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The Problem Drama.

There are certain underlying principles common to all art, that cannot change, yet the expression and interpretation of art may vary from time to time. Drama is an art. But it is interlinked with and dependent upon literature as a whole for its existence, and literature in turn, is dependent upon the times and conditions of the nation of which it is a product. Thus, we notice several distinct periods in the literature and art of a given country and even of the world at large. The country which is farthest advanced in civilization strikes the highest key in art, in literature, in science and thus becomes the leader for the rest of the world.

The splendid civilization of the Greeks and Romans gave the world the classic literature and art destined to live long after these empires had crumbled to dust. A new civilization sprang up. The natural, physical elements of the old literature and art seemed material and sensuous, the love element which needs run through all literature, seemed cold, without the spiritual life behind it, the heroic element, also an underlying principle of all literature seemed distant and non-applicable to the new civilization.

The Renaissance carried with it not only a waking up, but new ideals and conceptions which must find expression in somewhat different ways from the old. But the Renaissance period also had its day. It, too, became cold and rigid. It constantly pointed way up to some distant heaven, like the high spires of the cathedrals that rise high and slender upward till they almost seemed to disappear in the sky. People got tired of everlastingly looking upon saints and Madonnas with up-turned eyes, for they could not always follow their gaze. They wearied of promised joys in some distant heaven. So even Romanticism, which for a while warmed the people because of its humanism and caused them to see go to the extreme in joy and glory and chivalry, had its day. Reaction set in and rationalism reigned supreme. This, in turn must yield to a newer and different kind of romanticism and rationalism as well. Thus we have even now two schools, that of idealism from the old time romanticism, and realism from rationalism, and some authors seem to be exponents of both schools.

The 19th century has seen rapid changes in all directions. There has been such progress in all departments of life, physically, socially and spiritually, that people find it hard to re-adjust themselves to the new changes. Some one has said that the 19th century was an age of greatest doubt and of greatest faith. As a result of this new renaissance materially, intellectually and morally, we have a new psychology, new theories of medicine, a new sociology, new religion and a new psychology-literature. In this era of evolution it is hard for the individual to be himself and to hold his own, it matters not what station of life he is in. There are the laws of heredity, environment, sex, survival of the fittest often at the expense of the weaker-- all these conditions and problems to be solved.

Any one who would be a pioneer leader or teacher industrially, intellectually, physically, socially, morally must help to solve the new problems that are knocking at the door and crowding themselves upon our civilization.

This is true then as to literature and drama as well as in regard to other departments of our modern civilization. There must be new wine in new bottles.

Drama mirrors life. Shakespeare's dramas were true to nature and life. The dramas of to-day must reflect not only the truths that are underlying principles of life and character in all times or deal only with the causes and effects that always make life glad or sad, happy or woeful, but it must

penetrate to the peculiar conditions, that mark the transition period of our own times and if it cannot answer its problems it must at least reveal them and make people thoughtful concerning them.

Johan Henrik Ibsen, the intellectual giant, the worldfamed dramatist, is the father of the problem drama. Bernard Shaw, the Celtic exponent of live dramatic art, says, and we think truly, "Drama can never be the same since Ibsen has written". Then to understand the drama of to-day, one should understand Ibsen and his works. One may then see his influence, his principles, his ideas reflected among authors and dramatists in all modern lands.

Norway, ^{with its} sturdy, freedomloving and romantic people, failed, until recently, to develop a national literature. As a primary cause for this failure, might be mentioned Norway's political dependence, which in turn was due to the 1st "The Viking expedition", 2nd "The migrations to Iceland, where literature had a chance to blossom among a free and noble people, and which became a safe repository of all that was beautiful and valuable of Norse history and traditions, legend folklore and sagas", 3rd, "The struggle between the members of Royal families," 4th, "Struggle between Church and State." Then in 1536, Norway fell from her state of independence and became a province to Denmark. If 8 years before in 1528, Norway had been united and rebelled or if she had joined with the revolutionary forces in Sweden, she might have been able to throw off the Danish yoke.

This period forms the historical background of Ibsen's "Lady Inger from ^{Oslo} ~~Osma~~." Not till 1814 did Norway get away from Danish rule to a more independent status under Sweden's protection. It was then that Norway's leaders penned the articles of their wonderfully liberal constitution, really so far ahead of its times, that it took the Norwegian people as a whole, many decades before they realized, what great rights and liberties that were really theirs. It was the mission of school teachers through the teaching of civil law to open the people's eyes to their birthrights. As the farmer people saw what they could do and what they might have, they began to take more active part in what pertained to their country's and their own welfare. They sent their sons to be educated, thus fitting them for a larger life.

The University of Christiania had not been established until 1811. Before that time the Norwegians had gone to Copenhagen to attend the University of that place and whenever any literary talent developed it found its expression in Denmark rather than in its own country. It is a fact that when civilization flowered into literature in other countries, Norway remained in darkness. The Norwegian students in Copenhagen formed into literary societies. The German influence was especially strong in Denmark, later French influence prevailed until the beginning of the 19th century, when Denmark woke up and created a literature of its own and for the following half a century, Denmark enjoyed its golden age in literature.

In 1840-48 we have in Scandinavian countries the period which has been called "Scandinavianism." That old question of union of the three northern countries Sweden, Norway and Denmark which was tested and found wanting in the Calmar Union of 1397, because of Sweden's unwillingness to submit to any bonds, was not dead. Students and teachers met to discuss this question and conferences were held at the different leading universities to further the cause. But Both Björnstjerne Björnson and Ibsen were in favor of the movement. But nothing came from this in a political way. Intellectually and morally it was a great stimulant to each country. A brotherhood of soul and intellect was recognized deeper and more potent than physical or political ties.

Though Norway had begun to develop a literature of its own, for it had had a few poets of note, and more material in the literary line continued to press forward, yet the stage and drama were entirely dependent upon Danish influence. It fell to the lot of Ibsen and Björnson to start the opposition in Christiania against the Danish theatre in favor of a purely national one.

Johan Henrik Ibsen was born in the town Skien in Norway, March 20, 1828. Beside a Norwegian ancestry there was an admixture of Scotch blood on his

father's side and Dutch on the side of his mother. His father was a wit but the mother was a rather morose and melancholy woman. Ibsen inherited the traits from both sides of the family. Ibsen's father was a merchant of no small account. The frame building, which his family occupied, was centrally located and was of great Social importance in the town. No biographer of Ibsen fails to mention the environment and the points of interest, that daily met his eye, when a child; perhaps because Ibsen himself, was as shown by his own words, was so strongly impressed by what he saw. There was the church and its high steeple with the sexton and his black, shaggy dog which had never showed himself except once, when he had looked down from the tower window. The next day, the old sexton had done likewise, but lost his footing and met his death on the stony pavement below. Once his nurse girl had taken him up there and let him peer over the edge of the window and the people had seen the babe at that dizzy and perilous height and they had screamed and swooned at the sight. At that the nurse girl pulled him back and hastily descended with him to the place him in his mother's arm, who cried to have him back safe. The next time Ibsen should reach such a height would be in after years of steady climbing, but there should be no one to attend him or hold him back and no one to cry of despair or pain, ~~should he~~ should he grow dizzy and fail, nor any one to weep of joy should he succeed. But censure and criticism there would be, to be mixed with cries of "bravo" as he persevered and wrested victory laurels out of the very elements of opposition, misunderstandings and hardships. Next to the church was the public school building, then the city hall, the seat of authority, and the look-up, the evidence of that same authority, then the gallows; there wicked people had been hung in days gone by and might be yet, for all he knew, or else why should they stand there as a threatening monster? A little farther off was the insane asylum with its heavy iron gratings for the windows and as he passed, he either saw or fancied he saw pale, tortured faces peer out between the iron bars. When Ibsen was 8 years of age, his father failed in business and it became necessary for him and his family to move to Venstöp in Gjerpen on a small and rather dilapidated farm. Here Ibsen grew, played and worked in his own way for some 7-8 years. He was not like his two younger brothers, Nikolai and Ole Paus, nor his sister, Hedvig, who she probably understood and sympathized more with the quiet, eccentric boy than any one else of the family. It was to her he confided in his youth, that he would like to attain to the highest and most perfect in greatness and light. "Suppose you could," she had queried, "Then I would die," was his answer. When the other children played he would withdraw to some quiet nook, where he could be alone and study his problems. Sometimes his retreat was nothing better than the cold and dark little ante-room to the kitchen, from which he would emerge with a vengeance to chase the other children away, when they teased and annoyed him to get him out of his dark corner. He had a few books and a paint box, that took much of his time. He would cut out figures of heavy paste-board, that he had painted and arrange these characters on his improvised play-stage as his fancy led him. But no doubt these plays were far more serious and his characters more real, stern and realistic than the pretty elfa and fairies, and kings, queens and other royal folk that biased the gentle Hans Christian Anderson's brains and head in similar play.

