality only one whose authority remains undisputed, namely, Dostojewski. His Raskolnikow is a criminal-psychological individual treasure of the highest value. But Dostojewski's Russians were too far from us to teach us anything in particular. They are not our flesh and blood. We feel that what he says is true, but that, after all, it does not concern us.

As a mountain towers high above the ant-hills, so Shakespeare's marvelous genius overtops that of all other writers. His characters fit all time and belong to the whole of mankind. Those who know them have an interest in them as in no other poetic creations. His characters seem almost parts of ourselves. They possess a validity of so general a mold as to make them much more than figments of the imagination. Not only are the heroes or villains of this or that kind, but each in his own particular way represents the very good or the very evil in human beings without ever descending to abstractions; without at any time they cease to be persons like ourselves. By choosing these as our models we get as close as is only possible to the ideal concept: to see the criminal in man, and man as the criminal. The fine thread that connects the criminal instinct with the whole permits us to identify the criminal with his normal fellowmen.

It matters little that Shakespeare is more than three hundred years in the past. No psychological problem seemed unknown to him; he appears to solve them all as if it were mere play. He carries us with equal ease to the highest point of the soul-life and

takes us to the abysses deepest down. He unravels for us motives, explains the whole intricate web of existence and enables us to follow the flight of his thoughts so that at last we can see that a certain act must result in just such a crime, in just that individual. While professedly an adherent of the free-will idea he is in reality one of the most luminous spokesman for determinism. If anyone can teach us the psychology of criminology it is Shakespeare.

In "The Tempest" appears a mystical creature,—half fish, half monster, and yet wholly man. He represents a fanciful primitive being that civilization has tried to influence through the character of Prospero. Prospero gives him shelter; he utilizes this in an attempt to commit rape. Prospero teaches him the power of speech; he makes use of it for the purpose of cursing his benefactor. Prospero shows him how to think, only that he may plot evil against him. He loves but one thing, liquor. The only thing he fears is punishment. He is fit for nothing but the meanest kind of labor, and he works only when there is no other way. He is, as Prospero says,

A devil, a born devil, on whose nature
Nurture can never stick, on whom my pains
Humanely taken, all, all lost, quite lost—

I shall neither attempt the anachronism that Caliban is Lombroso's man of crime, or say that Shakespeare got his idea so long before Lombroso. One thing, however, is certain: we have here the criminal in his undiluted state; the cell containing within itself the germ for all other creations with tendencies and designs like it.

Let us, then, beneath the magic wand of Shakespeare-Prospero follow some of Caliban's descendants. In some we shall find but a few of his characteristics; in others more; in others, again, the whole in full bloom. Unfortunately, they are not like Prospero's figures,

Spirits which by mine art
I have from their
Confines called to act—,

but living entities, that in our daily life embitter our existence. But as Caliban in the final analysis retains a deadly respect for Prospero's books, without which

He's but a sot as I am nor hath not
One spirit to command,—

because he knows that with them alone Prospero's has the means

to control him, let us through knowledge, understanding and reason try to find the remedy for the subjugation of the descendants of Caliban, the criminals.

Brutus and Cassius

The political offender, whom we may designate as the homo nobilis of the criminal guild, is the idealist, differing from the crude materialists so prevailing. The instant he appears on the scene he is a piece of living history in the midst of the ephemeral beings of crime who are doomed to disappear the moment their deeds are done and judged. Even the closest adherents to the laws of punishment are deferential before this personage, although they must sanction the prescribing of severe sentences in the matter of the plots that caused the offense. Ordinarily considered, whether in literature or art, the political criminal is a hero, the upholder of an ideal, the representative of what is truthful and right in the eyes of a pretending society.

However, in the above sense not everyone is a political criminal who offends against the State. And as we consider the many characters in Shakespeare guilty of high treason and regicide, it is essential to define just what are the particular characteristics of the political criminal.

