

Sheridan's

Dramatic Works

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## INTRODUCTION

AT the close of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century Richard Brinsley Sheridan was one of the most conspicuous figures in England. The most successful dramatist of his day; among the first of parliamentary orators; one of the last surviving members of the Literary Club, to which he was elected on the nomination of Dr. Johnson; the most brilliant of conversationalists, the trusted friend of the Prince of Wales, the ally of Fox, the associate of Burke, the successor of Garrick in the management of Drury Lane, he filled the public eye as did scarcely a man of his epoch. His family was eminent and has remained illustrious, and his personal adventures were romantic enough to have supplied the materials for his dramas. Among those who paid him extravagant eulogy was Byron, who recorded in an often quoted passage of his diary: 'Whatever Sheridan has done or chosen to do has been, *par excellence*, always the *best* of its kind. He has written the *best* comedy (*School for Scandal*); the *best* opera (*The Duenna*—in my mind far before that St. Giles's lampoon, *The Beggar's Opera*), the *best* farce (*The Critic*—it is only too good for an after-piece), and the *best* address (Monologue on Garrick),—and to crown all, delivered the very *best* oration (the famous Begum Speech) ever conceived or heard in this country.' In a vein of similar exaggeration it was popularly but erroneously affirmed that the same evening that heard him deliver the famous Begum speech witnessed the performance at Covent Garden and Drury Lane respectively of two of his dramatic masterpieces.

Of the aspects in which he presented himself to his contemporaries, several remain unobscured. As a dramatist he still ranks in popularity second only to Shakespeare, and his reputation as an orator is only eclipsed because none but maimed and inaccurate records of his

speeches survive. As a lyrist he does not approach the first rank, and what Byron calls the best of operas is now a stranger to the boards. As a master of artificial comedy he is unequalled in this country, and in France even it is only in the author of *Le Barbier de Séville* and *Le Mariage de Figaro* that one finds a contemporary who is also a rival. It is curious that Beaumarchais, the date of whose comic masterpieces coincides almost exactly with that of *The Rivals* and *The School for Scandal*, should occupy an eminence kindred with that of Sheridan as an orator.

Dismissing the somewhat legendary account that carries back the Sheridan pedigree to days preceding the Norman conquest of England, and links them with Princes of Leitrim, of Sligo, and of Cavan, it may be said that William Sheridan, who died in 1711, was Bishop of Kilmore, but was deprived of his bishopric on account of his Jacobite tendencies. His nephew, Thomas Sheridan, became the intimate friend of Swift, who procured for him a schoolmastership in Dublin and ecclesiastical preferment. The story is familiar how when presented by Carteret, the Lord Lieutenant, to a living in the County of Cork, he preached his first sermon on the text 'Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof'. As the day in question was the 1st of August, the anniversary of the death of Queen Anne, the choice of a text aroused the suspicion of Jacobite tendencies and led to the dispossession of his living, the striking of his name off the list of chaplains, and the prohibition of his appearance at the vice-regal court. His candour with Swift, to whom he undertook and discharged a service analogous to that entrusted to Gil Blas by the Bishop, led to an estrangement subsequently regretted but never repaired. This indiscreet ecclesiastic was the grandfather of the dramatist. Orphaned, and all but penniless, Thomas, his son, cast his eye upon the stage. While an undergraduate he wrote *Captain O'Blunder, or The Brave Irishman* (12mo, 1754), in which the Monsieur de Pourceaugnac of Molière was turned into an Irishman. The success of this, first played presumably in Dublin but given on the 31st January, 1746, in London at Goodman's Fields, was pre-

