The Subjectivity of Ibsen.

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No poet and few writers of the 19th century have presented with such urgency the need of absolute devotion to sincerity and truth as Henrik Ibsen. His whole life was a struggle for this in which he expressed himself with courage and feeling unparalleled in the world's history.

He looms up out of Norway's fiords and mountains, strong and silent - a seer. His portraits disclose a man not over large, but well knit; a head, massive and white with hair, thick and outstanding; a noble brow, deep set eyes, behind gold rimmed glasses, and a mouth tight-lipped, repressive and uncurved; a face of powerful mentality, proud, yet kindly, of unusual expression in that its mood is entirely elusive. Such is the face confronting those who attempt any penetration of Ibsen.

Of the not small army of interpreters, crowding about Ibsen, few have fathomed or have sought explanations beyond mere externalizations, and we have, as the

resultant, hosts of prejudiced and unjust conclusions.

To catch a glimpse of the inner man- the force which impelled all the wonder of that work - is not a simple task. It is not to be found in his letters which are but few and which relate almost entirely to business matters, nor in an autobiography, as none exists, but in the very works themselves.

He himself said: "Everything that I have written has the closest possible connection with what I have lived through, even if it has not been my own personal experience; in every new poem or play I have aimed at my own spiritual emancipation and purification - for a man shares the responsibility and the guilt of the society to which he belongs. HenceI once wrote the following dedicatory lines in a copy of one of my books:

To live - is to war with fiends
That infests the brain and the hart;
To write - is to summon one's self,
And play the judge's part."

Few men have been so enthusiastically praised, or so roundly damned as Ibsen. He has been called the Wagner of drama. Wagner struggled for understanding just as Ibsen has and until a few years ago was utterly scorned.

However at the present time Wagner students are no longer mere faddists, they have ceased to admire him as an affectation; and he has gained many true disciples who earnestly seek to understand the thoughts of the great revolutionizer of music. So it is and will continue to be with Ibsen.

When Ibsen began to write the worlds of science and religion had been shaken to their depths by that theory of evolution of which Darwin, Wallace, and Haekel were the protagonists. Ibsen, too serious a thinker to become a pessimist, grasped these new ideas from a poet's view point and reflected them with power in his work.

He was preeminently the man who as playwright and poet undertook to interpret the effects of 19th century civilization in general, and of Darwinism in particular, upon our social and domestic life. With a mind peculiarly open to purport of scientific investigation and discovery, he became a heart searcher, a mind purger, and truth revealer: undoubtedly the greatest dramatic genius of modern times, the founder of modern technique, the revolutionizer of theatre privilges and duties, and an influence upon the 19th century greater than that of Shakespere's upon the 16th and 17th centuries.

Upon being questioned at one time regarding his work, Ibsen answered: "Ientreat you don't inquire what it was that determined a single play, they are rivéted to one another like the links of a chain; read them or play them in their chronological order and you won't need a commentory."

These plays, which covered a period of fifty years, from 1848 to 1898, may be divided roughly into three groups. First, the romantic poetic plays, inspired by the early period of Scandinavian history: second, the stern prose plays sent to Norway during his exile: third, beginning with the "Master Builder", his four last plays of mystic, romantic spirit. In them he dealt essentially with three great problems; those of state or political life, those of family or domestic life and those of church or religious life.

He once said, "I have written only what moved me deeply - only what moved me at the moment and what seemed to flash throught my mind like lightning and awaken a keen perception of something great and beautiful. This I have condensed and shaped and meditated upon and wrought into a solid form. But I have also meditated upon what I at first neglected, upon the slag and waste of the great and dearly beloved thoughts of that first moment. Poetic and literary meditation becomes for me a sort cleansing bath that makes me feel freer and stronger for my journey." "

Ibsen's life and work are striking illustrations of the theory concerning the influences of heredity and

environment in the formation of individual genius and character. One can scarcely fail to discover in Ibsen's mixed ancestry, in the experiences of his childhood, in the national phenomena with which he was surrounded in the trials and struggles of his early youth, in the bitter enmities of his prime, and in his long years of exile, an explanation in part at least of some of the more salient attributes of the poet dramitist: his sturdy independence, his contempt for conventionalities, his uncompromising idealism, and his incessant championship, of what he deemed the rights and obligations of individual will.

Ibsen was born in the little Norwegian town of Skien, March 20th, 1828, the birth-year also of Meredith and Tolstoi. He sprang from sea-folk country-bred, of a strong Germanic strain. Although cosmopolitan in his life, Ibsen was intensely Norwegian - the natural phenomena of Norway, its mysterious depths of fiords, its rugged majesty of storm swept crags got hold of his imagination and never left him. His father, a banker and merchant was the rich man of the little town, but when Ibsen was eight years old he failed in business and retired to a country house very poor. This change from plenty to poverty had a strong effect upon the child who was by nature of a serious and

thoughtful disposition. In this grey cheerless atmosphere, the little dreamer yearned to be a painter, but fate landed him in an apothecary's shop in the small seaport town of Grimstad. Here he tried to learn Pharmacy but failed, and his first experience with the sharp contrast between affluence and poverty, became accentuated here.

His visits to his family became less frequent, and as he grew older he wrote only at long intervals. There were certain things which necessitated this break as he himself states: "From my fourteenth year I was thrown upon my own resources; it has been by long hard struggle that I have wone my way to where I stand now. My chief reason for writing home so very seldom during all these years of struggle was that I could offer no assistance to my parents: it seemed idle to me to write, when I could not act. I went on hoping that my circumstances would improve; but the improvement was long in coming; it is of perfectly recent date."

But a stronger reason than this was the fact that in his desire for a perfect realization of himself - that "completeness" which he craved - he felt that it was necessary for him to break entirely from the old ties in his father's house where strict biblical piety reigned.

Regarding this feeling,he wrote to Bjornson: "Do you know that I have entirly separated myself from my own parents, from my whole family, because a position of half understanding was unendurable to me?" That he took this step without conpunction but with a high,clearly defined idea of the value of the freedom of thought, and of his talent, may be seen in another letter to Bjornson in which he says: "A man's gifts are not a property, they are a duty." Thus this separation, at first from his immediate family and them later isolation from almost all friends, unnatural as it may appear to outsiders was not so in reality. It was done for the sake of his life wofk, a result of "that genuine , full-blooded egoism, which forced him for a time to regard what concerned himself as the only thing of any consequence and everything else as non existent."

With his sister Hedvig only, he seemed to keep up a closer connection, and it was she to whom he confided in his twentith year, on one of his last visits to Skien, that he desired to reach "the highest, most perfect, attainable degree of greatness and understanding, and then to die." Later on he declares with much the same thought that "So to conduct one's life as to realize one's self -

this seems to me the highest attainment possible to a human being. It is the task of one and all of us, but most of us bungle it."

The group of plays which stand for Ibsens romantic period begin with "Catilina" and include all those up to "The Pillars of Society."

During the five years of struggle at Grimstad, with poverty and antagonistic suddoundings, yet ever fearless and ambitious, Ibsen went through a period of unrest in which he grew and developed intellectually, and which found expression in various poems, and in his first drama, " Catilina." Regarding it he wrote; "Catilina was written in a little provincial town, where it was impossible for me to give expression to all that fermented in me except by mad riotous pranks, which brought down upon me the ill will of all the respectable citizens, who could not enter into that wo world which I was wrestling with alone."

Ibsem used the notorious figure, Catilina, the product of his study of Cicero, to embody those ideas of protest against social and political order which remained his to the end. It is also a significant fact that in this early immature play may be seen the two strikingly contrasted female characters which were destined to become famous in his later plays, Here all Ibsen is present in famous potency and power and every thought that is characteristic

of Ibsens later plays may be found in " Catilina." Of it he wrote to a friend in 1850, " Catilina was only intended to be a forerunner of those other things of the same kind which we had planned."

It is characteristic of Ibsen that in 1848 he enthusiastically supported with his pen, the patriots in Hungary and the revolution in France. When but twenty he wrote to persuade the king of Sweden and Norway to unite with Denmark in war upon Germany,; and it said that he shed tears upon learning that the Commune in Paris had failed.

In one of his letters Ibsen wrote: "Everything which I have created as a poet has had its origin in a frame of mind and a situation in life; I never wrote because I had as they say, found a good subject." Thus just as we find his early poems to be personal, his first play to be the outcome of a certain period and definite experiences, we shall find his later plays to be intensely subjective although infinitely subtler and more finely veiled.

At twenty - two he knew enough of life to write;

"Either must thou at lifes feast
Sit at table as a guest
Or a looker on stand staring
Through the lighted window pane
In the cold and wind and rain
Outside not to enter daring."

Here the reflective powers, the leaning toward the gloomy and weighty, the doubts and hopes of this introspective muser were becoming intensified, and all his later gifts existed at this early period, to be developed in the future.

gifts existed here to be developed in the future.

Ibsen remained at Grimstad until the end of 1849- going then to the University of Christiania where he passed the matriculation examination in the summer of 1850. In this year he wrote "The Hero's Mound," a dramatic poem in one act and the next year he was engaged as manager et the Norwegian theatre in Bergen.

During these years he formed many important friendships, among them being Björnson, Vigny, Bachke, Dunker, Sverdrup, Lökke, Berkland and Botten-Hansen: men who influenced him strongly, and who proved of inestimable help to him both materially and spiritually.

During the summer of 1852 Ibsen went, at the Theater's expence to Copenhagen and several large German cities, studying art and literature, and from this journey he brought back a three act play entitled St. John's Night. It resembles A Midsummer's Nights Dream somewhat, but exists only in manuscript form.