Occasionally Ibsen could interest the other children in some theatrical play or get their aid for some amateur magic performances by which he could astonish the simple country folk and then he was happy leader and manager, but he generally had to bribe his brothers heavily, that they should not betray his secrets.

At the age of 16, Ibsen must out in the world to make his own living. He became apprenticed to an apothecary in the small town of Grimstad, where everybody knew, else, and where class distinctiveness were strong in social circles and conventionalities and gossip, the main characteristics of society. Here Ibsen pounded and mixed medicines in the day time and at night

busied himself with his books, the Bible and old sagas of earlier days plus some Greek and Roman history and literature books. He also had his brushes and paints. He had much to learn. Even his encounters with the narrow conventionalities and the gossip socialibilities of the small town gave him food for thought and stuff for future work, even though he felt bored and annoyed with the littleness, shallowness and shams of society as he found it. It is while here that a young lady (according to Brandes) wrote of him: "He goes about as a perfect enigma sealed with seven seals, silent and gloomy enough to make anybody afraid of him."

Yes, Ibsen was a problem, and that no doubt, also to himself. He, as all the rest of mankind, could only learn the riddle of life's existence by living it. Truth in the same way must be lived and experienced from time to time in order to become effectual in one's life and work. Ibsen wanted to get to the top where he could breathe freely and see and be a great light. He wanted to live a life worth while. Did he have the call for such a career? Could he have faith in himself? Would his will be strong enough? The shortest road to the top is the most difficult. Moreover it is not the popular road. He would have to go alone; but then is not the man that stands alone, rather than the majority, in the right? Yes, he must be himself and he must be true to that self, even though he would be on the dangerous ground of becoming "sufficient unto himself" like Peer Gynt.

As Ibsen began to live his life in earnest and to express the thoughts that dwelt in his mind, he took up these problems, one by one and answered them in the same way, but the drama that answered the problem of the foregoing always brought a new problem to the front. Grimstad, where Ibsen spent some 10 years, had but 800 inhabitants, shut out from the world at large and on the whole content with its own pretty interests. But no geographical or conventional barriers could limit Ibsen's thoughts or interests. The larger and history making events of the day were followed with the keenest interest. He dared to express his thoughts, too, this youthful upstart. Many of his poems were dedicated to the revolutionary leaders in the struggle for political freedom in Hungary. Some years afterwards he championed with the same zest and fervor, in the cause of the Danish people in their uneven struggle against the Germans. Some of the sonnets he sent to *the King of Sweden* importuning him to let the Scandinavian brothers help their little sister country in need. It cut him to the quick to live and learn that nothing came out of the sentiments expressed in favor for the Danes and in one poem, especially, he arraigns his countrymen as selfish and lukewarm, whose words of honor and truth *are no longer, like in days gone by, words of honor and truth.*

Ibsen's first drama, Catilina, was written in Grimstad 1850. This is also his first problem drama, i.e. it contains the seeds, many of which blossom forth stronger and more distinctly in some of his later dramas. It is dark and gloomy, the critics say, due perhaps to the fact that it was written at night and also because it in some ways reflects Ibsen's own hard time and struggles. And yet it has its light points. The very fact that Ibsen could see good in Catiline and make this once for all, as one might think, labelled and branded outlaw, a hero, the embodiment of noble ideals which, if he had been good enough and strong enough would have saved Rome, shows that Ibsen had had a new vision of things. He sounded the bugle note of a different kind of political idealism from that of a political phariseism, that is more apt to prevail. It isn't necessarily the men that head the majority that are in the right. This same idea in his later dramas and especially in "An enemy to the people". Similarly there are other principles laid down in this his first drama, that we shall find running through all his dramas. Chief of these principles is the value of character, whereupon hinges the success or failure of Catiline; and, "Power of love and 3rd, Nemesis, the former embodied in Catiline's wife, Aurelia, the latter in Furia. Ibsen often places a man between two women that are the antithesis of one another. The reason why Ibsen so often espouses the cause of the individual and of the minority as over against the masses and the regime or powers that be, the respectable majority, is undoubtedly because he gives expression to the individualism and the revolutionary elements in his own soul. And so it happens that there is something about Ibsen's heroes as cats

line, King Haakon, and even Skule, Dr. Stockran, Brand, builder Solnes and others, that strongly remind us of Ibsen himself. But there is this difference; as each character develops and as he makes them unfold before our eyes, he delinates them away from himself and makes them stand forth on their ^{own} merits defects alone. The problems in this drama appear in his other dramas, in different aspects perhaps and with new problems in their train. The chief ones in Catiline are; Relation between past and present, between the older and the younger generation, between man and woman, between the individual and the state as well as society, ~~between the individual and the church,~~ between desire and possibility. Catiline had noble ideals, he was capable and ambitious, he had a great work to do. He failed because he was morally sound; his associates too, ~~never~~ were morally unsound and the society of the times was corrugated with vice and corruption. Catiline did not understand his task aright, nor did he chose the right methods for its performance.

In the spring of 1851, Ibsen went to Christiania to enter the university. Of "Catiline", which was published in bookform, only about 35 copies were sold, the rest of the editions were disposed of to a merchant, who used it for wrapping paper. At a sort of preparatory school to the university, he met with Björnstjerne Björnson and Jonas Lie, both rising and promising literary lights of the day. He did not pass unconditionally his entrance examination to the university and possibly this fact had a great deal to do with his taking up at once a literary career. He chose his friends and associates among those, who fought for new ideas and consequently always found himself among the minority. Politically, he became a socialist and edited for a while the radical paper "Manden", (The Man). It is noteworthy, however, that Ibsen after this experience in politics never stooped to meddle with neither party nor politics for the rest of his life. It was left to his in one sense rival, (for they were consciously and unconsciously compared by every literary student or critic), Björnstjerne Björnson, to lead the reform party, the liberal party in Norway and to advocate his political hopes for a free and independent country, even in foreign lands.

Thus it happened that Björnson felt hurt, when he thought himself the butt of ridicule in such a play as, "The Youth's League." As a matter of fact Ibsen did not believe in the state as it now exists and all efforts at reforms, he looked at as tinkering, meddling and meddling with an effete and harmful institution. At least, that is the way Ibsen writes to a friend, and critic Brandes in Denmark. "The state is the individual's curse", he writes. He points to Prussia and asks if its strength as a state was not bought at the expense of the individual. The Jews, on the other hand have been kept in isolation and -poetry, because they have not been hampered by a state. He kindles with enthusiasm as he thinks of Russia where such an internal struggle is in progress for the attaining of glorious liberty and freedom. In fact, it is the struggle for freedom rather than freedom itself that he considers worth while. The kind of revolution that Ibsen would want to have a hand in, is the kind that would eat away the idea of a state, as it now exists, and make a voluntary agreement and soul or spirit kinship as basis for a union. "That kind of liberty would be worth something," he adds.

