

# Henrik Ibsen as He Was Seen by an Intimate Friend

## Rasmus B. Anderson, Norse Scholar and Diplomat, Knew the Poet and Dramatist in His Contradictory Moods

By M. W. Odland.

WE WERE sitting in the cozy living-room of Rasmus B. Anderson, the Norse scholar, author and diplomat, at Madison, Wis., and the subject turned to Henrik Ibsen. The learned man filled and lighted a huge pipe, which bore the name of Christian IX, of Denmark and which that worthy king had smoked and loved for years. Then, leaning back in his easy chair, he unfolded several interesting pictures of the famous Norwegian dramatist, whose works have stirred all Europe and set critics by the ears. The sands of his life are running out rapidly, and the tidings of his death will soon fill the newspapers with stories of his strange career.

"Prior to my first meeting with Henrik Ibsen," began Professor Anderson, puffing slowly. "I had carried on an extensive correspondence with him, particularly with reference to a translation of his play, 'Pillars of Society,' which I had put on the boards by the great actor, Barret, who was greatly impressed with it. The drama was never produced, however, and my translation was never used.

champagne and cigars. What do you think?—there we sat till the small hours of the morning, engaged in animated discussion of literary matters and drinking each other's health.

"Ibsen is universally known as a man of impenetrable reserve, cautious and taciturn, who carefully guards his literary secrets. That night he deviated from his rule. He talked very freely and was quite confidential—so confidential that I would be guilty of gross impropriety should I reveal much of what he said.

"One reason for his friendliness to me was the champagne, no doubt; another was the fact that I represented as minister the United States, at whose capital his son, Dr. Sigurd Ibsen, was then serving as secretary of the Norwegian and Swedish legation.

"Dr. Ibsen discussed his literary work fully and freely. He was going

to probe to the bottom of modern society, he said, and intimated that the world would be shocked by his sensational disclosures. He was becoming more and more revolutionary in his tendencies and felt more and more disgusted with social conditions. That he has followed the line which he proclaimed that night, Ibsen's dramas of the last twenty years conclusively prove.

"About 3 o'clock in the morning our interesting conversation was interrupted by the entrance of Mrs. Ibsen, who came to remind her husband that it was high time for him to retire. She bowed good night to me and led Dr. Ibsen from the room.

"That night Henrik Ibsen was all cordiality—the jovial companion, with whom it was a delight to associate. I

was soon to see him in a different mood.

"It was about 2 o'clock the next afternoon when my servant at the American legation called my attention to a carriage in the street below. The door was opened by a footman and revealed Dr. Ibsen, who handed out a card to be taken upstairs. I hurried down and greeted the poet with the utmost cordiality, telling him how glad I was to see him at my quarters. But he repaid my warmth with cold politeness, acting in marked contrast to his conduct of the preceding evening. He followed me stiffly up the stairs to my reception room, but declined to be seated or partake of refreshments, saying that he had merely called to pay his respects by sending up his card. He had nothing to say, and compelled me to do all the talking. His conduct could not have been more formal, nor

could his visit have been much briefer for he stayed less than five minutes. I am free to say that his departure was a relief to me, so embarrassing was his extremely stiff and reserved behavior. I have seen many aristocrats, but none so dignified and rigid as was Ibsen that afternoon. It must be that he thought he had been too free the night before and wished to correct the impression he had made upon me.

"During the next two weeks or more I met the dramatist almost every day at receptions and dinners, given in his honor by enthusiastic admirers, who took delight in showering upon him all kinds of courtesies and attentions. He impressed me as a vain little man of dignified, haughty bearing. He would have been sure to attract attention as an extraordinary man wherever he might have gone. I noticed that he was exceedingly deferential to all men

occupying official positions, especially to those in the diplomatic service, due no doubt to the fact that his son had started on a diplomatic career.