To begin with, we must except all those who commit crimes against the State for personal gain, as in the cases of Macbeth and Richard III. There must also be excluded the various pretenders who by virtue of their real or imagined rights to the throne employ more or less violent means in asserting their claims. Those in the first category are, as a matter of fact, just common criminals, the latter no criminals at all when judged by the standards of their time which, necessarily, must be our measuring rod.

The real political criminal is a criminal, it is true, but of a very special kind. What characterizes the ordinary criminal is that he attacks the fundamental interests of society for the sake of his egoistical goal. The political offender acts in the service of a higher purpose, for the common weal, as he believes, and his attacks are therefore directed against the one or the many who in his eyes are the enemies of the common welfare. Instead of doing injury to the fundamentals of society he means to serve and promote them. Instead of striving after personal profits by his act he very often realizes that he himself may be crushed beneath the effects of what

he has done; that, at any rate, he will never reap the fruits of his deed. In his role as transgressor, then, he is an altruist, and not an egoist, and considered subjectively, he is far from being a criminal; in fact, just the opposite of one.

Viewed objectively, however, he is a criminal, since no society can afford such self-assumed judgment of what is best for the common weal. Existing society will always conceive of the common good in its own way and must, therefore, consider whoever acts contrary to its judgment as a criminal. Even then society admits that he is a criminal in a class by itself because his motives are so widely different from what actuates other criminals. Whether posterity will consider him a hero or an unlucky dreamer depends in all essentials on the results achieved.

In "Julius Caesar" we find two types of this kind which are valid for all time, namely, Brutus and Cassius, the real supports of the drama. In contrast to them, Caesar is represented as the foremost power of the State. As we know, Shakespeare gives us Caesar as a rather inferior person, and Georg Brandes for this reason and for the sake of historical correctness, enters his objection to Shakespeare's characterization of one of its greatest figures, a caricature, as it were, which Brandes finds damaging to the structure of the drama and the interest it is calculated to create.

It is not my purpose to here look into the reason for Shakespeare's undervaluation of Caesar. The main thing here is not Caesar's personal qualities, but his status as representative for the legally created society; as the personification of this very society. And that position he fills completely.

In spite of frailties, Caesar stands as the bulwark against chaos and disintegration. He is the mighty defense of the lives and the interests of the citizens,—just that which the State must be in order to solve its problems.

It is true that Caesar is an usurper, but there is nothing wrong in this since all social might depends upon usurpation. Power is not given to the weak; the strongest possess themselves of it. Thus it has been always, even in our own day, even in the world's most parliamentary States. It is only that the form has changed. Caesar's power was approved by the people,—legally as well as in fact, he was the strong possessor of the State.

The reign of Caesar was mild and just; not even his worst antagonists could prove that he misused his power. Even Brutus says,

and, to speak truth of Caesar
I have not known when his affections sway'd
More than his reason.

And yet, the power of Caesar has its weak points. Caesar has not misused his power, but he might do so. His power is without legal limits. And while he is a legal ruler, he is a new ruler, and only he who during a long period has exercised this power is taken for granted.

The masses do not ask what uses might be made of power; only what use is being made of it. Only the finer natures sense this; those who love liberty for its own sake, not for what it may bring them. They hate unlimited power, even though it may be of service, because such power may do damage. This Caesar's power might do, and the completely freeborn mind must stand as enemy against this power, if for nothing else than for

these hard conditions as this time
Is like to lay upon us.

It is this spirit which has carried humanity forward from the despotism of the past to the law-secured and legally circumscribed liberty of our own time, and this spirit it is that possesses Brutus, lover of liberty. But Caesar has no eyes for the fact that his power is encumbered with any weakness. Like all robust rulers who govern well and firmly he is secure in saying:

Know, Caesar doth not wrong, nor without cause—

What more can the most idealistic lover of liberty ask? And what is this liberty to Caesar? He has seen how liberty had become licentiousness and wildness, how the disregard for law spread itself in the name of liberty. And it was just through the power that he possessed that this disregard had been supplanted by legal security. Who in all earnestness could think of returning to the confusion of the past?

