HENRIK IBSEN

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An Introduction to His Life and Works

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Foreword

SO much has been printed about Ibsen that the publication of another book would seem to call for explanation. Ibsen was a pioneer in intellectual and moral matters to such an extent that it was rather difficult for his commentators to keep abreast of his thought, therefore much confusion has arisen in regard to interpretations. Since the publication of his letters and addresses and a number of excellent critical studies, notably such work as that of Professor Anathon Aal, the main lines of interpretation have become reasonably clear, and it seems fitting that this information be made available to students and readers.

The purpose of the present volume is to bring the student in touch promptly with the main problems of each play,

so that he may devote his major energy to an intelligent reading of the book. American readers are usually so little in touch with European currents of thought that this mode of approach would seem wise. No attempt has been made to give a full account of Ibsen's thoughts and theories, but to encourage the student to read the works of the author independently, and to work out the solutions for himself. To this end, suggestive questions and topics for study are appended in order to enable the student to approach the plays in the spirit in which they were written.

A selected bibliography is appended. It is by no means exhaustive. The aim has been to include the most vital and well-known contributions, and to give the student a fairly reliable approach to a more scholarly study of the subject.

P.H.G.

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To live is to war with fiends
That infest the brain and heart;
To write is to summon one's self
And play the judge's part.

—*Letters 334*

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 am no longer there, I am elsewhere; farther ahead I hope.

—*Letters 370*

HENRIK IBSEN

The First Period

ALTHOUGH Ibsen's ancestry included Scotch, Danish, and especially German stock, his Norwegian characteristics were quite dominant. He was born on March 20, 1828, at Skien. His parents, who had been in easy circumstances, were reduced to poverty in his early boyhood. This accounts for Ibsen's early bitterness, since it forced the highly gifted youth into narrow and chafing surroundings. As a young man he was apprenticed to an apothecary at Grimstad, a town even more provincial than Skien.

Narrow Surroundings

Doomed to live in an uninteresting fishing village, the boy was burdened

by its dullness and constantly yearned for the great world that lay beyond. His only relief from this monotony was supplied by occasional sailors who had seen the world and who fired his imagination with its wonders It is not surprising, therefore, that a marked reverence for the traveler trails through the works of Ibsen.

Caricaturing

More important than this, however, was his habit of caricaturing the petty inhabitants of the town. He had had some elementary instruction in art. Now this afforded him emotional relief and, eventually, influenced his technique as a writer. The tendency toward caricature remained so strong in Ibsen that practically all of his characterizations are affected by it. He hardly ever gives a portrait that he does not intensify salient characteristics to the point of caricature.

Catiline

During Ibsen's adolescence, Europe was seething with revolution. France had a long record in this connection, but the revolution that culminated in Germany in 1848 came to his attention more directly. This revolution was headed by university men who pointed not only to America but to the republics of antiquity in their propaganda. So it came that when Ibsen was preparing to enter the University, he became vitally interested in the republican phases of his Latin studies. As a result of his study of Sallust and Cicero, he wrote his first play, *Catiline*, in 1850. It was little more than the average play of the average revolutionary student, and did not give evidence of unusual talent.

Reverence for Physicians

In 1850 he went to Christiania to study medicine. While he was soon

diverted to other interests, this early ambition did leave its permanent marks upon him. From now on, he had the most profound respect for the scientist and the scientific attitude. Throughout life he had a marked reverence for physicians. Of all the characters that he created, Dr. Stockmann remained his favorite, and rarely did he portray a physician whom he placed in an unfavorable light.

Radical Tendencies

At the university, other interests soon eclipsed his medical studies. He became acquainted with a group of liberals and for a time acted as one of the editors of *Andhrimnir*, a radical journal. He took time to become better acquainted with Scandinavian poets, notably Hertz, Öhlenschläger, and Holberg. At the time a fierce literary feud was raging between two writers, Wergeland and Welhaven. The former

was violent and spectacular, the latter more solid and logical. Ibsen found himself in agreement with the latter. This was of prime importance in shaping his future, for he too was to serve as a contrast to an important writer of his era.

Contact with Björnson and Ole Bull

It is this period which brings him in contact with Björnson, with whom his name was to be linked throughout life. The two men at first entered into close friendship, but each one preserved his own personality. Björnson, tall, impressive and handsome, was destined to become a popular idol. Ibsen, short, critical, keen, and timid had to win his way more slowly, but in a far more substantial manner.

Norway, fired by its young thinkers, became more and more alert to its national culture. In the interests of this movement Ole Bull, the noted

musician, had founded a theater at Bergen. Ibsen was now appointed the director of this theater and his dramatic apprenticeship began in earnest. A small traveling allowance enabled him to visit Dresden where Devrient, the famous director and historian of the German theater, gave him a new insight into the problems of the stage. He also visited Copenhagen where Heiberg exerted considerable influence upon him.

Ibsen and Scribe

A glance at the list of plays produced under Ibsen at Bergen shows a marked preponderance of French plays. Especially the dramas of Scribe are in evidence here, a fact that lends color to the contention that Ibsen's style was profoundly influenced by Scribe. It is quite possible that its crispness and clearness are partly to be traced to this source.

The Influence of Hettner

Of greater importance to the development of the dramatist was another influence. During this period he became acquainted with the work of the German critic, Hettner, who had made a strong appeal for greater psychological truth in the drama. The influence of this critic becomes apparent in Ibsen at once and may be traced very clearly in all of his subsequent work.

Ibsen and the Nationalist Movement

The patriotic movement in Norway continued to make excellent progress. Scholars and poets emulated the example of the Germans and began to collect the Norwegian myths and folklore. The university became interested in this movement and for a time employed Ibsen in this connection. Ibsen's efforts in this field had little scientific importance, but they enabled

him to gather material which he utilized to good effect in subsequent plays. He was entirely too subjective to do scholarly work. His interest was in the present rather than the past to such an extent that even his historical plays always involved modern issues.

Lady Inger at Östrat

It is not surprising therefore that *Lady Inger at Östrat* (1855) deals with the question of Scandinavian unity. This presents one of Ibsen's most important trends. He favored larger and larger political states, therefore was impatient that Denmark, Norway, and Sweden could not combine into a larger unit. Much later in life he even wanted Scandinavia to feel that she was a part of a larger Teuton unity.

The Feast at Solhaug

The next play that Ibsen produced was *The Feast at Solhaug* (1856). This

is considered the least satisfactory of his dramas. It is a rather extravagant treatment of a romantic subject and fails to carry conviction.

The Vikings

The appearance of *The Vikings* in 1858, however, proved that a thoroughly original and keen dramatist had appeared. The play discusses the conflict between paganism and Christianity at the time when Iceland was becoming christianized. It is so important that it will be desirable to devote some space to it.

Jökul, a fierce viking of the old school, is slain by Örnulf, a chieftain of Iceland who has come to accept a milder philosophy. As Jökul dies, he pronounces a curse upon Örnulf, and bequeathes his daughter Hjördis to him, in the hope that she will somehow carry on the feud. Hjördis grows up with Dagny, the daughter of Ör-

nulf. When the two girls have grown to maturity, Sigurd and Gunnar appear and court them. Hjördis vows that she will wed only the man who can slay the bear. Gunnar realizes that he cannot do this, but his love for Hjördis prompts him to beg Sigurd, his foster brother, to perform the task for him.

Sigurd, although he also loves Hjördis, cannot refuse this kindness to his foster brother and clandestinely delivers Hjördis to him. He himself takes Dagny, and the two abduct the young women. Old traditions demand that Örnulf should immediately pursue and punish them, but Örnulf has been touched by Christian lenience, and fails to do so. Finally, after five years, the Assembly forces Örnulf to call the abductors to account.

He encounters Sigurd first. After a victorious combat, Sigurd promptly offers rich presents to Örnulf to sat-

isfy him, for he has learned to love the gentle Dagny. Örnulf then meets Gunnar, who, without attempting a conflict, immediately offers to pay the indemnity. This utterly fails to satisfy Hjördis, who feels that her honor is at stake. She invites the heroes to her banquet hall and at once creates dissension. She despises Örnulf and his weakling son, Thorolf. She proves that this son does not possess the first virtue of a warrior, the ability to hold his tongue. Then she insists that her husband is the greater hero and forces Dagny to reveal the secret that Sigurd had entrusted to her. She, the strong woman, had a mysterious affinity for Sigurd the strong man, and she insists upon unraveling the tangled situation. When Sigurd secretly confesses the fact that he really had loved her and had turned her over to Gunnar out of friendship, her disdain knows no bounds. With supreme emotion she exclaims:

"All good things may a man do for his best friend, but surrender to him the woman that he loves, for that is a violation of the law of the Nornes."

It is quite clear that Ibsen originally intended to depict Hjördis as a savage pagan. As he continued to develop the character, however, she became more and more attractive to him until she finally emerged as the heroine of the play. Unfortunately, however, Ibsen published the play before he had eliminated all of her negative characteristics.

Importance of the Vikings

Faulty as *The Vikings* may be in a few minor details, it did give evidence that Ibsen could enter into the spirit of the old legends and present them in a new and striking manner. What is still more important, he found characteristics in the old legendary characters that appealed to him as sound and desirable in modern life.

A Period of Struggle

In 1857, Ibsen became director of the Norwegian Theater at Christiania. In a short time this theater was forced to suspend, and the author faced six of the most trying years of his life. To be sure, he was made literary adviser of the old theater at Christiania, but this position yielded him a mere pittance. It was therefore a much needed relief when the crown granted him a modest pension of 400 riksdaler, in 1864.

Love's Comedy

The Christiania period was quite important in Ibsen's development. His attention was more definitely directed to the social problems of his own day. The contact with more vital problems greatly developed his critical and analytical habits, as is proved by the publication of *Love's Comedy* in 1862. As compared with other plays this drama is somewhat

experimental. Its outstanding merit is to be found in its exuberant buoyancy, a rather surprising characteristic when we remember the seriousness of Ibsen's personal affairs at the time.

The Pretenders

Once more Ibsen turned to a theme from the national traditions in *The Pretenders*, (1864). It marks a great step forward, for now the author begins to develop his characters with far greater seriousness and more technical skill. The character contrast between Hakon and Skule in this play is one of the cleverest to his credit. How greatly this play is valued by the Norwegians is proved by the fact that the Norwegian king assumed the name of Hakon when Norway again became an independent kingdom. In other respects also, *The Pretenders* is so excellent technically that some critics include it among Ibsen's best plays.

Conflicts and Readjustments

FOLLOWING the production of *The Pretenders*, a period of unrest and severe mental agitation ensued. Although both Ibsen and many of his critics assert that he was not influenced by the writer, Kierkegaard, it is quite clear that, indirectly, he must have come into contact with ideas of this interesting thinker. This is the most plausible way of accounting for the turmoil of his soul. Everything seemed to call for scrutiny and, above all, he came to feel that a heavy responsibility rested upon him to grapple directly with the problems of the day.

The Individual and Traditions

He came to realize that the old traditions frequently rested upon un-

sound foundations and that if men accepted these traditions they became morally responsible for them. He felt called upon to subject the old traditions to a searching criticism and this habit almost became second nature to him. He never could get rid of the feeling that his little Norwegian village life, beset by traditions, had been most unfortunate. Once having formed the habit of scrutinizing these, he applied the method to society as a whole. If a man was to be true to himself and not be a hypocrite, he must fearlessly face old traditions, accept them or reject them; if not, he would make himself a coward and a poltroon. The student of English literature will not fail to see an interesting parallel here to Carlyle in *Sartor Resartus*.

The Individual and Reform

This mode of thought led Ibsen to

suspect party activity and political propaganda. As a youth he had placed much faith in the emancipatory power of revolutionary parties. As we have seen, he had even been editorially active in such propaganda. Gradually, his ardor cooled. Salvation could not be obtained by or through group activity. If society was to be reformed, it must be by reforming the *individual* and making him the very center of this effort.

Larger Environment

A most important change now came into Ibsen's life. He had been battling with his vexing problems in a rather limited way, for he lacked breadth of experience. His horizon was limited by what he was pleased to call his Norwegian provincialism. He now became a stranger to his native land and resided in Rome, Munich, and Dresden. The broader views of older

civilizations began to affect him and he analyzed Norwegian life with critical detachment. He was greatly affected by his contact with the masterpieces of European art and grappled with its deeper problems. Above all, he became more cosmopolitan intellectually. He was charmed with the masterpieces of German classical literature, and was especially stimulated by Goethe. This influence became apparent at once in his works and can be traced quite clearly in all of his subsequent thinking. Of modern writers, the German dramatist, Hebbel, interested him especially. Many writers have asserted that he imitated this author's technique in his poetical dramas. While this cannot be disproved, it is a matter of minor importance, but it is far more significant that Ibsen was profoundly impressed with the grim seriousness of Hebbel's spirit and that he re-

mained essentially true to that spirit.

