

Cleopatra is perhaps one of the most interesting characters that Shakespeare ever painted. She seems to possess a trace of that which renders exalted womanhood so noble, but this is greatly overbalance by the inordinate qualities her vanity hath devised. The baseness of her mind is shown by the way she taunts Antony about Fulvia, and by the consolation she draws from fleshy comparisons when she is given a description of Octavia. Throughout the play instances of her artifice can be found in almost endless number. Her beauty and intellectual powers are supremely eminent; and had she not been so vain, and her thoughts so base, she might have been a bright star in the firmament of womanhood.

As Antony and Cleopatra are the central figures about which the others group themselves, I shall attempt to say nothing specific in regard to the minor characters. On the whole the play is a typical representation of a noble character brought to the lowest shade of disgrace and shame.

BREAKFAST FOR FIVE.

Scene:—A restaurant at a seaside resort on the southern coast.

SCENE I

[Enter two gentlemen, three ladies and a little girl.]

Mrs. Courtenay—Oh, how lucky it is we found this restaurant! We should have died of hunger if we had had to wait for breakfast at that poky hotel.