

The not yet Queen of the Adriatic had cast off the bonds of Constantinople. Dearth of *all* manufactured articles in Europe, and of practically all other products whatsoever, made the slave trade the easiest and most profitable of all trades.

Prisoners of war were the regular staple, but kidnapping rose in favour.

Pope Zacharias and others protested repeatedly and in vain; as have moralists in all time against any form of profitable infamy.



Kronenberg

"The Venetians had for a long time been engaged in this traffic" and Leo attributes the popular tradition of merchants killing children to the often fatal effects of the operation.

The testimony is not traditional; we have the records of the statute books.

Charlemagne prohibited the sale of any slave to foreigners under pain of death and prescribed the same penalty for anyone who mutilated a man "as occurred in that traffic".

Arichi, Prince of Beneventum, published similar laws, which were so little observed that the prince Sicardo had to republish them; but in their wilder country the edict applied only to free Lombard citizens and took no count of slaves or prisoners of war.

In 784 Charlemagne drove all the Venetian merchants out of his domain, and the traffic is specifically prohibited in the subsequent treaties.

As everyone knows, the orderliness of Charlemagne's era was quickly lost. The sale of slaves to the "infidel" continued throughout the crusades, and after. The black page in Veronese's banquet scene is not a freeman, and by the light reflected from his trappings we may consider Shylock—not an exceptional, fanciful monster; not a villain of exceptional imagination or ferocity, but a little behind his age, an expression of an earlier order, an order whose barbarities we have exchanged for another series of evils which our descendents will regard as little less barbarous.

The choice of Portia as advocate needs no comment. Her legal learning is solid. Generations of Anglo-saxons have applauded this play without in the least understanding it.