ceded by that he personally made at Smock Alley Theatre, Dublin, where on the 29th January, 1743, as 'a young gentleman' first, and afterwards under his own name, he appeared as Richard the Third and was at once promoted to a rivalry with Garrick. In the disputes by which the management of the Smock Alley house (to which he was raised in 1745-6) was accompanied, his interests were espoused by Miss Frances Chamberlaine, daughter of the Archdeacon of Glendalough, with a warmth that led to an acquaintance and ripened into a union. This lady had written at the age of fifteen *Eugenia and Adelaide*, subsequently printed and converted into a comic opera by her daughter, Mrs. Lefanu. After her marriage she wrote, on the advice of Richardson, a second novel, *Memoirs of Miss Sidney Biddulph*, published anonymously with a dedication to Richardson (3 vols. 12mo, 1761). This was praised by Johnson and by statesmen such as Fox and Lord North, was translated into French and German, and enjoyed the singular honour of being adapted by l'Abbé Prevost, the author of *Manon Lescaut*, by whom it was entitled *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de la Vertu. Extraits du Journal d'une Dame*. Among other works for which she is responsible some are dramatic. After being read by Garrick, *The Discovery* was produced by that actor at Drury Lane on the 3rd February, 1763, with Garrick and Thomas Sheridan in two principal parts. Sufficient of a triumph was gained to justify further experiments. *The Dupe* was given on the 10th December of the same year, with Mrs. Pritchard and 'Kitty' Clive in the chief female characters, and failed, the victim of an alleged cabal. The next comedy she attempted, *A Journey to Bath*, and a tragedy on which she ventured, were not produced. Mrs. Twyfort in *A Journey to Bath* was the prototype of her son's Mrs. Malaprop.

By his union with this clever woman, Thomas Sheridan had four children, Charles Francis, Richard Brinsley, Elizabeth, and Alicia (Mrs. Lefanu). He was himself a prolific, though scarcely a distinguished writer. From both his parents, then, Sheridan derived his taste for the theatre. It is perhaps fair to suppose that the maternal

was the stronger influence. His father's work was scarcely of a kind greatly to impress him, nor were their relations, though respectful and attentive on the part of the son, uniformly close and cordial. Other and stronger influences were brought to bear. The elopement, for to this it amounted, with Elizabeth Ann Linley, the daughter of Thomas Linley, the well-known composer, herself distinguished as a vocalist and renowned as a beauty, and the two duels with Major Mathews, a married admirer and persecutor, introduced into Sheridan's life a strong flavour of romance, and were in part responsible for his overwhelming popularity. With his literary career, with which alone we are concerned, these things, like his parliamentary triumphs, are but indirectly related, though the character of Sir Lucius O'Trigger in *The Rivals* may perhaps be regarded as a direct outcome of his experiences as a duellist.

To the beauty and distinction of the first wife, testimony is borne from many quarters. Horace Walpole describes her as handsome 'in the superlative degree', and adds that the King (George III) 'ogles her as much as he dares to do in so holy a place as an Oratorio (*Letters*, vol. viii, p. 255, ed. Toynbee). John Wilkes speaks of her as the most modest, pleasing, and delicate flower he had seen for a long time; and Fanny Burney, no friend politically of her husband, says 'the elegance of Mrs. Sheridan's beauty is unequalled by any I ever saw, except Mrs. Crewe' (*Diary and Letters*, i. 187, ed. 1904). Sir Joshua Reynolds painted her as St. Cecilia and as the Virgin in his 'Nativity'. By her Sheridan had one son, Tom, among whose progeny were three daughters—Helen, who married Lord Dufferin; Caroline, the wife, first of George Chappel Norton, Recorder of Guildford, by whom she had three children (the second son of whom, Thomas Brinsley, became Lord Grantley), and afterwards of Sir William Stirling-Maxwell, of Keir; and Jane Georgina, who espoused the twelfth Duke of Somerset, and became the queen of love and beauty of the Eglinton tournament. To describe the ramifications of the distinguished Sheridan pedigree is a task pleasant but superfluous, having been

already accomplished. By Richard Brinsley Sheridan's second wife, Miss Ogle, daughter of the Dean of Winchester, he had one daughter who died in infancy.

Little in Sheridan's early days gave promise of the distinction he was subsequently to attain. A certain Hibernian recklessness and indolence not inherited from his father commended him to his fellows and was condoned by his tutors. Dr. Parr, one of his masters at Harrow, found him slovenly in construing and unusually defective in his Greek grammar. The most that can be said by him of the lad is that he was a great reader of English poetry, while his exercises afforded no proof of his proficiency, and he was quite careless about literary fame. The indifference last named seems speedily to have been abandoned, and he had not long left Harrow before he was engaged with his schoolfellow and associate in the rendering of *Aristaenctus*, published in 1771, Nathaniel Brassey Halhed, in translating *Theocritus*. More significant was their jointly writing a farce entitled *Jupiter*, which, after raising sanguine hopes in the minds of the youthful authors failed to impress either Garrick or Foote. This piece, suggested by the popularity of the *Midas* of Kane O'Hara, reveals distinctly the future dramatist. It is cast in the shape of *The Rehearsal*, soon to be more directly copied in *The Critic*; its language is inspired by Vanbrugh, and it contains one character called Simile in whom it is possible to trace a precursor of Puff. Another scheme of the pair of friends was the publication of a weekly periodical entitled *Hernans Miscellany*, one number of which, written by Sheridan, was found among his papers. To this period belong a few amorous poems, some of them dedicated to Miss Linley, shortly to become his wife, and occasional verses chiefly connected with Bath subjects. In one of the latter occur, it is said, his familiar lines, the authorship of which is not generally known :—

‘ You write with ease to show your breeding,  
But easy writing's curst hard reading.’

