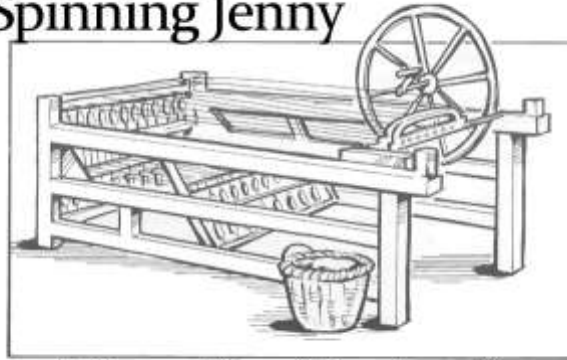

The Time of Spinning Jenny



A Choose Your Adventure Story

The Industrial Revolution is changing every thing in England. Your family has always lived off the land. Two hundred years ago your family began to raise sheep and cattle. The farm was handed down from generation to generation. Now your farm cottage is gone. Your father is dead and your mother is very sick, living with her sister. You are in your teens, alone and heading for the city to make your way in the world. You have very little money which you must live on, until you find work.

You have heard there are many factories in the city. Many of them make raw cotton into yarn. In the old days people spun and wove at home. But now there are complicated new machines like the spinning jenny. A worker can turn a wheel and several threads are spun at once. You are clever. Surely you can learn to work one of these machines. You have been told that

inside the factory the workers are like soldiers in an army. Each worker has a task to do. Everyone must work together at the same speed. In a way, the workers are part of the big machines.

If you find work in the city, you must find a room in a tenement building. Your sister-in-law has told you that it would be more pleasant to work in a coffee house in London.

"Some of those little coffee houses are such exciting places. All the famous writers and the powerful politicians go there. You hear all the gossip. And the work is not nearly as hard as it would be in a factory," your sister-in-law says. She worked in such a place before she was married. She told you some outrageous tales about some famous people who came to the coffee house.

■ If you go to a factory, turn to page 2

■ If you go to a coffee house, turn to 3

You go to a large factory and tell the manager you are eager for work. You are strong and healthy, and the manager seems to like you right away.

You enter a cotton mill and find it very large. The machines look like monsters. They are spinning and weaving constantly. Great rollers are always in motion, driven by steam. The air isn't very good. It seems the cotton dust makes everybody cough.

"The things to watch out for," says your boss, "are these rollers. If they catch you they'll break your bones like twigs. They will pull you right into the machine if you aren't careful."

You nod nervously.

"If you are too slow, we don't need you. This is no place for sluggards," your boss says.

Again you nod. If only you can keep up with everyone else!

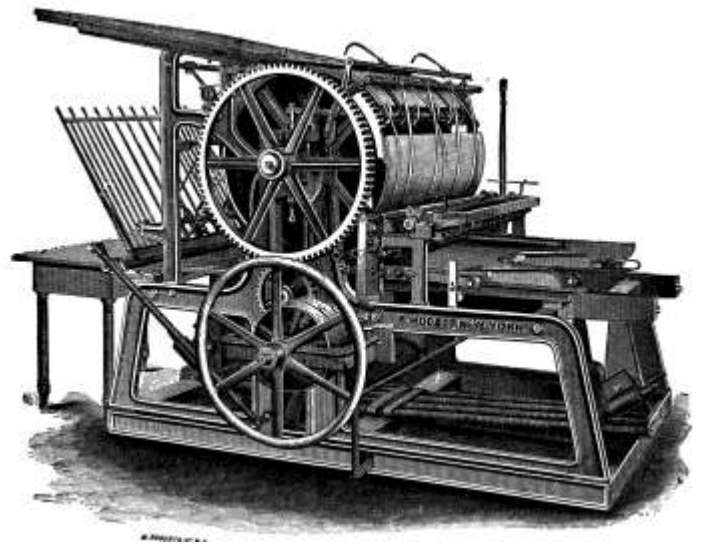
You learn quickly and grow very skillful at operating the spinning jenny. You spin more thread from cotton than almost anybody else. But you must work fifteen to sixteen hours a day. You are really worn out at the end of the long day. You must trudge home in the darkness to your dreary tenement. You share a tiny room with four other mill workers.

