



THE LEAGUE OF YOUTH *by Henrik Ibsen*

CHAMBERLAIN: I understand you; but I can justify my conduct before God and man! When the country was in distress, after the separation from Denmark, my father made sacrifices beyond his means. Thus part of our property came into the hands of the Heire family. What was the result? The people who lived upon the property suffered under Daniel Heire's incompetent management. He cut down timber to the injury, I may even say to the ruin, of the district. Was it not my obvious duty to put a stop to it if I was able? And it happened that I was able; I had the law on my side; I was well within my rights when I re-entered upon my family property. You, too, have always had the law on your side. But what about your sense of right, your conscience, if you have such a thing? And how you have broken down all social order! How you have impaired the respect that should attach to wealth! People never think of asking nowadays how such and such a fortune was made, or how long it has been in such and such a family; they only ask: how much is so-and-so worth?--and they esteem him accordingly. Now I suffer by all this; I find myself regarded as a sort of associate of yours; people speak of us in one breath, because we are the two largest proprietors in the neighborhood. This state of things I cannot endure! I tell you once and for all: that is why I am set against you.