And Caesar, who has aged, has forgotten his youth; also forgot that each generation sets up its own ideal of liberty; that it is not freedom of the past, but of the future, that it considers, and that the experience of the past can only show that the liberty at hand could not be used, but, nevertheless, can never stifle the faith in the liberty which has not been tried. Caesar forgot that experiences only stamp decisively the generation that can claim them.

But if Caesar does not sense this danger he is the more conscious of that other weakness from which his power suffers. Caesar

is a new man with power, and what are not the conditions that confront such a new man? It is not only the ever-present dissatisfaction of those who at one time were something and now are nothing; it is not only the continuously vigilant criticism of those who always seem to think that what is should be different; it is first of all the hatred against the "upstart;" he who has become great and who must be acknowledged greatest by those who are absolutely convinced that this greatness belongs to them.

Caesar knows this danger, and this hatred makes him afraid. As abstract as is the longing after liberty, just as concrete is hatred. It aims straight at its goal, and it knows the way. If the modern individual is inclined to forget youth's joy in liberty, the better he learns to know the hatred of advanced age towards the one who has progressed. He knows its strength, how bitter it can become, what is its danger.

Caesar sees a danger in Cassius:

I fear him not:
Yet if my name were liable to fear,
I do not know a man I should avoid
So soon as that spare Cassius.

For, adds Caesar,

Such men as he be never at heart's ease
While they behold a greater than themselves,
And therefore are they very dangerous.

Here Caesar hits the nail on the head. True, Cassius is not Caesar's enemy out of purely personal spite, or for the sake of gaining any direct advantage. He hates him,—let us say, politically; because he finds it unworthy that one of such "low estate" as Caesar, that this "poor man," should be master of Rome.

Age, thou art shamed
Rome, thou hast lost the breed of noble bloods!
When went there by an age, since the great flood
But it was famed with more than with one man?
When could they say till now that talk'd of Rome
That her wide walls encompass'd but one man?

But back of this political hatred we find rich elements of downright common envy.

In Cassius' long speech to Brutus he reveals himself. After reciting how he aided Caesar when he was ill; after asking whether

he, Cassius, is not just as good as Caesar, for does he not even swim better, he declares,

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

Ye gods, it doth amaze me
A man of such a feeble temper should
So get the start of the majestic world
And bear the palm alone.

We can understand that Caesar has good reason to fear a man who can take no other measure of Caesar—this Caesar, who like another Atlas carries on his shoulders the period and the world-development, and who is looked upon by Cassius as a common soldier. And still, Cassius is a clever person, a good judge of human nature, and a shrewd politician. But he belongs to those small natures that estimate conditions in their relation to themselves; he is a prosaist without imagination, and therefore hates plays and music. He is able to judge all situations merely as they shape themselves in his own favor. Caesar has committed the unforgivable wrong of outshining Cassius, and what is Caesar but Cassius' old comrade? How beautiful sounds this word: comrade! and beautiful it is so long as comrades walk in steps. But let one but gain a little ahead, let him forge far ahead of the other, and what faults are now heaped upon the old comrade. And if on this onward march he does not break his neck, on whom other than the comrade does the task devolve to break it?

Why, it is really a duty to open the eyes of those simple-hearted fools who let themselves be impressed,—no one knows better how unworthy he is for the position he has come to occupy than the one who knows him so intimately. Of all political opponents he becomes the most bitter, the most implacable, the most dangerous. Around him gather all those other dissatisfied ones, the critical ones, the small ambitions that scent spoil. And the opposition party is formed.

Cassius is the representative of hatred in the revolution that overthrew Caesar. In all social revolutions it is hate that creates the ferment. Every revolution needs before it breaks out its Brutus, but it is the Cassiuses that fill the ranks. The personal hatred of Cassius against Caesar is superseded by the hatred of the lower classes for the upper. Hatred thus becomes collective, and for this

reason the most violent because it is the accumulation of the individual hates.