In 1853 Ibsen received an engagement at Ole Bull's theater in Bergen, which also gave him a chance to make a short trip outside his native land. During his five years' stay at Bergen he wrote about one drama a year as follows: "Midsummer Night", (St. Hans Natten), "The Warriors Mound" (Kjæmpeskjolden), "Lady Inger of Oestraat" (Fru Inger fra Oestraat), "The Solhaug Feast" (Gildet paa Solhaug), and Olof Liljekrans". All of these dramas treat of historical and patriotic subjects, which necessarily makes them more or less traditionally limited. Some of them might be classified as romantic rather than historical as, "Midsummer Night", "The Warriors Mound" and "The Feast at Solhaug". In 1850 he had also written a short satirical drama entitled "Norm" which does not exist in published form.

These dramas deal with no particular problems. "The Warriors Mound" for instance, is just a simple little story. "The Solhaug Feast" whose theme is a woman's love for the hero of the drama, is another story sparkling

with humor and satire, but which exceptionally pleasing and sunny.

"Lady Inger of ~~Ostrad~~" written 1538 was Ibsen's greatest production before the age of thirty. It is different from preceding dramas in that Ibsen now appears as the great mystifier. He weaves the characters into an intricate web while the scenes shift with wonderful swiftness. As far as historical facts are concerned they are, as a whole, sacrificed for dramatic effects. Historically, Lady Inger was not the noble, patriotic woman she is pictured to be. Love of money and not patriotism seems to have been the main principle from which she acted. She takes up Dalejunkaren's cause rather than Gustavus Eriksson Vasas, because she thinks the former is likely to win, in which case she will marry her daughter to him.

The facts of the drama are: At the bier of the murdered Knut Alfsson on board Henrik Krummedike's ship, Lady Inger vows, that she will revenge his death and furthermore consecrate her life to the freedom of the father-country. From that time she believes herself to be the chosen instrument to do the work, which fell from Alfsson's hand, as his life was cut off by foul murder. Others believe the same and all eyes look to her as their country's liberator. But she will never be able to do it; she is bound hand and foot with the love for her son or perhaps for herself, and she dares not move for fear that his life shall be endangered. Through her love connection with the able political leader of Sweden, Sten Sture, this son had been given her, and he is sent to Sweden to receive his education. This son became her "skeleton in the closet", who sooner or later should come forth and reveal her double dealings. She marries the simpleminded Nils Gyldenlove of Denmark and gives her daughters to Danish nobles. When the final hour of reckoning comes she is led to murder her own son, mistaking him for another, whom she believed was in her son's way. She lost her son and she has nothing more to live for. What is the problem of this from the start rather gloomy and foreboding drama? The one that is most readily apparent in the struggle between mother love and patriotism. A definite idea of a definite calling. It seems as if Ibsen here gave us a glimpse of himself and gave voice to a problem in his own heart.

In a letter to the Swedish-Norwegian people ^{Crown Prince} ~~people~~ ^{he writes, that he believed himself to be called upon to help awaken the Norwegian people} and to help them to think great thoughts - no small task for any poet or writer. He causes Lady Inger to say over and over again, as if echoing his own thoughts: "Why, have you, God, given me this burden, this task, and not given me the power to do it? For such great work one must be strong and pure and free. Lady Inger was ambitious enough, but she was bound. Ibsen emphasizes more than once in his plays that the one who would be strong must stand alone, in fact, is the strongest who is most alone and free. Even friends, he says, are an expensive luxury. The one who would give his all to a specific calling and who has a special mission to perform in life, can't afford to have friends. In this drama, Ibsen struck a path, that was to lead him to a unique place among the world's dramatists.

His last romantic play written at Bergen is noteworthy because it marks a transition in Ibsen's work from romanticism to realism. What might be called folksong romanticism (because the names of characters or themes have been taken from some old folk song or "folkvisa") is from this time on a thing of the past in Ibsen's works. Olof Liljekrans is the son of the aristocratic Lady Kirsten Liljekrans, who has become tired of the feud between her house and that of the Guldvik farmers. Arne, the present owner of Guldvik, feels the same and so the agreement is made that Kirsten Liljekrans' son, Olof shall marry Arne's daughter, Ingeborg, the latter getting the social distinction from being connected with an aristocratic family and Olof getting the claim in time to the wealth of Guldvik. But the parents' plans miscarry. Olof up in the mountain meets the sweet nature-child Alfhild, daughter of Thorgeir, the fiddler. Up here everything is beautiful and romantic. Olof up-in-the-mountain-meets-t--speaks to Alfhild as if she were a dainty elf-queen and Alfhild becomes carried away with feeling. But when they finally come down into the valley, things look different. The poetry and romantic imagination on Alfhild receive rude shocks, for instance,

Here, for instance, Alfhild meets the rude pine coffin of a little child of the poor. No flowers, or musc or argels with white wings to carry the little soul upward, as Thorgeir had told her about, was here to be seen. As for Olof, his romanticism evaporates quickly under the stern control of his mother. He is to marry Ingeborg after all and poor Alfhild is left to her fate. She takes revenge by setting fire to the house where the wedding is to take place. Ingeborg, the bride, runs away with Hemming, her father's servant, away from cold-blooded reality to the rosy-hued realms of romanticism and love. Alfhild is caught and condemned to death, unless some worthy man comes and claims her for his bride. Olof is the man and the mother must give in. Hemming and Ingeborg are found and Arne, too, must give his blessing to the two. So all through the play, one feels the struggle between romanticism and realism. Alfhild's failures, for instance, from a romantic standpoint are victories for the reality. Yet one could not have told from this drama alone how Ibsen himself would have decided the problem either in favor of realism or romanticism. The next following period from 1864-1869 has been called his Transitional Period during which, he wrote, "Brand", "Peer Gynt", and "The League of Youth". Caesar and Galilean 1873 forms a period by itself. Then from 1877-1884 comes his Realistic Period including the dramas; "Pillars of Society", "The Doll's House", "An enemy of the People", and "The Wild Duck". The fifth period which is the final and closing period of Ibsen's well-filled life shows a return to Romanticism together with a strong strain of mysticism. These plays will be enumerated and briefly dwelt upon further in this paper.

In 1857 Ibsen returned to Christiania where together with Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson he struggled hard to break the power and influence of the Danish theater in order to get a Norwegian one established. The first ^{drama that he wrote upon his} return to Christiania was, "The Vikings of Helgeland". It was an interesting drama, whose heroes are sublime on account of their strong sense of honor, strength of will and utter contempt of death. Love and hate, simplicity and cunning, the new teachings of Christ and the old heathen religion meet and mingle throughout the play. Hjordis, the wife of Gunnar, ~~is the woman with beautiful, ambitious, highstrung and strong willed,~~ she would, indeed, be capable of becoming the valkyria to inspire Sigurd, the warrior viking to heroic deeds on the battlefields and then at last to accompany him to the pleasant halls of Valhalla. But she fails after all, for she has not the right conceptions of how to attain happiness and success. And at last when Sigurd is dying at her hand and she would meet him on the other side, even that hope is taken away from her, for he says, that he has pledged his faith to the new Christ and will go to his heaven, and not to the halls of Valhal.