Before the production at Covent Garden on the 17th



January, 1775, of *The Rivals*, Sheridan had married Elizabeth Ann Linley and fought his two duels with her unprincipled admirer, Mathews. It was natural that the contest in which he had been engaged should be supposed to have been indicated in his title, *The Rivals*. Writing from Bath Miss Linley, afterwards Mrs. Tickell, says to her sister, Mrs. Sheridan : ' I was told last night that it was his (Sheridan's) own story and therefore called *The Rivals*,' and adds very sensibly, ' but I do not give any credit to the intelligence.' It is, in fact, impossible to fit any of the characters of the real into the mimic drama. Neither Lydia Languish nor Julia bears any more resemblance to Miss Linley than does Captain Absolute or Faulkland to Sheridan. Bob Acres and Mrs. Malaprop have no one to correspond with them in the surrounding circle, and it would be complimenting Mathews too far to find in him a prototype of the chivalrous Sir Lucius O'Trigger.

At the suggestion of Harris, the manager, *The Rivals* was written for Covent Garden. Owing principally to the selection for the part of Sir Lucius of John Lee, a capable though old-fashioned and mannered actor, the favourable expectations generally formed were defeated, and the early performances were not a success. On the 28th of January the obnoxious actor yielded his part to Clinch, and the piece, with a new prologue by the author, sprang into a popularity subsequently maintained in London, and was given during the season in Bath, Southampton, Bristol, and Liverpool. It would have been strange had matters been otherwise. As a comedy of manners nothing equal to it had been seen since ' Restoration ' days, and *She Stoops to Conquer* by Goldsmith, given at the same house two years previously, was the only attempt at rivalry to which it was possible to point. Fault might of course be found. The characters of Bob Acres and Mrs. Malaprop were caricature ; but what caricature ! The unreasonable and extravagant jealousy of Faulkland went virtually unpunished. One may find, moreover, in the dialogue, brilliant as this is, an employment of sentimental speeches such as in *The School for Scandal* awoke,

In the mouth of Joseph Surface, the admiration of Sir Peter Teazle. In the scenes between Sir Anthony and Captain Absolute, however, an amount of comic vivacity is reached which nothing in the comedy of Congreve or Vanbrugh can surpass. The excessive length of the work on its first production seems to have exercised over its early fortunes an influence at least as sinister as that of the choice of an exponent of Sir Lucius. It is probable, though nothing is known on the subject, that the Faulkland and Julia interest, since reduced into an episode and sometimes suppressed in representation, occupied at first a more prominent place than was expedient with regard to the fortunes of the piece. The female exponents, though good, were scarcely the best obtainable, and before the end of the season Miss Barsanti surrendered to Mrs. Mattocks the part of Lydia Languish, in which character she was subsequently seen in Bristol. In its amended shape *The Rivals* has enjoyed a vogue unequalled except by that of *The School for Scandal*, and 'the nice derangement of epitaphs', though in a sense anticipated by honest Dogberry, has enriched the language with a term, 'Malapropism,' still constantly employed.

For the second contribution of Sheridan to the stage the service rendered by Clinch in coming to the rescue in the character of Sir Lucius was responsible. *St. Patrick's Day, or The Scheming Lieutenant* was given at Covent Garden on the 2nd May, 1775, for the benefit of that actor, who played in it the part of Lieutenant O'Connor. It is a trifle in two acts, showing the imposition practised by the Lieutenant upon a Justice of the Peace with whose daughter he is in love. Persuading the Justice that he is poisoned, the Lieutenant personates a German quack doctor and exacts the promise of his daughter's hand as the price of a cure. Presumably an early sketch, this work shows little either of wit or comic invention. On the stage it enjoyed a certain measure of success, was played several times, and was revived so late as 1821, when it was given at Covent Garden with 'Gentleman' Jones as the Lieutenant, William Farren

as Dr. Rosey, and Liston as Justice Credulous. Since then it has slept.