"The most interesting glimpse I have had of Henrik Ibsen was at Munich in 1898. As acting minister for Switzerland, which had no representative of its own at Copenhagen, I journeyed that year to Berne to deliver my verbal report to the president of the Swiss republic. On my return to Denmark, I went by way of Munich, in order to pay a visit to the great Norse scholar, Dr. Conrad Maurer, who was a professor in the university there.

"In the morning of March 20 (the exact date), I took a cab to Dr. Maurer's home. While driving back to my hotel, it came to my mind that Henrik Ibsen

lived in Munich and that I ought to see him. I remembered the number of his house from the letters he had received from him, and told the driver to take me to No. 1 Maximilian street where the poet lived with Mrs. Ibsen on the second floor of a rather simple unpretentious building.

"Ibsen is a recluse and does not receive visiting visitors. His servant in Munich was instructed to say all comers, 'Dr. Ibsen nicht zu hau' (Dr. Ibsen is not at home). So bo nerve and diplomacy were necessary gain entrance into his house.

"I rang the bell and a moment a young German girl was at the door. Before I could speak a word she exclaimed, 'Dr. Ibsen nicht zu haus!' looking very squarely in the eye, handing her my card and requested her to go in and look again. The door, I suggested, might have returned. She flushed a deep red and disappeared. I waited long before Ibsen himself came to the door, gave me the hat of welcome, and ushered me into the sitting room. There I found Mrs. Ibsen who also gave me a warm welcome.

"It was 10 o'clock, and I supposed that I had timed my arrival so as not to disturb Dr. and Mrs. Ibsen at table. I was mistaken, however, for before coming they had been seated at a table on which stood a decanter of port wine and a plate of cakes. A third chair was now brought up and Mrs. Ibsen invited me to partake with them of the refreshments. During the ensuing conversation I had to answer many questions as to my journey. There was regard to mutual friends in Copenhagen. Then I made bold to ask:

"Is it a daily custom with you to take an evening stroll in the park?"

"I shall never forget how Mrs. Ibsen flushed and stammered out:

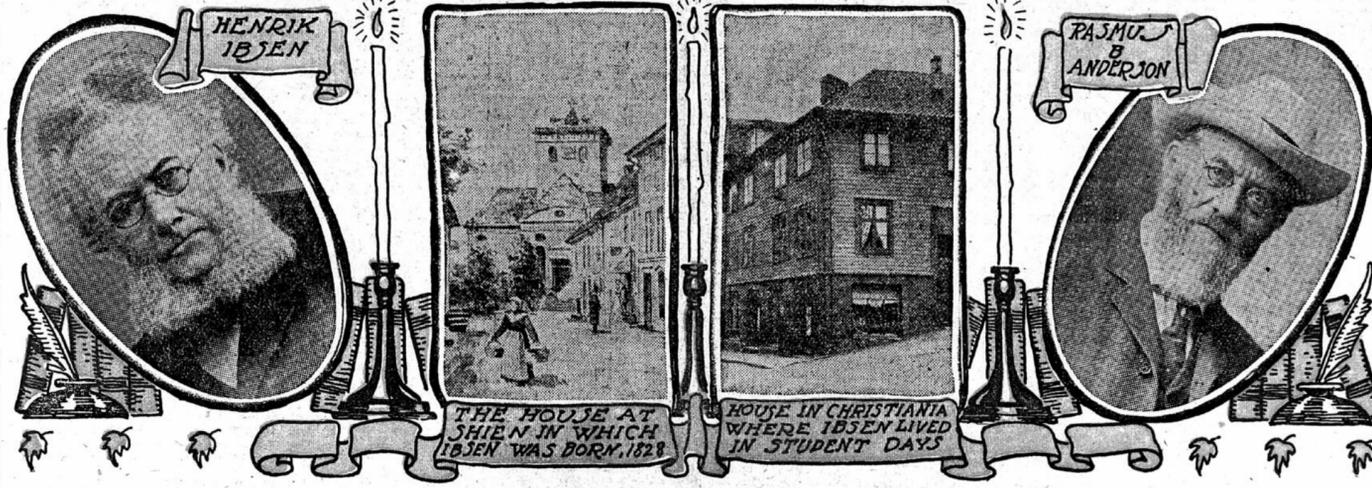
"It is my husband's birthday today, and we are remembering it the way."

