

SCENE VIII.

Belmont.

Enter Portia with Morochius, and both their trains.

Por. **G**O, draw aside the curtains, and discover
The sev'ral caskets to this noble prince.
Now make your choice. [*three caskets are discovered.*]

Mor. The first of gold, which this inscription bears:

Who chooseth me, shall gain what many men desire.

The second silver, which this promise carries:

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

This third, dull lead, with warning all as blunt:

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

How shall I know if I do choose the right?

Por. The one of them contains my picture, prince;
If you choose that, then am I yours withal.

Mor. Some god direct my judgment! let me see,
I will survey th' inscriptions back again;
What says this leaden casket?

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

Must give, for what? for lead? hazard for lead?

This casket threatens. Men, that hazard all,

Do it in hope of fair advantages:

A golden mind stoops not to shows of dross,

I'll then not give nor hazard ought for lead.

What says the silver with her virgin hue?

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

As much as he deserves? pause there, Morochius,

And weigh thy value with an even hand:

If thou be'ft rated by thy estimation,

Thou dost deserve enough, and yet enough

May not extend so far as to the lady;

And yet to be afraid of my deserving,