

The Love Story of Richard Brinsley Sheridan and the Beautiful Elizabeth Linley

[By T. P. O'Connor, M. P., in T. P.'s Weekly.]

VI. I left Sheridan and his Elizabeth last week at the altar of the little Catholic chapel outside Calais. It was a ceremony destined only to satisfy their own love and their own consciences; it had no validity in the eyes of the law as it then stood, for both were minors, and both were Protestants; and the marriage of Protestants in a Catholic Church was not then legal. By and by, while the tide was held to bind themselves, it was loose enough to raise further difficulties before their path of true love did run smooth. After the ceremony Miss Linley found a home in a convent in Lille, and there her father found her; and the three—father, daughter, and lover—returned to Bath together. It was not till his return to England that Sheridan heard of the outrageous advertisement of Mathews in the Bath Chronicle, and with a promptitude that did credit to his courage and his chivalry, he resolved to bring the creature at once to account. He vowed that he would never sleep till he had encountered Mathews; and kept his word so literally that he sat up all night in Canterbury, and when he got to London he paced the street outside the lodgings of Mathews in Crutched Friars, was at last let in by Mathews at 2 o'clock in the morning; and Mathews, instead of being the fire-eating warrior he professed to be, thrusting for the blood of Sheridan, received the poor youth—who had not yet seen the text of the letter in the Bath Chronicle—with friendliness, explained away the letter as nothing in particular. Sheridan, who had been pacified and continued the journey to Bath with Mr. Linley and the fascinating Elizabeth. But no sooner was Sheridan in Bath than he saw the horrible advertisement which Mathews had inserted; he took counsel with his brother Charles; they made up their minds, quickly and decisively, that the insult was not one to be wiped out in words, and off they started for London again. This was on a Saturday night. The Sunday following was a day of gloom to the two households—especially as the two brothers had given no indication of the deadly work on which they were bent—and the young ladies in both households wept their eyes out in anticipation of some bloody outcome of this daring journey to London. Poor Elizabeth—regarding herself as the origin of all the trouble—had fainting fits after fit, until at last the doctor had to be called in. The doctor, by the way, was the momentous man called Dr. Priestley, who figured largely in some chapters of English politics and English science. It was indeed a gloomy Sunday in these two households in Bath. Meantime, the Sheridan brothers and London on Sunday day, saw Mathews immediately, could get no satisfactory apology from him, and nothing was left but a duel. Mathews, as the challenged party, chose swords as the weapons, and, though he had the reputation of a skilful swordsman, he was worsted in the encounter. Sheridan had his sword at the breast of Mathews, and he was declared by him and his friends that he spared the fellow's life because of an appeal from his second not to kill him. But Mathews disputed this version, and declared that he had been unfairly treated. Sheridan, then, in his anger demanded that Mathews should give up his sword or renew the duel. Mathews gave up his sword, and Sheridan broke it in two, flung the hilt to the other side of the room. Mathews was made very angry—thought that the transaction might be represented to his disadvantage—but ultimately he was pacified and agreed to insert an apology in the Bath Chronicle; and so, for the moment, honor was satisfied on both sides.

VII. I give the story from the records in the book, but how old world, how impossible, how childish it all appears to us now, with these ridiculous punctilios, on which a brilliant human life like that of Sheridan hung as by a thread. It is not relevant to my immediate subject, but I cannot help expressing a certain wistful question, which is: whether the punctilios that influence men, individuals, but nations today—Germany and ourselves, for instance—may not appear to a generation half-a-century hence as childish as these points upon which one of our greatest dramatists had, a century ago, to stake his life? But let that pass for the moment, and return to Sheridan and Elizabeth Linley. The young hero returned to Bath and he had gone through the fiery furnace of a duel, and had come out of it untouched in honor as well as in person. That rather snobbish father, who had looked down so self-complacently on the Linleys, was so delighted—after the fashion of the pretentious Irish squire of the period—with the prowess of his son that he

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THE REAL AND THE NOMINAL RULERS OF EGYPT SIDE BY SIDE



A news photograph, just received of King George of England and the Khedive of Egypt, snapped at Port Said, while the King was en route to India. Although the Khedive is ruler of a big territory he owes nominal homage to Turkey and is actually responsible to England.