Will and Conscience

More than ever he felt the importance of the writer and his relation to his own conscience. In a letter to Laura Kieler he said, "The most important thing is to remain true and faithful to one's behavior to himself. It is not a question of willing to do this or that, but of willing what one is absolutely compelled to will, because one is what he is and because he cannot do otherwise." With such a robust and sensitive conscience then, the writer is to sit in judgment of men and events.

> "To live is to war with fiends
> That infest the brain and the heart,
> To write is to summon one's self
> And play the judge's part."

Individualist of the North

While Ibsen came under these new cultural influences, he insisted upon

remaining the sturdy individualist of the North. He continued to accept and reject, all the while insisting that the literary man should produce out of his own consciousness directly, and not simply reflect the thoughts of others. Great art, as he saw it, was the revelation of a great individual, and great art is what he intended to produce.

Ibsen's scrutiny of the old traditions now led him to suspect many things that had been considered definitely settled. He looked upon human progress as an everchanging process to which the individual must adjust himself and to which the great individuals must give direction. In this connection he began to examine some of the old ideals with the result that he began to suspect them. This brought down much criticism upon him from those who understood him imperfectly. He was really a great

idealist, but was not afraid to throw aside a worn-out ideal.

New Ideas and Inconsistencies

For a considerable period, Ibsen's mind was fairly seething with these problems and he adjusted his views from day to day. It is not surprising therefore that the works of this period lack a certain clarity in spite of the fact that they are brilliant and stimulating. So rapidly were new ideas crowding upon him that a new adjustment frequently came during the composition of a play, and at this period of his life he seemed to lack the patience and industry to eliminate these inconsistencies before he printed his dramas.

Brand

It is in this period of inner turmoil that Ibsen wrote *Brand* (1866). It was first written as an epic and later

recast in dramatic form. Even in such matters of technique his mind seemed to be quite unsettled. He presented Brand as a sombre divine who fearlessly practiced what he preached. Careless critics at once made a hero out of Brand, which is quite out of harmony with Ibsen's intention. There are many admirable traits in his character, but the play clearly indicates that Brand carries his principles to a ridiculous extreme and conflicts with the very nature of God, for God is a God of love, as the voice in the closing scene indicates.

It is quite clear that Ibsen was somewhat to blame for these faulty interpretations. Brand is so definitely right in his conflict with his adversaries that he wins our confidence unduly. We simply cannot do other than despise the various persons with whom he comes into conflict. Only in a minor way are the demands of

human love and kindliness voiced by the doctor who knows life in a more inclusive sense.

Main Purpose of Brand

The main purpose of the play was to show the diversity between doctrine and action. Ibsen was appalled at the fact that everybody preached volubly but practiced little, probably the greatest lesson that he drew from Goethe's *Faust*. He meant to say that men had a very severe religion that imposed terrific obligations, but that they paid no attention to this professed religion in their own lives. In *Brand*, then, he placed before them a man who does take his doctrine seriously and makes all of the sacrifices consistent with it, including wife, child, and finally himself. He does not state that this is the correct doctrine, but correct or faulty, Brand is consistent.

Gerd

Critics have given very many interpretations of the character of Gerd in this play. The most plausible one is that she represents one who carries the principles of Brand to the point of complete insanity. She acts as Brand might act if he threw off all inhibition and carried his ideas to their logical conclusion.

Weaknesses of Brand

At best, *Brand* can be called a jumble of brilliant ideas imperfectly organized and not matured into a real artistic unit. It is entirely too long to pass as a drama. The long passages which it contains, remind one constantly of the epic form in which it was originally cast. Ibsen should have done with *Brand* what Goethe did with his *Faust*. He should have kept it in his desk and remodeled it when he had attained greater clarity.

It is quite absurd, therefore, when critics refer to this drama as the author's masterpiece, for it was composed long before Ibsen really acquired his extraordinary technique.

Peer Gynt

If *Brand*, as some writers assert, portrayed the Norwegian as he would be, if he were true to himself, the next drama, *Peer Gynt* (1867) presented him as he is with his most prominent characteristics exaggerated. It is a satire upon Norwegian Romanticism. Peer had grown up in the romantic atmosphere. His father, once a well-to-do peasant, had lived a kind of dream existence, never coming down to the hard problems of life, and squandering his fortune. His widow inherits nothing but poverty and romantic traditions. Fleeing from her misery she finds comfort in her world of fairy and folk-lore figures.

In this fairy world Peer grows up and naturally becomes a preposterous liar. His mother loudly upbraids him for his lies, yet protects him against the accusations of others for she naturally understands her Peer.

As a liar Peer evades all real issues; he not only tells lies but acts them, since he believes this course natural, and convenient. He develops an unmitigated selfishness, and has no regard for the effect which his actions may have upon his fellow-men. Worst of all, he is a coward. Although he has the strength of a giant, he shuns his enemy, the smith. Instead of openly asking for his bride, he steals, and then basely abandons her.

Peer and the Romantic

So completely is Peer dominated by the romantic, that he is unable to distinguish between his real experiences and the fictions of his fancy.

From his fairy lore, he has evolved the hallucination that he is destined to become emperor, not by his endeavors but by some happy chance. He is driven from his home by the indignant villagers and engages in smuggling and slave trade. Having amassed some means in this way, he sets out for Greece, believing that the Greek revolution may bring him a kingdom. Of Greek issues he knows nothing and cares less.

On his way, some sly companions rob him of his ship and his treasures. Even his loss does not stir him; he continues to dream. Quite by accident he gets possession of a prophet's cloak and naturally puts aside the idea of kingship for a time, in order to pose as a prophet. He elopes with the dancing girl, Anitra, but his romanticism again plays him a trick, since Anitra steals his jewels without requiting his love.

Peer in Egypt

Since he is unable to become a king, he decides that he will do a kingly task. Since he is in Egypt, he makes up his mind to write a history of civilization from the Peer Gynt point of view. In the course of his fantastic investigations he comes to the Sphinx, where he is apprehended and taken to a mad-house in Cairo. The shrewd superintendent of this mad-house has recognized that the essence of insanity is the dogged living out of an individuality that is not one's own.

The Faith of Solveig

An old man, Peer returns to his native haunts after losing wealth which he had again gained in a haphazard way. Little is left to him but a sordid selfishness. He dies in the arms of faithful Solveig who has been waiting for him a whole life long. The credulous girl had taken the

prattlings of the romantic Don Quixote seriously and pays for it with a life of fidelity and devotion.

Early in his career, Peer saw a man in the woods who loved his home and his farm so dearly that he had cut off the index finger of his right hand in order to escape military service. Peer exclaimed; "Such a thing one thinks —but do it?—never." This may serve as a key to the whole play. Peer is the negative counterpart of Brand.

Peer Gynt and Brand

Technically, *Peer Gynt* marked a long step forward over *Brand*. There is less of the direct preachment in it and there is a far greater objectiveness. But it is, in no sense of the word, a real drama. Its interminable length alone is fatal to it in this connection, and many of the long passages, exquisite in themselves, remind one of the epic character of *Brand*.

Grieg and Ibsen

A word should be said of Grieg's Peer Gynt music. When Ibsen heard it, he shook his head in a worried fashion and said that it did not mean anything to him. Grieg seems to have taken seriously the Romanticism which Ibsen satirizes in his play. Composer and author are clearly at cross purposes here.

A League of Youth

Brand and *Peer Gynt* caused considerable stir in spite of their artistic defects. Ibsen's star was ascending, and many were anxious to hail it. This was especially true of a group of liberals and reformers with whom he had been associated. For some years, however, he had held himself aloof from party life and had become what he called "a pagan in politics." He, therefore, turned aside from poetical drama for a time and wrote *A League*

of Youth (1869), in which he portrayed a group of irresponsible, corrupt, and inefficient liberals. The liberals were sorely offended, especially Björnson, who felt, not without some cause, that Ibsen had made a veiled personal attack upon him. It led to a long estrangement between the two writers which, many years later, was readjusted sufficiently to make the marriage of Ibsen's son and Björnson's daughter possible.

Greater Powers Revealed

In a *League of Youth*, the ultra conservative Chamberlain is depicted, in contrast with a whole group of liberals, each one of whom is inefficient and corrupt in his own way. Special attention is lavished upon Stensgaard, whose character is portrayed with an analytic insight hitherto not approximated by Ibsen. For the first time, the author gives us a

complete record of the ancestry, the environment in all of its important periods, and the education of the character. It is evident that Ibsen is turning his attention more definitely in the direction of Hettner's demand for greater psychological plausibility. Of greater importance still, is the fact that these characters are not mere abstractions but have been gleaned directly from life by the author's personal observation. The book might be considered a fortunate accident, for in this field Ibsen was destined later to do his most effective work. What was intended merely as an incidental book, revealed powers to the author that he used to good purpose in his greatest plays.

A Collection of Poems

In 1871, Ibsen published a collection of his poems. This again marks an important step in his development.

He had come to the conclusion that poetry contains an element of insincerity. Since it frequently expresses in beautiful words and meters things that are untrue or only partly true it is not to be trusted. He, therefore, published his poems with an inner resolution to break with his poetical past and devote himself to honest homespun prose in the future.

Emperor and Galilean

Due to his contact with German literature, Ibsen continued to delve into historical and philosophical subjects. This tendency culminated in the publication of *Emperor and Galilean* (1873). This book consists of two dramas, *Caesar's Apostacy* and *Emperor Julian*. It presents an interesting theme. Julian, who has been brought up under the narrowest Christian influences, rebels against them and accepts paganism as it is

revealed to him in the wisdom of the ancients and in their wonderful art into which he gains real insight. His paganism is of the serene character reflected in the philosophy of Marcus Aurelius. He does not utterly condemn the Christian teachings and dreams of the "Third Kingdom," which is to spring from a blending of the best elements of paganism and Christianity.

In time, Julian becomes a victim of the megalomania of Caesarism and realizes that his philosophy lacks that vital element in Christianity that inspired the martyrs.

Emperor and Galilean Inadequate

Instead of one interminable drama as in *Brand* and *Peer Gynt*, *Emperor and Galilean* presents two. In spite of the vigorous thoughts and subtle points, Ibsen wears out the patience of his most devoted admirers in this book.

Did he mean to create a second Faust which was to sum up all of human wisdom in the scope of a single work? If so, the subject matter in spite of its many merits, falls far short of that of the model. More important, however, is the fact that Ibsen had not clarified his ideas into an artistic, articulate unit. Julian rejects Christianity and finds that paganism lacks vitality, but cannot enter the Third Kingdom which remains vaguely in the future.

Ibsen Realizes Weakness

Emperor and Galilean is almost academic in character. It is pedantic at points, and it is not unlikely that upon reflection Ibsen felt the futility of his effort and abandoned this type of subject for all time. This may even have been in his mind during the writing of the book, for he has one of the characters say: "I must

live—Gregory—the activity here in this school of wisdom is not life. Books are of no use to me. I am hungry for life, for converse with the spirit—face to face. Did Saul obtain vision through a book?"

He seemed to feel the results of mental indigestion and insisted upon stressing life instead of learning from this time on. His reading became strictly limited. He surrounded himself with only a few favorite books, one of the most prized of which was the Bible. Again and again he refused to read books urged upon him by his friends because he considered them "irrelevant."

The Social Dramas

HIS experiment with *The League of Youth* became the basis of Ibsen's real success in the dramatic field. He was sufficiently pleased with his former work to attempt another play of the same character. His liberal critics had taken offense at *The League of Youth*, and had criticised *Emperor and Galilean*, pointing out that reformers grow lukewarm when they enter the field of philosophy. They went so far as to accuse Ibsen of being a renegade whose success had made him deaf to the progressive program. His answer to these criticisms is found in *The Pillars of Society* (1877).

The Pillars of Society

In this drama, he puts the smug, traditional, conservative classes in

the pillory. But he does more. He accounts for the shallow respectability of these classes by pointing out the forces that produce them. At the bottom of these social evils, he sees an incorrect educational program resting upon the old fashioned discipline. For this, he would substitute the rearing of youth through enlightened self direction. The social regeneration is to be gained not by revolution and debate, but by an enlightened educational program which alone can regenerate the individuals who constitute society.