In 1854 came "Lady Inger of Östrat, an historical drama which went back to the 16th century, the darkest period of Norway's history. It is by far the best of the early plays. Concerning it Ibsen wrote: "Lady Inger" is the result of a love affair, hastily entered into and violently broken off, to which several smaller poems may also be attributed. " Here again we find the two contrasting types of woman in

Lady Inger and Elina.

About a year after the production of "Lady Inger " Ibsen met Susanna Thorensen, whom he married in 1858. It is related that upon meeting her he exclaimed; "You are now Elina but in time you will become Lady Inger." In 1876 twenty years later, he gave his wife a copy of Lady Inger for Christmas with the following inscription on the fly-leaf: "This book is by right indefeasible thine
"Who in spirit art born of the Östråt line."

His marriage proved a very happy one. In a letter to his sister Hedvig he once wrote: "I wish you knew my wife she is just the wife for me." Ibsen was also greatly attached to his sister-in-law Marie Thorensen, and it is a curious coincidence that he found in these sisters much the same contrast of character which he had put into his first plays, and which were to stand out so prominently in his later plays.

Young as he was, Ibsen did not make the mistake of over- idealizing the character of Lady Inger.: she is portrayed as devoted to her land, but ambitious, and ambition and love are waring ~~close~~ in her. The problem of the mother is emphasized here and seldom is Ibsen more dramatic than in thésplace where Lady Inger tells her daughtr who Nils Lykke is,and sees in part, the result of her intrigue.

Lady Inger- "Unhappy child,- what have you done?
Elina- (In a toneless voice)"Made shipwreck of my soul-
Good-night, my mother!
Lady Inger, "Ha, ha. ha! It goes downhill apace with Inger

Gyldenlove's house. There went the last of my daughters."

The speech of Nils Lykke about woman is significant; there is good in him, Ibsen did not make the mistake of making him wholly villanous. Had he met the right woman first, he would have been a different man.

Speaking of Lady Inger, Ibsen said: "This was a task which had obliged me to devote much attention to the literature and history of Norway during the Middle Ages, especially the latter part of that period. I did my utmost to familiarize myself with the manners and customs, with the emotions, thoughts, and language, of the men of those days. The period, however, is not one over which the student is tempted long to linger, nor does it present much material suitable for dramatic treatment.

Consequently I soon deserted it for the Saga period." This period brought forth "The Feast at Solhoug", Ibsen 's first success, and also "The Vikings at Helgeland." In "The Feast at Solhoug" again appear the two contrasting females in the characters of Margit and Signi. Ibsen said of this play: "Like all my other dramatic works, it is an inevitable outcome of the tenor of my life at a certain period. It had its origin within, and was not the result of any outward impression or influence." It is written in three acts, a drama of mediaeval romanticism, the play which

stands preeminently for the young Ibsen.

In 1857 he resigned his appointment at the Bergen Theatre, accepting that of artistic director of the Norwegian Theatre in Christiania, where he remained until 1862, when it failed. He then accepted a similar appointment in the Christiania Theatre.

In the spring of 1857, Ibsen wrote to a friend: "I have already a new dramatic work under way, the tone and subject matter of which will be quite different from those of my earlier productions." This proved to be "The Vikings at Helgeland", a play in four acts, which appeared in 1858, and which was written while Ibsen was engaged to be married.

Ibsen shows his inimitable genius, here, in the way in which he humanizes his material, the demi-gods of Old Norse Sagas, and brings them down from unintelligible abstractions to powerful realities. The characteristic of the Sagas is a terse, idiom, strong, straight and simple. They deal with the primary passions and colors of sex, love, of noble relationship, of kin faith, of the doctrine 'an eye for an eye'; and of a blind acceptance of faith. Ibsen handles his material fearlessly and firmly. It is a single whole not a medley. The theme is centered around the characters of Hiordis, the fierce typical woman of that age, and Dagny, her foster sister. Again the two distinct contrasting types of womanhood appear.

"Loves Comedy", which came after the "Vikings at Helgeland", sent Ibsen into exile, followed by the venomous and supercilious criticism of his own people. In it we find Ibsen in a mood, it being written in his storm and stress period of poverty and trouble. He was discouraged and grew satiric here, and by writing this play he "purged" himself as it were, not unlike the Aristotelian doctrine of the tragic Katharsis.

The drama is a social satire in which we have a glimpse of the modern Ibsen, and a taste of the character which remained true to itself even in the darkest period. "Loves Comedy" deals with two people who found themselves fitted by nature for each other, but unfitted by social conditions for marriage, and therefore the drama ends with the heroine, with the absolute consent of the hero, marrying another man who could take care of her under the existing conditions. Ibsen was hostile to the marriage question as he found it; i e, marriage based on barter and inequality, but never to any true union.

In a letter to Gosse, Ibsen said: "Loves Comedy" should really be regarded as a forerunner of "Brand", for in it I have represented the contrast in our present state of society, between the actual and the ideal in all that relates to love and marriage." In this play, also the cleryman is

introduced for the first time upon the stage, and openly satérized. This fact alone gave Ibsen the name of an immoral writer, but Ibsen stands for free spirit, and his central significance is that he does not accept the machine called society as it is; for as it is constituted, society is not a helpful machinery for the individual man.

Ibsen throws a flash of light on this play, and at the same time gives us a clever sketch of his wife's character in another one of his letters where he writes: "Not until I was married did more serious interests take possession of my life. The first outcome of this change was a long poem, 'Paa Vidderne' (On the Heights.) The desire for emancipation which pervades this poem did not, however, receive its full expression until I wrote "Loves Comedy" a book which gave rise to much talk in Norway. People mixed up my personal affairs in the discussion, and I fell greatly in public estimation. The only person at that time who approved of the book was my wife. Her's is exactly the character desiderated by a man of mind, she is illogical, but has a strong poetic instinct, a broad and liberal mind, and an almost violent antipathy to all petty considerations. All this my countrymen did not understand, and I did not choose to make them my father confessors. So they excommunicated me. All were against me."

This was the end of the six wretched years in Christiania and the following year, 1864, Ibsen departed for Italy. The play which followed "Loves Comedy" was closely interwoven with this experience, and he writes: "The fact that all were against me, that there was no longer anyone outside my own family circle of whom I could say: "He believes in me" must as you can easily see have aroused a mood which found its outlet in "The Pretenders."

Written at his darkest period of life when he was disgusted with everything, in direst poverty, and living on what he could borrow from friends, "The Pretenders" is nevertheless one of his finest pieces. It is Ibsen's Hamlet, a romantic tragedy of doubt and illusion, and in this play he comes perhaps nearest to self-revelation. The greatest interest of the piece may be found in reading between the lines, Ibsen as Skule, and the hopeful Håkon, as Bjørnson. Ibsen seems to be saying through Skule: "I am a dark spirit with certain kingly qualities, but gnawed by doubt." It is a tragedy, not pessimistic, but noble and uplifting. Both combatants are grand characters, but marred in the beginning. All the characters are psychologized, the leading one, if any, is Skule himself, because of the intense psychologic interest in him.

In meaning, it is richly suggestive, and starts one's imagination. It is essentially a deep study

of life in relation to temperament, as shown in the interweaving of will, circumstances and action, dominated by heredity and resulting in fate."

In Skule, doubt weakens ~~his~~ will. Seldom do we find a greater bit of literature than in the scene between Skule and Jatgeir.

King Skule, (seizes him by the arm). What gifts do I need to become a king?

"Jatgeir. Not the gift of doubt; else would you not question so.

"King Skule, what gift do I need?

"Jatfeir, My lord, you are a king.

"King Skule. Have you at all times full faith that you are a skald?"

In the last line we have the gist of this tragic situation. King Skule lacks the kingthought because he lacks confidence, he is a soul-sick with self-analysis.

In writing to Bjorsen, Ibsen said: "I have something of the same feeling as the Skald in "The Pretenders". I can never bear to strip myself completely. I am conscious in personal intercourse of only being able to give incorrect expression to what lies deepest in me, and constitutes my real self: I prefer to lock it up, and this is why we have some times stood as it were, observing one another from a distance."

"The Pretenders" was translated into German by John Grieg, and at that time Ibsen wrote him: "I am convinced that you will be successful with your adaptation, and that it will be a success, in the best sense of the word, with the public for which it is intended. I have been looking through the play again, and I think myself that there is a good deal in it which should awaken some response in Germany. It is strange how history repeats itself in different forms, like variations on a musical theme. In Germany at the present time they are fighting the same battle, over the question of unity or separation; the same passions and interests are at work. In a way the Germans have both their "Bishop Nicholas" and their "Earl Skule"; and Hakon is the man for whom they long and in whom they hope."

"The Pretenders" also strikes a most modern note in its teaching of duty to ones self, in the need of seeing an action through, when once it is conceived, even if it is sinful, to see it through--- a strong characteristic of Browning. It also emphasizes the psychology of woman, by pointing out that man pursues his career at the expense of womankind; that the wife or mother is put aside for the state: that the daughter must agree to the doom of her father at the husband's hands: and while Ingebord is betrayed, yet she is unembittered; at the same time being recognized as the aid

and councallor of the man.

The play has great beauty, one of the loveliest things in it is the cradle song of Margrete:

"Now roof and rafters blend with
the Starry vault on high;
now flieth little Hakon
on dream wings through the sky.

There mounts a mighty stairway,
from earth to God's own land;
there Hakon with the angels
goes climbing, hand in hand.

God's angel-babes are watching
thy cot, the still night through;
God bless thee, little Hakon,
thy mother watcheth too."

Nowhere is Ibsen more tenderly intuitive in the portrayal of motherhood than in the character of Margrete and the little King-child.

"Brand"was a crucial play with Ibsen and his first play which attracted favorable attention in general. It is also an intensely auto-biographic play in which Ibsen works off a mood of saltiric contempt, and of the futility of the unswerving following of an ideal.

