

Macbeth to be affected by the supernatural, is difficult to determine. Such influence is familiar to the student of Shakespere, as it holds an important place in almost every plot. The ghost of Hamlet's father appears demanding vengeance against his murderous brother and unfaithful wife; Cæsar consults the gods, and Hermione appeals to the judgment seat of great Appolo. The appearance of Banquo's ghost we may attribute to an excited imagination. But upon the sober testimony of the two generals we are bound to accept the story of the witch scenes. Their effect upon Macbeth is bad. It is immediately after an interview with them that we get the first hint of the plan to murder the king, and the insane purpose to destroy the family of the escaped MacDuff follows their last conference. Every human being is liable to suggestions—whether he attribute them to satan or his own evil nature—which prompt toward evil deeds. If Shakespere was endeavoring to illustrate this truth his witches served admirably.

In the history of Macbeth Shakespere steps into the sphere of a moralist, and in harmony with the original aim of the English drama becomes a great religious instructor. The lesson which he teaches is the effect of yielding to the evil within our own hearts, and within the hearts of those around us.

#### THE BORDERLAND IN BIOLOGY.

In a person's experience apparent trifles occur which, though quite natural in the course of events, it is necessary to rank among the great events of a lifetime: such an one having a marked effect in changing the current of my life I am about to relate.

I had taken train at Carrick-on-Shannon en route for Dundalk; the slow drip drip of the rain from the roof of the carriage beat a dreary tattoo to the wailing of the wind. As I glanced round the compartment, in which the guard had shut me with a slam that bespoke a disposition to immolate me to the deity which seemed to dominate at the same time his mind and the weather, I noticed a middle-aged woman bearing unmistakable traces of the land freed from the toad and snake by St. Patrick. I soon wearied of observing my companion, however, and turning the seat into which I had thrown myself, sat staring out at the window, too listless to notice the shifting

scenes of the flying landscape. How long I sat thus I know not, but I was roused by a sudden halt. I proceeded to acquaint myself with the locality whereat we so unexpectedly drew up, and a more dismal, uninhabitable region could not well be imagined; bleak open moors, covered with a scanty growth of shaggy gorse, interspersed at frequent intervals with dark pools of stagnant water.

The occasion of our halt was soon made apparent by the guard's opening the door to admit a third party to our company. He was somewhat below medium height, with keen eyes peering out from under overhanging brows that reminded one of steep cliffs crowned with a thick irregular growth of underwood. His dress consisted of a blouse and knickerbockers of coarse gray frieze, while from the tops of his heavy brogues to his knees his legs were incased in a many folded wrapping of twisted straw as a protection against the wet and mud of the heaths, and topping all was a broad-brimmed Kossuth hat which shed great drops of moisture over everything within range. A microscope was strapped to his shoulder, and from his left arm depended an osier basket which he deposited at his feet.

Glancing at the basket I saw that it contained a motley assortment of oyster cans partly filled with mud, and small bottles filled with turbid water, evidently taken from the pools before mentioned, for green slime might be seen floating in some of them, and mingled indiscriminately, were many species of water plants.

I felt a glow of satisfaction run through my veins at meeting a naturalist who in his enthusiasm prosecuted his researches, regardless of discomfort or opposing circumstances. I afterwards learned that he was Herr Weidman, Professor of Zoology at Marburg, the nursery of the mind of Burnsen. I had been called upon to prepare a paper on the borderland in biology to be read before the scientific institute when a number of literary persons, bearing no small portion of the alphabet after their names, were to be present. I decided to surreptitiously seek some information on my subject, and so I began.

"Sir I believe that to fate I shall always remain a debtor for this meeting. I devote much of my leisure to the study of biology and I perceive that you are a naturalist." Keenly regarding me, he without a word, unstrapped his microscope, and