By this time the stage had taken full possession of Sheridan's mind, and the holy-day period of the year that witnessed the production of *The Rivals* was devoted to writing *The Duenna*. For the story of this, slight as it is, Sheridan is said to have had recourse to some famous authors, among whom are mentioned Molière, Wycherley, and Mrs. Centlivre. Very slight is, however, his indebtedness to any of them, and the obligation to an incident in the *Country Wife* which Moore in his *Life of Sheridan* points out may be dismissed as all but imaginary. Neither upon plot nor dialogue has much pains been lavished, and the comparison by Donna Louisa of the position of her converted Jewish lover Isaac to the blank leaves between the Old and New Testament is the one brilliant conceit in the work. As in the comedies of Colley Cibber, however, and some of those of Garrick, the dialogue has briskness and animation that almost do duty for wit. Like the nymph after whom Isaac sighed, Sheridan's language

‘no beauty can boast  
But health and good humour to make her his toast’.

Some of the lyrics, notably the song of Don Carlos :

‘Had I a heart for falsehood framed  
I ne’er could injure you,’

survive, but the verse as a rule can claim no merit beyond facility. For the success of the whole—which was conspicuous, eclipsing that of *The Beggar's Opera*, or any other work of the same class—the collaboration of Linley, to whom was entrusted the choice of the music and who admirably executed his task, must be held largely responsible.

While *The Duenna* still held possession of Covent Garden, Sheridan took the most important step of his life by succeeding Garrick as patentee and manager of Drury Lane. How he acquired the £10,000—which constituted his share in a purchase in which he was

associated with Linley his father-in-law and Dr. Ford—remains yet a subject of debate. At any rate, Drury Lane opened under Sheridan's management on the 21st September, 1776.

Sheridan's first contribution to the house now his own consisted of *A Trip to Scarborough*—a workmanlike adaptation of Vanbrugh's ingenious but highly indecent comedy *The Relapse*. In spite of the freedom with which are drawn the characters of Amanda and Berinthia, the original still held possession of the stage, from which, however, it was finally displaced by Sheridan's brilliant, though in its day much condemned, alteration. *A Trip to Scarborough* was produced on the 24th February, 1777, with Dodd as Lord Foppington. On the 8th of May of the same year was given for the first time *The School for Scandal*, which is not only the greatest work of the dramatist but the confessed masterpiece of artificial comedy. All circumstances attendant upon the production were favourable. From the fine company bequeathed him by Garrick, Sheridan was enabled to select a cast so exemplary that Genest, the historian of the stage, writing presumably half a century or more later, is able to affirm that though the piece 'has continued on the acting list at Drury Lane from that time (1777) to this, and been several times represented at Covent Garden and the Haymarket, yet no new performer has ever appeared in any one of the principal characters, that was not inferior to the person who acted it originally.' The same holds good to the present time. A picture in the Garrick Club of the original cast in the scene at the moment of the disclosure of Lady Teazle reveals a formalism in grouping, from which, though it is still observed at the Comédie Française, our stage is now fortunately free. The formalism in question is, however, characteristic of the epoch, and lasted until the invasion of realism. The reception of the work was triumphant and the consensus of praise universal. An attempt to deprive Sheridan of the honours of authorship by assigning them to a young lady, the daughter of a merchant in Thames Street, who afterwards died at Bristol

of pectoral decay, was as transparent a lie with a circumstance as Crabtree's account of the ball from the pistol of Sir Peter, which missing its object struck against a little bronze Shakespeare that stood over the fireplace, glanced out of the window at a right angle, and wounded the postman, who was just coming to the door with a double letter from Northamptonshire. A certain amount of indebtedness to the author's predecessors there is, but even this has been exaggerated. In the heartlessness of Charles Surface, who finds in the troubles of Sir Peter matter for mirth, there is most trace of the influence of the Restoration drama, though the charge brought against Sheridan of making the conversation of his lackeys as brilliant as that of his gentlefolk was incurred by Congreve.