Brevity and Exactness

Technically, *The Pillars of Society* marked an important advance in Ibsen's dramatic art. He had finally learned the lesson of brevity. This play is very much shorter than *A League of Youth*, and as a result, is far more suitable for the stage. All of

the characters are portrayed with the utmost care, and give the impression of being true to life. What is more important still, Ibsen began to regard himself more strictly as a dramatist with a specific task. He now formed the habit of devoting two years definitely to a play. During this period he lived with it exclusively and did not allow men or books to distract his interest. He worked out each scene with utmost care and checked his work inexorably. He did not trust his imagination, but placed objects that stood for the characters on his desk, so he might realize the exact situations as he wrote.

Indirect Delineation

His style also gained in crispness and clearness. Unnecessary details were eliminated entirely, and he developed an uncanny skill in placing much between the lines. This tend-

ency was carried so far that careless readers are in constant danger when they read his works. This accounts for many of the ridiculous interpretations that Ibsen's critics have imposed upon him, and for the silly performances, of which tawdry actors of Ibsen's plays have been guilty from time to time.

A Doll's House

Through Mrs. Ibsen, the poet became interested in Mrs. Collett, the great exponent of women's rights. There is, however, a danger of interpreting *A Doll's House* (1879) too narrowly as a pamphlet in favor of this movement.* The woman, Nora, interested Ibsen because she is conceived as an individual shorn of the

* "I am not even quite clear as to just what this women's rights movement really is. To me it has seemed a problem of humanity in general. And if you read my books carefully you will understand this."—*Address, May 26, 1898.*

rights of the individual. According to Ibsen, matrimony remains moral only on the basis of frankness and mutual confidence. Since these are lacking beween Nora and Helmer, their marriage becomes a lie. Around this thesis the play is constructed and the characters are modified and intensified in order to bring out the truth of the thesis. In the process, Helmer becomes an unnatural brute and Nora turns out to be an unnatural mother, yet one cannot quarrel with Ibsen when one realizes his purpose.

Dual Characterization

Ibsen was fond of presenting his characters at the beginning of the play in such a manner as to make a misinterpretation probable. This misinterpretation is promptly cleared up by the ensuing events. Nora is presented at first as a spendthrift, munching macaroons. Very promptly, how-

ever, we learn that this is acting on her part; that she plays the part of the spendthrift in order to make the disappearance of the money devoted to her debt plausible. In order to hide her means of saving Helmer, she plays the part of a child in her supposed doll's house.

Nora's Moral Standards

Presumably spoiled by her family in many respects, this woman, nevertheless, has the highest conception of her moral obligations. Her flirtations with Dr. Rank are not lapses. They mark the climax of her agony. She uses the sex appeal because that is the only one that has been successful with her husband. When the matter seems to take a serious turn, she promptly turns on the light and dismisses the subject. Unfortunately, many actresses distort this portion of the play into a suggestive sop for the lascivious

portion of their audience. When Nora is apprised in the most brutal manner that Helmer would sacrifice her in order to maintain his public reputation, when his monumental selfishness is revealed to her, when she realizes that it is not the individual Nora but the animal Nora that he treasures, she naturally rebels and leaves his home.

The End of the Play

Even Ibsen's admirers quarreled with the end of this drama. Especially in Germany, stage managers clamored for a change. They asserted that no mother of Nora's qualities would leave her children as Nora does. When Ibsen was requested to furnish another version, he suggested that Helmer might restrain Nora and push her against the door of the nursery just as the curtain is lowered. Even this, he considered a mutilation of the play. Nothing could be more in-

structive than this position. He has not portrayed a Nora taken bodily from some household that he has known. He has described a Nora who goes to the limit of crime for the man whom she loves. She learns that this man despises all the heroic characteristics which she has manifested and, hence, she realizes that the only moral course open to her is to break with him and all that concerns him and thus find herself.

Views on Marriage

It is clear that Ibsen is quite conservative on the question of marriage. His heroes and heroines do not take the marriage tie lightly. Even when the marriage is a complete failure the sturdy characters do not sever the tie, but abide by the consequences of their step. Even Nora does not seek a divorce. She leaves her husband because they are not bound by spiritual

ties and because she is completely at odds with herself.

Technique of A Doll's House

The technique of the play should also be observed. Nora is presented in full contrast with Krogstad, the crook, so skilfully, that the motives for her actions become entirely clear. Even greater skill is shown by introducing Mrs. Linden, whose faults throw Nora's virtues into full relief. Nora's father does not appear in the play at all, but he is as important as any of the real characters. On the surface he appears as a shiftless, careless, unbusiness-like man. Careful scrutiny then reveals that he has been a model father and practically a faultless man. Nora wishes that she had more of her father's characteristics. Ibsen presents the character in this manner because he is trying to prod his audience into a more thoughtful

analysis of human character. His idea was only partly successful, for many of his readers and critics persisted in misreading these characters presented under a double aspect. At times, Ibsen became as irritated as an overworked schoolmaster at the weird interpretations that thus became current.

Abnormal Homes

In *A Doll's House*, Ibsen, for the first time, pays serious attention to the problem of abnormal homes. Nora has been reared by a kind father, but without the guidance of a mother. Much of her tragedy grows out of this fact, for the absence of the mother not only deprives her of advice, but affects the conduct of the father who heroically tries to make up for the deficiency. In many of the subsequent dramas, the absence of one or both parents plays an important part in the destiny and character of the children.

Truthfulness

The delineation of Nora again called Ibsen's attention to a problem that had been of prime importance to him from the beginning—the influence of the lie upon society and the individual. The well-intentioned lying of Nora becomes an important element in her tragedy, but it remains of subsidiary importance.

Ghosts

In *Ghosts* (1881) the lie becomes the central theme. Mrs. Alving (like Nora) surrenders to the conditions which surround her. She compromises with situations and uses the white lie in order to ward off the evil consequences. After she had been in love with the parson of the village, this woman has become the wife of Alving, who turns out to be a reprobate of the worst kind. She flees to the parson, confesses the state of

affairs to him and suggests a divorce. The parson, who is a model of traditional rectitude, is horrified and advises her to return to her husband.

Mrs. Alving's Compromise

She is utterly unable to reform this husband and finally adopts the course of the opportunist—to make the best of the situation and save as much of the salvage as possible. The son, who is born to her after her return, is sent away from home, so that he may not be under the father's influence. In order to hold up an ideal before the son, she writes him in glowing terms of praise about his father. Even after the father's death, this policy is continued. She builds an orphanage to his memory, hoping thus to inspire the son.

Oswald's Problem

But all of these lies lead to the ruin of the son. When he shows symptoms

of disease due to his father's sin, he feels certain that the blame cannot rest with his father. His illness leads to depression and completely destroys his ability to do creative art work. In this depression, he returns home and is impressed by the robustness and cheerful character of the maid. In accordance with a popular delusion of the times, he supposes that marriage with her might restore him to health. He clearly sees that this shallow creature will poison him if he should become a burden to her and he certainly has no illusions about her.

Effect of Lies

Here again the lies of Mrs. Alving are doing their deadly work. If he had known that his father was to blame for his ailment, he would not have indulged in self-reproach. If he had known the truth about his father,

he would not have spent his last energy in attempting to save the orphanage, and his final collapse would at least have been deferred. As it is, the truth which is finally revealed to him, coming as it does, at the time of his complete physical exhaustion, causes his lapse into imbecility. He has always dreaded this moment and has hoped that someone would give him poison. He attempts to call for this poison but since he has already lost control of his faculties, and since the sun is just rising, he becomes confused and asks his mother to give him—the sun.

A False Conclusion

Critics have been too prone to conclude that the main theme of this play is to be found in the sins of the fathers. This is based upon a wrong assumption, since, at that time, the belief was quite common that Oswald's malady

might have been cured. If he had known the truth at the outset and had not deceived his physician, the whole tragedy might have taken a different turn. The well-intentioned lying of Mrs. Alving impedes the recovery of her son at every step.

Abnormal Families

Again the problem of the abnormal home is placed in bold relief. Oswald grows up without the guidance of parents completely and is in total ignorance of some of the most vital problems of life. His mother is a victim of similar conditions. She has grown up in the household of her widowed mother and the situation is complicated by the presence of two spinster aunts. She is totally ignorant of real family life and with this handicap marries a joyous, robust, young man. Naturally enough, she fails to bring him happiness and he lapses

from the path of virtue. Not until the whole family is completely engulfed in sin does she realize that it was her own ignorance of life that precipitated the whole tragedy.

Joy and Morality

Mrs. Alving, in the course of time, realizes that joy is the basis of life and that her lack of capacity to create joy has really been responsible for the trouble. Oswald finds that joy is the only basis for real art work, that without it he is lost as an artist and a man. Ibsen makes it quite clear that this joy should not be of a mean type. He shows us that Mrs. Alving blundered when she tried to descend to the level of her husband and he shows us Regina's conception of joy, which is simply a yearning for the boulevards and bright lights of Paris. One of the most important themes of *Ghosts* is that genuine joyousness is the very basis of morality.

Ibsen as a Pessimist

How critics could call the author a pessimist in the face of these facts is hard to understand. Ibsen says: "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 an optimist in so far as I believe in the capacity for procreation and development of ideals." When it is remembered that the central message of *Ghosts* is that truthfulness and joyousness are the real basis of morality, it becomes clear that Professor Richard Meyer, of the University of Berlin, was not far from the truth when he stated that Ibsen's work was characterized by a robust optimism. The fact that a play presents tragic events does not make it pessimistic. This is as applicable to Ibsen as it is to the Greek dramatists. Behind the black tragedy we feel a

buoyant, hopeful, battling personality that believes in "capacity for procreation and development of ideals."

Public Indignation

The boldness and directness with which Ibsen had attacked what seemed to him the basic evils thoroughly enraged the public. A storm of indignation swept over Europe, and Ibsen was regarded as a monster. The man who had contributed a real classic on human conduct shared the fate of the great teachers of morality in the past; he was accused of corrupting the youth. Even today, after fifty years, this puerile chatter is heard from persons who base their literary criticism on gossip and prudishness. *Ghosts* became the center of mobmania, and a veritable whirlwind descended upon the author. It was during this experience that Ibsen developed his fine scorn for the igno-

rance of the masses. A very few discerning critics understood him, but the great masses persisted in missing the whole significance of his important message.

An Enemy of the People

In answer to his critics, he now wrote *An Enemy of the People* (1882). The disappointment which followed the revolutionary period resulted in a very conservative view of the "compact majority."* The reception of *Ghosts* brought this question to the poet's attention again. At the bottom of the worst ills of society is the lie. Whoever attempts to deal radically with this crucial evil instead of working with all kinds of half-way

"*But I maintain that a fighter in the intellectual vanguard can never collect a majority around 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 be at least ten years ahead of the majority. He can never have the majority with him." —*Letters, p. 370.*

measures and palliatives which do not reach the trouble will be branded as an enemy of the people by the compact mass.

Dr. Stockmann

Dr. Stockmann, whose genius has first led to the establishment of the health resort, tries to remove the danger of typhoid by finding the truth and eradicating the source of the evil. This might establish the reputation of the baths definitely, but vested rights interfere with him and enlist the support of the people against him. Stockmann is not only dismissed, but stoned. It is true, this Stockmann is a peculiar man. His interest in new and stirring ideas is quite unconventional. His life lacks regularity and he shows a supreme disgust for the petty interests that seem of prime importance to the average citizen of his little town. He is a scientific

idealist, and his ideals are sound. When he has reached his conclusions concerning the origin of the epidemic, he has the water analyzed at the university by experts who confirm his theory. He is enthusiastically interested in sane progress, but to the Philistine community he is a crank.

Practical Motives

Again the character of Dr. Stockmann is presented under a double aspect. A superficial reading of the play leads one to conclude that this man is a hopeless visionary, not to be trusted with anything that touches the practical. He is so different from ordinary men that his very appearance excites their antagonism and raises doubts in regard to his good sense. Closer scrutiny reveals that in every detail this man is prompted by practical motives of the soundest character. This is accomplished by

placing him in contrast with his brother Peter and showing, step by step, that those things which the ignorant consider practical are really wasteful and futile in the long run.

Ibsen's Democracy

Much confusion exists in regard to Ibsen's democracy. One gets the impression from *An Enemy of the People* that he has broken with democracy completely. Only two men agree with the doctor at the public meeting. One is the young captain in love with the doctor's daughter; the other is the half-witted village drunkard. At the end of the play the doctor stands absolutely alone facing the scorn of the whole village. But it will be noted that he does not propose a return to older forms of government. He decides to fight it out and win. He, the expert, will exert his influence in democracy.

