

as a thinker, not as a poet, I said : " He is essentially a kindred spirit with Shaw." At this time Mr. Bernard Shaw had barely heard Ibsen's name, and *The Quintessence of Ibsenism*—nay, the very word, " Ibsenism "—was as yet undreamt of. Have subsequent events, then, justified my observation? Only, I think, in a very limited sense. But this earliest juxtaposition of the two names seemed worth putting on record.

## IV

Three years passed before I again saw Ibsen. In the meantime *A Doll's House* had been produced by Mr. and Mrs. Charrington at the Novelty Theatre, London (June 1889), English translations of this and other plays were pouring from the press, and the " Ibsenite " and " Anti-Ibsenite " factions were fulminating against each other in the English and, to some extent, in the American press. In August 1890 I passed through Munich on my way to Oberammergau, and spent a day with Ibsen and his wife and son. I again quote from a letter written a few days later.

My first business in Munich, after making sure of my seat for the Passion Play, was to call upon Ibsen. . . . His fame in England and America is, as he says, " a fairy-tale " to him. . . . He is obviously older, but looks very well, and is quite alert and cheerful. He trotted me round a vast exhibition of modern pictures, where there is a portrait of himself by a Norwegian named Smith—a vivid enough, but far from flattering one. He won't go into the room where it hangs, but waited round the corner. Just as I discovered it, an Englishman and his wife were standing before it. The man looked up his catalogue, and said, " Oh, that's Ibsen, the Norwegian poet " ; whereupon the lady replied with the greatest interest, " Oh, is it? Well, now, that's just what I should have expected him to look like." I was tempted to tell them they need only step into the next room to see the original; but, instead, I reported their conversation to the " Old Man," who was amused. Sigurd Ibsen joined us at lunch, and we had a long talk about all sorts of things—mainly about translations and performances in England, America, &c.

You would see from Shaw's letter which I sent you that Ibsen was supposed to be infuriated at having been classed as a Socialist by G. B. S. He explained to me, however, that his rage existed only in the imagination of the *Daily Chronicle* interviewer. What he really said was that he never had belonged, and probably never would belong, to any party whatsoever; but he expressed