"I was agreeably surprised, and, lifting my glass proposed Dr. Ibsen health and wished him many returns the day."

Here is a theme for a painter: Henrik Ibsen, the world's greatest man of genius, living in one of the most cultured cities in Europe, surrounded by distinguished poets, scholars, painters, scientists and musicians, celebrating his birthday like a hermit, shutting out the whole world; when in up-his breaks a bold American globe-trotter against whom no obstacles avail the ruse.

Professor Anderson is not in sympathy with Ibsen's dramas. He condemns them for their destructive tendencies, believing them injurious to a city.

# The NORWEGIAN GENIUS & the MAN WHO TELLS OF HIS STRANGE LIFE



# Peculiarities of "Bill Nye," "Citizen" Train and Other Platform Stars

"THERE have been many good men on the lecture platform with whom it was a delight to be associated, but so far as my acquaintance goes, no one has been so popular as Bill Nye. He is the king bee of them, and although I was his manager for two seasons, our business relations only cemented a friendship which has lasted to his untimely death," says Manager G. E. Raymond of the Orpheum theater.

For several of the many years Mr. Raymond has been engaged in the "show" business, he has piloted many stars of the lecture platform, including the late and favorite William Edgar Nye. George Francis Train and Ben King of beloved memory, and he tells many tales of their travels which have not found their way into current print.

"He was the best man to travel with and the easiest man to handle I ever met," says the present director of the Orpheum's fortunes. "It was just as he said, if he got mad at me it was in the wrong place and without cause—at the little things. In illustration of this good nature, I remember well the last time we came into Minneapolis.

"We had been playing a lot of small towns in Wisconsin and had been up pretty nearly every night, making jumps. Our last station before here was Wausau, and we had to take a freight train out of there to either Junction City or Marshfield. I am not sure which. When we got there we found that the double train into Minneapolis was several hours late.

"A little prospecting showed that there was no hotel and a little more prospecting showed us the door of the little station house almost covered with the forms of sleeping lumberjacks, clothed in brilliantly colored Mackinac jackets and big boots, to say nothing of the lively odor emanating therefrom. As I have remarked, we were dead tired from all night jumps.

"Bill" looked sadly at the sleeping forms, sniffed a very goodly amount of the ambient atmosphere and with a grin fit to break the heart, said: "Chimmie, let's turn in. Whereupon he laid aside his silk hat, stretched out between two of the morning kings of the forest and was presently sound asleep.

"Bill" had several fads, one at a time, and one of these was the cutest toilet set any 'star' ever carried. I guess few of you here in Nye's home ever saw him with a beard, but if you did, you will acknowledge that he was about the most horrible sight eyes ever met. "Bill" was no beauty in his best moments, but with a beard he looked like a gargoyle on the Church of Notre Dame. He wore it but a short time, however, for even his sense of beauty, coddled by all the pictures that Walter MacDougal did of him, could not stand the daily inspection of the mirror. Here is the true tale of how "Bill" came to wear a beard and it is a tale of desperation and daring:

"Bill" had been to London and when he came back he had the hand-

somest set of razors I ever saw in my life. There was one for every day of the week, and the handles were engraved in the extreme. Some of the admirer had given them to "Bill" and he thought no end of them. He was quite a fellow for trappings of this sort.

"He used to carry a silver manicure set around with him with silver-topped perfume bottles, and would you believe it, a silver mounted powder puff! I'll bet there isn't a society girl in town who has one half so fine. This was business on Bill's part, however. He claimed to have invented what he called 'The Quick Shave or the Lecturer's Friend.' When we had been traveling all day and would get into a town just in time to get on the stage, 'Bill' would get out his powder puff, give his face a thick coating of powder, and from the front he would look like a man with a wedding shave.

