

version of it was performed at Stockholm in 1877 and at Helsingfors in 1880, and a German version in Berlin in 1880. The play has also been translated into French. In January 1906 two performances of it were given at the Scala Theatre, London, by the Stage Society. The part of Lady Inger was played by Miss Edyth Olive, and that of Nils Lykke by Mr. Henry Ainley.

In *Love's Comedy* we see a very different Ibsen, but still the young Ibsen. This piece of high-spirited satire took some time to incubate. It was planned in 1858, but not completed till 1862. The author's eager personality was by this time in revolt against the narrowness of Norwegian life; and the revolt, as is so often the case, expressed itself in a fondness for just such paradox as would most annoy his audience. The play was first planned and begun in prose, but Ibsen very soon abandoned that medium of expression in favour of the light rhymed verse which forms one of the chief charms of *Love's Comedy* as it was eventually given to the world. So much of the vivacity of the play in the original depends upon the sparkling quality of the verse and its often laughably ingenious rhyme-devices, that any attempt at a reproduction of it in English verse is foredoomed to at least comparative failure; the present translator felt, therefore, that he might perhaps succeed in robbing the original of less of its savour if he confined himself to an attempt at light prose. The paradox of the play—that, to keep the sacred fire of love alive, you must renounce it when it has reached its very culmination—that only a loveless marriage or a marriageless love can be really successful and happy—was perhaps not so novel as Ibsen no doubt imagined it to be when he wrote the play. But, anyway, it served as inspiration for a wittily satirical attack on the stupid convention and soul-deadening ceremony that seemed to the author to surround and stifle love when love was leading to marriage. Naturally its production raised a storm of indignation, and Ibsen came in for some rough handling in consequence; it was not until some ten years later that his audiences at home had become sufficiently educated to his point of view to enjoy his wit even though it were pointed at themselves. The play ultimately became particularly popular at