It is not Cassius who alone overthrows Caesar, but in his mixture of political and personal hatred, in his ability to let one thing strengthen and inflame another he is the type of one of the groups of which men of revolutionary tendencies are composed; the great haters, those who, as August Comte declares, in writing about the great men of the French Revolution, are in a constant condition of "chronic rage" that enables them to commit the most terrible deeds whenever they think the right moment has come.

But Cassius and his crowd are unable to handle the situation alone. The people are devoted to Caesar. Their shouts of joy convince Cassius that he cannot depend on the assistance of the masses so long as he has only his own hatred on which to build. Caesar's regime is too powerful, and too firmly grounded, too just to make room for hatred. And Cassius does not propose to sacrifice himself as a blind fanatic in a hopeless situation for just the sake of his hatred. Shrewd politician that he is, he does not want to conquer and die, but to live and enjoy the fruits of his act.

It is for this reason that he turns to Brutus, the brooding individual, the theorist with his abstract state-ideals; the faithful Republican, the unspotted man of honor, whom Caesar loves and who loves Caesar, but who never attempts to gain for himself a single advantage from the favorite position he occupies. Cassius knows that Brutus of late has been serious and more than ordinarily reserved. It is his guess that his restlessness and apparent unsettled condition of mind are due to his concern for the affairs of state. What a chance for Cassius to fish in troubled waters! What a possibility for an alliance, and such an alliance! If he can get Brutus on his side, this idealist whom all the people love, this man, the name of whose ancestor still lives in the memory of the masses as Rome's deliverer;—if he can succeed in this, then there can be thrown over the crime a glamour of idealism. Brutus' association alone will cause all to think that compelling reasons existed, and that they had been delivered from a terrible danger of which they were entirely unconscious.

There is something elevating in this, the wholly honorable man's significance in the State. Before the man whose disinterestedness is raised above all doubt, all defer, big and little, Caesar as well as Cassius. If he is part of a movement, then the adherents

have confidence in the outcome. If he is against a plan, it is a foregone conclusion that it has nothing on which to stand.

Cassius has need of Brutus, not because of his good qualities, but because of the position he occupies in the eyes of the people. Brutus can raise the banner that will attract the most followers. But it is not given to him to impress others with his idealism. By associating himself with Cassius he makes him no different than he is. Instead of lifting him up, it is Cassius who drags Brutus down to his own level. And Brutus ends up by being a false friend and traitor toward his benefactor, Caesar.

What determines Brutus to kill Caesar is partly Cassius' machinations, partly Brutus' own peculiar nature, the intensely theoretical in his thinking. Both of these factors work together in a very characteristic manner which casts light over that which mankind generally imagines influences it decisively,—and what actually governs it.

First considering Cassius' talk about Caesar's poor qualifications, we find that this leaves Brutus absolutely cold. What does concern him, as he says, is his fear that

the people
Choose Caesar for their King.

During Cassius's long speech Brutus' thought is turned steadily toward the race track from where there reaches him the cries of joy in favor of Caesar. It is this which causes him to exclaim in response to Cassius' angry outpourings:

Another general shout!
I do believe that these applauses are
For some new honours that are heap'd on Caesar.

It is only after Cassius talks to him of Rome's disgrace in having only "one man," who is an autocrat, within its walls, that he becomes attentive. It is then, after Cassius ends his direct appeal to him with

O, I have heard our fathers say
There was a Brutus once that would have brook'd
The eternal devil to keep his state in Rome
As easily as a king,

that Brutus answers quietly and thoughtfully:

That you do love me I am nothing jealous
What you would me to, I have some aim:

How I have thought of this and of these times,
 I shall recount hereafter; for this present,
 I would not, so with love I might entreat you,
 Be any further moved.

Brutus wants to think matters over in his own way and come to a decision uninfluenced, if possible, by others. This prudent, considerate man knows only too well what effect rests in the words of a clever agitator. And he fears such an influence. It is therefore, that he asks to be spared further incitements:

That you have said
 I will consider; what you have to say
 I will with patience hear—

And yet, Cassius' words have not been without effect, for

Brutus would rather be a villager
 Than to repute himself a son of Rome
 Under these hard conditions—

Cassius immediately sees how far he has gotten:

I am glad that my weak words
 Have struck but thus much show of fire from Brutus.