As you hurry along, you hear footsteps behind you. You know how common robberies are on these streets. The criminals are so bold they sometimes rob in broad daylight. But it's dark now and the footsteps gain on you!

Suddenly a rough man jumps at you. You scream as you tumble, bloody and bruised, into the street. Luckily someone hears your cries. Two fellow mill workers catch the thief and hold him for the sheriff. You get your money back. A few weeks later you hear that the thief has been sentenced to hang for many crimes.

"Let's go and watch the fellow swing," suggests one of your roommates. "It should be something to see."

You are not so sure you want to see a hanging.



■ If you go to the hanging, turn to page 4

■ If not, turn to page 5

You think that working at a coffee house would be easier and more fun than at a factory. You are strong, pleasant, and cheerful, so you are soon hired at a busy London coffee house. Most of the people who come in are country gentlemen. You come from a small farm, and you never knew what a pleasant life these people led. They stroll around the park every morning, and then they spend the afternoon meeting their friends in the coffee houses. They have smooth hands that show no sign of hard work.

You serve tea and pastries as well as liquor to the gentlemen. Sometimes you are very busy and you must hurry to satisfy everyone. But other times you can take it easy and listen to the gossip. You hear jokes about the king and other members of the royalty. Some of the gossip makes your eyes pop wide open.

Today, three of the gentlemen are getting very drunk. The more they drink, the more they argue. Right now they are fighting about the gambling debt one of them owes the other two. They demand more liquor, and when you try to set it down, it spills. It's not your fault. When men are shouting and cursing like that, it would make anyone nervous enough to spill liquor. But now the liquor is all over the fellow's pants!

"Fool! Idiot!" he screams. Your boss comes running. This gentleman is a very good customer. He comes in every single day.

"I am so sorry, Sir," your boss says.

"I want this simpleton fired at once," the gentleman demands. His word is law. Soon you are out on the street

It's a cold evening. You must find work soon, but nobody needs you. You are desperate when you see a drunken gentleman walking down the street toward you. He is dressed in a velvet coat. He wears expensive jewelry. You hate to beg, but your room rent is due tomorrow. Perhaps he would give you a coin if you asked. Or would he fling you into the gutter?

■ If you ask, turn to page 6

■ If not, turn to page 7



You have never been to a hanging. You have heard they are all different. Sometimes the person to be hanged screams and puts on quite a show. Other times even bad criminals die with quiet dignity. You hope you don't get upset seeing it.

There are hundreds of people already there when you arrive. Many have brought bread and cheese and meat to snack on during the hangings. There is a kind of party feeling. People are laughing and joking. A few are taking bets on how the different criminals will act.

"It seems awful to make a party of a hanging," you say.

"Well," your roommate says, "these people are getting what they deserve. Look at all the people they robbed, or maybe hurt or killed. They owe us a free show. That thief who knocked you into the street could have killed you. What if you had struck your head on a paving stone? A lot he cared!"

"Yes," you agree. But you feel strange inside. Your stomach feels like it does when you eat something that doesn't agree with you. You hope you aren't going to be sick.

Slowly, the jailers and the people to be hanged appear. A cry of excitement goes up.

"There the wretches are," a woman laughs.

"Dance lively, lads," a man yells.

You notice that one of the criminals to be hanged is a little boy. He set fire to a house. It was a terrible crime, but the boy is only nine years old!

Everybody is pushing and shoving for a better view. You want to run away, but you don't. You watch six people hang. Two are pickpockets. Three are strong-arm thieves.

You watch the man who robbed you hang. He lets out an awful scream. You will never forget it.

The last one to hang is the nine-year-old boy. He is very quiet. He doesn't even cry. But you cry. And you get violently sick.

