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THE CONSCIENCE AND SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS OF HARRIET MARTINEAU

A Dissertation Presented

By

VALERIE KOSSEW PICHANICK

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

March 1976

History

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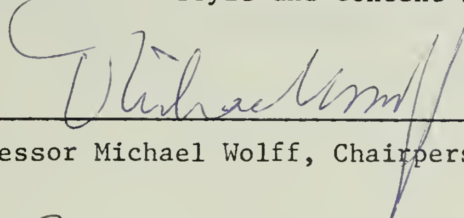

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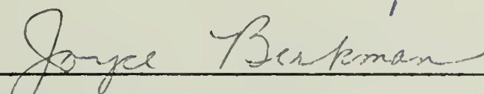

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To those friends whose encouragement and patience spurred my efforts, and to Marcelle who generously shared her mother's time with Harriet Martineau, I lovingly dedicate this work.

I would also like to thank the members of my committee for their careful reading of my manuscript, and to express my gratitude to Professor Howard Gadlin for his interest and assistance. I am deeply indebted to the librarians at those institutions at which my work was accomplished, especially those at the University of Massachusetts; Manchester College, Oxford; Trinity College, Cambridge; and Dr. Williams's Library, London. I would like to thank Birmingham University for permission to quote from the Martineau Papers. And my special thanks go to the Woodrow Wilson Foundation for their confidence and support.

ABSTRACT

The Conscience and Social Consciousness of Harriet Martineau

(March 1976)

Valerie Kossew Pichanick, B.A., University of Cape Town
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Directed by: Professor Michael Wolff

Harriet Martineau (1802-1876) was an English writer of considerable contemporary importance. Her career spanned forty-five formative years in British history. She was an astute observer of her society and so close to the center of events that a study of her career and works serves not only to illustrate her life but also the era in which she lived.

Harriet Martineau was the daughter of a middle-class Unitarian family. Her earliest writings were concerned primarily with religion and philosophy and both subjects were to remain abiding interests. In the 1830s her attention began to focus on England's social and economic problems. She conceived the idea of teaching the public the principles of political economy so that it could thereby assist in its own regeneration. The publication of Illustrations of Political Economy (1832-1834) made Harriet Martineau an instant celebrity. She was associated with the Political Economists and the Radical Reformers and she sought through laissez-faire, self-help and democracy to end old aristocratic monopolies in trade and government and to achieve at last the greatest happiness of the greatest number.

After completing the Illustrations Martineau spent two years in the United States. Her tour produced Society in America (1837) and Retrospect

of Western Travel (1838). In Society in America Martineau not only made an important sociological statement about America but she chose also to judge it according to the standards of its Declaration of Independence. She concluded that as long as slavery existed, and as long as women were denied the dignity of an equality of education and opportunity, democracy in America was a mockery. The abolition of slavery and the advocacy of women's rights remained two of Harriet Martineau's lifelong causes.

Harriet Martineau was one of those Victorians who was unable to reconcile religious orthodoxy and empiricism and she followed the path which led to unbelief. She knew that her action would be reprobated but she was not one to suppress her convictions. In Eastern Life Present and Past (1847) she rejected the essence of Christianity. With Henry George Atkinson in Letters on the Laws of Man's Nature and Development (1851) she denied that the God conceived by Judaic-Christian tradition was the first cause. In 1853 she translated and condensed Auguste Comte's Positive Philosophy and embraced the scientific elements in his philosophical theory.

Martineau's interest in the socio-economic and political problems of England did not end with the publication of the Illustrations. In The History of England during the Thirty Years' Peace (1849 and 1850) and its subsequent additions, she wrote a contemporary history which remains an important document as well as an intrinsically valuable work. The subjects which most deeply concerned her found expression in the History: the condition of the working-class, pauperism, public education, monopoly and protection, the non-representative character of government, Ireland, imperialism, colonial rule, and domestic and foreign politics. When she

devoted her life to journalism after 1854 she used her position as an editorialist to publicize these and other concerns. She continued to champion abolition and she kept the question of women's rights before her reading public. Her Autobiography was posthumously published in 1877.