In 1862 Ibsen wrote "The Comedy of Love", a drama that made a tremendous stir among his country people and made the most respectable and conventional among them squirm. Ibsen had heard much about virtue and goodness, love, truth and high ideals, but he does not accept mere words, he wants proofs. His is a questioning nature. Ibsen's mission is to teach and he has chosen the drama as his medium. Yet pure drama does not explain. Any dramatist that would teach must teach clearly and some critics hold that he does not, but rather bewilders by his many problems. Some question his judgment ^t and ~~ref~~ as a dramatist. They say he can only see one thing at a time and then in the succeeding dramas he merely shifts view points, but he does not have a place in the centre, where he can see the whole circumference. They acced to the fact that he teaches honesty and courage, but beyond that his gospel is not clear. He is called an iconoclast that removes the very props from under the foundation of society. It is not within our province to defend Ibsen or even to praise him. But since the problem drama marks a new era in the stage and may be destined to play a most important roll in the evolution of the dramatic branch of literature, we are interested in all the factors that contributed to and had a share in the problem drama from its very beginning. It is true Ibsen does not answer the problems he sets forth in a drama. Very likely he does not know or see the light at first

hand. But as he asks the questions and mentally lives the ^{truth} ~~truth~~ as far as he sees it, he gets a better hold on it and each step reveals new truths to be tested and taught. Thus it is that a succeeding drama often sheds light on the problem of the preceding drama. He does not aim to answer, how ever. That he leaves to his readers in their own way. In fact, Ibsen as an exponent of individualism is too wise to attempt to answer those deep problems of life, which only can be solved by each individual for himself. The best he could ^{do} would be to give the answer from his own standpoint, but that would help the rest. So he confesses freely that he "rather questions for his mission is not to answer". An old lady asked him once late in his life, what he meant by "Peer Gynt." He looked at her for a moment, then said, "Only the Lord and I knew what was ^{meant} by Peer Gynt at the time I wrote it, but as for me I have long since forgotten it." Perhaps there was more even in that answer than ^{was} at first apparent. It was undoubtedly written at a certain point of his own development and if we may believe his own words and the "truth which he puts in "Hildas" mouth in one of his dramas, "Builder Solnes" he does not believe in living in the past, but is for ever looking forward to something better. Yes, Ibsen holds up the mirror before the people, but he does more than that. In a printing shop I have often occasion to see the printer after a form has been locked up, go carefully over each line and letter, and pressing down rather hard with his fingers each place where he suspicions a letter or line may be loose in which case it must be squeezed in by additional mental stripes, so that it can not drop out. Why is he so careful and why does he bear down so hard with his fingers on the mental that seems in order and secure? Because if he does not these letters or lines will not be secure in their places, when the heavy rollers of the printing press goes over the form, and the copy it turns out will, of course, be defective; not only that, but a portion of the type, if dislodged, might ruin the rest of the type, on account of which the thing must be reset, and there is danger, too, of the whole press machine becoming damaged.

Thus it seems to me, I can see Ibsen, critically examining all the forms of society. Now and then, he presses down rather hard with his fingers to see whether everything is as fine and solid and genuinely secure as it looks. Wherever there is a flaw he finds it out and exposes it and is it not ~~is~~ better so, than that hidden defects, shams and pretenses should be left to work destruction?

In "Loves Comedy" he presents to us a number of people of various kinds and so called "love" is the order of the day. Mrs. Halm, a widow, has two daughters, Svanhild and Anna. She keeps also a number of boarders. Among them is Falk, the young poet brimming over with the revolutionary theories and revolting against the hollow conventionalities of the day. He would give his life in order to destroy the false and give room for higher ideals in society. He is in love with Svanhild and the two mean to sacrifice everything in order that their true love might live. Then there is Lind in love with Anna. He would go out to the heathens as a missionary, but finds (to his satisfaction) that the new duties and responsibilities which his marriage with Anna would entail, as friends and relatives point out to him, demand that he remain at home. And so love for him destroys his mission in life. Mr. Styver, a department clerk, and Miss Skjare, now ~~with~~ both of them, and almost worn out in their struggle to save enough for their marriage, tho they were engaged young, have not had much joy or comfort or even uplift from their young loves. Then there is Rev. Straamand and his wife, Maren, who for love spurned the comforts of a luxurious home with her wealthy parents and sets up a home with her young but poor lover in a garret. In time they, too, have lost the romance of love and merely become instruments in the hands of fate for the propagation of their species. This is the story then: First love, genuine enough till the stamp of officiality is affixed to it and then it is done for. Then come "aunties and friends and "murder the poetry of love" Next the marriage itself, then the childrens noise and howl. Then the womans beauty fades away, thoughts ~~vanish~~ and dreams of youth

vanish, his enthusiasm and conquering spirit droops and thus within a short-
 or longer time the whole "love business" is in the state of bankruptcy.
 Would that be the fate of Falk and Svanhild's love, too? Evidently the road
 was not easy. Svanhild sees it and she tells her lover that the falchion
 (Falk is the Scandinavian word for falchion) must face the wind if he
 would gain aerial heights. There is no way for them, but to separate, if
 they keep their love. In other words, love in order to be permanently ideal
 must be changed into memory. So the engagement ring is thrown away and they
 are free. And so the Comedy ends in tragedy after all, and the reason is
 that there is no other way, there is no room for reform. Later on Svanhild
 is being provided for by marrying the intensely practical, but with all
 amiable Mr. Goldstar and his money bags but that, however, does not help
 to solve the problem which is this: Does love hold in all the vicissitudes
 of life? If not, is not pure, unbound, unpledged love better than the de-
 generate married love? Ibsen not only saw the mockery of the so-called ro-
 mantic love but he also dared to speak it out. He brought upon him for this
 a storm of unfavorable criticism and abuse; was called the cynic, the bru-
 tal atheist, the shocking realist ect. Yet, we believe that his idealistic
 nature that made the play possible.

In 1863 Ibsen wrote his last national romantic drama, "The Pretenders,"
 (Kongemannerna). The scene is in Norway in the 13th century, but the dramatic
 personae are singularly modern, especially the pretender, Earl Skule, Haakon
 who has been brought up among King Sverres heroes, believes himself divine
 right to be the lawful king. He is the incarnation of faith, founded on the
 right, hence victory and all good fortune must come to him. But with Skule
 it is different. He is never sure of himself and his high ambition and will
 is not sufficient to lift him up to the heights of assurance and success.
 Ibsen has been charged with placing too much emphasis on the power of will
 and the force of a fixed purpose in life and that he ignores that great pow-
 er of the soul, which is able to remove mountains, but those critics have
 not read or understood "The Pretenders". Bishop Nikolas, the runster and
 all-around bad man of the play is the embodiment of hate, envy, division
 discard and hypocrisy. Through him as a mouth-piece, Ibsen has a chance to
 tell some pungent truths about the state church clergy, as a rule a well-
 fed undeserving class on account of the pious pretensions, and consequent
 authority and meddling propensities, whenever they can favor their own in-
 terest. Poor Bishop Nikolas finds it hard to get along in Hades, because
 he had neglected to learn Latin, as all priests should, for that was the
 language down there, He has clear insight, however, this priest, and can tell
 Skule just how and why King Haakon is the happiest. He says; "The happiest
 man is he who does the greatest acts, whom the demand of time takes un-
 awares, causes thoughts which he knows not where it ends, but which he fol-
 lows, must follow till he hears the people shout of joy and he looks about
 him surprised and finally realizes that he has wrought something great".
 But Skule is not satisfied with this; "Haakon has the right on his side."
 Bis- "Yes, because he is the happiest, but with what right did he get that
 right?" asks the bishop, who evidently has the cart before the horse. "Be-
 cause he, himself believes it". answered Skule. Skule is always trying to
 find in others the one quality lacking in himself. He tries to appropriate
 Haakon's ideas to gain what he needs for himself. In his interview with the
 poet, he would have him confirm what he cannot believe about himself. "But
 you are king", says the poet. Skule: "Do you at all times believe that you
 are a poet?" Skule has been able to climb up on the throne, because of his
 son's faith in him, but that was undoing. He, as all other men that would
 win, must stand on his own feet. And at last in order to atone for his hav-
 ing gained the kingship at others expense, he must acknowledge that the i-
 deal is not his, but Haakon's and then he dies with his son. The problem is
 based on the two forces of good and evil already referred to. In one sense
 this play is Ibsen's most strongly Shakespearian play. The evil goes down
 and the good comes up and prevails. Most of the critics, Yaeger and Brandes
 included, thinks that Ibsen is voicing his own problems in the character
 of Skule, especially in his interview with the poet. But it seems to me,
 he is rather King Haakon than Skule. He had already expressed his faith in
 a divine calling, he knew he was in the right. To be sure his plays had been

