it. He must get it out of the king whether or no he did the deed, or whether this ghost was only a lying similitude of his father, a devilish impersonation of "the majesty of buried Denmark," and his doleful message a piece of fiendish mischief. Hamlet's greater burden may have been a righteous revenge, but that duty had as a preliminary task, the obtaining evidence that would justify his deed. He postpones the greater till he has done the lesser work.

Remembering this we can understand his whole course of procedure; with his mind full of that revulsion which he felt against his mother's frailty, he has this fresh burden laid upon him. His philosophy has taught him the folly of attempting to succeed by noise or blustering assertion. He is moreover alone. He can tell no one of his secret except his bosom friend Horatio. He must proceed with caution, for as soon as the king thinks that he is suspected Hamlet's life is not worth much. He hits upon the expedient of feigning madness. Under the cloak of insanity he can do and say things that would not be tolerated in a man who was not of an "antic disposition." This mock madness was the very best expedient he could hit upon, if he were able to play so very difficult a part. As behind a masked battery he could work his parallels underground nearer and nearer to the citadel he wished to take. That Hamlet could act this part we all know well, and that he succeeded in his plan is manifest, when we consider the relative importance in the plot of the famous play scene. From that moment when the king stopped the tragedy Hamlet knew he was right—the ghost had not deceived him, the king had been made to bear unwilling witness against himself. The first stage of the king's punishment is over, and Hamlet breaks out into a wild outburst of glee.—

Hamlet. Why, let the stricken deer go weep,
The hart ungalled play:
For some must watch, while some must sleep:
So runs the world away——
Would not this, sir, and a forest of feathers (if the rest of my fortunes turn Turk with me), with two provincial roses on my razed shoes, get me a fellowship in a cry of players, sir?

Horatio. Half a share.
Hamlet. A whole one. I,
For thou must know, O Damon dear,
This realm dismantled was
Of Jove himself, and now reigns here
A very very —— peacock.
Horatio. You might have rhymed.
Hamlet. O, good Horatio, I'll take the ghost's word for a thousand pounds.

I might now go on to show how Hamlet is from this point obliged to alter his tactics while pursuing the same general plan. His life, however, is now in imminent danger, and he knows it. He will lose no time, but takes care to secure the next point in his evidence, and to be the next knot of the web which he is weaving. He will gain over to his side the queen, his mother. Time will not, however, allow me to follow all the incidents of the drama as it passes on to its its conclusion, in which, in spite of that one grievous incident in which he forgot his purpose, and allows his hot blood to carry him into doing a deed which is a mistake, the poem ends in rude justice to all who have taken part in the history. Even Hamlet has justice done him if we remember that that purpose to which he had given himself was fulfilled.

The whole story of Hamlet is to my mind but another version of that wandering problem which has taxed thinking minds in every age and in every country, viz., how to reconcile the higher life of duty, and honor, and faith with the lower life of sin and suffering, and wearisome common-place incidents. It is the problem of the Book of Job, the problem of Gœthe's "Faust," the problem of "Paradise Lost," a problem which ever and anon presents itself to us all. And the unknown author of Job, and Shakespeare, and Milton, and Gœthe are all at one in this, that no solution of this problem is possible unless we remember that right and duty rest on eternal sanctions, and are not the temporary expressions of expediency; and also that, coincident and concurrent with this visible mundane realm is another universe—unseen, and spiritual, and real. The key to

"Hamlet" is the same that may be applied to Gœthe's "Faust." That brilliant fragment, the first part of "Faust," is a puzzle and an enigma, just as Hamlet is; but in the second part Gœthe himself gives us the key, and that key, which explains Faust, will also explain Hamlet.

A good man in the direful grasp of ill
His consciousness of right retaineth still.

Advertiser October 21st 1884.

CLIMATE AND DISTRIBUTION OF LIFE IN AUSTRALIA.

Professor Tate delivered the first of a series of lectures on this subject before a moderate audience, chiefly consisting of teachers, at the lecture-hall of the University on Monday evening. After severely criticising the errors contained in a recent publication by Mr. H. B. De la Poer Wall, M.A., entitled a "Manual of Physical Geography of Australia," the lecturer entered at once on his subject. He said the climatic elements indispensable to animal and vegetable life were temperature and moisture. The distribution of moisture on the globe was subject to the greatest irregularities; while the average annual temperature in each place varied but a few degrees from year to year, the quantity of rain at the same place might differ from one year to another by a quarter or even half. On the whole the quantity of rain decreased with the temperature, *i.e.*, from the equatorial belt towards the poles, because the heavier the air the greater was its capacity for holding vapor. However, this general law experienced a remarkable interruption in Australia a little beyond the tropic, where the quantity of rain was suddenly reduced to a minimum, while on the equatorial side of that belt were found abundant summer rains of the tropical climate and on the polar side the copious winter rains of the warm temperate regions. Australia, in this particular, presented no exception to other lands similarly situated, inasmuch as there existed in both hemispheres a dry zone. The northern zone of dry land extended in width for about 24° to 32° N. In the New World it began at the west of the Peninsula and Lower California, thence passing through Arizona, New Mexico, and West Texas, 1,000 miles west to east, the average rainfall being 10 inches, and going down to 2 and 3, while in some years the rain failed entirely. Further east in the same latitudes local causes gave abundant rains to the Valley of the Mississippi and Florida. In the Old World the dry zone occupied the very centre of the great Sahara, where the absence of rain was nearly complete on a length of 3,200 miles, and was considerably increased in width. Thence it crossed the central part of Arabia on a line of 1,300 miles, passed through the dry plateau of Persia and Belocchistan, and reached beyond the Indus the desert of Thur, after a course of 1,000 miles, making together a tract of 5,500 miles of dry lands. Further east, as in the New World, local causes brought in the same latitudes abundant rains which marked the influence of the general cause of dryness. In the southern hemisphere the dry zone was strongly marked on the western slope of the Andes; all the coast of Peru from Punta Parina, in 6° S., to northern Chili, in 30° S., was a rainless region. In the latitude of the dry zone, however, from 20° to 30° in the desert of Atacama, about the tropic of Capricorn, the atmosphere was not only rainless but perfectly dry. Even on the coast of Chili, Copiapo (27°), received only 0·32 inches, and La Serena, in Chili, 0·5 inches. In the same latitude on the east of the Andes, the plains of the Pampas were subject to great droughts. In the same lati-