Neither Harriet Martineau's life nor her writings were without controversy. She spoke out on unpopular issues and she embraced radical causes. She was a popularizer of other people's ideas rather than an original thinker but her opinions reached a large audience. Her preoccupations and prejudices even when they were uniquely her own, influenced then, and illuminate now the milieu in which she lived.

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PREFACE

Since the appearance of her posthumously published Autobiography in 1877, Harriet Martineau (1802-1876) has been the subject of several studies and biographies. The most recent full-length works on Martineau have been Vera Wheatley's The Life and Work of Harriet Martineau (1957), and Robert K. Webb's Harriet Martineau: A Radical Victorian (1960). Wheatley's book does not claim to be scholarly and tends to be hagiographic. But Webb has made important contributions to Martineau scholarship and it therefore becomes necessary to justify a reappraisal. Webb's error has principally been one of perspective: instead of trying to see the nineteenth-century as Martineau saw it, and relating her view of it to current opinion, Webb has turned the telescope about, and, looking at Martineau within the framework of the literature and philosophy of the period, he sees a very small figure indeed. He does not sufficiently emphasize either the importance of Martineau within her own milieu, or the significance of her views about that milieu. He stops short of describing her as completely irrelevant, but he leads the reader to conclude that Martineau's most enduring quality was her eccentricity, and that she was otherwise too "second-rate," and too "imbedded" in her own period to demand much attention. Because of his dismissive attitude he has, therefore, made little sustained attempt to examine her work, and he has not afforded it that degree of respect which indeed it merits.

Martineau's importance was contemporary, and it is primarily in this that she becomes important for the historian of the nineteenth century. She sought not immortality but immediate influence, and in her own time she achieved it. Her eclecticism may have made her a second-rate

philosopher, but it did not prevent her from being a significant purveyor of new ideas. She was in advance of most popular opinion, and she did much to lead that opinion: if her views were sometimes repugnant to her readers, they were seldom ignored. She was a remarkably competent observer of her own society, an arbiter of opinion, and a publicizer of radical ideas. She reached an audience of remarkable proportions, and the handicap of being a woman in a profession and an age dominated by men did not prevent her from achieving a rare prominence. Her works have an intrinsic interest and value even when they fail to compare with the philosophical or literary qualities of her more eminent contemporaries. They are, furthermore, important to the modern historian not only for what they tell us of Martineau, but also, because through her they help to illuminate her era.

My aim has not been to write either a critique of Webb, or a defense of Martineau, but simply to re-examine and re-interpret her life and works in the age which gave them birth. My main focus will be on her career and on the ideas--religious, philosophical, political, social and economic--which found expression in her writings. I cannot and shall not attempt to chronicle all the works and subjects which preoccupied her during a literary career which spanned forty-five years, to do so would be to lose sight of her main works, and of the intellectual and moral concepts which most particularly absorbed her. The act of selection is a personal one and there will inevitably be omissions, but I have endeavored as far as possible to be impartial and to remain true to the spirit in which Martineau wrote. I have kept her chief priorities always before me: her economic and political liberalism, her abolitionism, her

feminism, and the development of her religious and philosophical opinion. I have tried to present her strengths as well as her weaknesses, and to maintain, as far as I was able, the nice line between objectivity and empathy.