badly received; there was a whole kingdom against him, but he hoped to reach the people just as King Haakon formed a kingdom, but would leave it a people. Then Ibsen had a look to the future. He would have faith in himself, he had the call, he was in the right and the end he would prevail. But this for Ibsen had certainly had a hard row to hoe. He was misunderstood and harshly misjudged. Economically he was in a bad fix. His friends even tried to get a subordinate position for him as a clerk in a revenue office, so that he should get something to live on. Whatever he had striven for even unselfishly seemed in vain. Sweden and Norway would not listen to his plea to help Denmark, but left the little sister kingdom to fare as best it could at the hand of her burly neighbor. In vain, too, he had applied for the stipend that the state was wont to grant literary men and which before had been granted to Björson. The minister who was on that Committee said that the man who had written such a destructive, immoral play as "Love's Comedy" should have a public beating, rather than a stipend. Finally, however, half the amount of a regular stipend was granted at once to Ibsen and he was not loath at once to shake Norway's dust off his feet and go where he could breathe a freer, purer and friendlier air than that of the closed in and poisoned atmosphere of his own country's valleys. It was the end of April, 1864, that he left Christiania which was not to see his return for 30 years except for the brief summer visits of 1874 and 1885. He went by Berlin and Triest way, down to the sunny Italy and historic Rome. Ibsen was of a deep, serious and even gloomy disposition, and perhaps that was the reason that he felt the need of sunshine and joy. Once, when in Munich and after he had been away from his own country for a great number of years, he was interviewed by a Copenhagen journalist in regard to this very point. He answered the following: "The magnificent, but stern nature which surrounds the people in Norway and the loneliness and separation in which they must live, compels them, when they cannot occupy their minds with what happens to other people, to turn their minds exclusively upon themselves. The separation from the world at large makes them sober, meditative, doubting and even desperate. There every person is a philosopher. Then there is the long, dreary and severe winter. My country will need, indeed a little more sun. It is for that reason that I like Rome. Rome is the only city where one can live fully and if one can't live there, Munich is the next place. I would like to go to Rome this winter again, but I can't now". Ibsen was then busy with Rosmersholm.

Ibsen's first drama written on foreign soil, was Brand, 1866, a play, first of all, national in character. He pictures the lot and characteristics of the people in the valley, hemmed in all sides by high, well-nigh, unsurmountable mountains and typical of the Norwegian people as a whole. "The people are slaves", Ibsen says in this play, "to the struggle for existence. Their senses have become dulled to all higher and finer feelings and they can have no conceptions of any definite or living ideals. Even their Lord's prayer is unintelligible to them except the petition in it about "daily bread". But there is not enough will or desire behind their prayers for them to reach God. And if they look to heaven it is only with one eye, the other they can't get to look away from the dust. In fact, they are a lukewarm, half and half, ya, a disintegrated race. The leaders are mainly to blame all the way from the highest to the lowest of the officials. The official head of the district has in his zeal for material good and for the pride of his district as a whole ceased to be a human being. The state church minister is worse still. As for Sundays they are mainly to give him an opportunity to air his ideals, for which he is paid, but as for weekdays they are good only for toil and gross materialism. It is his duty, as well as other officials, to see that the people are kept close to the ground and humble, and it is best, if they can be made to keep step just as soldiers of the same company. Even the teacher and the organist find it hard to be officials and men, too. It is among these people, that Brand, the hero, finds his mission. He would wake up the people that officialdom and priestcraft have bound, caged and lulled to sleep. So he becomes minister and prophet to the people in the valley. The old time church soon becomes too small

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for the God he represents. A new church is built, but that even becomes too small for Brand's lofty ideals. It limits and bars the way for getting near to God. Brand knows it when it is all ready for use, but rather than to give something limited or a substitute for true worship, he throws away the key and points to greater heights to which he would lead the people, but whither they never could reach, nay, ^{not even Brand himself} without losing his life.

The drama shows a marvelous delineation of character. The problem is greater than that which Hamlet put to himself of "to be or not to be", it is that of being wholly and completely that which you are. Is Brand's ideal supreme and if so, has he the right key with which to be might attain to it? A rigid sense of duty and an unswerving will are the two motive forces in Brand's character. He is the incarnation of ~~will~~ ^{will} and ideal, strength and enthusiasm. Agnes, who becomes his wife is the personification of home-life. She was first attracted by the shallow, artistic Einar, but when she meets Brand, her soul is drawn to him. Even his physical strength appeals to her or rather the soul strength and fervor that penetrates the physical form. "Did ~~Brand~~ ^{Brand} tower as he talked?" she asked.

Brand sacrifices for his ideals all that is dear to him, in fact, he feels that the ideal must be dearest to him, all else is of secondary importance and all else would be idols to his soul which must be cleared away. He cannot yield to his mother's voice from her death bed, that calls him to come and administer to her sacrament, because in her love for him, which he sees is for herself as well, she cannot give up all earthly stores and give them to the Lord's poor. "God is not so hard as my son", says the dying mother. Indeed duty and purposeful will that compels to will for an ideal, knows of no compromise, no exceptions, no yielding to any impulses which would deviate a hairsbreadth from that upward path. Thus the little child's life, his and Agnes' child, must also be sacrificed, because duty bids him stay with the people, rather than to seek a warmer clime for ^{their} sick baby. Brand is not satisfied to climb that road alone, he needs have the people with him and of course his own wife. So she must not be allowed to have any idols. She must not even let her eyes go out to the little cold and lonely grave out there in the churchyard. The shutters must be closed and she must not have those little garments so precious and comforting to her, now empty, sorrowing and aching mother heart. She must give them all to the gypsy woman for her child. Yes, all. Even that little hood that she secretes in her bosom, must be sacrificed. First then, can she hope to see God. She finally comprehends and as she tears everything away from her heart, that is dear to her, dearest to her than life, in order that she may be fit to approach Brand's ideal, his God, she stands forth in superhuman strength. One wonders for a moment if her reason can hold together. Yes, she can grasp the ideal, she pays her price, she sees that awful, but all-wise and omnipotent God, who still rules for the best, but by so doing she is lost as far as Brand is concerned. One's emotions are stirred to the very depths as one reads the play. The sympathies are with Agnes almost entirely until we see how Brand's soul is wrung at his loss and then we feel with him, too. A new problem looms up before one. It may be alright for an individual to sacrifice all, to will unswervingly for the attainment of his ideal, but to what an extent has he a right to drag others with him and to make them sacrifice what is dear to them? Has any man a right to sacrifice anything but himself to his own ideals? At last, Brand meets his fate up in the icy mountain. The crazed mountain girl Gerd, nature's own child opens his eyes. "Does mankind's will then count for nothing", he asks bewildered. And the answer comes with ^{an} avalanche under which he meets his death. "God is love".

Not to will is a crime and yet, too much will leads to madness, that is all Ibsen proves and he leaves it to his readers to solve whatever problem may arise. Brandes says that Ibsen got his theme from the Danish free-church philosopher and writer, ~~Soren~~ ^{Soren} Kirkegaard, who had written a book with that title. Yaeger, on the other hand, thinks that Ibsen was inspired by a min-

ister of Ibsen's own acquaintance, Mr. Lammers, who found the state church too ineffective and binding and therefore broke away from that church to preach a freer and more spiritual gospel. It seems more plausible to me that Ibsen, instead of taking his text from one person, rather gave the spirit of the whole free church movement between which and the state church there would be so little compromise, It seems that Ibsen had chance to learn about this movement in his own home, when a child, for his mother sympathised with them to a great extent.