The author had a fine scorn for the democracy that merely counts noses. He believed in an aristocracy within a democracy that supplied it with leaders. He rejected the idea of an ancestral aristocracy and an aristocracy of money, substituting an aristocracy of merit. He felt that democracy was doomed if it failed to work out a system by which it could produce leaders and experts.

Stockmann as an Educator

As in former books, Ibsen again asserts that society must be reformed, not by spectacular speeches, meetings, resolutions or revolutions, but by means of education. To this end he has presented Dr. Stockmann as a supremely skilful educator. He has reared a daughter whose character and intelligence are beyond question. He is vitally interested in his boys and enjoys nothing more than to play

with them. In his training, he departs radically from the old standards. He does not insist upon prompt obedience but trains the discretion and judgment of the boys, taking great care not to stifle their curiosity and frankness. He teaches honesty by means of example and inference, instead of by precept. He sees the root of our social and political corruption in the educational system, which he would reform by beginning at home with his own boys and letting his example gain headway if it has any merit.

False Deductions

Critics were not slow to accuse Ibsen of pessimism when this play was produced. How incorrect this is will readily be seen when one remembers that the doctor refuses to leave town, that he knows that he stands alone but does not falter. He even

gets satisfaction out of this fact and concludes that the strangest man is he who stands alone. This not only reflects his faith in himself but his faith in the ultimate victory in society of the things that he considers good and abiding.

The Wild Duck

After the publication of *An Enemy of the People*, there was much indiscriminate praise of idealists. Again Ibsen felt that he had been misunderstood. Since many unsound idealists found comfort in what Ibsen had said he promptly repudiated them in *The Wild Duck* (1884). In contrast with Dr. Stockmann here he shows us an idealist who is really visionary and impractical.

Werle

The play presents Mr. Werle who is an absolutely unscrupulous man. He

has amassed a fortune by very questionable methods. He has saved himself and his business by the sacrifice of his partner Ekdal, who is imprisoned for the misdeeds of the firm. In his family life, Werle is equally base. He causes the death of his wife by his brutal conduct. He defiles a servant and marries her to Hjalmar Ekdal, the son of his former partner. He openly sustains relations with another servant and finally marries her.

Gregers

His son Gregers is the exact counterpart of this prosperous malefactor. Gregers is the impractical idealist, whose idealism is a curse to himself and to all with whom he comes in contact. Instead of remaining in his father's house, he goes away in order not to be molested by his father's vice. He remains away for years and in his isolation becomes more and more of a

visionary. Upon his return, he finds that the elder Ekdal, now released from prison, in the memory of his former splendor, is living a lie. Hjalmar Ekdal is likewise living a lie, since he believes himself to be an artist destined to work out a great patent while, in reality, he never works honestly at anything. Hjalmar's wife, conscious of the fact that her child belongs to the elder Werle, pampers her husband and gradually assumes full responsibility of his studio.

Misdirected Idealism

Gregers is appalled at the state of affairs, the responsibility for which rests with his father. He attempts to apply his own visionary ideals to Ekdal, and comes to the conclusion that his degradation is due to the fact that there is a lie between himself and his wife. He discloses the truth to

him and completes his ruin, for, since Ekdal is a weakling he is unable to bear the truth. Gregers, properly enough, comes to the conclusion that he is the thirteenth at the table. He is of no use in the real progress of society. Impractical idealism, in other words, is destructive to self and society.

Intention and Accomplishment

It is interesting to note the devices by means of which Ibsen characterizes the impractical idealist Gregers. As the son of a visionary, complaining and spineless mother, it is apparent at once that the boy is seriously handicapped. By sheer reaction against this colorless wife, the elder Werle is naturally confirmed in his crass materialism and thus forms a perfect foil to his own son. But Gregers is also shown in contrast with Hjalmar Ekdal. While Hjalmar is lazy, vain

and an idle dreamer who has lost all contact with his real duties, Gregers takes himself seriously, and is industrious in his way. He has the best of intentions in his misguided ideas of social reform. Devoid of all real vitality on account of the improper training that his mother has given him, this man, after making a complete failure in the reform of his own father, attempts to right the wrongs of the great world. Nowhere has Ibsen shown the disparity between intention and accomplishment with greater skill, and the reader is confirmed in his conviction that good intentions are the basis of perdition.

The minor characters are also developed with unusual care. Gina, the wife of Hjalmar deserves special study. A girl of little positive force, she had easily become the victim of the elder Werle who has disposed of her by marrying her to Hjalmar. Her

guilty conscience becomes the force that completely enslaves her to the household and in time she becomes an ordinary drudge, glad that she can expiate her moral lapse.

Nietzsche and Ibsen

It is difficult to determine to what extent Ibsen knew the works of Nietzsche. It is not at all certain that he concerned himself directly with them. One of Nietzsche's famous dicta was that master souls have one kind of morality and that slave souls naturally must have another. When the morality of one class is applied to the other, confusion and havoc result. This is clearly the situation in *A Wild Duck*. Gregers applies a high ideal, that of absolute candor and truthfulness, to low grade individuals and causes their ruin. As we know from *A Doll's House* and *Ghosts*, Ibsen valued nothing higher

than truthfulness, but in *A Wild Duck* he makes the further inference that pearls should not be cast before swine. This is in complete accord with Nietzsche's doctrine. Many other parallels between the two writers could be pointed out. They have the same robust optimism, both are eternally concerned about the development of character by means of a superior self discipline, both are sworn enemies of mawkishness. Whether they influenced each other or were subject to the same influences, is a question which literary scholarship must solve in detail. Ibsen's views take shape so logically that one is inclined to believe that they sprang from inner conviction and first hand analysis.

Rosmersholm

A visit to Norway after his long voluntary exile brought Ibsen face to

face with the party conflict that was raging. He utilized many of the impressions which he obtained in this connection in *Rosmersholm* (1886). Many critics emphasize this satirizing of party prejudice unduly. To be sure, the author does show how the spirit of party loyalty distorts the judgment of a number of the characters and this is done so well that a superficial reading might lead one to stress this element. It is a good example of the dangers of using biographical information too freely in the interpretation of a play. A careful perusal of the play itself makes this quite plain. Ibsen himself was irritated by this inadequate view for in a letter he stated: "But the play (Rosmersholm) 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 us from gain to gain. The moral consciousness—what we call conscience, is on the other hand, very conservative. It has its deep roots in traditions and the past generally. Hence the conflict."

John Rosmer

Rosmersholm is an old estate where a family of the official class has resided for generations. It is bound up with tradition and superstition. At Rosmersholm, the babies have never cried and the grown people have not laughed. From such traditions springs John Rosmer who becomes a minister and sets the ideal for himself to make of his parishioners "glad creatures of a new nobility." He gains wide recognition as a preacher, but in his heart feels that he has failed to en-

noble his flock. He, therefore, resigns from his pulpit and buries himself in his library. His studies now undermine his old orthodox theology and, almost imperceptibly, he drifts into more tolerant views. He is married to a meek, colorless, vapid wife who, partly because she remains childless, drifts into melancholia.

Rebecca West

Into this dismal family Rebecca West is now introduced. She is the illegitimate daughter of a libertine liberal, Dr. West, and a midwife, Mrs. Gamvig. Of questionable origin, her training under her father has been of a character that would make her still more hostile to all traditions. She realizes that Mrs. Rosmer is neither a mother nor an efficient wife, and therefore, in accordance with the doctrine of the survival of the fittest, she advises Mrs. Rosmer to commit

suicide, which the poor weakling promptly does. Rebecca now tries to take Mrs. Rosmer's place in the household, but she comes under the influence of the subtle traditions. As she studies her problem, she realizes that she has involved herself in guilt and pays the penalty by committing suicide. Rosmer who is really not guilty at all, from sheer weakness, and driven by a sickly conscience, follows the same course.

Sanctity of Marriage

In all of his plays, Ibsen shows a deep reverence for the family. With Haeckel he clearly believes that it is the foundation of civilization. Even when children are not involved, he insists upon the sanctity of the tie and has his characters act in accordance with the principle. In *Rosmersholm* he has given us the clearest account of this principle. Rebecca

applies the theory of the survival of the fittest to Mrs. Rosmer. Ibsen has taken infinite care to show us that Mrs. Rosmer is unfit down to the minutest detail. She fails in every test of wifehood and motherhood that can be applied. Nevertheless, Rebecca comes to the realization that she has wrecked a family, the institution upon which society itself rests, and she therefore is willing to pay the extreme penalty.

Rosmer's Frailties

Infinite care has been devoted to the character of Rosmer. He has grown up without tears and laughter. His boyhood has been devoid of play and associates. He naturally blunders in the choice of a wife, and having acquired her, fails to develop her into robust womanhood. As a minister, he would make all men glad creatures of a new nobility without hav-

ing the capacity for joy in his own right. When he has failed, he seeks for light in his library to the exclusion of human relations. He then permits a woman of doubtful antecedents to foist herself upon his home and drive his thoroughly devoted wife to suicide. Although not directly involved in any guilt, he is spineless in the face of accusation and finally commits suicide from utterly flimsy motives.

Kroll

As a foil to Rosmer, Rector Kroll is drawn with a sure hand. All of the faults of the unflinching conservative are laid bare relentlessly. He is stamped as a hypocrite because he cannot maintain the loyalty of his wife and children. While Rosmer tries to build a family without a robust personality, Kroll attempts to do the same thing by utilizing tradi-

tional makeshifts without a shred of sincerity.

Minor Characters

The minor characters are worked out with the same rigid care. Ulric Brendel had been a young man of rare promise. As Rosmer's schoolmaster, he had sown the first seeds of his future liberalism. Then, conscious of his real superiority over his fellows, he withdraws from the world, intending to come back at the appropriate time to place his rich treasures before the world. When the time comes, Ulric attempts to unlock the treasure, but finds that it has vanished. This character is placed in juxtaposition to Rosmer, and shows with peculiar force, the danger of fleeing from human contacts. Rosmer inclines toward the course of Ulric without going to his ridiculous extreme.

Caricature

The tendency toward stressing salient traits in his characters becomes very pronounced in this play. Reference has been made to Ibsen's fondness for caricature in his youth. It is erroneous to state that these characters are realistic. They almost become type figures, and border upon caricature. Rebecca in her crass modernism never existed. No Beata ever sank to the depths of weakness shown by Ibsen. Rosmer is a vehicle for sundry types of flabbiness, and it is to be doubted that there ever was a real man who could be as much of an out and out hypocrite as Kroll. In this connection it should be remembered that cartooning was much in vogue in Ibsen's day and that it clearly affected other types of art. Both impressionism and expressionism were clearly affected by it to a remarkable degree.

Suicide

From the beginning of his career Ibsen devoted much thought to the value of human life. Nothing delighted him more than to portray an individual who manifested a strong will to live. The war between Denmark and Austria, however, so stirred his patriotism that he constantly found himself asserting that a man should not hesitate to sacrifice his life for a good cause. This led him to a thought that he stressed repeatedly, that a man should not hesitate to give his life when honor is at stake. He never allows himself to treat suicide flippantly. Beate's suicide is the final proof of her abject weakness. Rosmer is depicted as a well-intentioned weakling who adopts this course, when he is unable to right himself. Rebecca values life most highly, but is willing to give it up to atone for a most serious sin against society.

Full Maturity

The Lady from the Sea

WITH advancing age, it became apparent that Ibsen grew in poetic depth and fervor. While this tendency was already present in earlier plays, it became more pronounced in *The Lady from the Sea* (1888). When the *Doll's House* was published, many readers put a wrong interpretation upon the book. Especially hysterical women identified themselves with Nora and rushed into the divorce courts. This may have led Ibsen back to the woman problem, which was now solved from another angle.

Ellida's Problem

Dr. Wangel, who, in a sense, dominates the play, is a physician of rare character and insight. He has

attained wisdom in the practice of his profession and deservedly has an enviable reputation. He has married a second time, but his wife, Ellida, fails to find happiness in her new home. As the daughter of a light-house keeper, she has the delusion that she has a mysterious affinity for the sea. Long before her marriage, she had met a rough sailor who, by means of suggestion, had made her believe that she was spiritually wedded to him. She had put aside this notion definitely enough to marry Wangel, and entered the new home without misgivings. A child is born and the lowering of her vitality again makes her subject to the hypnotic spell of the sailor. So pronounced does this delusion become that she refuses to continue her marriage tie. This condition continues for a period of three years, during which the doctor exhausts his ingenuity in at-

tempts to restore his wife to a normal condition. Finally, the sailor returns and Ellida demands that the doctor give her full freedom to choose between himself and the sailor. Difficult as this becomes for him, he accedes to her request and Ellida is freed from her hallucinations.

