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SHAKESPEARE
CASSETT STORY

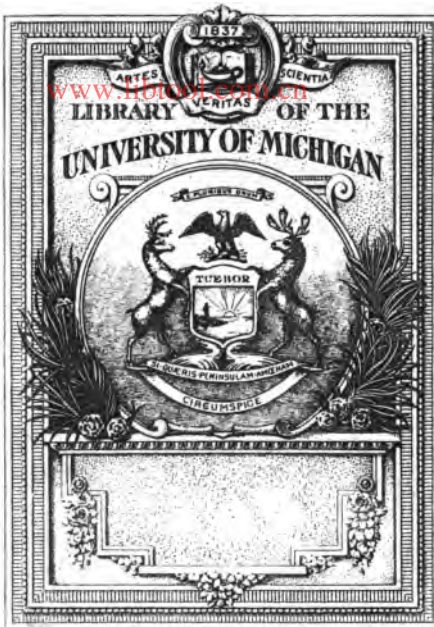
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(FROM MERCHANT OF VENICE)

BY

LOLAINE PLATT-IMBEN

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THE GIFT OF
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**SHAKESPEARE
CASKET STORY**

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SHAKESPEARE CASKET STORY

(FROM MERCHANT OF VENICE)

∞∞

BY

Mrs. LORAINÉ (PRATT) IMMEN 1840-



TRADESMAN COMPANY
PRINTERS
GRAND RAPIDS, MICH.
1915

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**The Shakespeare Casket Story
Booklet, with the Compliments
of The Loraine Pratt Immen Art
Fund of Ladies' Literary Club.
Mesdames Immen, Vine, Mul-
hern, Edwards, Clark, Mc-
Knight, Russell and Goldsmith.**



Pres. C. H. Van Dyne
1-20-1927

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LADIES' LITERARY CLUB
October 2nd, 1915

Presentation to the Ladies' Literary Club of Grand Rapids, Michigan, of a Shakespeare Window by Loraine Pratt Immen—with Song and Story.

Design carried out and executed by Louis C. Tiffany, of Tiffany Studios, New York City.

ooo

William Shakespeare!

He was not for age but for all time!

—Ben Johnson.

In his will he wrote: "I commend my soul into the hands of God, my Creator, hoping and believing through the only merits of Jesus Christ, my Saviour, to be made partaker of life everlasting."

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Copy of "Shakespeare Casket" at
World's Fair, Chicago, Por-
traying Scenes From
Shakespeare's Dramas

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SHAKESPEARE CASKET STORY

"The little casket bring me
hither."—T. of A.

"They found him dead and cast
into the streets—an empty casket."
—K. J.

"Bill Nester bring me spices, ink,
paper, my casket and jewels."—
Pericles.

"I feel impelled to select a few
of the little gems from this casket
of song."—J. Miller.

Casket! Many writers and speakers refer in their writings or speeches to this simple word that expresses so much and most persons have placed carefully away somewhere—a little casket or box, containing souvenirs precious to them.

What a flood of Caskets and boxes come to my mind as I recall the Museums of the old world and how I paused before these treasures in Eng-

SHAKESPEARE CASKET STORY

land, France, Germany, Austria, Italy and other countries across the water.

In our own country the collections in the Metropolitan Museum of New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Stanford University and at our several expositions, all emphasize the interest in Caskets or boxes.

Whence this interest in them? Go to nature and you will find that every thing intended for perpetuation or safety is enclosed in a casket or box, from the pea pod—with its artistic structure—to the poppy's receptacle for its seeds, the flower-de-luce, wheat, oats, barley and all seeds of the trees of the forest, flowers of every description, all animal kind, from the fish of the sea, fowls of the air, to the great world of humanity, whose germs are enclosed in a beau-

SHAKESPEARE CASKET STORY

tiful casket from the embryo in the mother's womb, to the perfect body of man, which contains the Immortal soul. This subject so vast appeals to thought and needs no further suggestions of mine. Man has copied Nature and from the beginning, the garden of Eden, to the palatial residences (as well as humble cottages), from the "groves which were God's first temples" to the millions of churches with their spires pointing heavenward—built to contain humanity in the one case and the spirit of Religion in the other.

The Ark of the Covenant covered with gold is the first recorded example of the smaller caskets. The mummy cases, the gorgeous vaults in all cities where rest the remains of loved ones gone, and the massive safety vaults constructed to keep secure

SHAKESPEARE CASKET STORY

financial investments, etc., emphasize, that not only for ornament but use, they are considered a necessity.

The subject of our window is, Shakespeare's Casket Story, in Merchant of Venice.

Shakespeare is looking out of the window as he is seated at his desk, with manuscript in hand, and from his store house of imagination, one of his most perfect characters is revealed to him.

Portia, an obedient, loving daughter, a faithful lover and wife, loving home life yet capable of pleading her husband's friend's cause, successfully, in court, giving in her plea that matchless speech ending in "We do pray for Mercy," and that same prayer doth teach us all to render "The deeds of Mercy;" locating the scene in the beautiful City of Venice

SHAKESPEARE CASKET STORY

in the height of its glory and splendor before vice and extravagance ruined it as a Republic.

Her conversation with her maid Nerissa was about the terms of her father's will, [which was that there should be prepared three caskets].

One of gold with inscription. "Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire."

Silver, "Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves."

Lead, "Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath."

One of the caskets was to contain Portia's portrait, and Portia's hand was to be given to the suitor choosing the casket with Portia's picture.