However, Ibsen disavows any intention of making this a religious play but says that he might just as readily have taken his hero from any walk in life. As it was, it helped to make Ibsen popular in his own country.

"Peer Gynt, the drama that made Ibsen's worldfamous, was published in 1867, Brand and "Peer Gynt, too,--has-a-will,--but are spiritual contrasts. Brand stands for selfdenial, Peer Gynt for selfindulgence. Brand had a will that would not yield and it meant his death. Peer Gynt, too, had a will, but it adapts itself readily to the exigencies of outward circumstances. Ibsen preached individuality in Brand; Peer Gynt is likewise himself even in his grossest egotism. Peer Gynt's will, which helps him to weave the garments of fantasy and romanticism to be spread over life's realities, and makes him conceited and selfsufficient, does not lead him to any lofty heights or heroic death, but to the very edge of that good-for-nothing-ness state, from which alone the moulding-over process can save him. The problems in this drama are psychological ones and touch upon the very meaning of life. The drama is full of symbolism and allegories. "Peer Gynt" represents, first of all, the Norwegian people. In that sense it is a national drama; but it is also a world-drama, because humanity is much the same in all countries. Peer is the "fraction", as Brand characterizes the people. He represents the people during the transition period from Romanticism to our own vital and earnest times. Even Aase, his mother, lives in that atmosphere which lends itself to forgetting whatever there is that is not pleasant for the mind. Peer can dream and fancy to such a degree that he hardly knows the difference between fantasi and reality. He acts, if at all, on the impulse of the moment as for instance, when he carries away Ingrid, another man's bride. As a whole he goes around difficulties, whenever he can, never faces them. It is only when he encounters the Button-Moulder that he is compelled to meet him face to face. For the first time, he finds out that he is not sufficient unto himself. Only on account of faithful Solveg's love ^{she has any hold on him. He already indulged Ibsen} ~~is the only adequate stimulus~~ makes the times responsible for Peer's ~~of or~~ rather the people's dream-life. It is that misused romanticism and purposeless or unapplied will that is the cause for the lack of character with the people. L. Partridge and others have recognized these traits in our modern times.

The League of Youth was published in 1869. This drama pictures the political situations during the years of 1850-60. The would-be leader for the new or liberal party, Stemsgard, is an ideal politician because, as an individual--Huneker says, he is a politician without ideal. He is Peer Gynt in politics though he lacks his brilliant imagination; he is easily sidetracked for whatever appeals to his selfish vanity. The other characters are similarly well delineated. There is no particular problem in this play which verges more upon the realistic, than any of his preceding dramas. It is, indeed, a grim satire on the politics of the times. Bjørnson, who thought that it pointed at him, was greatly offended, and in fact none of the political leaders of either the conservative or more liberal parties were flattered by it.

In 1869, Ibsen visited Denmark and Sweden, where he received an invitation to be present at the official opening to traffic of the Suez Canal. In 1871, Ibsen revised and published a volume of his poems. In 1873, he published his double drama, Emperor and Galilean. The drama deals with a philosophical problem. It is a question of loss and gain by the Galilean's victory. The first drama contains the account of Julian's youth up to the time when he breaks with Christianity. The youth hungers for ~~truth~~ ^{truth}, but finds only dead forms and empty words. The pagan wisdom has been reduced to mere quibbling and hairsplitting of word. Christianity has lost much of its spirit

uality and power, while under the cloak of priesthood works of deception and fraud are wrought. Paganism is here given a fair chance to show its spiritual power since Julian is determined to drag from it its grave. Julian has a mission to fulfill and he must fulfill it whether he means to or not. Ibsen introduces an element of fatalism in this regard, which however, does not return in his later plays. Julian fails to interpret his calling right. He means to establish an empire, yes, but not the Galileans as his early Christian training might indicate, but Caesar's empire. So, Julian the Apostate, sets about to root out Christianity that paganism might flourish. But to, the lukewarm Christians are awakened and united, becoming stronger and more vital the more their band is lessened by the number that he martyrs. Thus the Galilean's kingdom is strengthened in spite of his efforts to tear it down, which was contrary to his calling. Julian's showed strong traits of character in his youth, but later on, the bad ones blossom forth as well. Toward the last of his life his love for books and discussion becomes the dominant factor in his life. The scholar Julian, listening to the seer Maximus is a scene especially full of interest. One cannot feel, as the drama goes on, but that there is some light of reason on Julian's side. Does not Christianity starve the body, even more than paganism starved the soul? Which is better the development of the individual as paganism would have it, or an equal development for all according to Christianity's teachings? We see and feel that Julian never can reestablish that old spiritual beauty of paganism nor can the joyous indulgence of sensuous beauty be recalled. These things are as grown out garments, which never can serve humanity as under a previous stage of development. But will the new truth that Christianity embodies serve for all time? The seer Maximus points to a third kingdom in which the best seeds from both paganism and Christianity will blossom forth and ripen into fruit that shall better meet the needs of humanity. Julian never got away from the sway of the Galilean. "What, if he goes on and on and suffers and dies and conquers?" he jealously exclaims. The fear grows upon him that the Galilean will live and tell the tale of the emperor's defeat. On the battlefield he sees visions of martyrs and angels and he dies with the famous words on his lips; "Thou hast conquered, O Galilean: What

The thought of a third kingdom has been planted and one who reads the play will never forget it. Ibsen considers this play his best. In 1874, after having been away for 10 years, visits his native land. He is received, but when fall comes, goes southward again and for the following 17 years he divides his time between Munich and Rome, Denmark and Sweden. In 1891 when he returned to Norway and the capital became once more his home city.

The Pillars of Society (1877) is the first drama of the 4th or realistic period. Consul Bernick, the chief personage in the drama and the chief pillar of society in his town, is very only a pillow by virtue of a life of deception. Being in need of money he had married his wife and broken faith with her half-sister, Lena Hessel. Another ^{secret} love affair with a French artist came well nigh exposing him, but he shifts the blame on his brother-in-law who sails for America and his daughter Dina gets a home in his family. He pretends to get shocked at what an American Steamship Co. would do for gain by risking life in an old, rotten boat they would send to sea, but later he would do exactly the same thing himself. When Johan and Lena Hessel return for a visit from America, Consul Bernick's "greek fury" is at hand. She knows all and compels the consul to strip of all the hypocrisy garments with which he has clothed himself. He must even in public when there is a big demonstration in his honor, stand forth and confess his sins of a double life. However, he is somewhat ~~as~~ re-whitewashed and the end is not so very tragic after all.

The Dolls This drama is a direct attack on "respectability" in society. ~~The Dolls~~ House was published in 1879. We have here the picture of what might be an ideal home if it had not been Thorward Helmer's selfrighteous egoism which makes him stupid and unbearable. His wife Nora, is all that he can see in

her; the lark ~~bird~~, the squirrel, the child, but she is much more than that! The child when we first meet her is at least capable of growth and how she grows as to soul and character, as the drama progresses!

She knows love and she can sacrifice, too, as long as she thinks that it is for some good purpose. And yet Helmer sees nothing more than the pleasing plaything, the child who can laugh or pout and who loves to have macarons to chew. Yet, her efforts to save him in his first illness, which she did by signing her father's name to a note, because she could not reach him and get it signed properly and legally, then her efforts to make things straight, and especially to save her husband any annoyance when Krogstad informs her that her connection with that note was a very serious thing, a legal offence, all these things try the very mettle of her soul. She dares not with all her love, be herself. Does she not belong to Helmer and must she not be happy and pleased? Yet, she hopes all the time, that, when he shall know about the note and the attendant circumstances, for she can no longer stave off that hour, he will pay it and say that all was well. In stead of that he gets angry and lectures her. Then as the message comes, through her friend's interference, that the note is paid, he exclaims, "I am safe". She was entirely forgotten, she, that had done and suffered that all might be well with him. It is then that she makes her decision to leave. Helmer realizes too late his stupidity. Of course he will forgive. But Nora, if she leaves, does so, because as he has before intimated, she is not to be a mother. "You are, first of all, my wife", he exclaims, and as such she is of course, bound to him. "No," she answers, "she is first of all a human being, or if she shall try to be one." The problem centers about love and freedom. Had Nora a right to leave? And did she return to enter that door, which closes with a bang, before our very eyes? Ibsen cares not whether she does or not, but it seems to one, he says plainly enough: "She had a right to go if she wanted to," and that's all he cares to prove. That's Ibsen's way to present the problem and let the readers themselves draw their own conclusions.