In *A Doll's House*, Helmer loves Nora's body but not her soul, while Dr. Wangel loves Ellida's soul to the point of renunciation if he can thus save her from the doom of insanity. It is quite clear that Ibsen meant to show that many supposed Noras had every reason to realize that they were under a delusion in yearning for some mysterious stranger.

Work—A Panacea

This drama might be called an educational classic. It shows how futile mere restraint is in solving human problems, and presents the doctor as

a hero who has the courage to apply this doctrine in the most extreme situation. With great skill, Ibsen shows that Ellida's hallucination persisted because she had no responsibilities. With Carlyle, Ibsen believed that "work is the grand cure of all maladies that ever beset mankind." That he does not accept this doctrine without limitations, is proved by the fact that he gives us a matchless study of the mere drudge in Boletta and the busybody Ballested.

Interest in Art

Ibsen's fondness for art was destined to have permanent results. He continued to observe art and artists. This interest he had manifested with great intelligence in *Ghosts*. With increasing means, he became a discriminating collector of paintings. In *The Lady from the Sea*, he again turned his attention in this direction, and pro-

duced two extremely clever studies of artist types. Lyngstrand is portrayed as the weak artist who dreams of being an artist, but never advances to the stage of production. He has all of the popular delusions about the artist's work. To him the career of the artist is an easy escape from hard work, and he chooses sculpture on the theory that it is easy on the hands. Ballested, on the other hand, is the busybody jack-of-all-trades artist. He is busy from morning till night, does almost anything fairly well, but never rises to the point of doing anything with distinction.

Psychological Problems

The most important advance that Ibsen made in *The Lady from the Sea* is to be found in his successful grappling with subtle psychological problems. There is little of the professional psychologist about him, but he does

have a surprising insight which appeals to one as glorified common sense. It is therefore quite incorrect to read a mysterious supernaturalism into the play. This is the very thing that Ibsen is satirizing.

The Aristocracy of Character

The sad fate of Professor Hoffory, a man of undisputed genius but lax morals, who became insane in consequence of his dissipation, suggested an important problem to Ibsen. He was thoroughly out of sympathy with the prevalent theory that license is the privilege of the gifted. Like Nietzsche, he believed that the man of genius owes himself a higher discipline than is imposed upon most men. He felt out of patience with the traditional nobility and the money aristocracy; so the fashionable profligacy of the men of genius of his time convinced him of the futility of their

standards. To speak with Ibsen: "Of course I am not thinking of hereditary aristocracy nor the money aristocracy, nor of the aristocracy of science and not even of the aristocracy of genius. But I am thinking of the aristocracy of character, of the aristocracy of will and principle."

Hedda Gabler

This, in spite of most all of the criticisms of the play, seems to be the problem of *Hedda Gabler* (1890). Hedda is the daughter of a general and has grown up without a mother. Hedged about by all kinds of conventions, she has a feverish thirst for the world, yet is supremely distrustful of the ideals with which she comes in contact. As the daughter of a general, she is naturally an aristocrat, but she is groping her way out of the old aristocracy and is unable to find anything new that will take its

place. She is surrounded by admirers but refuses all. She turns her back upon military ideals (officers), and upon the money aristocracy (Brack), and falls in love with Lövborg, a young genius in whom she sees the new aristocracy. She burns with the desire to inspire this man's life. But this young genius is morally corrupt, and Hedda turns him away at the point of her pistol.

Hedda's Marriage

At the serious age of twenty-nine, she finally marries Tesman (aristocracy of science, as she supposes) a young man of professorial prospects. After a marriage trip of five months, this woman returns home to find that the household is indebted to Brack, a rejected suitor. Her husband has spent his time on the trip delving into musty archives in his researches on a subject distinctly trivial.

Mrs. Elvsted

Lövborg, after he had been dismissed by Hedda, had drifted into the home of a Mrs. Elvsted. This Mrs. Elvsted is the counterpart of Hedda, she is a plebeian in character. Even as a child she had been scorned by her playmates. As a governess she had come into Elvsted's house, and had married him for a shelter at the death of his wife. In Elvsted's house, she strikes up a relationship with Lövborg and follows Lövborg without his invitation when he leaves.

Hedda's Doubts

Lövborg and Mrs. Elvsted come to Hedda, who now hears that her own dream of inspiring Lövborg has apparently been realized by Mrs. Elvsted. She learns that Lövborg has stopped drinking and has written a book under the inspiration of Mrs. Elvsted. Nervous and high strung

by nature, Hedda Gabler's excitability is heightened because she is with child. She immediately doubts the validity of Mrs. Elvsted's power and puts Lövborg to the test. This test he is unable to stand. He becomes brutally intoxicated and lapses into his former vice. When he returns to Hedda, she hands him a pistol with, the request to "do it beautifully." Lövborg even disappoints her in this, for instead of shooting himself in the temple, he shoots himself in the abdomen.

Hedda's Suicide

Having advised Lövborg to end beautifully rather than degenerate, still more, Hedda is promptly placed before the same problem herself. She realizes that she has married a pedant, a man who has been coddled until there is no manhood left in him. She is looking forward to the birth of a

child of this man, a child that will be put under the same influences that spoiled the father. (Hence her treatment of Aunt Juliana.) She finds that Brack has her in his power in several respects. Tesman is indebted to him, Brack is in a position to involve her in a scandal, and she may even look upon this libertine in a more favorable light in comparison with her utterly Philistine husband. Rather than expose herself to all this, she deliberately shoots herself and does it beautifully.

Interpretation of the Play

The play has been interpreted in many ways. Few commentators see the positive side of Hedda on account of her elusive remarks. But it is strange that Aunt Juliana, whose Philistine virtues had such a serious effect upon Tesman, should be canonized by any one. Hedda, of course,

is not a super woman nor an ideal character, nor a heroine. She is simply the daughter of an aristocrat who has grown suspicious of the old aristocracy and cannot find a worthy aristocracy to take its place. Her tragedy is the tragedy of the able, self-respecting woman who lives at a time when men of genius think that they must be libertines in order to be great. Fortunately, we have some evidence that Ibsen did not have a negative character in mind when he wrote *Hedda Gabler*. He was present at a rehearsal when the stage-manager Keppler, who was unable to interpret, exclaimed, "What in the world is the beast (canaille) after?" Ibsen quietly remarked, "That is not a beast at all. The woman is six months advanced in pregnancy and I only wanted to portray to what extremes this condition can induce a lively, responsive woman."

Master and Slave Morality

In a letter to the French translator of the drama, he stated that Hedda had been seriously misinterpreted, that he had meant to portray two distinct classes of society. It is clear that one is represented by Hedda, the other by Aunt Juliana, Tesman, and Mrs. Elvsted. Nietzsche's doctrine of master and slave morality is clearly in the poet's mind here. The parallel can be pursued still further. In his *Revaluation of Values* and *Twilight of the Idols*, Nietzsche attacks the old ideals that modern man is called upon to reject. Aunt Juliana, Tesman, and Mrs. Elvsted are swayed by just these unworthy ideals and are clearly held up to ridicule by the author.

The Vikings and Hedda Gabler

There is a certain relation between Hjördis in the *Vikings*, and Hedda Gabler. We have seen that Ibsen

grew very fond of Hjördis as she took shape in his mind. He again takes up the same type in Hedda, whom he clearly makes the exponent of his new aristocracy.

Dual Characterization

In no other work has Ibsen carried his method of presenting characters under a double aspect as far as in *Hedda Gabler*. He intends to have her shock us at every turn. When she vents her spleen upon Aunt Juliana's bonnet, we are completely disgusted. Not until we realize that this bonnet is the symbol of Aunt Juliana's thoroughly contemptible Philistinism, degrading in every way, are we willing to understand Hedda's action. It should also be remembered that, by this time, Hedda feels actual physical disgust for Aunt Juliana because this plebeian woman insists upon discussing her most intimate and personal

affairs with her. As an aristocrat of the spirit, Hedda is, and should be, touchy about her marriage relation and her prospective child. The pedagogical value of Ibsen's method must be apparent. Unless the audience must burrow for the points and use some judgment and discrimination, the drama will fall short of real effectiveness.

The Master Builder

The factory system and modern industrial expansion put an end to the old apprentice system. At the beginning of this period, hundreds of untrained men rushed into the arts and crafts and many of them succeeded, sometimes by means of their innate worth and again by means of doubtful practices. To the latter class belongs the central figure of *The Master Builder* (1892). Solness has never served a real apprenticeship,

nor has he worked seriously at the real problems of the builder. He is an unsound promoter, and conscious that he does not really deserve his success, he accounts for it on the ground of mystical psychic powers. He comes to believe that he can accomplish things by willing them. He marries a woman who has inherited an old homestead located on a large tract of land, because he hopes to build on this land. He knows that the old house has a faulty chimney but he fails to repair it. The house burns down from another cause and Solness is more than ever convinced of his mysterious power. He advances rapidly now and, since he knows nothing about the real problems of architecture, he presses Brovik, his old master, and Brovik's gifted son into his service and keeps them there by fair and foul means. The fact that he has pressed this young man of

superior talent into his service makes him develop a morbid suspiciousness of youth. Every time he hears a knock at the door, he shrinks because he fears that "youth is knocking at the door" and will force him to relinquish the place that he does not really deserve.

Solness Breaks with his Ideal

In Norway, it is customary for the master builder to crown the edifice with a wreath at the dedicatory exercises. Solness has been ambitious to build churches, but his bad conscience has made him timid about climbing to the pinnacle to crown a work really not his own. So marked does this fear become, that on one occasion he vows to God that he will build no more churches, but will devote himself to building homes for men. In other words, he breaks with his highest ambition and glosses his

step over to himself. On this occasion, he makes a deep impression upon Hilda, a little girl who is present at the exercises. Buoyed up by the important part which he is playing on the occasion, he speaks to her with his characteristic bombast. He promises to get her, the princess as he calls her, in ten years, and deliver a kingdom to her.

The Return of the Ideal

After ten years, this Hilda comes to the house of Solness and demands that he fulfill his promise. With relentless insistence she scrutinizes his affairs. She finds that he keeps his books on the shelves for mere display, that he is not even able to read them. She finds that the younger Brovik is really his superior and forces Solness to permit him to work independently. The master has built another house, a home for himself. It is a hybrid of a

church and a home, a grotesque thing with a steeple. His old ideals are making inroads upon his work. Hilda expects Solness to crown his work and, when he hesitates, she uses all of her powers of persuasion. He climbs to the steeple, but falls and is killed when the young girl shouts to him from below.

Unconscious Symbolism

It is clear that this play shows a certain symbolism, but it must be remembered that Ibsen became quite furious about most of the symbolistic interpretations of his plays. It would seem that Ibsen's symbolism was unconscious. In a sense all speech is symbolical. When we apply the epithet "thief" to a person, we are not conscious for the moment that we are making the person a symbol of dishonesty. This may be carried a step farther. At the thought of dis-

honesty, we may have a visual image of our dishonest friend and the symbolism is complete.

Intensified Characters

This habit of thought was very marked in Ibsen during the latter part of his life. Solness is not a real man, but the type of professional dishonesty; Mrs. Solness is not a real woman but the type of the traditional woman who loves the past so much that she prefers her old dolls to her children. Ibsen has made the observation that some women have characteristics that are associated with the conception of the ideal. This is apparent in Hedda Gabler. She is cold and merciless as an abstract ideal when she burns Lövborg's manuscript which, under the circumstances, cannot be worthy of him, and when she hands him the revolver and tells him to die beautifully.

Hilda as the Ideal

Hilda is quite an improbable character if we look upon her merely as a woman. But if we proceed from the theory that Ibsen puts the characteristics of the ideal in her, she becomes thoroughly plausible. One almost feels that Ibsen had Lowell's beautiful lines in mind when he outlined the figure.

> Some day the soft ideal that we wooed
> *Confronts us fiercely*, foe beset, pursued,
> And cries reproachful: Was it then my
> praise,
> And not myself was loved? *Prove now thy*
> *truth;*
> *I claim of thee the promise of thy youth*
> *Give me thy life, or cower in empty phrase*
> *The victim of thy genius, not its mate.*

Little Eyolf

In *Rosmersholm*, Ibsen had portrayed a character whose intelligence is more progressive than his emotions. Rosmer's emotions, however, are centered

upon a rather worthy past. In *Little Eyolf* (1894) this problem is taken up again but under different circumstances. Alfred Allmers worships personal and family traditions that are unworthy in every sense. He thus develops a morbid, petty selfishness, and sacrifices his wife to it. Not until he realizes that all to which he has been clinging is essentially a lie, does he rise to the point at all of taking a reasonable view of his affairs. It is possible that Ibsen was influenced by Hauptmann's *Einsame Menschen* in this play. A comparison of the two plays gives an excellent opportunity of contrasting Hauptmann's and Ibsen's art. The former proceeds from a minute observation of human life which he portrays in accordance with modern psychology, the latter illustrates an idea in terms of life, in short, he presents an idea in the form of a drama.