You are sorry you came today.



You just haven't the heart to go to see a hanging. You are afraid the sight would haunt you for the rest of your life. Then, the next day, you are so glad you didn't go. You are invited to see a play. You have never seen a real play in a theatre before.

You enter the theatre with your friend in the afternoon. You are embarrassed to be so poorly dressed. Your young friend, who is related to the owner of the cotton mill, is so well dressed.

But you are determined to enjoy yourself anyway. The play is called *The Rivals*. It was first seen in Covent Garden in London twenty-five years ago. It's a wonderful comedy, and soon you are laughing. One of the characters is called Mrs. Malaprop. She uses the wrong word for everything. It is very funny.



You laugh more than you have in ages. You almost forget your dull, hard job at the mill.

The next week you go to the opera with your new friend. You don't enjoy that as much. But you pretend you do, because your friend likes opera. And you really enjoy being with your new friend. The fact that you come from different social classes does not seem to matter. You have a lot in common. You both enjoy taking long walks in the country, and you both like to laugh a lot. You don't like people who are so serious they seem afraid to laugh.

In the springtime of the next year, you and your friend are married. You enter into the world of the upper middle classes. Your life of drudgery is over. You continue to work at the cotton mill, but now you work on the ledgers-accounts books. You are one of the bosses. .

How strange life is! Suddenly you are looking forward to a life of comfort and plenty.

■ Turn to page 8

"Please, Sir, I am out of work and soon to be thrown out of my room. Could you spare me a few coins? I will pay you back when I am working again," you say.

The man turns to look at you. He almost falls down at your feet. He is so drunk he cannot understand a word you said!

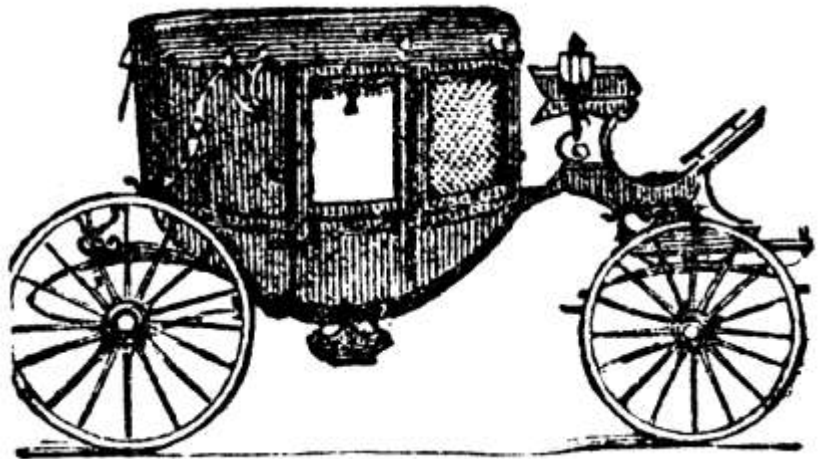
'Just a few coins so that I might pay my rent," you plead.

But the man falls to his knees and topples over! And it has begun to snow! You see his carriage across the street with his horses patiently waiting. But he will never make it
Already snowflakes are powdering his shoulders as he lies at your feet

A man and woman, smartly dressed, come along. "Would you help me get this man to his carriage?" you ask them. "He will surely freeze to death lying here."

"Drunken wastrel," the man snaps. "The world shall be well rid of him!"

"Disgusting!" sniffs the woman. She and her husband hurry on. You imagine they think you and the drunken man are together!



You drag him to his feet, pulling his arm around your neck. Luckily he is a slight man.
You drag him to his carriage and get him into a seat. You are exhausted!

The man is too drunk to drive the carriage, so you must climb in beside him and take the reins. The horses are clever enough to go straight home when you hold the reins loosely and give them their heads.

The angry wife is waiting in front of the house. You quickly explain that you found the man and feared he would die in the snow.