In 1866 he wrote to Bjornson concerning it: "My book will appear in a day or two I expect...About my present position, waiting, worn out with anxiety and suspense, looking forward to the appearance of the book and to the possibility of its producing strife and attacks of all sorts, unable in such circumstances to begin something new which

nevertheless is already full developed within me--about all this I will say no more. Dear Bjornson, it seems to me as if I were separated from both God and men by a great, an infinite void."

This was written just before he received a pension from the king, a dismal period for him, hard pressed as he was for money, attacked upon all sides, and as he said to Björnson, "You are my one and only trusted friend; you do not know what it means to have only one." Yet he says again, "Last summer when I was writing my drama, I was, in spite of all that harassed and perplexed me, indescribably happy. I felt the exhaltation of a crusader, and I don't know anything I should have lacked courage to face; but there is nothing so enervating and exhausting as this hopeless waiting. I dare say this is only a transition period. I will and shall have a victory some day."

This "exhaltation" which he felt while writing "Brand", had undoubtedly a strong effect on the play. It is a brilliant performance in the handling of form, both subject matter and setting, making the verse the fit thing for the mood.

At this time he wrote to Birkeland: "As regards the inner man, I believe that I am in some ways very much changed; yet it seems to me that I am more myself now than I

I have ever been." Again he says: "Rome is beautiful, wonderful, magical. I feel an extraordinary capacity for work, and the strength of a giant killer. I kept struggling with my poem for a whole year before it took shape clearly, but once I had hold of it, I wrote from morning to night and finished it in less than three months."

The play is a condemnation of Norway's standards-- Ibsen wrote at this time to Bjornson: "I have a terrible foreboding that our life as a nation will not be eternal, but definitely terminable. When I read the news from home, when I gaze upon all that respectable, estimable, narrow mindedness and worldliness, it is with the feeling of an insane man staring at one single hopelessly dark spot."

Speaking of the conditions in Norway at this time he wrote in a letter to his mother-in-law, Magdaline Thorensen:- "I often wonder how you can endure them (the conditions) yourself. Life there, as it presents itself to me now has something indescribably wearisome about it; it wearies the soul out of me, wearies the strength out of one's will. That is the accursed thing about small surroundings, they make the soul small.... One advantage, at least, we reap from living abroad, the national life comes to us from home purged and in extract; we are spared what goes in the streets and lanes, and are gainers thereby."

In a letter to Bjornson, he wrote:- "It is possible

that we shall go to the Northern Italy for the summer, but where we shall spend next winter, I do not know. I only know that it will not be in Norway. Were I to go home now, one of the two things would happen: I should either within a month make an enemy of everyone there; or else I should sneak myself into favour again in all manner of disguises, and thus become a lie, both to myself and others." And in the same letter he urges him to travel, saying: "Go abroad, carissimo! Both because distance gives a wider range of vision, and because much more value is set upon the man who is out sight. I am certain that the good people of Weimar were Goethe's worst public."

In another letter Ibsen declares: "Brand is an aesthetic work, pure and sumple, what it may have demolished or built up is a matter of absolute indifference to me. It came into being as the result of something which I had not observed but experienced; it was a necessity for me to free myself from something which my inner man had done with by giving poetic form to it; and when by this means I had got rid of it, my book had no longer any interest for me."

It is a noble philosophic drama. "Brand" is a kind of Old Testament man, believing in the law of God before the love of God. "Brand" insists upon absolute conduct for himself and all about him, the absolute in standards and in

truth.The deaths of his wife and son prove the futility of absolute conduct, while his own death proves the futility of absolute truth- truth being the relation of an individual belief to God.

That he wrote only what he felt to be true and imperative to the complete expression of himself is seen in one of his letters in which he declared: "I cannot nor will not suppress a single line, no matter what these pocket-edition souls think of it.Let me rather be a beggar all my life. If I cannot be myself in what I write, then the whole is nothing but lies and humbug; and of these our country has enough."

In another letter which gives us more interesting detail in regard to "Brand" he says: " About the time of my arrival at Copenhagen, the Danes were defeated at Dybbol. In Berlin I saw King William's triumphal entry with trophies and booty. During those days "Brand" began to grow within me like an embryo. When I arrived in Italy the work of unification there had already been completed by means of a spirit of self-sacrifice which knew no bounds. Add to this,Rome with its ideal peace, association with the care-free artist community, an existence in an atmosphere which can be compared only with that of Shakespeare's "As You Like It", and you have the conditions productive of "Brand". It is a great mistake to suppose that I have depicted the life and career of Soren Kierkegard . (I have read very little of S. K. and understood even less.) That

Brand is a clergyman is really immaterial; the demand "All or nothing," is made in all domains of life, in love, in art etc. Brand is myself in my best moments - just as certainly as it is certain that by self analysis, I brought to light many of both Peer Gynt's and Stensgaard's qualities.

During the time I was writing Brand I had on my desk a glass with a scorpion in it. From time to time the little animal was ill. Then I used to give it a piece of soft fruit, upon which fell furiosly and emptied its poison into it, after which it was well again. Does not something of the same kind happen with us poets? The laws of nature regulate the spiritual world also."

This thought occurs again in a letter to Brandes in which Ibsen wrote: "You seem to me to be passing through the same crisis which I passed through in the days when I began to write "Brand"; and I am certain that you, too, will find the remedy which drives whatever is the cause of the disease out of the body. Energetic productivity is a capital specific."

With his future now assured by a pension from the King; a new traveling grant also; and the pleasurable relief at the kindly and enthusiastic reception given to "Brand", Ibsen devoted himself undisturbedly to his calling. With the utmost precision and regularity he produced a play every two years, from now on, up to the "Epilogue," his last drama.

His next play, "Peer Gynt, is a dramatic poem, a

phantasmagoria rather than an allegory. It is the most imaginative of all Ibsen's works - holding something of the same position to modern Scandinavian literature that Faust does to German literature.

Brand and Peer Gynt are antipodal characters and spiritual contrasts, as Ibsen himself says; "Peer Gynt is the antithesis of Brand: many consider it my best book. It is wild and formless, written without regard to consequences, as I only dare to write away from home. It came into being during my stay on the island of Ischia and in Sorrento in the summer of 1867."

Brand translates thots and feelings into vehement action; Peer would serve nobody but himself; Brand had self assurance, while Peer lacked it; Brand was a tragedy of will, Peer a tragedy of fantasy. Yet for all his fantasy, Peer is human. In idea the play is a study in egoism: it shows the necessity of having a guiding principle in life, in order to bring out the best ego in us.

In this piece Ibsen seems to define the three different views of humanity: as we appear to others , as we appear to ourselves, and as we appear to God. To Solveig, one of Ibsen's most beautiful creations, Peer is his potential self.: and at the very end, Ibsen lifts it above the conventional love scene to a high, symbolic thing. As a whole , the play is close woven, of gripping logic, vitality and cohesiveness.

In Peer Gynt we have a picture of Ibsen's youthful home, and also a portrait of his mother in Aase, which add much interest to the piece. In one of his letters Ibsen wrote "After Brand came Peer Gynt, as though of itself. This poem contains much that is reminiscent of my own youth; for Aase, my own mother - with necessary exaggerations - served as model." Concerning the piece while it was in construction he wrote: "And now I must tell you that my new work is well under way, and will, if nothing untoward happens, be finished early in the summer. It is to be a long dramatic poem, having as its chief figure one of those half mythical and fanciful characters existing in the annals of the Norwegian peasantry of modern times. It will have no resemblance to Brand, will contain no direct polemic etc. I have long had the subject in my thoughts."

Writing upon the same subject a little later he said: "It may interest you to know that Peer Gynt is a real person who lived in Gudbrandsdal, probably at the end of last or the beginning of this century. His name is still well known among the peasants there; but of his exploits not much is known. Thus I have not had very much to build upon but so much more liberty has been left me."

After Peer Gynt was published in 1867, Ibsen wrote to his publisher, Hegel; "I am very curious to know how the book will be received; but the matter causes me no disquietude ; I am after mature reflection." The mental preparation and exact formulation of material long before the actual work of writing took place was characteristic of Ibsen. He an

tude; I wrote after mature reflection." This careful preparation and exact formation of his material long before the actual work of writing took place, was characteristic of Ibsen. So accurate and definitely worked out were his plays that the actual writing of them necessitated but a comparatively short time.

To Clemens Petersen's disparaging criticism of Peer Gynt, Ibsen broke out in noble wrath with the prophetic words:" My book is poetry: and if it is not, then it will be. The conception of poetry in our country , in Norway, shall be made to conform to the book. Do not believe that I a am a blind conceited fool. I can assure you that in my quiet moments I sound and probe myself and dissect my own inward parts, and where it hurts most too. However , I am glad of the injustice that has been done me. There has been something of the God send, of the provdential dispensation in it; for I feel that this anger is invigorating all my powers."

Later he wrote: "I learn that Peer Gynt created much excitement in Norway. This does not trouble me in the least: but both there and in Denmark they have discovered much more satire in it than was intended by me. Why can they not read the book as a poem? For as such I wrote it. The satirical passages are tolerably isolated. But if the Norwegians of the present time recognize themselves, as it would seem the they do, in the character of Peer Gynt, that is the good p

peoples own affair."

It is a curious fact that in view of the popularity of Peer Gynt today, Ibsen himself did not think it would take particularly well, as he said in one of his letters; "Of all my books I consider Peer Gynt the least likely to be understood out of Scandinavia."

It is a significant fact that from 1864, the time of Ibsen's departure from his native land, he never lost his native quality, but continually obtained new stimulation. The classic motive in "The Emperor and Galilean" was the first impression after this new stimulus.