Parental Influence

Little Eyolf brought Ibsen back to a number of problems treated in earlier plays. He had shown that children were handicapped when they were reared without the influence of a father or mother. Mrs. Alving had no father and was reared by a mother and two spinster aunts. Hedda Gabler had no mother and learned life from her correct military father. In *Rosmersholm*, Ibsen had shown the baleful effects of an education devoid of play and normal associations.

The Honors System

Alfred Allmers in *Little Eyolf* has neither father nor mother and grows up under the influence of an inexperienced foster sister. She prods him into intensive school work at the expense of normal activities. She makes him seek grades, honors, and emoluments. He marries a rich, beautiful, normal

woman. Since he has led a distorted life he lacks the vitality and initiative to make her happy. Even his son is sacrificed to his scholastic vanity.

Borgheim

A complete foil to Alfred is presented in Borgheim, a road engineer. He is robust and healthy, in love with his profession and capable of bringing joy to all with whom he comes in contact.

The Ratwife

Much has been made of the ratwife in this play. The most improbable symbolism has been interpreted into her. Her function in the play is simply to show how these unfortunate individuals, turned from the normal course of life, have become susceptible to the grossest superstition.

John Gabriel Borkman

In *The Master Builder*, Ibsen presents

the promoter from the negative point of view. It is quite probable that the indiscriminate attacks upon promoting in general led the poet to present a promoter in a more favorable light in *John Gabriel Borkman* (1896).

A poor miner's son, Borkman, had already in his youth seen the possibility of developing the hidden mines all about him. After he has been successful as a mine operator, he broadens his plans to include a great expansion of industry and commerce, which is expected to bring prosperity to the whole region. With such stupendous plans, he enters upon his duties as director of the bank, but, unfortunately, he knows that one of his fellow officials shares his love for Ella Rentheim.

Sacrifice of Ella

Without the coöperation of this official, Borkman cannot possibly

carry out his ambitious program. His devotion to his projects is even stronger than his love for Ella, therefore he renounces her and marries her selfish and petty sister. Ella, however, refuses to transfer her affections to Borkman's rival, who now comes to believe that Borkman is the secret cause of her obstinacy. In order to avenge himself, this rival betrays Borkman's daring financial deals, with the result that the latter, after a long trial, is sent to prison for a number of years.

Borkman's Delusion

His wife, petty in all things, feels her own humiliation, and after Borkman's return from prison, husband and wife live together in the same house for years without seeing each other. Borkman is buoyed up by the vain delusion that the directors of the bank will recall him to his former

position, seeing as he does that none of his great plans have been, and apparently cannot be, carried out by his incompetent successors.

Ella's Unselfishness

Ella, who has learned from her physician that she will die soon, comes to Borkman's home in order to provide for his son. The mother, in her selfishness, has fostered the hope that her son will stamp out Borkman's shame and reëstablish her in society. Ella offers to make him her sole heir if he will adopt her name. She is not in favor of burdening the young man with a disgraced name. The negotiations lead to an interview between Ella and Borkman, in which the latter confesses why he had relinquished her. In the greatest disdain she exclaims: "You are worse than a murderer. You have killed the love life in me."

Borkman's End

The son fails to follow the advice of his mother and that of Ella as well. The gloom of his home has made him susceptible to the charms of a well-to-do young divorcée whom he follows into the world. Borkman has counted upon the assistance of his son, and at his departure he feels convinced that the directors will not come to him, but that he will have to set out for himself if he is to begin anew. Ella follows the almost helpless old man out into the winter night. As in a vision, he sees the scenes that the success of his plans might have brought to these regions. He sees smoking chimneys, busy factories and a harbor teeming with ships. Ella comes under the spell of his vision, realizes that she has not been sacrificed to an utterly base ideal and offers the last assistance to the dying man. Realizing that her sister had

never been her rival in the real sense of the word, she becomes reconciled to her.

Loyalty to an Ideal

Borkman, like Hedda Gabler, is not an ideal character. He does have a worthy ideal and remains true to this ideal at the expense of his own happiness. He is a megalomaniac, but not half as negative as most critics would have us suppose. His business failure and imprisonment are not due to mistaken business judgment. He has done all that a man could do to forestall treachery on the part of his rival. While he did lay himself liable criminally, he did precisely what many "progressive" bankers do daily. After his return from prison he remains an imposing old man. Foldal, who has lost his money through him, gladly pays him homage, and even Ella, whom he has

sacrificed, unmistakably comes under the convincing influence of his personality again. He remains true to himself for he regrets the miscarriage of his plans more than the loss of Ella's love.

When We Dead Awaken

The central idea in Ibsen's later plays may be found in a statement which occurs in one of his letters to Björnson (August, 1882). "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 bungle it." This thought is presented in Nora and Hedda Gabler. It is the tragedy of Solness that he so miserably fails to live up to the best that is in him. It seems quite natural that Ibsen should call *When We Dead Awaken* (1900) his epilogue, for in this, his last drama, he gives us his

most eloquent expression of just this truth.

Rubek is an ambitious young artist of talent and is intent upon producing a great masterpiece in sculpture—"The Resurrection." Actuated by the highest motives of his art, he keeps aloof from his model, Irene, who has sacrificed her position in her family in order to serve him. When he refers to their relationship as "an episode" she, who is in love with Rubek, is so offended that she leaves and degenerates completely. After Irene is gone, Rubek's conception of his group is changed. He alters it by making all kinds of concessions to public taste and allows his ideal conception to become blurred. Thus altered, the group brings him immediate fame and money.

He now completely breaks with his former idealism. He makes portrait busts for the wealthy at lavish

prices. In these busts he sees the features of animals, although the public does not become conscious of the fact. He has become a cynic. He decides to make no more sacrifices, buys a villa, surrounds himself with the comforts of life, and marries an ignorant young girl who is little else but a fine animal. After he lives with her for a number of years, the inevitable happens. He becomes discontented and she concludes that the marriage with Rubek is not up to her expectations. He had promised "to take her up on a high place and show her the glories of the world." She takes this literally and insists upon an outing in the mountains.

Reappearance of Ideal

During this trip, Rubek encounters Irene again. After she had left Rubek, this woman had had all kinds of questionable adventures and now is

insane and in the care of a nurse. Rubek sees in her all that she has ever been to him and even more. He believes none of her frank accounts of her degradation and proposes that she be brought into his household in order that life may get a purpose for him again. He finally follows her up in the mountains and both are killed in an avalanche.

Hilda and Irene

As Hilda, in the *Master Builder*, so Irene is symbolical of the ideal. In the former play, the ideal is presented as unflinching and inexorable in "demanding the promise of one's youth." In the latter, the ideal is presented in a manner that reminds one of Hauptmann's Rautendelein. If a man forsakes his ideal, it will degenerate, but, he will in after years follow the degenerated ideal, will idealize it, will follow it and be destroyed by it.

The play reverses the problem in *John Gabriel Borkman*. Borkman is a complete failure outwardly, but dies in the serene consciousness that he has lived up to the best that is in him. Rubek is wealthy and famous but faces death in a complete state of moral bankruptcy.

Ibsen's Collapse

At the end of his long life (1906), Ibsen suffered from a short period of collapse. He was no longer able to write and, finally, his faculties became confused. Some critics have asserted that there are signs of the impending collapse in *When We Dead Awaken*. This is another interesting instance of reading biographical information into interpretations where they are of no significance. Ibsen seems to have terminated his long career most impressively, for his last drama is fully on a level with his greatest works.

New Plans

After he had published *When We Dead Awaken*, he made a curious statement. He said that if he ever appeared again it would be in a new armor. Many interpretations have been given to this utterance, and it is dangerous to hazard another. In the period of his complete maturity the poetic spirit became ascendant. His language became more and more instinct with fervor and it is not impossible that he was planning to return to verse as a vehicle for thought.

Unity of Action

Ibsen's dramas present only the climax of the plot, the preceding events being given retrospectively. This brings them into a curious analogy with the Greek tragedies in which the unity of time was observed. The past, however, is not narrated by Ibsen but suggested incidentally. This

intensifies the climax, for every word and every action reveals not only the present but the past. In short, Ibsen wrote for a public accustomed to modern psychology and the sciences, for men and women who are in the habit of looking below the surface and seeing the remote significance of things. His indirect delineation of the past is always clear, but not always particularly evident. A superficial reading of the plays is, therefore, always dangerous. Many of the false interpretations of *Nora*, *Hedda Gabler*, *Borkman*, and *When We Dead Awaken* are clearly due to carelessness in this respect. Each character must be traced out to a period greatly antedating the drama if a true conception is to be formed.

Ibsen an Impressionist

Almost unanimously, Ibsen has been proclaimed a realist, yet few

of his characters follow real life at all closely. The real was his point of departure, his raw material. He wrote remote from the scenes and persons whom he was characterizing, and moulded characters and incidents in the idea which he wished to convey. This habit of emphasizing was greatly intensified by his predilection for character contrasts; e.g.,Rosmer—Kroll; Hedda Gabler—Mrs. Elvsted; Solness—Ragnar Brovik; Ella Rentheim—Mrs. Borkman. He might be called an impressionist if it seems desirable to classify him at all.

Ibsen as a Moralist

For many years, popular report stamped Ibsen as perversive of morals. How this came about can hardly be understood in the face of his dramas and his life. He is certainly one of the most convincing moralists of his age. His culprits are not punished as in the

dramas of an older generation. Their immorality is punished by the very law of their being. They collapse of inner necessity and their self-punishment is more complete than any that might be visited upon them from without.

Ibsen's Optimism

It was formerly fashionable to refer to him as a pessimist. Gradually, this hard opinion has been changed until we now find writers of the caliber of Richard Meyer summarize him thus: "The greatest dramatist of Norway and one of the most potent spirits of the newer era. The love and hatred which fire the poet lead to analyses, the criticism of old views and the coining of new values. The basic mood is a *towering optimism*, an inexhaustible faith in the "Third Kingdom," in which the spirit of truth and the spirit of freedom will rule."

QUESTIONS AND TOPICS FOR STUDY

Questions and Topics for Study

THE FIRST PERIOD

(1) State the conditions that surrounded Ibsen's early youth. (2) How was he impressed by the Grimstad villagers? (3) How was his imagination stimulated at this period? (4) How did his habit of caricaturing affect his art? (5) How did Ibsen become interested in revolutionary movements? (6) State the origin of his first drama. (7) What effect did Ibsen's study of medicine have upon his plays? (8) How seriously did he become interested in liberal ideas at this time? (9) Why did Ibsen side with Welhaven in the latter's feud with Wergeland? (10) Describe Ibsen's relations with Björnson. (11) Why did Ole Bull found a theater at Bergen? (12) What did Ibsen learn from Devrient? (13) What plays interested Ibsen especially while he was director at Bergen? (14) Why was Hettner's influence of great importance? (15) Why did Norwegian patriots interest themselves in the study of myths and legends? (16) Why were Ibsen's mythological researches of little scientific value? (17) What was the most important idea in *Lady*

Inger at Östrat? (18) What was Ibsen's theory in regard to political units? (19) How does *The Feast at Solhaug* rank among his dramas? (20) What is the outstanding characteristic of the play?

