

Contents

I. INTRODUCTION	9
A 'prima facie' Reading	10
Romantic Idealism in the Received Readings	15
2. THE PLAY	
1. 'Friends that purpose merriment'	21
2. Shylock's Instruction in Villainy	26
3. 'All that glisters is not gold'	32
4. The Letter of the Law	38
5. 'Love me, and leave me not'	44
3. CONCLUSION	50
Three Readings of the Irony	51
Ironic Comedy	53
APPENDIX	
<i>The Jew of Malta and The Merchant of Venice</i>	58
NOTE ON TEXTS AND CRITICISM	59
INDEX	63