In 1866 he wrote to Hegel: "I shall be able to let you know very soon what work I am taking up. I feel more and more inclination to set seriously to work at Emperor Julian who has been occupying my thoughts for two years. The fact that Hauch has dealt with the same subject will of course not deter me, as I feel quite certain that my conception of it will be in every respect essentially different from his. I do not under the circumstances intend to read Hauche's poem."

Three years later he wrote from Dresden, "I am living a comfortable and care free life and purpose tackling Julian in the Autumn." That it had long been contemplated may be seen in another letter in which Ibsen wrote: " At last I am going to embark on the long and long-planned work, Emperor Julian; my conception of it has now become sufficiently distinct, and when I once begin , things will go at a rat-

ling pace."

An interesting word from the poet himself on the subject of his life abroad and its influence upon his work may be seen in another letter in which he wrote: "Environment has a great influence upon the forms in which the imagination creates..... My point of view has changed because here I am in a community well ordered even to weariness. Whatever will happen when I reach home! I must seek salvation in remoteness of subject, so I mean to begin Emperor Julian."

The next year he wrote: "I am hard at work on Emperor Julian. This book will be my chief work, and it is engrossing all my thoughts and all my time. That positive theory of life which the critics have demanded of me so long, they will get in it." It was his most ambitious work but unpopular, and we have no philosophic interpretation of this from Ibsen, however he wrote that there was more of himself in the piece than he cared to acknowledge to the public." I work every day at Julianus Apostata, and hope to have the whole work finished at the end of the present year..... It is a part of my own spiritual life which I am putting into this book; what I depict I have under different conditions gone through myself; and the historical subject chosen has a much more intimate connection with the movements of our own

time than one might at first imagine. The establishment of such a connection I regard as imperative in any modern poetical treatment of such a remote subject, if it is to arouse interest at all."

It is the best of the historical dramas. The first part was completed January, 1871. It is a drama of the human will. Julian shows us an ironic spectacle of will, and is not sure that he is called: he fails to believe in his vocation. Ibsen shows Julian as a weak willed man in order to bring out in contrast Ibsen's ideal man, the strong-willed man who is able to stand alone. There is a touch of fatalism and keen irony here, which he mentioned in a letter to Brandes: "In the course of my occupation with Julian, I have in a way become a fatalist; and yet this play will be a kind of banner. Do not fear, however, an underlying purpose; I study the characters, the conflicting plans, the history, and do not concern myself with the moral of the whole - always assuming that by the moral of history you do not mean its philosophy; for that will clearly show forth, as the final verdict on the struggle and the victory, as a matter of course.....Julian assists the Christian cause under his very opposition. He is an example of irresolution." Ibsen despises the weak not the strong sinner. He was the hater of shams. We must think and feel for ourselves. For, as he says "To will is to

have to will". In an address to a body of Norwegian workmen Ibsen once said, that man must ennoble himself and he must will himself free. As he says in one of his speeches: "A ruling majority does not grant the individual either liberty of faith, or liberty of expression, beyond an arbitrarily fixed limit."

"So there is still much to be done before we may be said to have attained (to) real liberty. But I fear that it will be beyond the power of our present democracy to solve these problems. An element of nobility must enter into our political life, our administration, our representation, and our press.

"Of course, I am not thinking of the nobility of birth, nor that of wealth, nor of that of knowledge, neither of that of ability or intelligence. But I think of the nobility of character, of the nobility of will and mind.

That alone it is which can make us free.

This nobility which I hope will be granted to our nation will come to us from two sources. It will come to us from two groups which have not as yet been irreparably harmed by party pressure. It will come to us from our women and from our workingmen."

This iron will which Ibsen admired above all else and for which he yearned in an ever increasing measure is

noticable in the most striking feature of the poets face, his mouth, which in its tight repressive lines, seems to have conquered by very power of will itself. Much might be written on this subject of the power of will. He is constantly referring to it. In a letter to his mother-in-law he urged her to "Try to get away: Go abroad: Do it whether it is possible or impossible. But nothing is impossible that one desires with an indomitable will." So in truth it seemed with Ibsen himself.

The criticism which Björnson made of the play hurt Ibsen, and brought forth the sincere words:- "I hear from Norway that Björnson, though he cannot know anything about the book, has spoken of it as "atheism", adding that it was inevitable it should come to that with me. What the book is, or is not, I have no desire to inquire into; I only know that I saw a fragment of the history of humanity plainly before my eyes, and that I tried to reproduce what I saw."

To the kindly review of Gosse, Ibsen replied:- "I am greatly obliged to you for your kind review of my new drama. There is only one remark in it about which I must say a word or two. You are of opinion that the drama ought to have been written in verse, and that it would have gained by this. Here I must differ from you. The play is, as you must have observed, conceived in most realistic style: the illusion I wished to produce was that of reality."

The fullest account of the piece which we have is the following: "Emperor and Galilean"is the first work which I wrote under German intellectual influences. When in the autumn of 1868, I came from Italy to Dresden, I brought with me the outline of "The League of Youth", which play I wrote in Dresden during the winter. During my four years' stay in Rome I had occupied myself with all kinds of historical studies in view of writing "Emperor and Galilean", and had made notes for it; but I had evolved no distinct plan or plot, much less written any part of the drama. My view of life was still that of the Scandinavian nationalist, and I could not accommodate myself properly to the alien subject.

" Then came the experiences of Germany's great time. I was in Germany during the war, and the development consequent on it, All this acted in many ways on me with the force of a transforming power. My theory of history and of human life had until then been a national one; now it expanded into a racial theory, and I could write "Emperor and Galilean". The play was completed in the spring of 1873."

Long after it had been written he said in one of his speches: "When Emperor Julian stands at the end of his career, and everything collapses round about him , there is nothing which renders him so despondent as the thought that all which he had gained was this: to be remembered with

respectful appreciation by clear and cool heads, whereas his opponents lived on, rich in the love of warm, living human hearts. This motive was proceeded from something that I have lived through; it has its origin in a question that I have at times put to myself, down there in the solitude. "

In 1868 Ibsen wrote to Hegel, concerning his play "The League of Youth." -- "In Dresden I shall write my new play...This new, peaceable work is giving me pleasure." The following year in a letter to Dietrichson he said: "I hope that you have by this time received a copy of "The League of Youth." As you will see, the play is a simple comedy, and nothing more. It will, perhaps, be said in Norway, that I have portrayed actual persons and conditions. This, however, is not the case. I have, of course, used models, which are just as necessary for the comedy-writer, as for the painter or sculptor.

In another letter to Hegel he said: "The reception which "The League of Youth" has received pleases me very much; for the disapprobation I was prepared, and it would have been a disappointment to me if there had been none. But what I was not prepared for was that Bjornson should feel himself attacked by the play, as rumour says he does. He must surely see that it is not himself I have in mind, but his pernicious and "lie-steeped" clique, who have served me as models."

Again he declared: "They are judging my work

from the political, instead of the aesthetic standpoint. From the attacks which I have read, one would conclude that phrasemongering, hollowness, and roguery are regarded in Norway as national characteristics, which must not be meddled with."

In a letter written in 1888 he declared: "One of the things that have pained me most in my literary relation to my home country is, that for a number of years, as far back as the appearance of "The League of Youth," I have been appropriated by one or the other political party. I who never in my life have busied myself with politics, but only with social questions! And then the supposed opponents' unwillingness to understand! It is not praise or adherence for which I thirst. But understanding! Understanding!"

Ibsen's essential message in religion, politics and the family was the same---that there are no sure foundations, but those of truth and liberty. This message needs to be retold from age to age; for fads and fashions are ever strong, and conventionalities and insincerity are only natural; but this note of truth and of freedom is the note the world needs today. He teaches that the true attitude of the awakened man of today is the reverence for truth, wherever it may be found.

He insists that if we free ourselves from ancient dogmas, if we watch for truth, willing to receive it wherever

it may be found, we must come out upon new ground, with courage, persistency and new convictions, in order to build new churches.

Observation of life teaches us that it is easy to break from influences of the past, but it is not easy to get away from them. We slide back into the old dogmas, and glide into the same sentimentalities which we have renounced and sought to be freed from, because of the tremendous power of tradition. The struggle which Ibsen made was an effort to force the past to become his servant instead of his master.

"The League of Youth" closes Ibsen's first group of plays, those of his early romantic period. They stand essentially for a transition time, in which all his later characteristics are seen in a formulative condition--complete in themselves, potent and powerful, yet representing ideas and characters which were to become infinitely more subtle and beautiful, rising ever to more and more wonderful possibilities in his later plays.

The period is rich in suggestion, revealing more of the author himself, than he was willing to let us perceive later on: After this Ibsen seems to withdraw more and more within himself. That he understood the value of silence is almost too well seen; his letters grow less frequent, and more conventional in tone, and the plays themselves become

more finely veiled, nowhere has an author, consciously or unconsciously, hidden himself so carefully and minutely from the public eye.

The second group, consisting of eight stern prose plays, begins with the "Pillars of Society" in 1877 and ends with "Hedda Gabler" 1899. These plays deal with the problems of the time, with conventionalities of society, and are the first plays which gave the author world wide fame. In them Ibsen tends to look upon social life as mainly imposing chains upon men preventing their growth, but these relations he holds, may become not chains but ties, binding men and women together who live freely their own lives, freely communicating each with the other.

Ibsen in this respect is the most interesting of all modern playwrights; and the most interesting and most valuable plays which have been written lately by others, are all, without exception, (pieces which display) the influence of the Norseman's work.

Ibsen lived long enough to see the innovations which he introduced into the drama become the models for the greatest of the dramatists who have arisen since his prime; among whom are Sudermann, Fulda, Pinero, d'Annunzio, and Echegaray.