"Now Nye carried all these things in a little valise. It had a lot of other truck in it, too, for he was always buying little fancy things. Well, one night we had to take a train at 2:30 a.m. after the show, so we didn't get to bed at all, but sat around the hotel until it was time to ride down to the station. The carriage was late and we started down at a rattling pace. Our luggage was on the front seat with the driver.

"All at once we felt a jar, just as if the carriage had run over something. The driver pulled up, got down, got up again, lashed his horses and away we went again.

"I guess he dropped his whip," ventured Bill.

"We had just time to catch the train, but as we changed cars at noon Bill looked down upon the valise he was carrying and observed that the top was badly wrenched.

"That black imp of a porter must have let the bed down on it," he remarked. While we were speculating, the train came along and, with the valise out of his hand, the subject was dismissed. But that night after dinner there was an awful uproar in Bill's room, and the language that came therefrom would have shamed a sea-faring parrot. I rushed to the center of disturbance and found Bill contemplating the contents of his pet valise as they lay upon the bed. Not an article remained whole. The manicure set was smashed to smithereens, some beautiful meerschaum pipes of which he was particularly proud were in bits, the powder puff was no more and the razors found all out of shape.

"The hackman had not run over his whip the night before—he had chosen Bill's valise.

"Then and there Bill took a mighty oath that he would never shave again. He would raise a beard and be independent of the barbers and careless drivers. He was terribly in earnest, as he was in everything he did, and he did grow a beard. But it was more terrible than his determination and he had to part with it.

"A good lie lasts a long time, and I have heard so many lies told about Bill Nye's death that I always like to tell what I know about it when I get a chance. Bill died of a broken heart, and nothing else in the world. Dabbling with playing writing did it. Paul Potter got him interested in a play and Bill promised to collaborate, and he did, as far as his other work would let him. But he was writing a history of the United States, a history of England, preparing for his tour and doing a lot of other stuff and it was Potter who wrote the play.

"I am satisfied that had it not been the best play in the world, every critic in New York would have written a scolding letter on it, with the exception of the World's man, because Nye was the biggest thing in the papers then and the World had him all by itself in New York. This, then, was the other papers' first chance to get at him, and how they did trim that Nye-Potter play! All except the World, which gave it two columns of extravagant praise.

"It so happened that Bill was lecturing in and around New York for three or four days, and he simply couldn't get away from it. Every time he would turn a corner, some one would shout at him: 'So, you got it good, didn't you?' and all that sort of thing. This simply drove Bill daffy. The matter was of especial interest to me, because I was to take him thru the latter half of that season's tour. And then he went over to Paterson, came on the stage all dazed like after bucking and keeping the audience waiting a half hour for me, refused to wear his glasses, stumbled on the stage carpet—and the New York press just threw itself wide open with the lying story of his 'gross intoxication' in Paterson. To make matters worse, a mob of toughs threw rotten eggs and vegetables at him as he was leaving the theater.

"This will be the finish," he said to me, who had gone down to Paterson to meet him, and he settled down in his seat and didn't speak again until we got into New York. I still have the return ticket which the conductor failed to collect from Bill. It is a New York, Lake Erie & Western ticket, and bears the date stamp of Oct. 29, 1895. That was Bill's last public appearance, and if ever a man died of a broken heart, Bill Nye did.

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"Quite the opposite type of a man was George Francis Train—Citizen Train, who used to startle the public at Georgia, was another unsuccessful name candidate was defeated with Harrison. They were Hugh L. White, of Tennessee, and W. F. Mangum, of North Carolina.

James K. Polk defeated Henry Clay in 1844, which is a notable exception to the rule which it is the purpose of this article to point out. In 1856 the man

was defeated in 1820, and in 1824 there was no election at the polls, and the presidency was settled by the house of representatives, which selected Adams, who was one of several minority electoral candidates. William H. Crawford of Georgia, was another unsuccessful candidate in 1824.