took him to his bosom. But, in spite of all this, the path of true love did not even yet run smooth. It seems to have been agreed by all the elders that the marriage in the little French chapel had made no essential difference in the situation, and Richard and his Elizabeth were still expected to go on as if they had never met. Elizabeth, indeed, was subject to a Spanish maid, not permitted to go abroad without the companionship of a duenna. But the love laughs at obstacles, and the two young people met furtively, sometimes in a grotto, which inspired not only delightful moments, but also outbursts of verse; and on both sides, the signs and uncalculating passions of youth. The delightful misery, the enchanting secrecy of their hidden love, and their furtive meetings were suddenly interrupted by the disappearance of Elizabeth from Bath—in the search for better weather, and in performance of professional work. From every point at which she stopped she sent letters assuring her lover that even the slightest entrance of fifty, or even a hundred miles had not made any change in her affections: so primordial were these people in the days before the railways had annihilated space and even to lovers.

VIII. So things went on for a while. "Oh, the happy time when we were miserable!" cries the middle-aged man or woman who looks back from the sober and chilling twilight of years and disappointment on the tumult and the uncalculating passions of youth. The delightful misery, the enchanting secrecy of their hidden love, and their furtive meetings were suddenly interrupted by the disappearance of Elizabeth from Bath—in the search for better weather, and in performance of professional work. From every point at which she stopped she sent letters assuring her lover that even the slightest entrance of fifty, or even a hundred miles had not made any change in her affections: so primordial were these people in the days before the railways had annihilated space and even to lovers.

Above all does the young lady worry over the length of time during which she has to be separated from Bath and from her Richard. Her "Horatio" is, as after the manner of her pseudonym, she calls Sheridan. "If I find you well and happy when I return I shall be content," she writes. "Till then receive my tenderest affections, and let me find you constant as I have left you. If my prayers be granted I shall once more embrace my Horatio and convince him how sincerely I am his Eliza."

Meantime, Richard was engaged on other and very different work. Various accounts had been set afloat with regard to the circumstances of the first duel, and the dreadful whisper had gone forth that Mathews had not behaved with the reckless courage which public opinion in those days demanded from every gentleman who entered upon a duel. Mathews is said to have been shunned, and in short, found his delicate honor so bespattered that there was nothing for him but to invite a second duel. Mathews took the trouble of coming down to Bath from his estate in Wales to settle this momentous issue, and by a series of insults provoked young Sheridan until the hot youth could find no reason why once more he should not throw his life as a stake in an encounter with this ridiculous, infinitesimal, and contemptible creature who had slandered at once a young woman and a young man. Sheridan, bleeding profusely, Mathews stabbed him several times viciously; fled to escape justice, with the consoling thought, as he himself said, that he had "done for" poor Sheridan. Sheridan, bleeding profusely, as it was thought, wounded to death, was removed to the White Hart Hotel—now the Pump Room Hotel—and from there, at the entreaty of his agonized sister, was taken to his own home. Meantime the all-unconscious Elizabeth was singing in Oxford, and she had to appear at a concert—the only person ignorant of the calamity that had happened to her lover, for

going to be; at one time his father decided that he was to be a barrister, then that he was to go into diplomacy, then that he was going to get one of those good Government jobs which, in these paternal days, were always ready for the young man of good family and small means; and he felt bound by promises extorted by his father not to continue his courtship. Elizabeth, meantime, is sighing in Bath. Her beauty and her voice attract new admirers to her side; even her father is tempted to give her a husband, his fortune, and his hand. And a further complication is added soon, for she comes to London, and there she has immense success, and divides the plaudits of the town even with the great Mr. Garrick. And she has become irritable and suspicious. Kind friends tell her that Sheridan's love has cooled; he is neglectful of his correspondence; he is even reported to her that he has spoken of her slightly; and she writes to him to say, after, again, the classic fashion, that all is over between them. And Mathews, who is all around her; the papers are full of her; all kinds of chronicles are written of her romantic adventures, including her love for Sheridan; so that when she appears on the stage, as Fanny Burney reports: "Miss Linley alone engrosses all eyes, ears, and hearers." It is in the pages of Miss Burney, too, that we find one of the best descriptions of what Elizabeth Linley was like at this brilliant moment in her life:

"Had I been born for my sins of the male race, I should have certainly added one to Miss Linley's train. She is really beautiful; her complexion a clear, lovely, animated brown, with a blooming color on her cheeks; her nose that of a queen; of shape, Grecian; fine, easy-sitting hair, a charming forehead, pretty mouth and most bewitching eyes. With all this her carriage is modest and unassuming and her countenance indicates diffidence and a strong desire of pleasing—a desire in which she can never be disappointed."