CHAPTER I

A HUMAN MIND FROM THE VERY BEGINNING

> No creature is so intensely reserved as a proud and timid child: and the cases are few in which the parents know anything of the agonies of its little heart. . . . It hides its miseries under an appearance of indifference or obstinacy, till its habitual terror impairs its health, or drives it into a temper of defiance or recklessness. I can speak with some certainty of this, from my own experience. I was [wrote Harriet Martineau] as timid a child as ever was born. . . .[1]

When Elizabeth Martineau gave birth to the sixth of her eight children on June 12, 1802 she confided the infant to the indifferent care of a wet-nurse. This was neither an actual nor a symbolic rejection of the child, for well-to-do middle-class mothers seldom nursed their own children. Yet the act of abandonment was significant, and it was repeatedly reinforced during the formative years of the young Harriet Martineau. Elizabeth Martineau gave her child few tokens of affection, and her seeming indifference was compounded by the frequency with which she sent the delicate and often difficult Harriet from home. The little girl's earliest recollections were not of mother and the comfortable brick house on Magdalen Street in Norwich, but of strange coarse sheets and an unfamiliar creaking bed-stead in a distant rural cottage.[2] "I really think, if I had once conceived that any body cared for me," she wrote in her Autobiography, "nearly all the sins and sorrows of my anxious childhood would have been spared me."[3] She was then fifty-two and a lifetime away from the frightened little girl who seldom passed a day without crying. But the child

> . . . who . . . scarcely dared to look round from fear of lights on the ceiling or shadows on the wall, who started at the patter of rain, or the rustle of the birds leaving the spray, who felt

> suffocated by the breeze and maddened by the summer lightening, . . . who trembled before a new voice or a grave countenance, and writhed under a laugh of ridicule. . . .[4]

. . . who suffered the agonies of loneliness, the pangs of sibling jealousy, and the fears of rejection, confided her anxieties to no one; and least of all to her mother.

As Harriet Martineau herself conceded, "Cheerful tenderness . . . was in those days thought bad for children."[5] And so, although Elizabeth Martineau scrupulously cared for her daughter's material and educational needs, she ignored her emotional wants; she gave her little girl no demonstrable tokens of her affection, and she failed to inspire that trust which is surely the first task of maternal care.[6] Instead of encouraging her daughter's love she succeeded only in inspiring her with fear. And, if in maturity Harriet Martineau pleaded with parents to be an "unfailing refuge" for their children, it was partly because she herself had had need of a refuge and had failed to find it.[7] Instead of experiencing love and security she had known only the bewildering unreality of her own isolation. Her otherwise careful and conscientious parents had erected a barrier of authority between themselves and their offspring, and, because they had not invited their child's confidences, they had never discovered the intensity of her need to love and to be loved.

Thomas Martineau, Harriet's father, was a manufacturer of bombazines and camlets, and an importer of wines in the old cathedral city of Norwich. Norwich had been a distinguished manufacturing town and a celebrated cultural center in the eighteenth century, but it was gradually becoming a casualty of the industrial revolution. As Harriet Martineau herself later described it:

> . . . railways, free trade, and cheap publications have much to do with the extinction of the celebrity of ancient Norwich, in regard to both its material and intellectual productions. Its bombazine manufacture has gone to Yorkshire, and its literary fame to the four winds.[8]

But the power looms of the north did not cast their shadow on the prosperity of the Martineaus and their city until a decade after the Napoleonic wars.[9] In Harriet Martineau's youth Norwich had not yet become a cultural and commercial backwater. Heavily Non-conformist, intellectually vigorous and economically prosperous, Norwich, like the Martineau family, owed much of its industrious competence and religious dissidence to its proximity to Europe. Waves of political and religious refugees had for centuries sought and found a refuge in Norwich. Among them had been Gaston Martineau, a Protestant surgeon of Dieppe, who had fled France for East Anglia following the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685. His descendants had remained in the area; they had prospered; and a century later were numbered among the first families of the city. Thomas Martineau, although lacking self-assertion and without much personal distinction, was part of an intellectual circle which included such literary figures as Mrs. Barbauld and Amelia Opie.[10]