President Adams' ill luck did not desert him during his incumbency of the White House, for he was renominated in 1828, and defeated by Andrew Jackson, who again started the rule of the men of one name, a rule which was not again interrupted until 1840, when Wil-

like this, standing on the back platform of a car with his hat off and the thermometer clear below zero.

"Once we had to change cars at a little station and wait an hour. Ben King, the poet-humorist, and I discovered a pair of scales and proceeded to weigh ourselves. The thermometer registered some twenty degrees below and we were muffled up in the heaviest ulsters we could find.

"Hold on," exclaimed Train. "There's no way to weigh yourself, unless all those clothes on; let me show you." Then he began to strip and if we hadn't stopped him he would have stood on those scales entirely naked in that north Pole weather. As it was, he got down to his shirt and trousers and stood there entirely unconcerned while we piled on the weights. He never took cold and had never known a sick day in his life.

"When he entered a car it was always from the front door. As he walked down the aisle facing the other passengers I have often seen him stamp on the floor to attract further attention. Then, when the people would look up to see what the nice looking old gentleman was making that noise for, he would say, 'Hello, folks, I'm Citizen George Francis Train.'

"And he was just as particular about the way he entered a hall where he was to lecture. Say it was here at the Orpheum. I would be on the door at 8:15 precisely he would come in and make me a low bow. Then he would start for the stage, but instead of going right down the aisle he would go to box A, and then salute the audience in a very stately manner. That would give him the reception he desired and when the applause threatened to die away he would revive it by climbing over the top of the stage and down in the jauntiest manner imaginable before beginning his lecture.

"Train's stage costume was as strange as himself. He always wore a thin serge suit with a cutaway coat. This had a velvet collar. On the tails were six big brass buttons and six more were sewed on each sleeve. He never wore suspenders, but he had a crimson silk sash that he wound around his waist two or three times and then let the ends hang down on his right leg. On the left side of his coat he would plaster flowers. I believe that if any one had given him a hundred dollars' worth of roses he would have contrived to pin them all on. Then, on the right side, he wore all his medals.

"He was very fond of flowers, frequently say, this was no affectation. Very often he'd say to me: 'When a man asks you to take a drink, you go out with him, don't you? Now, when any man asks you again, you say to him, 'Citizen George Francis Train neither drinks nor smokes, but you give me the fifteen cents and I'll buy flowers for him.' Sometimes, just for a joke, when the man knew both Train and my-

self, I would deliver this message, and I've seen a man out and about with a worth of flowers, just as he would if his best girl.

"Besides his love for flowers, Train was very fond of the Orpheum. He would allow to approach him and shake hands and play with his Grow up people stole his psychic power, he said, but he got power from children. Most of the money he made lecturing would be spent on the children he met on his travels. He would buy them flowers and toys and very often if it were a little girl, expensive jewelry. He didn't spend a cent of his money, for he was a rich man. How rich, he would never say. But he wasn't allowed to handle his money. When he was pronounced insane, after that Lucan street jail affair of his in New York, all his property was put in the hands of trustees, and they allowed him \$12 a week. 'That's more than I need,' he used to say. 'Look at me, I've got a coat of arms on my coat at the Continental Hotel, my meals come me 10 cents each, 30 cents a day, \$2.1 a week. That's \$7.10 all told. So I have more than I really want.'

"Train was a very good reader, and money while I was with him on book and papers and magazines. He had an invariable system about reading them. First he would write his name across the top of the page, and then he would run his eye up and down over the column for some mention of himself. If he found this, he would tear it notice out and throw the paper on the floor where the curiosity-seekers would fight for it. All these scraps were pasted on big sheets of manilla paper, not nicely, but higgledy-piggledy, and when he got back to New York he had them bound.