Among less able writers Ibsen's influence has

proved baneful for they seem to believe that in offering a merely disagreeable, immoral and depressing drama, they have written after the manner of the great Norse poet; and in this imitation, unintelligent playwrights entirely miss his conception. Apart from this inevitable misfortune, Ibsen's influence in the theatre has been of such stimulation as to change the character of dramatic literature in every country. Even authors who neither admire nor study plays of the Norseman unconsciously work under the influence of his spirit.

In these plays we are confronted by a new phase - the sociological - (and social service.) After all Ibsen's work is summed up in that theme which closes the drama of "Little Eyolf" - that life and religion are preeminently service, - not contemplative. He saw the faults and floating unconnected ideas of his age, and by his inimitable touch presented them to us in (signal creative art) and truth. He saw that the old principles must give way to new ones, that our somewhat worn ethics necessitated a radical moral change, but he wrote no prescribed remedies for these social ills - he did more by simply raising questions, as he himself declared - "My calling is to question - not to answer."

This method deepened questions of the day into

questions of life - to problems relating to religious life, past and present; to social life - of rich and of poor; to the relation between the sexes - and the woman question.

"The Pillars of Society" presents the new social basis for literature very definitely. We are asked how our standards can be raised and we recognize the existence of evil, but it is evil which is not irremediable. It portrays the failure of the husband to really unite his wife with him.

In writing to Hegel he says - "My new work is progressing rapidly; in a few days I shall have the First Act ready; and that is always to me the most difficult part of a play. The title of the book will be: "The Pillars of Society", a drama in Two Acts. The work may, in a manner be regarded as the counterpart of "The League of Youth", it will enter pretty thoroughly into several of the more important questions of the day."

The play has a strong theme, full of intense actuality; Concil Bernick is a model of respectibility, yet his existence is hollow, and founded upon lies. The lie has poisoned him, but he is not incurable, and in Ibsen's denunciation of the conventional lie, we get a glimpse of the great moral earnestness of the man.

"The Doll's House" and remaining plays of this second group follow each other by irresistable logic. Before

this Ibsen's women had found their all in love, but here, Ibsen applied, for the first time, individuality to woman herself. The plot is simply secondary here and exists only for the sake of revealing character, which makes it naturally an intensely psychological drama. It has been called "womans' declaration of independence." Thoroughly wholesome in idea, it is essentially a fundamental attack on the wrong education of woman. Ibsen felt that too much emphasis had been put upon "duty" so he presents the "rights" of the individual:

"Thou art, first and foremost, wife and mother," says Helmer.

"That I no longer believe," replies Nora. "I believe that I am, first and foremost, a human being; I, as well as thou - or, in any case, that I should endeavor to become one."

Thus we find that Ibsen, in ever increasing measure, is the champion of women. To the delineation of such women as Aurelia in "Catilina," Elina in "Lady Inger," Margrete in "The Pretenders," Agnes in "Brand," Solveig in "Peer Gynt," and Fru Bernick and Lona Hessel in "The Pillars of Society," are given the tenderest and most beautiful places in his work. He portrays love as the

most powerful tract of woman's character. In "The Pretenders" we read; "To live, to sacrifice all, and to foreget,- that is the sage of womankind." As Bernick exclaims: "You women are the pillars of society." Always is this strong, sympathetic belief in the future of woman a salient characteristic of Ibsen - it is an ideal holding up to woman the highest possibilities of nobility, truth, freedom and love. He represents her as a responsible being, complete in herself, struggling to cast off worn out ideals for those newer and finer duties of the present age.

In "A Doll's House" the perfect marriage of the future is shadowed forth. Not infrequently has this play been mistaken to be an argument for the so called free love, and later on for suffrage. Nothing could be more absurd. Ibsen was first of all poet, then, dramatist and philosopher. To the question - what is poetry? Ibsen answered "To be a poet is to be a seer - to show things just as a poet sees them." To him poetry was a spiritual experience, and his dramas demanded no less high and lofty conception. He would have been the first to discontenance "free love" and that his ideal standards of true love and true marriage relations should be thus absolutely reversed, is the height of irony.

As for suffrage he says in a speech at the Festival of the Norwegian Women's Rights League: "I am not a member of the Women's Rights League. Whatever I have written has been without any conscious thought of making propaganda. I have been more poet and less social philosopher than people generally seem inclined to believe. I thank you for the toast, but must disclaim the honor of having consciously worked for the women's rights movement. I am not even quite clear as to just what this woman's rights movement really is. To me it has semed a problem of humanity in general. And if you read my books carefully you will understand this. True enough, it is desirable to solve the problem of women's rights, along with all others; but that has not been the whole purpose. My task has been the description of humanity. To be sure, whenever such a description is felt to be reasonably true, the reader will insert his own feelings and sentiments into the work of the poet. These are attributed to the poet; but incorrectly so. Every reader remolds it so beautifully and nicely, each according to his own personality. Not only those who write, but also those who read are poets; they are collaborators; they are often more poetical than the poet himself.

The task always before my mind has been to advance our country and give the people a higher standard. To obtain this, two factors are of importance: it is for the mothers by strenuous and sustained labor to awaken a conscious feeling of culture and discipline. This must be created in men before it will be possible to lift the people to a higher plane. It is the women who are to solve the social problem. As mothers they are to do it. And only as such can they do it. Here lies a great task for woman."

"A Doll's House" was written in Rome and at Amalfi in the summer of 1879. Every character in this play has its particular use. Dr. Rank exists to show Nora the effects of heredity and the other side of life, a theme which Ibsen treats of more fully in his following play.

In Nora we are shown the effects of applying man made laws to all human beings. Her character displays wonderful evolution. The drama begins with Nora a half-bird and doll-like thing, and everything leads up to the final talk between Nora and her husband, where they literally "talk out their souls", and Nora becomes in reality a perfect intellectually, functioning human being. It is a logical and therefore an unhappy ending.

This play is one of Ibsen's most beautiful

examples of technique in the unity of time, place, and action; in the elimination of sub-plot, soliloquy, and aside; in fewer characters, in the subtle interweaving of exposition with the action itself; and in the wonderful dialogue - all in the "broken rhythm of life."

The ending of the piece was much critisized, and Ibsen wrote regarding it: " I received word from my translator the information that he had reason to hear that an "adaptation" of the play, giving it a different ending, was about to be published, and that this would probably be chosen in preference to the original by several of the North German theatres. In order to prevent such a possibility, I sent to him, for use in case of absolute necessity, a draft of an altered last scene, according to which Nora does not leave the house, but is forcibly led by Helmer to the door of the children's bedroom; a short dialogue takes place, Nora sinks down at the door, and the curtain falls.

This change I myself, in the letter to my translator stigmatise as "barbaric violence" done to the play. Those who make use of the altered scene do so entirely against my wish..... When my works are threatened, I prefer, taught by experience, to commit the act of violence myself, instead of leaving them to be treated and "adapted" by less

careful and less skillful hands."

Ibsen like other genius was far in advance of his time. When "Ghosts" was presented it at once aroused a storm of protest - the public did not understand it - the critics evaless , while both scoffed at the piece and scorned the author. At this time Ibsen wrote: "My new play has now appeared, and has occasioned a terrible uproar in the Scandinavian press; every day I receive letters and newspaper articles decrying or praising it..... I hardly believe that they will dare to play it in the Scandinavian countries for some time to come..... I am not in the least disturbed by the violence of the reviewers and all the folly that is written on the subject of "Ghosts". I was prepared for it. When "Lovet Comedy" appeared there was just as great an outcry in Norway as there is now; "Peer Gynt", too, was reviled; so was "The Pillars of Society;" so was "A Doll's House." The cry will die away this time just as it did on former occasions."

Again he writes concerning it:- "I was quite prepared for the hubbub. If certain of our Scandinavian reviewers have no talent for anything else, they have an unquestionable talen for thoroughly misunderstanding and misinterpreting those authors whose books they undertake to

judge..... Then they say the book preaches nihilism. It does not. It preaches nothing at all. It merely points out that there is a ferment of nihilism under the surface, at home as elsewhere. And this is inevitable. A Pastor Manders will always rouse some Mrs. Alving to revolt. And just because she is a woman, she will, once she has begun, go to great extremes."

To another friend he says:- "These last weeks have brought me a wealth of experiences, lessons, and discoveries. I was quite prepared for my new play eliciting a howl from the camp of the stagnationists; and I care no more for this than for the barking of a pack of chained dogs. I myself am responsible for what I write, I and no one else. I cannot possibly bring trouble on any party; for I do not belong to any. I stand like a solitary franctireur at the outposts and act on my own responsibility.

The only man in Norway who has stood up frankly, boldly, and courageously for me is Bjornson. It is just like him; he has, in truth, a great, a kingly soul; and I shall never forget what he has done just now.

But how about all these champions of liberty who have been frightened out of their wits? Is it only in the domain of politics that the work of emancipation is to be permitted to go on with us? Must not men's minds be

emancipated first of all? Men with such slave-souls as ours cannot even make use of the liberties they already possess. Norway is a free country, peopled by unfree men and women."

And again he writes:- "It may well be that the play is in several respects rather daring. But it seemed to me that the time had come when some boundary-posts required to be moved. And this was an undertaking for which an older writer like myself was more fitted than the many younger authors who might desire to do something of the kind.....

As regards "Ghosts", I feel certain that the minds of the good people at home will soon be opened to its real meaning. All the infirm, decrepit creatures who have fallen upon the work, thinking to crush it, will themselves be crushed by the verdict of the history of literature. And the anonymous poachers and highwaymen, who have shot dirt at me from their ambush in Professor Goos's shopkeepers' newspaper and other such places, are certain to be found out. The future belongs to my book. Those fellows who have bellowed so about it, have no real connection with the life even of their own day.

Therefore it is that I have taken this part of the affair so very cooly. I have made many studies and observa-

tions during the storm; and these I shall find very useful for coming works."