It is apparently Cassius' appeal to Brutus as a descendant of a Brutus, that has produced whatever effect is visible. He senses that under the peculiar conditions that then obtained in Rome she was on the road to again have a king after the lapse of many centuries. Of course, it is no new discovery that Brutus makes an account of what Cassius is saying. He has been thinking the same thing before. But in hearing this expressed by another as a sort of duty, his own thoughts receive a fresh impulse and the motive to act has some weight. But Brutus does not want to do anything merely through feelings or sentiment. For him action must be in accordance with his reasoning faculties. Reason, therefore, must be master of the uncertain and instinctive and it is this he attempts to bring out in his famous monologue,

It must be by his death: and for my part,
 I know no personal cause to spurn at him,
 But for the general.

What Brutus finally appropriates to himself as his reason, or rather, the picture that he summons to convince himself, is Caesar as the serpent's egg hatched in the sun and against which it is wrong to show any kindness, because the serpent is the enemy of

society. It is thus Brutus manages to get around that which is hardest for him, his personal love for Caesar; his debt of gratitude to him. As he becomes the champion of "the people's cause" he at the same time becomes an enemy of his own friendship for Caesar:

And therefore think him as a serpent's egg
Which hatch'd would as his kind grown mischievous,
And kill him in the shell.

In this whole reasoning theoretical scholasticism is much in evidence. If not Cassius' impulses,—those that rob Brutus himself of his sleep, of his desire for food, his health—had not been active within his own soul,—his own reasoning would never have influenced him.

It will not do to say that Brutus' gratitude and friendship for Caesar are false and spurious because he can have it in his heart to kill him. This is Dante's contention when in the furthest hell he places Brutus at the side of Judas, both being crushed beneath the jaws of a wild animal. If Brutus for the sake of the people sacrificed his feelings for Caesar it is not because he considers the latter of little consequence but because, as he sees his duty, this impels him to set aside every feeling that he has for Caesar. The greater we consider Brutus' love for Caesar to be, the greater must he himself be, since altruism has to overcome that much more. To get at the man Brutus we must first get around this altruism. His duty to his people is in reality the expression of his own important status as a descendant of Brutus the Liberator.

Shakespeare clearly shows the power that Brutus exercises over all the conspirators the moment he determines to join in their plan. All bow before his will, the lucidity of his thinking, his known integrity. Even Cassius is careful to enter no objections to his suggestions. Though he remains unconvinced by Brutus' arguments, he knows the impossibility of making him yield an inch. Rather would Brutus give up the whole scheme than let other theories than his gain the day. And Brutus cannot be spared.

As long as hatred and the streams of idealism blend the result is irresistible. The fall of Caesar comes through the coalition formed, but this very irresistible coalition also contains within itself the germ of dissolution. No sooner is the cooperation put to a test than two ideas pull in opposite directions. Cassius not only wants to strike the blow but make victory certain. Brutus sees no other duty before him than to liberate Rome. Of course, Caesar

must fall, but this must be accomplished in a manner different from what others have planned. It is therefore he cries out.

O, that we then could come by Caesar's spirit,
And not dismember Caesar? But alas,
Caesar must bleed for it! And gentle friends,
Let's kill him boldly, but not wrathfully;
Let's carve him as a dish fit for the gods.

Under the leadership of Brutus, then, there begin the long line of mistakes by the conspirators; mistakes which in real life would require years before their effect could be felt, but which in the drama develop in quick succession. For Brutus is disgusted with all this secretiveness, all the cunning that the conspiracy carries in its train. He objects to the conspirators taking an oath. Brutus needs no oath to bind him to whatever he considers his duty. If the sense of duty, Brutus' strongest driving force, cannot bind the others, to what use then is an oath:

Swear priests, and cowards and men cautelous,

Brutus has contempt for opportunists. He does not wish to win over those who can be won over—as would Cicero. And he does not want to crush those who may become opponents, as for instance, Mark Antony. He does not wish to win a political victory, then why seek out Cicero? He is not after striking others than the enemies of the country, and Antony is certainly no enemy; the frivolous Antony who does not lie awake at night, like Brutus, to clarify his own thinking. He is no character, has no convictions of his own. What he possesses he appears to have borrowed from Caesar,

For he can do no more than Caesar's arm
When Caesar's head is off.