IX. Elizabeth marched from triumph to triumph in London. She is invited to dine with so great a personage as the Bishop of Bristol; and soon after she reaches even a higher eminence, she is invited to sing before George III. and his wife, and for five hours she and her brother amuse their majesties. Nay, more, even the rigid George, confronted by the gorgon eye of this prim and ugly little wife from Germany, adds himself to the already innumerable hosts of Elizabeth's conquests. "He ogled her," says the cynical Horace Walpole, "as much as he dared in so holy a place as an oratorio, and at so devout a service as 'Alexander's Feast.'" And again the married gentleman—this time a nobleman—comes forward and offers her his fortune, though she is unable to offer her legal marriage; to which Elizabeth writes a justly indignant reply. It was, perhaps, the growing sense of the poor girl's exposed position, that may be that Richard Sheridan got round Mr. Linley's heart, or that at last he was convinced that his daughter's affections were immutable; whatever the reason, things began to advance. Sheridan paid an occasional visit to London, and William Abbey was not far off; and there is a legend that once when the young lady was returning from a triumph in a hackney cab, she found to her amazed delight that her driver followed her desperate lover. Perhaps advanced the more rapidly, perhaps, because everybody was protesting that the two could never be one, Sheridan said that he hoped for happiness from his love was and must be impossible; the lady had announced to him in all solemnity that she would never with her own consent be his, and he felt that he would sooner follow her to her grave than see her married to Sheridan. The end to all these vapors came on the 13th of April, when, in Mary Anne's Church, Richard Brinsley Sheridan and Elizabeth Ann Linley were married, with two witnesses, and started on that momentous voyage—with so many tempestuous seas and uncharted eddies and reefs and rocks invisible to the eye and incredible—which begins with married life. It was a year and a month after their elopement from Bath, and after many an hour of anguish and expiation and despair, that they were joined together. How they fared in this new life I shall tell in my next number, and so close this romantic story in which a dramatist makes his personage out of the coinage of his brain, himself enacted a drama, with many and varied episodes, and with black Chimerian darkness of death, and too early separation at its ending.

T. P.

(To be concluded next Saturday.)

Watt, The Steam King

[By Rev. Thomas B. Gregory.]

James Watt, the inventor of the modern engine, was born at Greenock, January 19, 1736. The father, a small merchant, was unable to do anything for his son, and James was early thrown on his own resources.

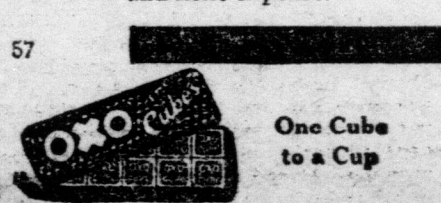
When Watt was about 28 years old, a model of Newcomen's engine was given him to repair. It was a clumsy affair, its usefulness being greatly impaired by the waste of steam at each condensation, and by the expenditure of heat in again raising the required temperature before a first stroke of the piston was possible.

Watt began thinking over the difficulties and the ways and means of doing away with them. For more than a year the problem was uppermost in his mind by day and by night, and in the spring of 1765 as he was strolling on a Sunday across the Glasgow Green, the great idea that was to revolutionize the world and make him immortal burst in upon him in all its glory. No other words than those of Watt himself are appropriate here: "I had gone," he says, "to take a walk on a fine Sunday afternoon. I had entered the Green and had passed the old washing house. I was thinking of the time, and had gone as far as the herd's house when the idea came into my mind that as steam was an elastic body it would rush into a vacuum, and that if a communication were made between the cylinder and an exhausted vessel it would rush into it and might there be condensed without cooling the cylinder. I had not walked farther than the golf house when the



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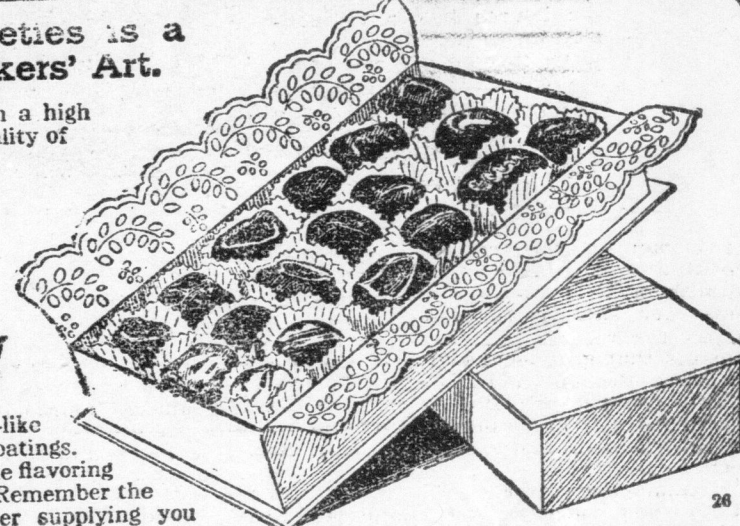
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whole thing was arrayed clearly in my mind."