Little is known about Thomas Martineau, his daughter's references to him were mildly affectionate, but rare and unrevealing. It was his wife who dominated the household, and who ran the lives of the young Martineaus. Before her marriage, Elizabeth Rankin had been the daughter of a wholesale grocer and sugar refiner of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. She was a literate and intelligent woman but her education had been limited: she loved poetry but she understood no philosophy, spoke no French, and felt out of place among the cultural elite of Norwich. There may be some

truth to the suggestion that her domestic tyrannies stemmed from her social inadequacies.[11] But whatever her reasons, Elizabeth Martineau ran the house on Magdalen Street with all the frugal efficiency and impersonal competence which so often characterized the nineteenth-century matriarch.[12] If she loved her children she rarely permitted them to know of it, and if her aspect was sterner than her reality, if beneath the starched muslin kerchief, the buckram and the stays she concealed a tender heart, then her daughter little suspected it. Her approbation was generally cautious, and her displeasure was much to be feared: the Martineau children were forewarned not to do anything stupid or clumsy before their mother if they "did not wish to be laughed at."[13] And years later a family friend recalled:

> [Mrs. Martineau] appeared to me to order everything and everybody right and left, and though by no means an indulgent mother, she was yet a proud one, and had confidence in the results of her own management and system of education. . . . It was the setting-down way she had, which was so terrible to sensitive young people, and which her own children felt. . . . When she was at the age of thirteen I saw much of Harriet. I remember no tenderness towards her, but the same severity and sharpness of manner, cleverness of management, and sarcastic observation of other people's management. I thought Harriet at that time a clever child, but an odd wise one. She used then, I remember, to be left much by herself, put aside, as it were. . . .[14]

Harriet Martineau later described the type of maternal authority to which she was forced to submit as "a tyranny of the mind."[15] Unquestioning passive obedience was demanded and unquestioning passive obedience was given. But subjection did not come easily to Harriet Martineau, and beneath her submissive demeanor "the interior rebellion" kept her conscience "in a state of perpetual torture."[16] She was a 'persevering' child and she was likewise a stubborn one. Never in childhood did she

own herself to be wrong.[17] She lied to her mother habitually, and out of fear, but even when caught out in an obvious lie, she would cling stubbornly to her story despite her mother's displeasure, and perhaps because of it. She almost enjoyed being punished: it brought her attention, swelled her feeling of importance, and increased her sense of injustice:

> There was nothing to be afraid of in saying the truth, no reason why she should not [she wrote of herself in Household Education]. But she had a temper of such pride and obstinacy that she was aware of even enjoying being punished, as giving her the opportunity of standing out; while the least word of appeal to her affections or her conscience, if uttered before her temper was roused, would melt her in a moment.[18]

Praise was always preferable to blame and even as an old woman she could vividly recall the glowing sensation on the few occasions when her mother had expressed her grudging pleasure.

Harriet resented the domestic despotism under which she suffered.[19] She longed for acknowledgement, affection and approbation but she did not get it. Even her older siblings bullied and teased her. Both she and her younger brother James suffered under the common persecution of their older brothers and sisters, and it is probable that their joint misery drew the two together from their earliest years:[20]

> All who have ever known me [wrote Harriet Martineau in her Autobiography] are aware that the strongest passion I have ever entertained was in regard to my youngest brother, who has certainly filled the largest space in the life of my affections of any person whatever.[21]

James was born when Harriet was not quite three, but from infancy she entertained a very special devotion towards him.[22] He became the object of her frustrated affections; she gave to him some of the love which she so craved herself. She was remembered by friends as "the companion and

care-taker of her younger brother." But James later chose to forget those early years:[23]

> In the close affection which had united us as sister and brother for so many years [he wrote in his "Biographical Memoranda"], sympathy in religious sentiment had always borne a large part. . . . Prior to the birth of this element in us both, we had not, as girl and boy, drawn together in any special companionship.[24]

His omission, however, is related to a later estrangement between himself and his older sister.[25] It raises some questions about James, but does not significantly disturb Harriet's assertion that he had become the outlet for her otherwise neglected affections.