The Vikings

(1) What is the general theme of *The Vikings?* (2) Give an outline of the character of Örnulf. (3) What evidence is presented to show that he has given up the old fierceness of the vikings? (4) Describe the character of Hjördis and Dagny before their marriage. (5) Was Thorolf reared correctly? (6) Why does Hjördis impose the condition that her husband should kill the bear? (7) Why does Sigurd surrender Hjördis to Gunnar? (8) Why did the ancient Icelandic tribes punish the abductors of girls? (9) Why does Örnulf not exact penalties from Sigurd and Gunnar immediately? (10) Why does he do so ultimately? (11) Does Sigurd settle with Gunnar from a sense of weakness? (12) Is Gunnar brave when he meets Örnulf? (13) Why has Hjördis been dissatisfied with Gunnar up to the time of Örnulf's appearance? (14) Why does she dislike the settlement that Gunnar has made with Ornulf? (15) Why does Hjördis arrange the banquet? (16) Why does Hjördis disagree with the methods that Or-

nulf has employed in rearing Thorolf? (17) How does Hjördis prove that Thorolf has not really become a man? (18) What prime virtue of the warrior has Thorolf violated? (19) What, according to the Viking law, must be settled when two warriors meet? (20) What did this same tradition impose upon two women? (21) How does Hjördis try to establish Gunnar's superiority? (22) Was Gunnar right when he lamented the death of Thorolf? (23) Is Dagny right in her defense of Sigurd? (24) What crime does Sigurd commit when he tells Dagny about the bear episode? (25) According to Hjördis, what law has Sigurd violated in turning her over to Gunnar? (26) Why does she consider this law of supreme importance? (27) Does Hjördis consider the possibility of infidelity to Gunnar? (28) What was the supreme ambition of Hjördis? (29) What difficulty has Kare had with Gunnar's men? (30) What was considered just punishment for stealing cattle and calling a man a thrall? (31) How has Ibsen shown that Hjördis is right in her attitude toward Kare?

Love's Comedy

(1) Relate Ibsen's experience at Christiania. (2) What recognition did he get from the crown at this time? (3) What advances did

Ibsen make in his art? (4) Give the most important characteristics of *Love's Comedy*.

THE PRETENDERS

(1) Where did Ibsen obtain the subject matter of *The Pretenders*? (2) What progress does this play show? (3) Compare the characters of Hakon and Skule and show how Ibsen has improved his technique in this connection. (4) What were Ibsen's ideas on patriotism at this period? (5) Give other specific evidence of Ibsen's improvement in style in *The Pretenders*. (6) Is this play still considered important in Norway?

CONFLICTS AND READJUSTMENTS

(1) Account for the mental and spiritual unrest of Ibsen. (2) What was Ibsen's theory about the individual in relation to tradition? (3) Account for Ibsen's habit of scrutinizing social conditions. (4) What was Ibsen's theory in regard to political parties? (5) State his views in regard to the individual and society. (6) What effect did Ibsen's sojourn in Rome, Munich, and Dresden have upon his study of Norwegian conditions? (7) What German writers influenced Ibsen profoundly? (8) Define Ibsen's individualism. (9) What was Ibsen's theory about the permanence of ideals?

BRAND

(1) In what form was *Brand* written originally? (2) In what sense is Brand a hero? (3) How does Ibsen indicate that Brand's philosophy is incorrect? (4) Of what principle does Brand make a fetish? (5) How does Brand win Agnes? (6) How has Ibsen brought out the idea of a man's principles confronting him in *Brand*? (7) Show how this idea is developed in the successive stages of the play. (8) How has Ibsen accounted for the rigidity of Brand's character on the basis of heredity? (9) To what extent does Ibsen contrast the mayor with *Brand*? (10) Is Brand's stressing of spiritual values correct? (11) Give an account of Ibsen's theory of aristocracy as shown in *Brand*. (12) To what extent does Ibsen show a reverence for the intelligence of the masses in *Brand*? (13) Is Brand loyal to Agnes and his child? (14) Does he become conscious of guilt in his attitude toward Agnes? (15) Is Ibsen consistent in making Brand an accomplished organist? (16) Compare Brand's views of architecture with those of the mayor. (17) How does Brand get the recognition of the church officials? (18) What effect does popular approval have upon Brand? (19) How do Brand's views of God differ from those current in his environment? (20) Is Brand correct in depriving Agnes of the baby's

hood? (21) What is meant by the reference "He who sees Jehovah dies"? (22) Why does Brand feel a kinship for Gerd? (23) Account for the character of Brand's mother. (24) Trace the character of Einar from his boyhood and account for his later views. (25) What evidence does the play contain that Ibsen was stimulated by Roman art? (26) What character in *Brand* most closely reflects Ibsen's own ideas? (27) Contrast Brand's character with that of Gerd. (28) In what respect is Brand undramatic?

Peer Gynt

(1) Give an account of Peer's ancestry and earliest environment. (2) What were the most important childhood impressions that shaped Peer's inner life? (3) What conclusions should be drawn about Peer's character from his experiences with the smith? (4) Why did Solveig impress him profoundly? (5) How seriously does he accept the fact that he has been outlawed? (6) What characteristics does Peer show when he builds his hut in the woods? (7) How does Ibsen handle this episode to show the difference between his dreams and reality? (8) To what extent does Peer accept the proposal of the dovre king? (9) Why does Ibsen introduce the episode of the boyg? (10) What thought sin does Peer

commit with the "green clad one" and what results does it have for him? (11) Why does Peer fail to accept happiness with Solveig in the mountains? (12) Why is the episode of the "silent man" introduced, and what does this episode contribute to the knowledge of Peer's character? (13) Why does Peer return to Ase? (14) What characteristics does Peer reveal in the death scene of Ase? (15) How does Ibsen show that Peer is not admirable in this scene? (16) How does Peer acquire his fortune in America? (17) Why does he embark for Greece? (18) Give an account of his companions. (19) What was Peer's conception of God at the time when he lost his ship? (20) Discuss Peer's plan of the desert empire. (21) Why does Peer decide to become a prophet? (22) In what sense is Peer an opportunist? (23) Give evidence that Ibsen tries to show that the romanticist Peer never really realizes his dreams. (24) Why does Peer decide to write world history? (25) Why is this in accordance with his character? (26) Explain Ibsen's satire on the source method in history. (27) Why is Peer locked up in the mad house? (28) Give an account of the three most important patients. (29) Why is Peer attracted to the gold fields of California? (30) By what methods does he acquire wealth there? (31) Why does Peer return to his child-

hood home? (32) What is the purpose of the last act? (33) Are the experiences of the last act real or imaginary? (34) What characteristics does Peer show in the last act? (35) How does Ibsen summarize the fallacies of the romantic dreamer in the last act? (36)Why does the button-moulder play such an important part in Peer's imagination? (37) Give a detailed account of the tragedy of the "silent man." (38) Was Ibsen justified in giving so much attention to this episode? (39) Explain the relation of Grieg's music to Ibsen's drama. (40) Discuss *Peer Gynt* as a stageworthy drama.

A League of Youth

(1) Give an account of Ibsen's contact with liberal groups. (2) Explain Ibsen's relation to Björnson. (3) Give an account of the business methods and character of the Chamberlain. (4) Analyze the character of Monson and tell in what respect his business methods are corrupt. (5) Outline the character of Monson's son. (6) Why has Ibsen given so much care to the delineation of Aslaksen? (7) Give a full account of the cynicism of Heire. (8) Give the reasons for Heire's failure. (9) How has Ibsen made it clear that Madame Rundholmen is a very undesirable woman? (10) Compare Dr. Fieldbo with

Stensgard in regard to (a) ancestry, (b) education, (c) professional attitude, (d) attitude toward women. (11) Give an analysis of the parents of Stensgard. (12) What was lacking in his early home training? (13) Was it proper for him to accept an education from his mother? (14) Why did his mother want him to become a solicitor? (15) What was his ambition in college? (16) Is he really a good public speaker? (17) How do you account for these deficiencies in his character? (18) What is wrong with the educational theories of the chamberlain? (19) Does Dr. Fieldbo agree with these policies? (20) Give reasons for assuming that Dr. Fieldbo voices Ibsen's views. (21) Were the liberals justified in taking offense at *The League of Youth?* (22) Why is this play of great importance in Ibsen's development? (23) What are Ibsen's views on party activity in this drama? (24) What defects does it show as a practical play?

Emperor and Galilean

(1) Why did Ibsen cease to use verse? (2) Discuss the soundness of his views. (3) In what respects did Ibsen follow the example of German writers at this time? (4) What is the central theme in *Emperor and Galilean?* (5) Did Ibsen consider this book of great importance? (6) What is the connection be-

tween this book and *The Vikings?* (7) Does Ibsen account for Julian's character on the basis of heredity and early training? (8) How does Ibsen make Julian's apostacy seem reasonable? (9) How did Ibsen's experiences in Rome enter into the delineation of Julian's character? (10) How has Ibsen indicated that Julian's philosophy is reasonable? (11) Is Ibsen satisfied with Julian's paganism? (12) How does Julian's paganism affect his character? (13) Does Ibsen find any positive elements in Christianity? (14) What is meant by the "Third Kingdom"? (15) Why is Julian unable to qualify for the "Third Kingdom"? (16) Discuss the technical defects of *Emperor and Galilean.* (17) Discuss Ibsen's attitude toward book learning. (18) What does Ibsen mean by the term *irrelevant?* (19) What was Ibsen's favorite book?

THE SOCIAL DRAMAS

Pillars of Society

(1) Discuss Bernick's ancestors. (2) Was Bernick's education of the proper type with reference to his life work? (3) How has Ibsen shown that Bernick was a very accomplished young man when he returned from Paris? (4) Was there any excuse for his marriage? (5) Give an exhaustive account of Ibsen's

excuses for Mrs. Dorf. (6) What defense is there for Bernick's conduct toward Martha? (7) Review Bernick's business transactions and point out those that can be defended. (8) What is Lona's educational creed? (9) Is she consistent in following Johan to America? (10) Why does she return to Norway? (11) Give an account of Bernick's family life and point out the underlying principles. (12) What is Lona's attitude toward this marriage? (13) What principles does Lona apply in the regeneration of Bernick? (14) Does Ibsen deal soundly with the labor problem arising from the industrial revolution? (15) How has Ibsen presented the tragedy of Aune? (16) What is Ibsen's opinion of the social set of the town? (17) Discuss the character of Rörlund. (18) Why is the character of Hilmar introduced? (19) To what extent does Ibsen rely upon education to reform society in this play? (20) What evidence is there in *Pillars of Society* to show that Ibsen believed that the marriage tie is binding? (21) To what extent is Lona portrayed as a heroine? (22) What technical advances did Ibsen make in *Pillars of Society*? (23) What were Ibsen's impressions of American life? (24) What habits of composing did Ibsen establish at this time? (25) What principles determine Bernick's private conduct?

A Doll's House

(1) To what extent did Nora have the benefits of a mother's training? (2) Was her father a sound man? (3) At what age was Nora married? (4) Why did her father fail to stress practical matters with her? (5) Whose duty was it to teach Nora the importance of business? (6) How has Ibsen shown that the father was not only good but practical in the best sense? (7) Is Torvald presented as a business man of the highest type? (8) Point out how Ibsen has proved that Torvald has only a carnal interest in Nora. (9) Is Nora *a doll* at the beginning of the play? (10) In what respects is Krogstad presented in contrast with Nora? (11) Point out how Ibsen has shown that Mrs. Linden is bad throughout her whole life and how he has made her appear good to careless observers. (12) Point out the evidence for assuming that Dr. Rank is the hero of the drama. (13) Define the relation between Dr. Rank and Nora. (14) What does Nora mean by the miracle? (15) Has she a right to expect the miracle? (16) Why does Nora leave Torvald? (17) Is Ibsen guilty of taking the marriage tie lightly in *A Doll's House?* (18) To what extent does Nora live up to high ideals of wifehood and motherhood? (19) Discuss Ibsen's ideas in regard to the

importance of play in the rearing of children. (20) To what extent has Ibsen stressed the contrast between Torvald and Nora's father? (21) Why did Ibsen refuse to change the end of the drama? (22) Why is Nora afraid to remain with her children? (23) What is meant by the statement that Nora's perplexity at the end of the play constitutes the climax of her tragedy?

Ghosts

(1) Under what conditions did Mrs. Alving grow up? (2) To what extent was she abnormal when she married? (3) Was Captain Alving really an eligible young man? Why? (4) Why did Captain Alving fall into bad habits? (5) Was the advice of Pastor Manders correct? (6) What mistake did Mrs. Alving make when she returned to her husband? (7) Was she right when she sent Oswald to Paris? (8) How does Ibsen show that the Latin quarter is better than its reputation? (9) Give evidence to show that Oswald gave real promise as an artist. (10) Why was it impossible for Oswald to regain his health? (11) Did Oswald fall in love and commit sin with Regina? (12) What were his plans with Regina? (13) Point out the various instances where the mother's lies became fateful for Oswald. (14) Why does Oswald call for the

sun in the last scene? (15) Does Mrs. Alving realize that her lack of joyousness has really caused the whole tragedy? (16) Contrast Regina's conception of joy with that of Mrs. Alving and Oswald. (17) Is "the sins of the fathers" the most important idea of this drama? (18) Account for the development of Mrs. Alving's ideas. (19) What is the predominant tragedy in the life of Mrs. Alving? (20) Does Pastor Manders represent the ideas of progressive Christianity? (21) Why is the character of Engstrand introduced? (22) What are Ibsen's theories in regard to art education? (23) What is the basic philosophy of Ibsen's *Ghosts?* (24) Why did careless critics accuse Ibsen of pessimism in *The Ghosts?* (25) Prove in detail that Oswald is presented as a high-souled man who is the victim of unsound conditions.