And thus it came that the employment of a separate condenser, with the discarding of every other force in the action save that of the steam itself, changed the whole condition of the engine, and made it, at one bound, the most powerful ally of civilization. When the full magnitude of the invention was apparent—its almost boundless capacity for human service—the world held its breath, and stood for a time in a state of sheer bewilderment. Men seemed to be afraid of it, and between the invention and its serious application there was an interregnum of several years.

But having done his work, Watt stood waiting, knowing that at last all things would come to him. And they did come—the steamboat, in 1807; the "Clippers," the first steamship to cross the Atlantic; in 1819; the railroad in 1825, to say nothing of the innumerable stationary engines that at once began the mighty work of turning the rough material of earth into the thousand and one articles of trade and commerce.

Watt died in 1819, at the venerable age of 83, his mind bright and his heart young up to the very last hour.

A SUFFRAGIST

Mrs. Pankhurst was presiding over an excited meeting of the Women's Social and Political Union in the Savoy Hotel the other night. At the same time and in the same hotel a dinner was going on in connection with the Bedford College for Women at which the Prime Minister was present. After some hot speeches had been made by the suffragists Miss Pankhurst announced, amidst tremendous cheers, that her two members had succeeded in "intervening" Mr. Asquith at his banquet and had had ten minutes talk with him. Presently Mrs. Cameron Swann, in full dinner toilette, appeared with Miss Leslie Hall and gave the following account of how they had interviewed the Prime Minister at the dinner table. "I feel," she said, "as I have never done before how necessary it is that in dealing with these politicians we should use something which hits. I had summed up the situation before I went, and had come to the conclusion that it would be wiser to make our demonstration just as the meal had started rather than wait for the speeches of the Prime Minister and the members of the Cabinet after they had dined. My one idea was this, that if they used force I would try to krap the tablecloth and clear their meal away."

"I put it to Mr. Asquith that if Mr. Lloyd George really desired the suffragist amendment, then the Government must let us have the smaller measure first and his, Mr. Asquith's, afterwards. We would fancy measure afterwards. We would not stand any collusion between him and Mr. Lloyd George. We would not, I said, have our measure wrecked. Some of the ladies around cried out 'suffragettes' and others asked us not to disturb Mr. Asquith at his dinner. I said 'This is a civil war.' In war we

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Mr. E. J. Fetherstonhaugh, of the above firm, was lately the principal in Fetherstonhaugh, Dennison & Co., Star Bldg., Toronto, which firm no longer exists. There is no Fetherstonhaugh in the Star Bldg. now, but Fetherstonhaugh & Son are in the Manning Arcade, where they will look after all patent and trademark work for their clients.

never choose the time and place, but attack the enemy on every opportunity we possibly can. They asked me not to spoil the dinner."

"I then grasped the tablecloth and Miss Hall grasped a chair. I then turned to Mr. Asquith and said: 'The country does not want manhood suffrage. There is no demand for it.' He said: 'How do you know that?' I told him I was a street corner speaker. Miss Hall was told that it was very hard on Mr. Asquith to do this sort of thing just then. She replied: 'Our women are in prison and it is harder for them than for Mr. Asquith.' By that time our hands had been forced away and we were marched out. Much laughing and loud cheers punctuated this account of the raid on the Premier's dinner."

SIAM'S AMAZON GUARD.

Siam is a corps of women police. The members of this Amazon Guard are all beautiful and young. They wear uniform and carry arms. Their chief duty is to act as gate keepers of the palace, and remain with him until he takes his departure. They have no one makes love to the royal wives and concubines. Men who have business in the palace freely, but are always accompanied by some of the Amazon Guard. The palace has some difficulty in recruiting these guards, as the work is hard and the pay poor, and the work is not complimentary. The London Chronicle.

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