In the case of James, Harriet's maternalism was implicit; it was explicit in the case of her sister Ellen, the youngest of the Martineau children. Ellen was born in 1811 when Harriet was nine. Harriet and her sister Rachel had been sent to live in the country during their mother's confinement. Harriet, as was her custom when away from the family, suffered the pangs of homesickness, and when she learnt of the birth of the latest member of the family, she longed even more for home:

> Homesick before, I now grew downright ill with longing. I was sure that all old troubles were wholly my fault, and fully resolved that there should be no more. Now, as so often afterwards, (as often as I left home) I was destined to disappointment. I scarcely felt myself at home before the well-remembered bickerings began; - not with me, but from the boys being troublesome, James being naughty; and our eldest sister angry and scolding. <u>I then and there resolved that I would look for happiness to the new little sister, and that she would never want for the tenderness which I had never found.</u> . . . That child was henceforth a new life to me. I did lavish love and tenderness on her. . . . The passionate fondness I felt for her from that moment [the moment of first seeing her] has been unlike anything else I have felt in my life, - though I have made idols of not a few nephews and nieces [my italics].[26]

She was not only emotionally attached to the baby, but honestly curious about it too. She told a stranger one day that she would now be able to see "the growth of a human mind from the very beginning." And several times a day she thanked God for that privilege.[27] She spent every spare moment in the nursery and when she was not quietly observing the infant, she would get up from her stool and "devour the child with kisses." She agonized over its illnesses and triumphed over its progress and throughout her life kept a special place in her affections for her baby sister Ellen.

For Rachel, who was a year and a half her senior, Harriet harbored a very different passion. Not only did Rachel ape the patronising attitudes which the oldest Martineau children adopted towards the youngest ones, but she had also become the object of Harriet's intense and secret jealousy. This jealousy may have begun earlier but Harriet recalled that at five a careless family friend had singled out Rachel--prettier and seemingly brighter than the plain, plodding Harriet--for a special favor, and had left Harriet alone on the street with "bursting heart, beating my hoop, and hating everybody in the world."[28] Later, when she observed, or imagined that she observed her mother favoring Rachel too, her misery was boundless. It simmered for several years until finally, surprised by her own temerity, she accused her mother of partiality. It was perhaps the only time that she had articulated her torments, but instead of taking the opportunity to discuss the problem, Mrs. Martineau sent the unhappy and still defiant Harriet off to bed with the admonition that she ask God's forgiveness for her outburst: Harriet, for once, did not pray that night.[29]

To Harriet Rachel represented a rival for her mother's limited attention. Rachel was closest to Harriet in age. Because she had the advantage of a year and a half, Rachel could accomplish the same tasks with considerably more skill than did her younger sister, and she therefore came in for a greater share of her mother's praise. In Childhood and Society Erik Erikson tells us that:

> While autonomy concentrates on keeping potential rivals out, and therefore can lead to jealous rage most often directed against encroachments by younger siblings, initiative brings with it anticipatory rivalry with those who have been there first and may, therefore, occupy with their superior equipment the field towards which one's initiative is directed. Infantile jealousy and rivalry, those often embittered and essentially futile attempts at demarcating a sphere of unquestioned privilege, now come to a climax in a full contest for a favored positon with the mother; the usual failure leads to resignation, guilt, and anxiety.[30]

The child who is "shamed beyond endurance," Erikson writes, "may be in a chronic mood (although not in possession of either the courage or the words) to express defiance in similar terms." He describes doubt and shame as the products of "foreign overcontrol" and loss of self-control, and relates the loss of self-control specifically to the functioning of the bowels.[31] His analysis may be applicable in this case to Harriet Martineau for as a child she suffered from a 'beggarly' digestive system, and it was surely no coincidence that digestive problems continued to plague her until she was thirty, independent, and secure in her own identity.[32]

Perhaps related to her lack of nurture and to her digestive problems was her claim to have had no sense of smell or taste since birth. This deficiency cannot be congenital and when it occurs is normally regenerative,[33] therefore it is highly probable that in Harriet Martineau's case

it had psychological rather than physiological origins. As an infant she had been deprived of maternal care as well as of adequate sustenance. The wet-nurse who suckled the child had done so in the knowledge that she had all but ceased lactation. It was fully three months before Harriet's mother recognized the cause of the infant's diarrhoea and otherwise pitiable condition, and then she tried to make up for her previous neglect by forcing the child to consume an over-abundance of milk. Harriet was given nothing but milk for breakfast each day. She hated it but could not bring herself to complain about it . . .