"The Ghosts" was published in 1881. "The Doll's House" had caused a storm of adverse criticism, just as "Love's Comedy" had done. It seemed as if he treated too lightly those sacred bonds and institutions upon which rested the whole social fabric of society. Did he not touch too much upon those dangerous subjects, "Woman's Emancipation and Free Love" that work such havoc with established good order? Had it not been better if Nora had endured her married ^{life} and sacrificed her individuality and freedom at least for the children and isn't it the duty of every wife and mother so to do? asks society. In this new problem drama, "The Ghosts", Ibsen answers that problem. Here is a wife, Helen, who does just as Nora did, runs away from her disreputable husband, Captain Alving, just as loath to part with her as was Helmer. The minister Manders, whom she once loved, shows her the path of duty which leads back to the home of Captain Alving. All her finer and warmer feelings are broken and chilled, but she becomes resigned to her lot and does the very best she can under the circumstances. Their child, Oswald, who has inherited a weakened constitution and the germs of a hopeless disease from his dissolute father, she sends to Paris, she also adopts into the family a daughter of her husband's with their servant girl whom she succeeds in marrying off to a carpenter, Engstrand, a low and cunning rascal. Captain Alving finally meets a miserable death and the widow builds an asylum for his money. Finally Oswald returns. He is morbid and sick, very near the brink of insanity. The poor mother once more visits Manders in order to get some light on the problem she must solve, but he only refers her the past instead of giving some glimmering hope of a dawn. Oswald falls in love with Regina not realizing the blood-bond that already exists between them. Manders and Helen hear now he tries to kiss Regina and the mother, who remembers a similar scene between the boy's father and Regina's mother cries. "Ghosts" and the curtain drops. From this time on, the horrors and gloom of the play thickens. What was the poor mother to do? She could not send Regina away to the home where she belonged. She must tell the two of their relationship. What are the results? Regina, haughty and rebellious in spirit, goes to Engstrand and Oswald loses his reason. He wants his mother to administer the poison, which will put an end to his misery and runs af-

ter her like a raving maniac. This is a play to make one shudder, but Ibsen remains imperturbable. Under present conditions and morals what else can you expect he says, than just such results? Judging from this and the two following dramas alone of Ibsen's works, it would be hard to refute the charge that Ibsen is a pessimist. He certainly is realistic. But it must not be forgotten that he seeks to show a better way. If people only would dare to be true and throw away pretenses, if they would live their own lives and do justice each to himself first and then the web of gloom and dire results would not drag other innocent victims along to destruction. But alas for the one who would live truly and who dares to speak the truth? Like Dr. Stockman in an Enemy of the People, his following drama, published in 1882, such a one would, indeed, be described as an enemy of the people. He would have to stand alone. Yet such a fate, according to Ibsen, is far better than to grovel with the multitude. The man that stands alone is the strongest and the minority rather than the majority is in the right. The little town where Dr. Stockman lives has just about come to the point, where its reputation as a health resort will bring visitors to the community that will prove no small means of revenue. Then Dr. Stockman discovers that the water is contaminated with the sewerage. He sees his brother, the burgomeister about the matter expecting of course that a thing so dangerous to a human life, will be remedied. Hasty, outspoken and uncompromising as he is, he does not see things as the burgomeister, the town council, and even the people will see the matter. There is a great expense connected with the relaying of the pipes, and then worst of all the town will lose its reputation as a health resort and consequently the revenue to be gathered into the citizens pockets from this source will come to an end.

Does it pay to be true to oneself, and to honestly tell the truth, the whole truth? That depends whether one is willing to stand alone and to suffer the consequences. Ibsen for one never stooped to any compromise. Whether a play pleased or displeased the critics made no difference to him as far as his next play was concerned. He still continued to enlarge a theme, to answer his problems and present the new ones that came instead. Once in a while he presents different phases of the same problem which makes the answer even more complicated. But he never catered to the tastes of his public. Not that he was not sensitive to praise or blame. Indeed, he felt it most keenly and once in a while it seems as if he flings back answers, that are most poignant and defying. But he never lost view of his aim in life. He stalked ahead alone and once in a while he shows us the lights ahead that beckon him onward with a kindly and bright gleam. In the next drama, The Wild Duck, published in 1884, it seems as if Ibsen asks himself: What's the use? People are not ready for higher ideals, and as long as they are not is it not better to let them alone? Are they not happier so? Gregers Werle thinks himself called upon to foist his ideals upon other people. He lacks much, however, in being an ideal man. Compared with Brand he is very weak, with Dr. Stockman he is negative, he is more of a busybody who having nothing at stake himself peers into other peoples' secrets and then thinks it his mission to tell each one's past history in order to set them right. The result is that as he takes away the ideals of his friends and foists his upon them, they lose their hold on things and even on life itself. His nearest friend gains nothing for the truth he tells, but shows off to worse advantage. Poor little Hedvig is indeed brought to see what sacrifice is needed to win her father's love and it brings her suicide and then drags another life with it because his life is not worth living after she is gone.

This is Ibsen's last play to be classified with the terribly realistic ones and with a strain of at least moral pessimism running through them, which in this last play verges close upon the metaphysical kind of pessimism.

The plays of Ibsen's closing period bear the color of mysticism or rather symbolism and romanticism. They present numberless psychological repeats. Rosmersholm 1885-86 which is the first drama of this period tells the story of the evolution of a human soul. In a way it presents the same problem as is found in *The Wild Duck*, that namely of transplanting ideals from one to another. *Rebecca West*, the heroine of the drama, comes from the Finnish boundaries in the northern part of the country. Her past is shady but she has a strong will by which she may attain to a higher and better things. Nothing can stand in her way to attain what she wants. Thus she gets into the Rosmers family. She succeeds in showing Rosmer a wider and freer outlook. She inspires him. She changes his views but his will remains the same. She inspires him with new ideals, but he is not strong enough to attain to them. She tries to pave the way for him in every possible way and even leads his wife, Beate, to commit suicide in order that she may not be in the way. Then love comes into Rebecca's life. The man whom she overtowers because of her strong will and high ideals of freedom and truth, has also an influence upon her because of the strength of pure and noble character. Through love Rebecca's will becomes purified and changed. She no longer has the same ambitions, or even is the same person as when she first came into the Rosmer's family. And at last it is Rosmer's view of love and life that prevails namely "sacrifice", which view brings them both to their death.

"People need to be ennobled, their minds to be freed and their wills to be purified," Ibsen says; and it matters not if they fail to solve the problem as in Rosmer's case just so their aim is upward to something higher. Some one has said that "Rosmersholm" is an answer to "Ghosts". It depicts also the warfare between the progressive element (represented by Ulric Brendel and Peter Hartenagaard), and the conservative force in society, (represented by Rector Kroll).

The leading character of the next drama, *The Lady from the Sea*, (1888) is also also a woman, representing and mirroring, not the grandeur of the north, but the changing moods and strange power of the sea. So strong is that power even on the old and worn out men, that their soul will thrill, their eyes get that strange far-away look and their lips tremble with emotion as they recount their old-time experiences on the old and loved sea. Ellida Wangel, the second wife of Dr. Wangel, feels herself out of place, here in the hemmed-in country life of her good natured and noble husband. The water in the narrow fjord just below is brackish as compared with the big ocean to which Ellida is accustomed from her childhood days. Then there is that mystic stranger which has such a strange power over her just because she is not herself, but bound and limited there though in a rightful sort of way. She cannot feel herself in this forced circumstance and even though she knows that Dr. Wangel loves her she cannot be at ease even with his love about her soul. The problem is that of the freedom of love. When Wangel says to Ellida, "You can choose in freedom and on your own responsibility between me and the stranger," then the problem is solved. The stranger's spell is broken, Ellida chooses her husband, who at once has made a great forward step by his noble sacrifice, and she becomes the better wife and even mother in the home.