But in all these respects it is Brutus who sees things in the wrong light and Cassius whose vision is clear. Hatred is sharp visioned and employs every means; the idea sees only itself and can use only its own remedy. This is why it falls short before the crime, for crime must also use crime's methods. To will the crime and still keep the hands clean, that is to reach for the goal with inadequate means—it is an illusion that carries destruction within itself.

Brutus murders Caesar in a firm belief in his "good, and well considered reasons" and their ability to convince others as they

have convinced him. He does not see that he only had to examine his own mind to find that it is the deeper feelings, transmitted through generations, and personal interests, that determine the act, not reason. Brutus confides to Antony:

Our reasons are so full of good regard
That were you, Antony, the son of Caesar,
You should be satisfied.

Antony obligingly answers that he craves nothing different, and Brutus feels so secure that in spite of Cassius' warning he permits Antony to hold the oration over Caesar's body, Antony whose love for Caesar rests on a deep admiration for Caesar's immense facility for acting with forcefulness. This Antony, to whom Caesar's unexpected fall has opened so great a chance that he only needs to ally himself with Caesar's nearest relative, Octavius, to conquer the world,—this Antony, Brutus thinks of winning over by reasons "so full of good regard."

Brutus even believes that he can convince the gathered populace with his "reasons," the masses to whom reason means nothing. And he makes a speech that sounds almost like a legal document, and which creates just such impressions as theses and antitheses are bound to create, an unpleasant, doubting feeling, swinging this way and that. Only for a moment does this uncertainty disappear: when Brutus appeals to the sympathy of the people by offering them his own life in expiation. As if with a magician's wand he creates the sympathy that has lain dormant, and as the shouts of joy ring upon the air, Brutus departs from the Forum,

Good countrymen, let me depart alone
And, for my sake, stay here with Antony.

As the people watch in surprised silence he leaves and gives the place over to Antony. And as he does this, victory slips from his hands. To the people as a mass only the present has existence. The one who knows how to stir up the emotions through his speech can in a moment sweep away all other impressions but his own. He is like the hypnotist who through his power robs another of his will. And the genial Antony understands how to utilize his chance to the utmost.

Brutus' arguments are at once cast aside by Antony reminding his hearers that Caesar trice declined the crown. He makes use of Caesar's will, talks of his mistreated body, appeals to their sympathy

for himself by showing them his grief. Little by little he succeeds in having them turn to himself, the plain, honest man,

For I have neither wit, nor words, nor worth,
Action, nor utterances, nor power of speech
To stir men's blood; I only speak right on.

Antony possesses just those qualities the people love; who will not follow such a man when he finally speaks the word: rebellion. And as he sees the people become as a foaming maelstrom ready to destroy those whom before they acclaimed jubilantly he smiles with satisfaction:

Now let it work. Mischief thou art afoot,
Take thou what course thou wilt.

With the expulsion of the conspirators from Rome all is lost to Brutus. His firm faith in the people bending before his "good reasons" is put to shame. His belief in life itself is destroyed. In the camp at Sardes he is already a broken spirit. What did he gain? New usurpers rule in Rome, many times worse than the great man who was murdered. And what can Brutus now expect? Be destroyed by these, or himself become an usurper with no greater right to the place than those who might be thrown down.

In his domestic affairs he likewise has suffered shipwreck. Portia is dead, his happy home is broken up. But in the purity of his thinking he remains the same. As before, he carries aloft the banner of idea. He is of these who do not become less in the hour of adversity—nor any wiser. He has learned nothing from his former mistakes because they were expressions of his inner nature. His eyes have not been opened to the truth that tactical mistakes avenge themselves as readily as moral. And he repeats them.

