

sufficient matter for any amount of discussion. Whether Nora acted rightly or wrongly, naturally or unnaturally, in leaving husband, home and children in order to develop her own "individuality"; whether her casting herself adrift was indispensable to her development—all this was hotly debated. Though it may seem to some that, in his statement of the case, Ibsen thinks too much of a woman's rights and too little of her duties, it must be borne in mind that in all his "social plays" he contented himself with stating problems as they appeared to him, and did not attempt to answer them. His reply to those who accused him of a merely destructive philosophy was that his task, as he conceived it, was to point out the weaknesses of the social fabric, and to leave constructive philosophy to those who were not dramatists. He diagnosed, and left the cure to others. Moreover, however sound or unsound his theory of Nora's action may seem to us, it must be remembered to his credit that Ibsen, in spite of his enthusiastic advocacy of a woman's right to the development of her own individuality, would never give any countenance to the self-styled "emancipated" woman. He had no patience with those whose idea of self-development seems to consist chiefly in the abandonment of the sphere in which woman is pre-eminent and the invasion of spheres for which she is organically unsuited. Women, he used to maintain, must inevitably in the future have an immense influence in the practical world; but as mothers, and as mothers only.

In the matter of technique, *A Doll's House* marks a turning-point in the history of European drama. Twenty years have made us so accustomed to the results of the revolution worked by Ibsen's dramatic method, that it is not easy to realise how complete the revolution was. Naturalness of dialogue and