"Bless you, child," the woman says. She asks you in for hot cider and coffee cake. When you tell her of your problems she offers you a job as housekeeper.

You get a small room of your own and must perform light duties. You are so happy and grateful.

You fear asking the fellow for help and you rush on, going around a corner as it begins to snow. You see a well-dressed couple getting out of their carriage.

"Please, do you have a spare coin-" you ask in a timid voice.

"Go away, you dreadful beggar," the woman says. "It's a disgrace that an able-bodied young person would have the nerve to annoy people by begging!"

"Off with you before I take a buggy whip to you," snaps the man.

The snow is falling heavily now. How quickly it covers the street. You remember as a child watching the snow come down. It was a beautiful, exciting sight. You were safe and warm inside your parents' cottage. Now the snow frightens you. You are so cold. And if you return to your room without the rent money, you will be thrown out at once.

You go into an alley under an overhanging roof. At least it is dry here. You sit down to rest your aching legs. But how cold you are! You are shivering and your teeth are chattering. It sounds like your mouth is full of marbles.

You would have frozen to death if the police had not found you and taken you to the poorhouse. The poorhouse is a dreadful, crowded place, but at least it is warm. You get some thin soup and a place to sleep.

When you try looking for a job again, you feel weak and sick. You have a hacking cough. You cannot afford to go to the doctor. And nobody wants to hire a sick person.

Finally you collapse on the street. You suffer a hemorrhage, a gush of blood from your lungs. You are taken to a public hospital. You are suffering from tuberculosis. Sadly, there is no real treatment for the disease and you die in two months. You are only fifteen years old.

■ Turn to page 8



Epilogue



The English were the first and, for many decades, the only people in the world to experience the material benefits and social costs of industrialization. Favored by an abundant labor supply, strong domestic and foreign markets, rich coal deposits, plentiful capital, a sound banking system, good transportation, a favorable business climate, and government stability, England began to industrialize in the eighteenth century. By the 1760s new mechanical devices for spinning and weaving were beginning to transform the textile industry, and by the early 1800s, coal-burning steam engines were being applied not just to textile manufacture but also to iron-smelting, brewing, milling, and a host of other industrial processes. In 1830, the first steam-driven locomotive made the trip between Liverpool and Manchester, and within only two decades railroads were moving people and goods throughout England.

During the nineteenth century industrialization spread from England to continental Europe, the United States, and Japan, and in the process changed considerably. During the final decades of the 19th century small family-owned businesses gave way to large corporations, monopolies, and cartels; finance capital became more important; new energy sources such as petroleum and electricity were introduced; and, most importantly, new scientific discoveries, especially in chemistry, transformed thousands of industrial processes.

The Industrial Revolution was a revolution in every sense of the term. It affected politics, work, people's standards of living, marriage, child-rearing, leisure, and, most fundamentally, the structure of society itself. In preindustrial Europe landowning aristocrats dominated society and politics, and peasants were the largest socioeconomic group. Preindustrial cities consisted of a middle class, or bourgeoisie, made up of merchants and professionals at the top and artisans and small shopkeepers below them. These cities also contained numerous servants and unskilled workers who earned wages as porters and laborers.

Industrial Europe looked quite different. Cities grew enormously, especially industrial centers like Birmingham, England, which grew from 73,000 to 250,000 between 1801 and 1850, and Liverpool, which grew from 77,000 to 400,000 in the same half-century. Europe in 1800 had twenty-one cities with populations over 100,000. By 1900 the number of such cities had reached one hundred twenty. Within these cities there had emerged a new class of factory workers, the "proletariat," who took their place in the working class alongside skilled tradesmen, servants, and day laborers. Industrialization and urbanization also increased the numbers, diversity, and wealth of the middle class. To the ranks of merchants, lawyers, doctors, and shopkeepers, there now were added industrialists, managers, government officials, white-collar workers, and skilled professionals in such fields as engineering, architecture, accounting, chemistry, and higher education.