Writing in 1812, Baker, Reed, and Jones, the authors of the *Biographia Dramatica*, are able to speak of *The School for Scandal* as still unprinted, and stress has been laid on the fact that a surreptitious edition published in 1788 in Dublin has as much right as any to be regarded as the *editio princeps*. It might have been thought that, considering the state of Sheridan's finances, the offer by Ridgway of £500 for the copyright of *The School for Scandal* would have proved tempting, yet at the author's death the work was still unpublished in any authorised edition. In the case of few dramas of equal importance, however, are we so familiar with methods of workmanship, and it is difficult to resist the wish that as bright a light as is cast upon the conversion into *The School for Scandal* of the sketches known as 'The Teazles' and 'The Slanderers, a Pump Room Scene' were available in the case of masterpieces of the Tudor drama. Idle as Sheridan represented himself and was, he was not sparing of the *limae labor et mora*—counselled by Horace—and the polish assigned to characters and expression is the work of a thorough artist.

One more masterpiece Sheridan was to contribute to Drury Lane. On the 30th October, 1779, *The Critic, or A Tragedy Rehearsed*, a dramatic piece in three acts, was shuffled on to the stage, the last act being written

by Sheridan in confinement on the eve of the day of production. In the composition of this, Sheridan was directly inspired by *The Rehearsal* of the Duke of Buckingham, which, though produced in 1671, was still occasionally revived, and was influenced in a less degree by Fielding's *The Tragedy of Tragedies, or The Life and Death of Tom Thumb the Great*. In its way each of these satires is a masterpiece, and if all are now banished from the stage, the cause is found in the disappearance of the class of tragedies against which their shafts are directed. The wittiest as well as the most modern of all, *The Critic*, has been once or twice revived in days comparatively recent, though generally for a single occasion and for a benefit. The younger Charles Mathews even obtained a measure of reputation in the part of Puff. On such occasions no attempt was made to respect the text of the author. The wildest gags were permitted, and the whole was ordinarily a burlesque of a burlesque. In the number of stock quotations it supplies, *The Critic* is inferior to neither *The Rivals* nor *The School for Scandal*, and it comes behind neither in style. Some resemblance in dialogue is traceable between it and *The School for Scandal*. Where Sneer objects to Puff: 'But, Mr. Puff, I think not only the Justice but the clown seems to talk in as high a style as the first hero among them,' Sheridan uses a reproach that had often doubtless been directed against his own previous works. The language of Puff when he boasts himself 'a practitioner in panegyric' is as florid as that of Sir Benjamin Backbite. The character of Cumberland as depicted in Sir Fretful Plagiary is perhaps the best drawn in Sheridan.

This was the last original work that the popular dramatist contributed to his own theatre. Little trouble was taken to deny the reports that ascribed to him *The Camp*, a musical entertainment, the scene of action in which was the camp at Coxheath. This piece, which during a couple of seasons enjoyed a considerable measure of success, had not, says Tate Wilkinson, who was likely to know, a line of Sheridan's. It was, however, printed as his in the collected edition of his works, but was in

fact by his brother-in-law Richard Tickell. In other pieces Sheridan had a share. In *The Glorious First of June*, written to celebrate the victory of Lord Howe over the French Fleet and ascribed to Cobb, he had a hand. The production of this trifle, which included songs by the Duke of Leeds, Lord Mulgrave, and others, is unmentioned by Genest. Of the translation of *The Stranger* of Kotzebue, ascribed to Benjamin Thompson, included in the German theatre which he published and produced at Drury Lane, 24th March, 1798, Sheridan claimed to have written every word. *Pizarro*, also by Kotzebue, was avowedly written by Sheridan, and is still included in his dramatic works. It was a marvellous success, was translated back into German, and had the singular good fortune to have its two principal female characters played by Mrs. Siddons (Elvira) and Mrs. Jordan (Cora). For the period this must be regarded as a good melodrama. The merit of invention must be ascribed to the German original. Sheridan's share in the success obtained is confined to portions of the dialogue, the patriotic tone of which appealed to a public then stirred by French preparations and menaces to the dread of an invasion. In the rhetorical speech to the Peruvian soldiers, the most effective passages were taken from Sheridan's political addresses. Among dramatic works attributed to Sheridan by the *Biographia Dramatica* are an unprinted alteration of *The Tempest*, produced at Drury Lane, 4th Jan., 1777, and a pantomime on the subject of Robinson Crusoe, played at the same house in 1781, and printed in 1797.