"Here is a little incident that will show you to what lengths Train would go to attract public attention. We were dining one evening in a southern hotel. Train had an empty soup plate. He called for the water bottle and filled the plate full of water. The waiter deliberately washed his face. I said nothing then, because a row, with its accompanying publicity, would have delighted his soul. But when we were alone I called him down in fine style and, mark my word, he never repeated this face-washing trick.

"Train is no more crazy than you or I. All his eccentricity and wildness I put on for effect. He would talk just as sensibly as could be to me when we were alone, but let a stranger approach and he would begin to make his grand stand plays. He was the most entertaining man I ever met. Many a time I have gone back to the hotel with him after a lecture and sat up till break fast listening to him talking of his travels and his experience. His words were as beautiful as paintings he had been everywhere and seen every thing and remembered everything. And he never told the same thing twice. To my mind, he is one of the most wonderful men of the day."—Earl C. May.



# These Facts Tend to Prove That One Given Name Is Luckier Than Two

By W. W. Jermans.

Washington, Oct. 19.

IT IS an interesting fact in American politics that the man with two given names has not fared nearly so well, so far as presidential aspirations have been concerned, as the man with one name, and it is upon this fact that some of the friends of Elihu Root are pinning their faith that he will succeed in capturing the republican presidential nomination in 1908, and afterwards the office itself.

In 1908, just twenty-four years will

have elapsed since any man with a double given name has been elected president. Of the twenty-five men who have been president, only seven have had this double name, and three of them came into office on the reputations they had secured as union commanders. Three of the others came into office between 1824 and 1844. The seventh was Chester A. Arthur, who succeeded to the presidency on the death of Garfield.

All the presidents whom the American people most admire were men of the single given name—Washington, Lincoln, McKinley, and now Roosevelt.

The fact that only seven men wearing double given names have ever succeeded in becoming president is not an indication that such men have not from the very beginning sought the office. Following the retirement of Washington, in 1797, Charles C. Pinckney, of South Carolina, came into evidence as a candidate, and he was nominated four successive times, disappearing as a candidate in 1808. The men with a single name had full control of the presidency until 1824, when John Quincy Adams came into office, and Adams had a good deal of trouble before he succeeded. He

was defeated in 1820, and in 1824 there was no election at the polls, and the presidency was settled by the house of representatives, which selected Adams, who was one of several minority electoral candidates. William H. Crawford of Georgia, was another unsuccessful candidate in 1824.

President Adams' ill luck did not desert him during his incumbency of the White House, for he was renominated in 1828, and defeated by Andrew Jackson, who again started the rule of the men of one name, a rule which was not again interrupted until 1840, when Wil-

liam Henry Harrison was elected. Harrison, like Adams, had his own troubles. He had been an unsuccessful presidential candidate in 1836, when Martin Van Buren was elected, and died within a month following his inauguration in March, 1841. In 1836 two other double-name candidates were defeated with Harrison. They were Hugh L. White, of Tennessee, and W. F. Mangum, of North Carolina.

James K. Polk defeated Henry Clay in 1844, which is a notable exception to the rule which it is the purpose of this article to point out. In 1856 the man

of a single name again returned to the presidency, and they remained there until the election of Grant, in 1868. Grant was re-elected in 1872, and in 1876 and 1880 came Hayes and Garfield respectively. Then, in 1884, came Grover Cleveland, and there has not been a two-name president since that year. Cleveland in 1884 defeated a two-name candidate, James G. Blaine, then the most popular man in American public life. Garfield, four years earlier, had defeated General Winfield Scott Hancock, a gallant union commander. McKinley twice defeated a man with two

given names, William Jennings Bryan while Mr. Roosevelt, last fall, defeated Alton B. Parker.

Thus does history establish the rule of the single-name presidents, suggesting that the chances of men bearing but one name are much better than those bearing two. Mr. Root has the only single-name gentleman thus far mentioned in connection with the republican nomination in 1908, and the fact that he is otherwise available, lends additional weight, some of his friends believe, to his position as a prospective candidate.