There is a vital connection between "Ghosts" and the play which preceded it - "A Doll's House." Both bring up the question of marriage and the futile sacrifice of human beings to an ideal.

Its subject matter has been questioned as unfit for art. It is intensely dramatic, but the handling of the theme fails to surround it with an artistic veil. "Ghosts" is not as horrible as "Aedipus" which effects us less, simply because it is so far removed from our own time; in other words, it is surrounded by an artistic veil.

The function of art should be to bring beauty into relation with sorrow and tragedy presented so as to show little alleviation. In "Ghosts" there is harmony in relation to all things, and an uplifting in the mother's sorrow which is deeply poetic. Technically, the play makes a fascinating companion to "The Doll's House" although the latter is more perfect than "Ghosts". There the exposition is more evident and does not leak out quite so naturally as that in "The Doll's House".

The conflict in "Ghosts" is internal - it lies in the struggle of Mrs. Alving against the conventions of

society and useless ideals which are slowly killing her soul. It is also intensely psychological.

The issue is continuously suggested and augmented, making the interest ascend constantly to the answer which comes at the very close of the piece.

The play is grounded in strong individual ~~reiterates~~ emotions which are simple, universal and social in nature. Every fact propels as well as explains and enriches, and there is no useless or unnecessary material in the whole play.

The essential thesis in "Ghosts" is "Don't live a lie". Marriage is a farce on that basis. Ibsen reiterates this constantly. Part of his doctrine of the individual was "Get the joy of life". As seen in Mrs. Alving's case, duty often results in evil.

Ibsen was never more sincere than he is here . "Ghosts" emphasises the hereditary idea - the inevitable return and recurrence of things from which there is no escape.

Mrs. Alving's speech about "Ghosts" is noteworthy. (Ghosts) "When I heard Regina and Oswald in there, it was as though I saw ghosts before me. But I almost think we are all of us Ghosts, Pastor Manders. It is not only what we have inherited from our father and mother that 'walks' in us. It is all sorts of dead ideas, and lifeless old beliefs, and

so forth. They have no vitality, but they cling to us all the same, and we can't get rid of them. Whenever I take up a newspaper, I seem to see "Ghosts" gliding between the lines. There must be "Ghosts" all the country over, as thick as the sand of the sea. And then, we are, one and all, so pitifully afraid of the light."

The plays in the second group show a definite change, socially, economically, and politically in woman.... She is here emphasized as the hope of society - which is so evident in what Nora did and Mrs. Alving did not - as mistress of the home built upon love. She is given by Ibsen the respect of man, equal opportunity, and recognition, which made the old idea of love, new, as he used it.

His bold attack on popular morality was severely criticized, and he soon replied with a new piece in which the chief character was placed in a position identical with that in which Ibsen found himself. In spite of the intense personal indignation to which the piece owed its origin, it is treated in a remarkably objective manner.

In 1882 Ibsen wrote - " - I am now extremely busy with the preparation for a new drama. It will be a very peaceable play this time, one which may safely be read by the State councellors, and the rich merchants and their ladies, and from which the theatres will not be obliged to recoil.....

I have enjoyed writing this play, and I feel quite lost and lonely now that it is out of my hands. Dr. Stockman and I got on so very well together; we agree on so many subjects. But the doctor is a more middle-headed person than I am; and because of this and other peculiarities of his, people will stand hearing a good many things from him, which they perhaps would not have taken in good part if they had been said by me"...

"An Enemy of the People" was written in Rome, and it immediately became popular. This is a play full of strong political elements without the sex motive which predominates most of the other plays.

In this piece Ibsen emphasises the fact that "The strongest man is he who stands alone above, not in a cold repellant sense, but in the sense that he who standing on his own feet, seeing with his own eyes, hearing with his own ears, judging with his own mind, by gentleness of spirit and by bonds of love, draws men into a fellowship for a larger work, entering into warmest, most natural relations in which one can communicate with another, without misunderstanding. This is the fellowship which draws and does not repel - the fellowship which we must work for.

Dr. Stockman is a fine creation. Ibsen seem to be laughing at himself in the character of Stockman for his

little weaknesses. He is in one of his happiest moods here. It is by a vital modern theme which grips us in this play - in which Ibsen challenges the whole system of rule by majority i.e., the democratic idea. He declares that the best of individual living is the best test for government or democrasy. There is a great philosophical field here in the conception of truth in its relation to the human mind and reality.

Ibsen has been unjustly accused of being an anarchist in this play. He did urge that the State should be abolished, but abolished for purposes of reconstruction which would mean its regeneration. Writing to Brandes he said:- "As to "The Enemy of the People", if we had a chance to discuss it, I think we should manage to come to an agreement. You are, of course, right when you say that we must all work for the spread of our opinions. But I maintain that a fighter in the intellectual vanguard can never collect a majority round him. In ten years the majority will, possibly, occupy the standpoint which Dr.Stockmann held at the public meeting. But during these ten years the Doctor will not have been standing still; he will still be at least ten years ahead of the majority. He can never have the majority with him. As regards myself, at least, I am conscious of incessant progression. At the point where I stood when I wrote each of my books, there now stands a tolerably compact

crowd; but I myself am no longer there; I am elsewhere; farther ahead, I hope."

In "Petra" we have the portayal of a noble woman, and a sketch of Ibsen's future woman - young here.

Many become aroused, but few speak out. Dr. Stockmann does not join the conspiracy in the society of silence, but speaks out, and this is exactly Ibsen's place in society. "Men still call for special evolution," he wrote , - "for revolutions in politics, in externals. But all that sort of thing is trumpery. It is the human soul that must revolt."

In the spring of 1884 Ibsen wrote:- "I have finished the sketch of my new work, a play in five acts, and am now engrossed in elaborating it - moulding the language more carefully, and individualizing the characters and speeches more thoroughly. In a day or two I go to Gossensass in the Tyrol, expecting to put the finishing touches to it there in the course of the summer."

This proved to be "The Wild Duck" of which he wrote again: - "I have not forgotten certain disrespectful utterances of my own on the subject of the metrical art; but they were merely the expression of my own temporary attitude to that art. I gave up universal standards long ago, because I ceased believing in the justice of applying them. I believe that there is nothing else and nothing better for us

all to do than in spirit and in truth to realize ourselves. This, in my opinion, constitutes real liberalism; and you can therefore understand why the so-called Liberals are in so many ways thoroughly antipathetic to me.

All this winter I have been revolving some new follies in my brain; I went on doing it until they assumed dramatic form; and now I have just completed a play in five acts - that is to say, the rough draft of it; now comes the elaboration, the more energetic individualisation of the persons and their mode of expression. In order to find the quiet and solitude necessary for this work, I am going in a day or two to Gossensass in the Tyrol. My wife and son go to Norway. I wish I could have accompanied them; but that is not possible. At my age a man must make use of his time for his work; the work will never be finished; he "will not have time to write the last verse"; but still, one wishes to get as much done as possible."

To Hegel in the autumn of the same year he wrote:- "along with this letter I send you the manuscript of my new play, "The Wild Duck." For the last four months I have worked at it every day; and it is not without a certain feeling of regret that I part from it. Long, daily association with the persons in this play has endeared them to me, in spite of their manifold failings; and I am not without hope

that they may find good and kind friends among the great reading public, and more particularly among the actor tribe - to whom they offer roles which will well repay the trouble spent on them.

In some ways this new play occupies a position by itself among my dramatic works; in its method it differs in several respects from ny former ones. But I shall say no more on this subject at present. I hope that my critics will discover the points alluded to; they will, at any rate, find several things to squabble about and several things to interpret. I also think that "The Wild Duck" may very probably entice some of our young dramatists into new paths; and this I consider a result to be desired."

"The Wild Duck was (of) as usual attacked, puzzled over, and soon became popular. It is a most intense psycholog drama. The skill with which it is done - the treatment of a painful theme, is what makes it excellent. As to its meaning, many have given it up, but Ibsen always demands hard work, and here it is only a little harder than usual. Its interpretation becomes easier when we realize his physical and psychological condition during the production of this piece. Ibsen was still smarting under the treatment which he received after the production of "Ghosts" - in a mood of

relaxation and perhaps doubt when he wrote this. Here we find him rather bittely laughing at his own theories and those who take them too seriously, or the dangers of ideas in the hands of a fool; and as usual, satirising the defects in human nature.

The play is deeply symbolic and deeply beautiful. In the character of the young girl - Hedwig, for whom his favorite sister was model, ~~Through her~~ he describes his own childhood, and home.

Hedvig: "There are such lots of wonderful things.

Gregers: " Indeed?

Hedvig: "Yes, there are big cupboards full of books; and a great many of the books have pictures in them.

Gregers: "Aha!

Hedvig: "And there's an old bureau with drawers and flaps, and a big clock with figures that go out and in. But the clock isn't going no.

Gregers: " So time has come to a standstill in there - in the wild duck's domain.

Hedvig: "Yes. And then there's an old paint box and things of that sort; and all the books.

Gregers: "And you read the books, I suppose?

Hedvig: "Oh yes, when I get the chance. Most of them are English though, and I don't understand English. But then I look at the pictures."

Hedvig is "The Wild Duck", and through her it becomes the symbol of the family, and through the family for humanity. From this time on symbolism is steadily used by Ibsen with the possible exception of "Hedda Gabler". It is a new method, he had never used it before, but he came to find it extremely useful. He uses it intellectually in order to draw attention to homely facts that have reason back of them; and artistically he adopted it for purposes of artistic atmosphere in dealing with ugly facts in life, to which in terms of one thing another thing is expressed.