Cassius has to give account of himself to Brutus, because he conducts the war as war, and not as a logical discussion, or a wager, and Cassius must once more submit himself to Brutus. But this time it is not before a Brutus of noble thought and speech. No, Brutus becomes angry, he is a tortured, unhappy man, and excuses himself before Cassius by saying that he is ill from many sorrows.

In the discussion of the plan of campaign it is once more Brutus' unfortunate idea that wins. Does this mean that Brutus is but an indifferent general, an intelligence of slight consequence since he looks on things in such a wrong light? This would seem so, since this time there can be no moral reason for having the battle take place at Philippi rather than at Sardes. There is, how-

ever, another explanation for this. The fact is that Brutus is dead tired of the entire chain of circumstances so unsuited to his nature, and of his crushed expectations there remains but one wish: to make an end of it all. The advantage of his plan is that the battle is expedited. Hence Philippi instead of Sardes. Judgment over himself will alone bring him peace.

Thus it is that while bending under the strain and excitement he sees Caesar's ghost which warns him of his death. It is characteristic of Brutus that he recovers his courage when he learns that only his death is concerned. This sentence of death is to him almost a liberation. If the warning had been that he had to live on as he was it would have seemed much worse. That which does terrify him is not that he is to die but that it had to be Caesar's spirit to render the verdict. For what does this signify? Nothing less than that his life had lived on fraud. He had no right to reason himself into killing Caesar. He is not the great citizen that he believed himself to be. Chasing after phantoms he had trampled on every true human feeling, offended every fine human quality, goodness, sympathy, gratitude, love. In spite of all, then, he is a murderer, and as such must share the murderer's fate.

This, then, is the judgment over Brutus; humanity's judgment, the social judgment. Brutus condemned in accordance with the objective aim of right is the judgment over the deed, which despite all subjective explanations and excuses, in spite of personal honor and purity, reaches upward as a rock that none can get around. Brutus must answer for his act, and mankind, society, history declares him guilty. It is Caesar that passes the sentence of death on Caesar's murderer.

Is nothing more to be said? Is there no room for another verdict? Suppose Brutus had had the ability of Antony when he addressed the people, and had Cassius' shrewdness before the battle and been victorious, and after the victory had brought to Rome the golden era of which he dreamed? The murder, the deed would have been the same, but had not the judgment of history been a different one? Let us rather say that it was Brutus' political diletantism; his doctrinal shortsightedness, his inability to understand the time and its need on which the real premises of the judgment are built.

But on the other hand, suppose Brutus had possessed the qualifications of Antony and Cassius, could he then have been Brutus, the hero of liberty? Would not the murder have been the more

disgusting if committed, not by a Brutus who by virtue of his mistakes went to destruction, but by a Brutus who through his political ingenuity succeeded in conquering the world? Would the moral judgment, then, not have been the more severe?

Here opens up a gap which it is not easy to get across. Should we let our own judgment rest on that of history, the world's judgment, which weighs the act and asks what the perpetrator has done, or are we to follow the edict of morality which examines the motives and inquires what the perpetrator actually had in mind?

To this no general answer can be returned. Each must reach his own conclusion according to his light. Perhaps he who does not forget the man for the deed is nearest right. Nor does Shakespeare allow history to say the last word about Brutus. The ethical judgment has something much more conciliatory to say over the corpse of Brutus.

This was the noblest Roman of them all:
 All the conspirators, save only he,
 Did that they did in envy of great Caesar;
 He only, in a general, honest thought
 And common good to all, made one of them.
 His life was gentle, and the elements
 So mix'd in him that Nature might stand up
 And say to all the world "This was a man!"

—This was a man! yes, but a human being, and nothing more. Brutus wanted to be more than human, he wanted to be the judge of righteousness, and its avenger. It was this that cost him his life, for he was only a human being. And this epitaph, which comes so close to Tolstoy's view of life, may, perhaps, be applied to the political criminal.