## PRINCIPAL DATES IN THE LIFE OF SHERIDAN

1751. Richard Brinsley Sheridan b. at 12 Dorset Street, Dublin, Oct. 30; second s. of Thomas Sheridan the younger (actor and elocutionist) and Frances Chamberlaine his wife (author of plays and novels); grandson of the Rev. Thos. Sheridan, D.D., friend and biographer of Swift (d. 1766).
- 1762-8. R. B. S. at Harrow School.
1771. Thomas Sheridan (father of R. B. S.) settles in Bath.
- 1771-3. R. B. S. in London.
1771. Published, with N. B. Halhed, verse translation of *Epistles* of Aristaenetus (ed. 2, 1773); later, contributed verses to *Bath Chronicle*.
1772. Accompanies Miss Elizabeth Ann Linley to Calais.
1772. Fights duels with Capt. Mathews (March); in the second is severely wounded.
1773. At Waltham Abbey; studies mathematics, astronomy, &c.
1773. Enters Middle Temple (April 6).
1773. Marries Miss Linley (April 13).
- 1773-4. At East Burnham and London.
1775. *The Rivals* brought out at Covent Garden Theatre (Jan. 17); improved version (Jan. 28).
1775. *St. Patrick's Day* performed at Covent Garden (May 2).
1776. Buys Garrick's share in Drury Lane Theatre [see Brander Matthews, 28-31]; it opens under his direction Sept. 21.
1777. Gives *The Rivals* at Drury Lane (Jan. 16).  
*A Trip to Scarborough* (Feb. 24).  
*The School for Scandal* (May 8).
1779. *The Critic* (Oct. 30).
1777. Elected member of the Literary Club on proposal of Dr. Johnson (March).
1780. M.P. for Stafford (maiden speech Nov. 20). Opposes the war in America.
1782. Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs in Lord Rockingham's second Ministry.
1783. Refuses to serve under Lord Shelburne; Secretary to the Treasury (Feb. 21) under Duke of Portland.
1783. Portland Ministry dismissed (December).



- 1787. Speech in Parliament on the Begums of Oude (Feb. 7); replies to defence, 1794.
- 1788. Confidential adviser to Prince of Wales.
- 1788. Upholds right of the Prince to assume Regency without sanction of Parliament.
- 1788. Speech as Manager of the impeachment of Warren Hastings before the High Court of Parliament in Westminster Hall (June 3, 6, 10).
- 1788. Death of Sheridan's father (Aug. 14).
- 1791. Old Drury Theatre ordered to be pulled down and rebuilt.
- 1792. Death of Mrs. R. B. Sheridan (June 28).
- 1794. First performance at New Drury (April 21).
- 1794. Sheridan marries Miss Elizabeth Jane Ogle, of Winchester.
- 1794. Speech in Parliament against French War.
- 1797. Speech on Mutiny at the Nore.
- 1798. Defends freedom of the Press in Parliament.
- 1799. Opposes the Union (Jan. 23).
- 1799. *Pizarro* produced (May 29).
- 1803. Speech urging resistance to Bonaparte.
- 1806. Treasurer of the Navy in 'Ministry of all the Talents'; M.P. for Westminster.
- 1807-12. Loses seat for Stafford; defeated at General Election; M.P. for Ilchester 1807-12; again defeated at Stafford 1812. Last Speech (June 21).
- 1809. Drury Lane Theatre burnt (Feb. 24).
- 1813. Arrested for debt (? August).
- 1816. RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN dies at 17 Savile Row (July 7).
- 1816. Buried in Westminster Abbey (July 13).
- 1817. Death of his son Thomas at the Cape (Sept. 12).

\* \* Many biographies of Sheridan have been written. Among them may be mentioned those by Thomas Moore (1825); Mr. Percy Fitzgerald (1887); 'An Octogenarian' (1859); Prof. W. Smyth of Cambridge (Leeds, 1840, privately printed); Mrs. Oliphant (1883); Mr. L. C. Sanders (n.d.), with full bibliography; Mr. Fraser Rae (who also contributes the Life in the *Dictionary of National Biography*); and Mr. Brander Matthews in his edition of *The Rivals* and *The School for Scandal* (1885).

It is impossible to pass over an article published in *The Ancestor*, No. 9 (April, 1904), by Mr. Wilfred Sheridan, which is important for its brilliant and amusing sketch of the family, as well as for several admirable illustrations. The writer mentions that, in the wedding which closes the long list of Gretna Green marriages, the bridegroom was a Sheridan; and calls attention to recent