An Enemy of the People

(1) What evidence is there to suppose that Doctor Stockmann has had a sound training? (2) Why does he begin his practice in the fishing village? (3) Who originated and popularized the idea of the baths? (4) Why does Thomas admit Peter into the venture? (5) How has Ibsen shown that Thomas is entirely practical in money matters? (6) Make a detailed comparison of Peter and Thomas from

the standpoint of practical common sense. (7) To what extent does Thomas believe that the family is the basis of civilization? (8) Show how Ibsen proves that Thomas only seems to be extravagant. (9) Why did Thomas not object more strenuously to the original location of the baths? (10) Why is Thomas sound when he divulges his information to the press? (11) Has Thomas due regard for the ethics of his profession? (12) To what extent has Thomas proved that he has sound educational principles in the rearing of Petra? (13) Outline the educational principles that he utilizes in training his boys. (14) To what extent does Ibsen attach importance to play as an educational factor? (15) Why is Thomas responsible to the people and not to the board of directors after the epidemic? (16) Why does Horster understand Thomas better than the villagers? (17) What is Thomas's view of the compact majority? (18) Is Thomas really an enemy of democracy? (19) Why is the fifth act essential to a full understanding of Thomas's tragedy? (20) What would Thomas substitute for agitation in order to reform society? (21) What are the outstanding evils of the press as reflected in the character of Aslaksen? (22) To what extent are Petra's views on literary criticism sound? (23) What is Ibsen's theory in regard to the purpose of

education? (24) Summarize the instances of self-education that appear in Thomas's educational practice. (25) Review in detail how the character of Thomas is presented under a double aspect.

The Wild Duck

(1) Present Ibsen's evidence that Werle might have been a good husband and father. (2) In what respects does Mrs. Werle fail to rise to the duties of wifehood and motherhood? (3) Give a summary of the evidence that proves the utter practical inefficiency of Mrs. Werle. (4) Under what conditions does Gregers grow up? (5) How is he affected by the fact that he does not play nor associate with his fellows? (6) What errors does he commit at the lumber camp? (7) Trace the character of the elder Ekdal from the days of his prosperity to the end of the play. (8) Outline the character of Hjalmar and show the influence of his early environment. (9) Outline the tragedy of Gina. (10) To what extent is the depravity of this family due to the absence of exalted ideals? (11) What ideal does Gregers apply to Hjalmar and Gina? (12) To what extent does Ibsen apply the idea of slave and master morality in this drama? (13) What effect does the application of the ideal to this family have?

(14) What attitude does Dr. Relling take in regard to Hjalmar and Gina? (15) To what extent does Dr. Relling reflect Ibsen's personal views? (16) What is Ibsen's theory of the importance of family discipline in morality as reflected in this play? (17) Compare Gregers in detail with Thomas Stockmann.

ROSMERSHOLM

(1) Give an account of the boyhood of Rosmer. (2) Why was he incapable of choosing wisely when he married? (3) Was he successful as a preacher? (4) Why did he resign from his pulpit? (5) Account for Rosmer's development of liberal views. (6) How has Ibsen shown that Mrs. Rosmer is utterly inefficient as a wife and mother? (7) Account for Rebecca's character on the basis of ancestry and environment. (8) What doctrine did Rebecca apply to Mrs. Rosmer? (9) What error did Rebecca commit? (10) Why did Rebecca come to the conclusion that she must commit suicide? (11) Is Rosmer justified in following this course? (12) Compare Beate's suicide with that of Rebecca. (13) What is Ibsen's theory of the importance of the family in *Rosmersholm*? (14) Account for the regeneration of Rebecca West. (15) Why is Rosmer unable to right himself? (16) Give an outline of the character of Kroll and in-

dicate how Ibsen shows his insincerity. (17) What important lesson does Ibsen teach in the characterization of Ulric Brendel? (18) Why is Madam Helseth introduced into the play? (19) Summarize the instances in which party affiliation and creedal loyalty affect the bias of individuals in this drama.

FULL MATURITY

The Lady from the Sea

(1) Why did Ellida's mother become insane? (2) Is Ellida doomed to the same fate? (3) Give an account of Ellida's early life. (4) How has Ibsen shown that her marriage was wise? (5) Did she rid herself of her hallucination before she was married? (6) Why did this hallucination again become potent? (7) How did Dr. Wangel attempt to cure her? (8) Does he act the part of the really enlightened physician in this connection? (9) How has Ibsen shown that Ellida is really worth all of the efforts which Dr. Wangel makes to cure her? (10) Why does Dr. Wangel decide to make the supreme sacrifice? (11) Compare Dr. Wangel's course with that of Torvald in *The Doll's House*. (12) Why will Ellida never have another relapse? (13) Why was Ellida relieved of work and responsibility in the home? (14) Outline the character

of Boletta. (15) Compare Boletta and Hilda. (16) Compare the characters of Lyngstrand and Ballested. (17) Why might *The Lady from the Sea* be called an educational classic? (18) To what extent is *The Lady from the Sea* the sequel of *The Doll's House?*

Hedda Gabler

(1) Did Hedda Gabler have a normal girlhood? (2) To what extent was her father devoted to her? (3) Did he devote sufficient care to her education? (4) Why did Hedda not interest herself in young officers? (5) Why did she reject Brack? (6) Why did she take a profound interest in Lövborg? (7) Why did she defer her marriage till she was twenty-nine years old? (8) Why did she accept Tesman and what error was involved in her choice? (9) Has Ibsen absolute faith in the judgment of university faculties? (10) Describe the childhood of Tesman and tell how his aunts trained him. (11) What does Ibsen think of the scholarship of Tesman? (12) Why is Hedda completely disillusioned after her honeymoon? (13) Compare in detail the character of Hedda Gabler and Mrs. Elvsted. (14) State the characteristics of Mrs. Elvsted that seem to be good but are really very bad. (15) Has Hedda any faith in Mrs. Elvsted's account of Lövborg's reform? (16) What is

Hedda's motive in asking Lövborg to drink and to attend Brack's party? (17) What does she mean by asking him to come back with vine leaves in his hair? (18) Is Hedda justified in suggesting suicide to Lövborg? (19) Is Ibsen careless in justifying the suicide of Hedda? (20) Enumerate the new ideals which Hedda accepts in place of the old ideals held by the Tesmans and Mrs. Elvsted. (21) State Ibsen's views on military discipline. (22) What is Hedda's supreme ambition? (23) Compare Hedda and Hjördis in *The Vikings*. (24) Discuss Ibsen's views on the effect of art on morality. (25) What was Ibsen's view of aristocracy at this time? (26) Summarize the character of Hedda Gabler as presented under a double aspect.

The Master Builder

(1) How thoroughly was Solness trained as a builder? (2) Show to what extent his business success was based upon sham. (3) What motives determined his marriage? (4) How has Ibsen made it clear that Mrs. Solness is a complete failure as a wife and a mother? (5) How does Solness account for his success? (6) What is his attitude toward youth? Why? (7) Show how Ibsen depicts Solness as the victim of a sickly conscience. (8) Describe the methods that Solness employs in order to

maintain discipline in his office. (9) Why was he in terror when he ascended the steeple? (10) Was he honest when he promised to build houses instead of churches? (11) Why did he try to impress Hilda? (12) Did he do the same thing on other occasions? (13) What symbolical meaning can be attached to the character of Hilda? (14) How has Ibsen shown that Solness broke away from his earliest ideals? (15) Does he return to these before the return of Hilda? (16) Is Hilda really interested in the welfare of Solness? (17) What does she want to know about his books? (18) Why does he think that technical books on architecture are irrelevant? (19) Whose interests does she have in mind when she demands that Ragnar be given permission to build? (20) Is Hilda jealous of Kaja? (21) State in detail why the new home of Solness is an architectural monstrosity. (22) What is the inevitable outcome of Solness's professional dishonesty? (23) How does Hilda try to save him from his doom? (24) Why is her effort futile? (25) Compare Hilda with Hedda Gabler. (26) In what play is the earlier life of Hilda depicted? (27) Test the characters in *The Master Builder* in regard to realism.

Little Eyolf

(1) In what respects was the early educa-

tion of Alfred entirely unsatisfactory? (2) How does Ibsen show that Alfred and Asta had erroneous ideas of the aims of education? (3) What effect does Asta's incorrect procedure have on the personality of Alfred? (4) Is Alfred competent to become a husband and father? (5) Show how Ibsen has presented Rita as the ideal wife of a literary man. (6) Why is Alfred a complete failure as a literary man, a husband, and a father? (7) What motives dominate Alfred in the education of his son? (8) Point out the virtues of Borgheim in contrast with the weaknesses of Alfred. (9) Why does Rita make the mistake of choosing Alfred? (10) Why does Rita not divorce Alfred when she is certain that he is a failure as a husband and father? (11) What does Ibsen accomplish by introducing the ratwife? (12) What does Ibsen think of the honors system? (13) Is it consistent with Borgheim's character to have him fall in love with Asta? (14) What educational ideals are stressed in *Little Eyolf?*

John Gabriel Borkman

(1) How completely was Borkman fascinated by mining in his childhood? (2) Does he remain true to this interest? (3) Why does he engage in banking? (4) Is he deficient as a business man? (5) Is he a reliable judge of

his associates? (6) How has Ibsen shown that he has unusual foresight in business matters? (7) What evidence does Ibsen introduce to show that he was an unusually capable banker? (8) Is he justified in expecting a recall? (9) Does he base his opinions on idle speculation? (10) In what respects does he compare himself with Napoleon? (11) How does he utilize Foldal? (12) Make a detailed comparison of Borkman and Foldal. (13) Compare Ella and Gunhild. (14) How does Ibsen show that Ella is entirely unselfish toward Erhart? (15) Why does Borkman not regret his conduct toward Ella? (16) How is she affected by this attitude? (17) What are Ellas's plans for Erhart? (18) Distinguish between the selfishness of Gunhild and Borkman. (19) Prove that the malicious gossip about Mrs. Wilton is not necessarily well founded. (20) Why is she made to appear in an unfavorable light? (21) How does Ibsen make it plain that her remark about Frieda taking her place is a jest? (22) Analyze the position which Foldal occupies in his own family. (23) How does Ella come to realize that Borkman's course toward her was not ignoble? (24) Why does Ella become reconciled with Gunhild? (25) To what extent can Erhart's loyalty to Mrs. Wilton be justified? (26) Compare Borkman's renunciation of Ella

with Sigurd's action toward Hjördis in *The Vikings*. (27) In what sense is Borkman a hero?

When We Dead Awaken

(1) What sacrifices has Rubek made for his art in his earlier career? (2) What was the first conception of his masterpiece? (3) Did he observe the proper professional attitude toward his model? (4) Why did Irene not observe the same attitude? (5) What does Irene do after Rubek refers to her service as an episode? (6) Has Irene been of inspirational value? (7) In what respects does Rubek lower his conception of the work after Irene's disappearance? (8) Does he deceive the public? (9) Does he deceive the critics? (10)What effect does the popularity of his debased art have upon him? (11) Give evidence that he becomes cynical about his art. (12) Does he continue to make sacrifices for his art? (13) Why does he marry Maja? (14) Why does he not select a wealthy girl? (15) What does he mean when he tells Maja that he will take her on a high place and show her all of the glories of the world? (16) How has Ibsen shown that life has lost its real purpose for him? (17) What becomes of Irene after her disappearance? (18) Is her subsequent conduct plausible? (19) Why is it possible to interpret Irene

as a forsaken ideal? (20) How does Rubek regard Irene when he meets her again? (21) Is this compatible with Irene interpreted as his forsaken ideal? (22) Give the evidence that proves that Irene is insane. (23) Why does Rubek again follow Irene? (24) Why is Rubek destroyed when he follows her? (25) Why does Maja insist upon visiting her old home? (26) Compare Irene and Hilda in *The Master Builder* as symbols of the ideal. (27) Why is the Sister of Mercy introduced? (28) Compare Rubek and Ulfheim and tell why these characters are placed in juxtaposition. (29) Outline Ibsen's ideals of marriage. (30) Define Ibsen's professional ideal.

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