Rosmersholm, is one of Ibsen's most exciting, fascinating, and stimulating dramas, and in it his idealism appears anew in a nobler and more beautiful form. In 1886 Ibsen wrote:- "I am engrossed in writing a new play, which I have been planning for a long time, and for which I made careful studies during my visit to Norway last summer." And in another letter written November, 1886, he says:- "Ever since I returned to Munich I have been tormented by a new play which was determined that it should be written. I did not get rid of it till the beginning of last month. The experiences of my journey in Norway last summer, the impressions received, the observations made, had a disturbing effect on me. I had to come to a distinct understanding of the whole and draw my conclusions, before I could think of trans-

forming the experiences into fiction."

By this it is seen how deeply his visit to Norway in 1885, effected him. The political fight was then raging, and other influences were at work also. The play was written slowly and thoughtfully. It was played at Bergen, 1887, and proved popular.

About this Ibsen wrote: "The call to work is, undoubtedly, distinguishable throughout Rosmersholm. But the play also deals with the struggle which all serious-minded human beings have to wage with themselves in order to bring their lives into harmony with their convictions. For the different spiritual functions do not develop evenly and abreast of each other in any one human being. The instinct of acquisition hurries one from gain to gain. The moral consciousness, which we call conscience, is on the other hand, very conservative. It has its deep roots in traditions and the past generally. Hence the conflict. But the play is, of course, first and foremost a work of fiction, a story of human beings and human fates." Here again we find reiterated (the basis of which he has told us) that he was a playwright first and philosopher last, that he had strong views and felt strongly, but that first of all he was a dramatist.

This play brings out more clearly than ever the

necessity for some high influence in society. While "Rosmersholm" is a tragedy, it is not depressing, but on the other hand full of imaginative beauty and exaltation. In the character of Rebecca West, we have another instance of that love which asks nothing for itself, but is willing to sacrifice everything for its object, - "the strong love which is able to renounce, which is content with such a life as that which we two have in common." As she, again says "a feeling of tranquillity came upon me, - a quiet like that of a bird, - cliff beneath our midnight sun," which gave her courage to confess all to Rosmer, renewing his confidence and faith in her love, and enabling him at last, to declare everything before men, and to sacrifice his life. To portray this love, the opposite of selfishness, "Rosmersholm" was written, and it was also the outcome of Ibsen's own innermost feeling.

"The Lady from the Sea" was published in November, 1888. In idea it is distinctly Ibsenesque, and has a logical though pleasant ending. The poetic idea underlying the piece is perhaps better understood by Scandinavian folk than by us, and altogether the play is unusually clear and bell-like in tone, not baffling like the one which immediately followed it.

Ibsen's love for the sea and its fascination for him are wonderfully proved here. Writing from Rome, in 1885,

He says, - "I have of late begun to think seriously of the possibility of buying a little villa, or rather a small country house in the neighborhood of Christiania, on the Fjord, where I could live in complete reclusion and give myself up entirely to my work. The sight of the sea is what I miss most here, and my longing for it increases year by year."

At this time he wrote to Jonas Lie:- "We are seriously considering the possibility of spending the coming summer up at the Skaw. The place has for a long time been a haunt of painters, and the great wide sea powerfully attracts us." Upon receiving a painting of the sea, he wrote:- "It is now hung in a good place in my study, so that I may constantly satisfy myself by the view out over the broad, open sea..... The sea I love. Your picture carries me in thought and sentiment to what I love."

Another reference to the sea comes out in a letter to Hegel, in which he says, speaking of his (Hegel's) old home:- I do not imagine, however, that you will part with your old place in the Strandvei which possesses, in my estimation, the greatest of all recommendations - it lies on the Sound. Among the things wanting to me down here, the want of the sea is what I have the greatest difficulty in becoming reconciled to."

Ibsen spent two summers near the sea before the drama was written, and there is no doubt but that it fascinated him greatly. An English writer regarding this experience said:- "He would stand for hours on the landing pier, gazing down into the depths or up at the distance. And when in the following year, he was selecting a retreat for the summer months, he went to Jutland, instead of to the Tyrol, as usual, and again it was the sea which enchanted and absorbed him as he wandered alone on the sandy shore."

The "Stranger" stands not only for the sea, but for the sea as a symbol of one of the greatest, strong, free things. The symbolism is felt throughout the piece. The "Stranger" is also the symbol of the far away, the allure of the unknown. The other characterizations are finely handled-psychologically and dramatically. In Elida we have presented a study of the typical modern woman who makes a conventional marriage without love. She is not a degenerate by any means, but there is a touch of neurasthenia in her it is true. "Through her we have a study of the nervous system in relation to the soul."

"Hedda Gabler" is unsurpassed if judged strictly for drama. Never has Ibsen shown more economy of material than in this play. In the spring of 1890, Ibsen wrote to the Swedish poet, Count Snoilsky: "Our intention has all

along been to spend the summer in the Tyrol again. But circumstances are against our doing so. I am at present engaged upon a new dramatic work, which for several reason has made very slow progress, and I do not leave Munich until I can take with me the completed first draft. There is little or no prospect of my being able to complete it in July." As it was Ibsen did not leave Munich that summer. In the autumn he wrote: "At present I am utterly engrossed in a new play. Not one leisure hour have I had for several months." And a little later on he wrote:- "My new play is finished; the manuscript went off to Copenhagen the day before yesterday--- It produces a curious feeling of emptiness to be thus suddenly separated from a work which has occupied one's time and thoughts for several months, to the exclusion of all else. But it is a good thing, too, to have done with it. The constant intercourse with the fictitious personages was beginning to make me quite nervous." Still later he wrote:- "The title of the play is "Hedda Gabler". My intention in giving it this name was to indicate that Hedda, as a personality, is to be regarded rather as her father's daughter than as her husband's wife. It was not my desire to deal in this play with so-called problems. What I principally, wanted to do was to depict human beings, human emotions, and

and human destinies, upon a groundwork of certain of the social conditions and principals of the present day."

In a series of letters to the young girl, Emmie Bardach, of Vienna, whom Ibsen met at Gossensass in the Tyroll in the autumn of 1889, and with whom he formed an interesting though brief friendship; one gets a few glimpses into the poet's moods and allusions to his work touching "Hedda Gabler". In one letter he writes:- "Here I sit as usual at my writing table. Now, I would fain work, but am unable to. My fancy, indeed, is very active. But it always wanders away. It wanders where it has no business to wander during working hours. I cannot express my summer memories, not that I wish to. I live through my experiences again and again and yet again. To transmute it all into a poem, I find, in the meantime, impossible."

This theme which, having no relation, to his summer experiences, he felt he ought to have been engaged in was undoubtedly, "Hedda Gabler". In the following letter he wrote:- "Do not be troubled because I cannot, in the meantime create. In realty I am forever creating, or at any rate, dreaming of something, which, when in the fulness of time it ripens, will reveal itself as a creation." In another letter he continues: " I am very busily occupied with preparations for my new poem. I sit almost the whole day at my writing

table. Go out only in the evening for a little while." And again he writes:-- "I am quite alone here, and cannot get away. The new play on which I am at present engaged will probably not be ready until November, though I sit at my writing table daily and almost the whole day long." And this is the last reference we find to Hedda in his letters. She seems to have been created when Ibsen was in a state of reaction against the dreamy, charming, summer in the Tyrol. Not yet ready or in the mood to put these Gossensass experiences into poetry and into the spirit of Hilda; he retreated for a time, and this period brought forth Hedda in cold, clear contures, a wonderful character study.

In"Hedda Gabler" we are not given a portrait of a type of bad woman, but on the contrary she portrays a type of woman on the rocks as the result of social conditions. She is unable to find a legitimate channel for her innermost activity, but she is not evil in the sense of an incarnate principle of evil, otherwise she would not have committed suicide at the end, for she might have gone on, had she been a light woman, to a life of gayety and ease. She is rather an embittered creature with a strong egoism and a deep power over others which she wishes to use because she has brains, and this power has unfortunately been turned wrong, when

having made a purely conventional marriage, she at last realizes the hopelessly asinine character of her husband.

In a different environment she would have been a greater woman, a power for good. She is intensely intellectual, and an egoist. She despises the conventions to which she bends, and has to stifle "the still small voice" by a forced coldness in order to harden herself against her inmate woman's sensitiveness. This she is forced into poisonous thought and action through living in the wrong atmosphere. She appears bitter and sneers and attacks things violently, yet she is essentially a good woman, deeply pathetic in her situation.

It is a significant fact that in Ibsen, although he probes as no other poet has probed, to the very bottom of the heart, there is not a bad nor abandoned woman. Hedda is the picture of ennui, ambitious, craving the power of wielding influence, yet idle and inactive. Had she been placed in different circumstances, given responsibility and outlets for her intense intellectuality, she would have been a different woman, in that she would have become a wonderful power for the highest and best in life's experiences.

Ibsen is primarily responsible for our search after truth, and new beauties in art and life which we thought could not exist. We are now striving to become natural, as

Maeterlinck says; "The first thing that strikes us in the drama of the day is the decay, one might say almost the creeping paralysis of external action. Next we note a very pronounced desire to penetrate deeper and deeper into human consciousness and place moral problems upon a high pedestal and finally the search, still very timid and halting, for a kind of new beauty that shall be less abstract than was the old." And again we realize that- "It is in a small room, around a table, close to a fire that the joys and sorrows of mankind are decided, We suffer or make others suffer, we love and die in our corner. When we think over our lives we see that it is , after all in secrecy and silence, that we have fought out the great dramatic moments. "

Ibsen possessed the highest type of constructive imagination -- a leader and revolutionist in art and life, and added to this, he was in tune with his time. He himself declared that - " There was a kinship between me and my time."