Hedda Gabler, the drama published 1890, is the problem of the city child, born and brought up and continuing her life with no difficulties in her way, at least not in a physical way, nor spiritually for she cannot perceive any, she has no high ideals to attain to and no high calling or mission to perform. It is only a question as far as she is concerned of creating so much of change in her otherwise monotonous life that it be tolerably interesting. She is the daughter of a general. Finally marries George Tesman, a bookworm who cannot keep up with her selfish demands for excitement. Then she meets Rigelert Løvborg, an erratic genius. Up in a little country town he meets Thea, a farmer

schoolmate of Hedda, now married to the sheriff of the place. She helps him on his feet and inspires him to write a book. Then he goes back to the capital. Hedda finds out the secret from Thea and deliberately undoes her work. A pair of pistols figures a good deal in the play. Finally Lovberg has run the course of his life and one of the pistols ends his life. Hedda, too, though coolheaded as well as coldhearted is driven to the same course by her cowardly fear for conventionalities and so the play ends with a pistolshot.

The Master Builder was published in 1892. Harvard Solnes, the master builder, is an egoist, yet he is capable of higher ideals. There are a number of shadowy lines in his character. He has supplanted another builder and now watches against the chances of his gifted son. Then he is troubled about the burning of their home, which instead of freeing his wife, who is a negative, earthly quantity, seems to tie her all the more to the past. Then Hilda Wangel enters his life, the little girl that once saw him on the top of the church tower in her home town, and, whom he afterwards, half in fun, promised to be her master builder. She is the reverse of Hedda Gabler; she is a positive power for good, free, independent, and whole. She inspires Solnes. He feels in her presence as if he saw sunrise. She wants him up,—his wife has always kept him down. Finally he does place the wreath upon the top of the building he has completed, cheered by Hilda's words. But he gets dizzy and falls from that now unaccustomed height.

Ibsen says nothing about immortality but it seems to me he suggests it as the field for living out the noble ideals, to which he brings character.

"Little Eyolf" came out in 1894. It is a character study. The problem is the tyranny of passion. Alfred Allmers has married Rita, a girl "with gold and green forests." The two do not understand each other and the little child, Eyolf, seems to push them ever further apart. But the Rat Wife with her fascinating eyes, comes along and the little fellow is drowned. Then his little crutch is found floating on the water and later Eyolf, too, is found with wide open, staring eyes even in death. When Rita begins to suppress her own selfish demands and Allmers understands that it is more important to live than to write books on "Human Responsibility," they come nearer one another and can start their life anew.

Johan Gabriel Bjorkman was written in 1896. Johan Gabriel Bjorkman was once chief director in a bank, but is now after his sentence in prison is served, in voluntary confinement in his own home. He has sacrificed his sweetheart for his great ambitions, "killed the love life" in her, as she expresses it. He hopes that his son will come to his rescue and help him come to his true kingdom. His dream is that of still becoming a captain of industry, of converting the hidden riches in the veins of the earth into currency. His wife also centers her hopes in the son, Erhart, that he shall restore the honor to a bedraggled name. And Ella, Mrs. Bjorkman's sister, and Bjorkman's former love hungers for the love of the young man, whom she unselfishly fostered as a child. But he breaks away from them all. "I am young, I want to live my own life," he exclaims as he goes out into the world with Mrs. Wilton, a companion for life that his people would not have chosen for him. That is the key to the problem in this drama. To be sure he chooses to live for happiness, rather than duty or work, but it is after all his life and spent as well as if he should give it to be used selfishly by his father or mother.

And now we have come to his last play, "When We Dead Awake" written in 1899. Arnold Rubeck, a sculptor, had lost his model, Irene, or rather let her go and in consequence his fountain of inspiration is dried up. He marries Maja, a woman, who lived in the pleasures of life as they come along. At a certain watering place, Rubeck again meets his model, who has suffered much because of his having robbed her of love and life. Maja and Rubeck acknowledge to one another their mutual boredom and separate.

Maja goes off with a hunter, Ulfheim, by name, and Rubeck goes up the mountains with Irene. There he throws off his life-life and they both perish in the storm. "Dare to be true, to live truly, that only is to live and to live worthily," is Ibsen's last words.

Ibsen's influence had been felt in all countries that have any dramatists to boast of. There is Suderman and Hauptman in Germany, both reflecting some of Ibsen's thots and methods. Maeterlinck, the belgian dramatist, though not so much in problem as in symbolism, owes something to Ibsen/ ~~D'Annunzio,--in-Italy-~~ as does also D' Annunzio, in Italy. In England, more than in any other country has Ibsen's influence made itself felt, where Bernard Shaw is the strongest exponent of Ibsenism. Arthur W. Pinero and Jones and ~~She~~ Stephen Phillips, though the latter in a lesser degree, are all famous on account of their problem dramas. But many writers of humbler name and fame, have been influenced and inspired by Ibsen in a way we may not know. How far Ibsenism will extend into the future is hard to tell. The problem drama may be transitional, but it will have done a mission in the world for which that kind alone was suite

During Ibsen's last visit in Stockholm (in 1887) he responded to the many toasts given at a banquet in his honor and because it gives a little insight into his character and aim of life we quote from it as follows:

Ladies and gentlemen: My heartfelt thanks to you for all the kindness, all the courtesies, which I, at this time, also, have received at your hands. There is a great pleasure in the feeling of having a larger father country. But to answer fully to all the expressions of esteem and honor in my behalf tonight is outside of, and above the province of my subject. But there is one point in these expressions that I would like to dwell upon.

It has been stated that I, too, and that in a leading way, have had a hand in the creation of a new era in our countries. I believe, on the contrary, that the time we are now in, might with reason be characterized as an ending, rather than as a beginning and that from this something new will have its birth.

I believe that the theory of evolution in regard to national science also is applicable to life factors. I believe that the time is at hand when neither the political nor the social conceptions will exist in their present forms, but that out of them will grow a new unity which will carry with it conditions that will be conductive to humanity's true happiness.

I believe that literature, philosophy and religion will merge into a new category, a new life power of which we, now living, can have but a dim conception.

It has been said of me that I am a pessimist. So I am in so far that I do not believe in the eternity of human ideals.

But I am also an optimist in that I fully and surely believe in their power of propagation and unfoldment.

I believe in our time's ideals as they go to form what I in ^{"Emperor} European and Galilean" termed, "The third kingdom."

Allow me therefore to drain my glass for that which is coming into being for the future.

It is on Saturday evening that we have met. After that comes the day for rest, a festal day or a holy day as one pleases.

I shall be glad to exchange my week-day toil, if it has been of the kind that it has prepared the conditions (German-Stimmung) for the morning of the-a that day.

But especially shall I feel at ease, if I, with my work, shall have helped to strengthen the souls for that work-week which is to follow."

One of Sweden's foremost authors, Gustaf af Geierstam who was present at that meeting and tells about it in a special article, was standing next to Ibsen, as he gave his response. And so moved was he, that he dared not step forward and speak for he knew his voice would break, so he turned around and because of the crowd got suddenly face to

face with Ibsen, who looked so closely into his eyes that their eye-glasses touched. "Do you too, believe that," he said. Geierstam's answer might be guessed without his telling us.

Ibsen knew too well that cries of "bravo" at a such times, was often no more, and so he looked around for a sympathetic and understanding eye that could look into his own.