Portia said "My little body is a-weary of this great world;" and, in reply to Nerissa's "for aught I see, they are sick that surfeit with too

SHAKESPEARE CASKET STORY

much as they that starve with nothing," said: "Good sentences and well pronounced. If to do were as easy as to know what were good to do chapels had been churches and poor men's cottages princes' palaces.

"It is a good divine that follows his own instructions. I can easier teach twenty what were good to do than be one of the twenty to follow my own teaching; but this reasoning is not in the fashion to choose me a husband—the word choose! I may neither choose whom I would nor refuse whom I dislike. Is it not hard that I cannot choose one nor refuse none?"

Nerissa reminds Portia of her father's good and wise qualities and that the one that she shall rightly love will choose the right one.

After Portia's description of the

SHAKESPEARE CASKET STORY

suitors already come and the Princes Morocco and Arragon had failed and after Portia had replied to Nerissa's remarks about Bassanio saying, "I remember him well and worthy of thy praise," Bassanio stood before the three caskets saying:

"So may the outward shows be least themselves;

The world is still deceived with ornament,
There is no vice so simple, but assumes
Some mark of virtue on his outward parts.

* * * * *

Look on beauty
And you shall see 'tis purchased by the
weight;

Thus ornament is but the guiled shore
To a most dangerous sea; in a word
The seeming truth which cunning times put
on

To entrap the wisest.

* * * * *

Therefore thou gaudy gold
I will none of thee;

SHAKESPEARE CASKET STORY

Nor none of thee thou pale and common
drudge

'Tween man and man; But thou, thou
meagre lead,

Which rather threat'nest than dost prom-
ise aught.

Thy plainness moves me more than elo-
quence;

And here choose I; joy be the consequence."

He opens the lead casket and then
gives that beautiful apostrophe to
Portia's picture.

"What demi-god

Hath come so near creation,

* * * * *

Here are sever'd lips

Parted with sugar breath; so sweet a bar

Should sunder such sweet friends.

* * * * *

Yet look, how far,

The substance of my praise doth wrong this
shadow,

In underprizing it, so far this shadow

SHAKESPEARE CASKET STORY

Don't limp behind the substance—
Here's the scroll,
The continent and summary of my fortune.
(Scroll).

“You that choose not by the view
Chance as fair and choose as true!
Since this fortune falls to you
Be content and seek no new.
If you be well pleased with this
And hold your fortune for your bliss,
Turn you where your lady is
And claim her with a loving kiss.”

Portia says to Bassanio:

“You see me Lord Bassanio where I stand,
Such as I am; though for myself alone
I would not be ambitious in my wish
To wish myself much better; yet for you
I would be trebled twenty times myself
A thousand times more fair, ten thousand
times more rich:
That only to stand high in your account
I might in virtues, beauties, livings, friends
Exceed account; but the full sum of me
Is sum of something which to term, in gross,

SHAKESPEARE CASKET STORY

Is an unlesson'd girl, unschool'd, unpractic'd
Happy in this, she is not yet so old
But she may learn; happier than this
She is not bred so dull but she can learn,
Happiest of all is that her gentle spirit
Commits itself to yours to be directed,
As from her lord, her governor, her king,

* * * * *

But now I was the lord
Of this fair mansion, master of my servants,
Queen o'er myself; and even now, but now
This house, these servants and this same
myself
Are yours my lord; I give them with this
ring,
Which when you part from, lose or give
away
Let it presage the ruin of your love
And be my vantage to exclaim on you.

Bassanio says:

"Madam you have bereft me of all words.
Only my blood speaks to you in my veins.
And there's such confusion in my powers

SHAKESPEARE CASKET STORY

As after some oration fairly spoke
By a beloved prince, there doth appear
Among the buzzing pleased multitude
Where every something, being blent together
Turns to a wild of nothing, save of joy,
Express'd and not express'd. But when
this ring
Parts from this finger, then parts life from
hence;
O then be bold to say Bassanio's dead!"

Bassanio's friend Antonio was in trouble. Portia went to Court and plead Antonio's cause successfully.

While Lorenzo and Jessica sit waiting for the return of the party, Lorenzo says:

"How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!
Here will we sit and let the sounds of music
creep into our ears.

* * * * *

SHAKESPEARE CASKET STORY

Look how the floor of heaven
Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold;
There's not the smallest orb which thou
beholdst

But in his motion like an angel sings
Still quiring to the young-eyed Cherubins;
Such harmony is in immortal souls;
But whilst this muddy vesture of decay
Doth grossly close it in, we can not hear it."

Portia and Nerissa return home
from the Court, Portia saying:

"That light we see is burning in my hall.
How far that little candle throws his beams!
So shines a good deed in a naughty world."

Later Bassanio returns—the ring
episode is explained and Portia says
to her newly wedded husband: "You
are welcome home."

* * * * *

"Here's a letter, read it at your
leisure and you will find that Portia
was the (doctor) or lawyer and

SHAKESPEARE CASKET STORY

Nerissa her clerk:” “Antonio I have good news for you; three of your argosies are richly come to harbor suddenly.”

Bassanio says to Portia: “Were you the doctor, and I knew you not.” Portia replies, “It is almost morning and yet I am sure you’re not satisfied.

“Let us go in and we’ll answer all things faithfully.”

NOTE.—Many quotations from Shakespeare’s Dramas glisten like diamonds, among the precious gems of thought.

“Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath.”

When young men and women give themselves to each other—equally they must give and hazard all they have and remain faithful to that promise taking for advice, “Whatsoever ye do, do all for the glory of God.”
1 Cor. 10:31.

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