

**THE TEMPLE
SHAKESPEARE.
SHAKESPEARE'S
TRAGEDY OF HAMLET**

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The Temple Shakespeare. Shakespeare's Tragedy of Hamlet by William Shakespeare & Israel Gollancz

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WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE & ISRAEL GOLLANCZ

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THE
TEMPLE SHAKESPEARE



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and W. Aldis Wright, Esq., the text here
used is that of the "Cambridge" Edition.*

First Edition of this issue of "Hamlet, Prince of Denmark" printed August 1895.

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Twelfth Edition, February 1906.

Thirteenth Edition, December 1906.



Figure 1: Scatter plot showing data points with error bars.



The Becker Death Mask.

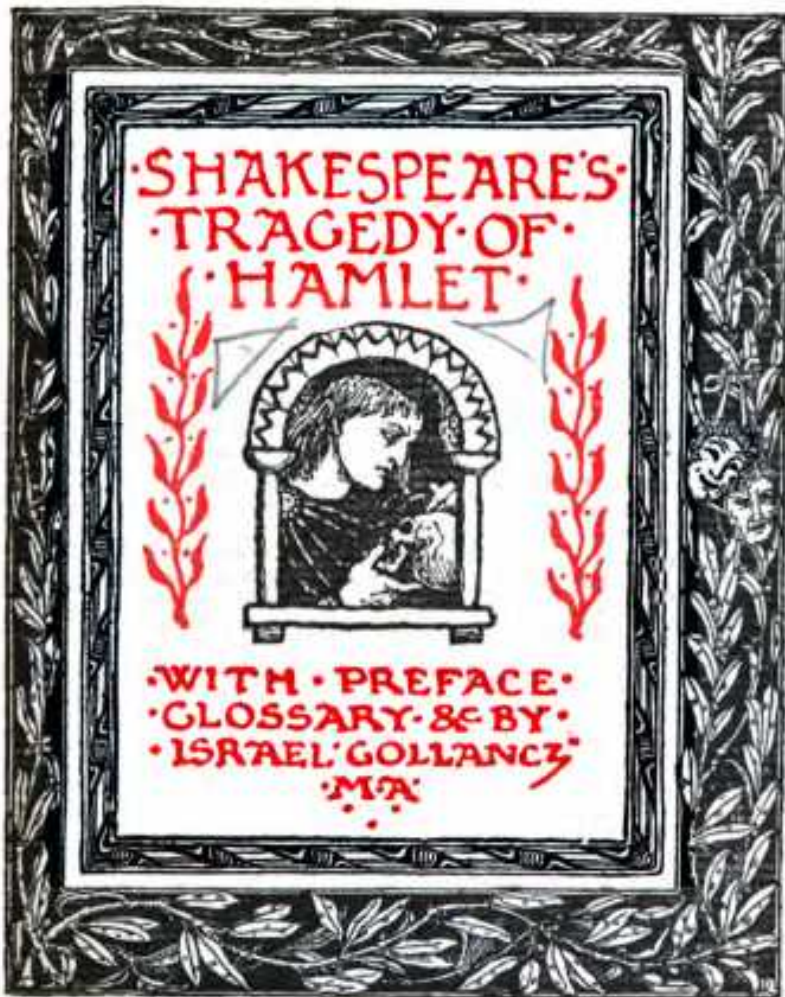
OTHERS abide our question, Thou art free
We ask and ask—Thou smilest and art still,
Out-topping knowledge. For the loftiest hill
Who to the stars uncrowns his majesty.

Planting his steadfast footsteps in the sea,
Making the heaven of heavens his dwelling-place,
Spare but the cloudy border of his base
To the foil'd Searching of mortality:

And thou, who didst the stars and sunbeams know,
Self-school'd, self-scanned, self-honour'd, self-secure,
Didst tread on earth unguessed at.—Better so!

All pains the immortal spirit must endure,
All weakness which impairs, all griefs which bow,
Find their sole speech in that victorious brow.

MATTHEW ARNOLD.



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*"The time is out of joint; O cursed spite,
That ever I was born to set it right!"*

In these words, I imagine, is the key to Hamlet's whole procedure, and to me it is clear that Shakespeare sought to depict a great deed laid upon a soul unequal to the performance of it. In this view I find the piece composed throughout. Here is an oak-tree planted in a costly vase, which should have received into its bosom only lovely flowers; the roots spread out, the vase is shivered to pieces.

A beautiful, pure, and most moral nature, without the strength of nerve which makes the hero, sinks beneath a burden which it can neither bear nor throw off; every duty is holy to him,—this too hard. The impossible is required of him,—not the impossible in itself, but the impossible to him. How he winds, turns, agonizes, advances, and recoils, ever reminded, ever reminding himself, and at last almost loses his purpose from his thoughts, without ever again recovering his peace of mind. . . .

It pleases, it flatters us greatly, to see a hero who acts of himself, who loves and hates us as his heart prompts, undertaking and executing, thrusting aside all hindrances, and accomplishing a great purpose. Historians and poets would fain persuade us that so proud a lot may fall to man. In *Hamlet* we are taught otherwise; the hero has no plan, but the piece is full of plan. . . .

Hamlet is endowed more properly with sentiment than with a character; it is events alone that push him on; and accordingly the piece has somewhat the amplification of a novel. But as it is Fate that draws the plan, as the piece proceeds from a deed of terror, and the hero is steadily driven on to a deed of terror, the work is tragic in its highest sense, and admits of no other than a tragic end.

GOETHE: *Wilhelm Meister.*