Ibsen's last four plays form a group by themselves. They are essentially different from the preceding dramas on that they are deeply symbolic and of mystic, romantic spirit. It was as if the stern seer, who had pierced the conventions and hypocracies in the life about him, in his struggle for truth in all things, had realized the futility of the purely realistic and the material side of humanity; and had to come to the conclusion that truth and beauty were not enough in themselves, but that the spiritual element must unite with them, if they would be truely effective in penetrating the souls of mankind.

In these last four plays all the action has preceded the play, and but little remains to be actually developed in the dramas as we have them. What action we have is essentially mental action, the struggle becomes intensely psychologic, and through Ibsen's masterly technique we see the exteriorization of the emotional states of human beings.

The first play in this group, entitled "The Master Builder", is a study of the contrasted and waring generations. Solness, the master builder, a man, who, fooled by love, tries to stop the natural laws, and perishes in the attempt.

As Ibsen grew older the references to his plays became less frequent and as regards these last four, there is little or nothing in his letters. Concerning this play he wrote, "The series which ends with the epilogue, really began with 'The Master Builder'. Into this subject, however, I do not care to enter further."

This group was written entirely in Christiania where he returned in 1891, not to partake in the political battles of the day, but rather in a lyric mood to wander in the secret places of his own soul.

The character of Hilda was undoubtedly modeled after that of Fräulein Emilie Bardach whom he met at Gossensass in the autumn of 1889 when he was sixty-one years of age; and she is said to have been but seventeen. On the back of his photograph which he gave her is inscribed "To the May-sun of a September life-in Tyrol." In her album he had written the words: "High, painful happiness - to struggle for the unattainable! "

The play is intensely subjective. It is enveloped in a vague, mystic atmosphere, through which the dialogue betwen Hilda and Solness interweave like the harmonious motives of a song.

The play gives us essentially the soul history of Solness, as he pours it out to the impassioned Hilda. He is an intense egoist, fearing the second generation.

One of the most pathetic scenes in all Ibsen occurs in the third act of this play where Hilda and the wife are talking together; and by relating the wife to Hilda in this way, Hilda is prevented from giving anything except her ideal side to Solness. Here again are the two contrasting types of woman.

The play is full of symbolism, which is almost entirely autobiographic. The "churches" doubtless stand for Ibsen's early plays; the "homes for human beings" his social dramas; the houses with the high towers, merging into "castles in the air" represent his mystic romantic plays; which he the master builder himself stands essentially for Ibsen and his own experiences.

The whole play is typical of Ibsen, no one else could have conceived and executed it. After a performance of "The Master Builder" in 1894 Ibsen said: "The French play me better than other people do:- I am a passionate author and I want to be played passionately or not at all!"

Two years after "The Master Builder" came "Little Eyolf", a drama of marriage, in which both people

fail as parents. It is a study in the purification of the marriage relation, and a sound and beautiful plea for true wedlock. By Asta's relation to the husband we see the possibility of higher relations between the husband and wife; while the boy leads them to the larger love which ~~is for~~ means the love of all children, not the selfish love for one.

This play is also symbolic - in the character of the Rat Wife, - the crutch which is the rebuking symbol of their passion - and in the open eyes which stare at them. Here there are also great silent places intensely dramatic, which represent the externalization of soul communion.

It is one of the saddest of the soul dramas. It emphasizes the importance of the law of change, and shows that the true pleasure is that of the mind and dwells only in illusions. This thought of the ephemeral quality of all things gives the play a symbolic, mystic atmosphere. Ibsen's ~~character~~ portrayal of the child is especially beautiful. When "Little Eyolf" was played, Ibsen said: "I want people to see the characters in my plays - to see even the buttons on the backs of their coats; for as I wrote I felt my characters to be so lifelike, so real!"

John Gabriel Borkman came two years later. The spirit of this play reveals that its author is no longer a young man. It is strong but more reflective. The symbolism here brings out the central moral of the play, that all human errors come from a coldness of heart and a disregard of the natural love-light in the soul of man.

It is the most Greek-like of Ibsen's dramas in the austere and slow movement. Although not so rich in symbolism as "The Master Builder"or "Little Eylof", it has some prominent symbols. Erhart leaving his mother and aunt represents the parting of the past and present: the ores in the mines wanting release, stand for chained spirits; and the "cold that kills" stands for the nature that has put out the hearth-fire of true love. In Borkman's dreams of power as the expression of egoism, he is representative of the human race.

The conflicts between the past and present; between love and ambition; and between the individual and society; may all be found here interwoven with one another.

In 1898 he gives us a glimpse of how he felt at this period, home again in Norway, respected and honored by all, where he said: "My life has passed like a long, long,

quiet week, and as I stand here in the real passion week, my life is transformed into a fairy play. I, the old dramatist, see my life remolded into a poem, a fairy poem. It has been transformed into a summer night's dream."

The "Epilogue" or "When We Dead Awaken," is a harmonious interweaving of the ideals of his earlier plays. It is intensely autobiographic, full of mystic quality, vague and indefinite. Maia represents earthly love and realism; Irene - love, beauty and the ideality of the spiritual life; while the life of Rubek is a portrayal of Ibsen's own soul, which he has symbolized again in the sculpture group.

This play is a summing up of Ibsen's whole career; in it he seems to regret his life and his stern adherence to work. In his talk about the portraits in the first act, we are given the suggestion that they refer to the characters in his plays.

He changed the base of the pedestal in his group of sculpture, which represents his change from early romantic plays to his later realism. Most significant of all is the fact that he has pushed the central figure to one

side - it does not stand now, quite in the middle. There is something hidden behind each thing. The nun is the symbol of Irene's past. The flowers floating down the stream symbolize the passing of time, and this scene represents the visualization or externalization of people who are reminiscent of their past experiences. This is one of Ibsen's most stimulating, most subtle, cryptic and penetrating dramas.

His use of height, high places, mountains and the like, are significant in that he seems to have craved the great distances as he grew older to express and symbolize his aspiration for the spiritual. This is made use of in the climax of "The Master Builder","Little Eyolf" and in "The Epilogue", particularly.

In one of his speeches he has tried to explain what constituted a poet, what he meant by a poet: in other words he has attempted an explanation of himself. He says: "As for me, it was a long time before I realized that to be a poet, that is chiefly to see, but mark well, to see in such a manner that the thing seen is perceived by his audience just as the poet saw it. But thus is seen and thus is appreciated that only which has been lived through, that is just the secret of the literature of modern times. All

that I have written these last ten years, I have, mentally, lived through. But no poet lives through anything isolated. What he lives through all of his countrymen live through together with him. For if that were not so, what would establish the bridge of understanding between the producing and the receiving mind?

And what is it, then, that I have lived through and written on? The range has been large. Partly, I have written on that which only by glimpses and at my best moments I have felt stirring vividly within me as something great and beautiful. I have written on that which, so to speak, has stood higher than my daily self, and I have written on this in order to fasten it over against and within myself.

But I have also written on the opposite, on that which in introspective contemplation appears as the dregs and sediment of one's own nature. The work of writing has in this case been to me like a bath which I have felt to leave cleaner, healthier, and freer. Nobody can poetically present that to which he has not to a certain degree and at least at times the model within himself. And who is the man among us who has not now and then felt and acknowledged within himself a contradiction between word and action,

between will and task, between life and teaching on the whole? Or who is there among us who has not, at least in some cases, selfishly been sufficient unto himself, and half unconsciously, half in good faith, has extenuated this conduct both to others and to himself?"

Ibsen looked the fact in the face and judged humanity by a higher standard than the prevalent morality of his own time. He awakened and stimulated thought, he induced reflection, and impelled people to analyze and answer grave questions of social morality, thus enabling them to realize their own individuality and the value of truth.

At a banquet in Stockholm, in 1887, Ibsen said: "It has been said that I, and that in a prominent manner, have contributed to create a new era in these countries. I, on the contrary, believe that the time in which we now live might with quite as good reason be characterized as a conclusion, and that from it something new is about to be born. For I believe that the teaching of natural science about evolution has validity also as regards the mental factors of life. I believe that the time will soon come when political and social conceptions will cease to exist in their coalescence, and there will come a unity, which, for the present,

will contain the conditions for the happiness of mankind. I believe that poetry, philosophy and religion will be merged in a new category and become a new vital force, of which we who live now can have no clear conception.

It has been said of me on different occasions that I am a pessimist. And so I am in so far as I do not believe in the everlastingness of human ideals. But I am also am optimist in so far as I firmly believe in the capacity for procreation and development of ideals. Especially, to be more definite, am I of the opinion that the ideals of our time, while disintegrating, are tending towards what in my play "Emperor and Galilean" I indicated by the name of "the third kingdom." Therefore, permit me to drink a toast to that which is in the process of formation, - to that which is to come. It is on a Saturday night that we are assembled here. Following it comes the day of rest, the festival day, the holy day - whichever you wish to call it. For my part I shall be content with the result of my life's work, if this work can serve to prepare the spirit of to-morrow. But above all I shall be content if it shall serve to strengthen the mind in that week of work which will of a necessity follow."

The absence of references, and of paging, is a serious deficiency. I suggest that it be remedied at once. O. W. F.

Ibsen's wish that his work "serve to prepare the spirit of tomorrow" is deeply suggestive. I t unites in a way , his whole life work, and brings it into harmonious relation with his highest ideals and possibilities. His, was the correct attitude in these days of acute mental introspection. That this intense subjectivity was characteristic of Ibsen throughout his life and his work, I have endeavored to show by the foregoing references to this fact in his speeches and letters, and by illustrations from the work itself. To Ibsen the "joy of life " was the "joy of work";he was intuitively governed by a fine sense of proportion ,and by a splendid sanity which was evident in his view of life,- that view which sprang from a mixture of both brain and emotion. Ibsen not only saw all the superficial form of existence, but beneath this he perceived the great scheme of nature, in order, unity and gradation; and underneath everything, the spark of our common brotherhood.

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