> . . . and so went for years having the feeling of a heavy lump in her throat for the whole of every morning, - sometimes choking with it, and sometimes stealing out into the yard to vomit; and worse than the lump in the throat, she had depression of spirits for the first half of every day, which much injured the action of her mind at lessons, and was too much for her temper.[34]

It is possible that these circumstances together with her basic insecurity, and her desensualized relationship with her mother had some connection with the desensitization of smell and taste. And the fact that she once in adulthood briefly experienced the sensation of taste would further support the conclusion that there was a psychological explanation for her deficiency.[35]

Erikson believes that trust and its corollary faith are fundamental in the maternal administration of children. Trust, he says, "forms the basis in the child for a sense of identity which will later combine a sense of being 'all right,' of being oneself, and of becoming what other people trust one will become."[36] Harriet Martineau's childhood anxieties, in all probability, stemmed from such a lack of trust. And although she may not have been able to articulate these needs, she

nevertheless, at an early age, unselfconsciously sought a substitute faith, and found it in religion:

> The religion [she wrote] was of bad sort enough, as might be expected from the urgency of my needs; but *I doubt whether I could have got through without it*. I pampered my vainglorious propensities by dreams of divine favour, to make up for *my utter deficiency of self-respect*: and I got rid of otherwise incessant remorse by a most convenient confession and repentance, which relieved my nerves without at all, I suspect, improving my conduct [my italics throughout].[37]

Although she was afraid of everyone, she was not in the least afraid of God. She constantly longed for heaven and ". . . the temptation to suicide was strong. No doubt there was much vindictiveness in it. I gloated over the thought I would make somebody care about me in some sort of way at last: and as to my reception in the other world, I felt sure that God could not be angry with me for making haste to him when nobody else cared for me, and so many people plagued me."[38] Once she went so far as to sneak into the kitchen for a carving-knife but mostly she fantasized about heaven and indulged in dreams of martyrdom.[39] She imagined death at the stake and on the scaffold and had a great longing to be a Catholic and a nun so that she could "take heaven by storm."[40] In chapel she sat staring at the windows "looking for angels to come for me, and take me to heaven, in sight of all the congregation."[41] At seven Harriet, who was "only waiting for some influence to determine my life in that direction,"[42] came under the moral persuasion of an older, highly religious child who had come to live with the Martineaus. From that time her religious devotions became earnest: she prayed with punctilious regularity, she compiled a notebook of Biblical commands for all occasions, and by the age of nine she had written a sermon. Nevertheless she

was still unable to subdue her habitual misery. Her experience of childhood remained "a painful and incessant longing for the future . . . a longing [she said in retrospect] . . . for independence of action."[43]

Harriet Martineau drew upon her childhood experiences in her novels and children's books, but her most significant childhood revelations were made in the posthumously published Autobiography (1877) and in Household Education, published in 1849, the year after her mother's death: as if still deferring to her mother until death made deference no longer necessary. In her Autobiography she recounted her loveless and often distorted youth. In Household Education she drew upon her own experiences and observations in order to teach parents the importance of inspiring their children with love instead of fear, of preserving instead of destroying their confidence, and of understanding their keen sensibilities.

Harriet Martineau's concern about childhood was not confined to her own early experiences; nor was her interest in childhood unique. She reflected a contemporary awareness of the importance of the formative years. Probably the single greatest influence on her educational theory was that of the Rev. Lant Carpenter who gave her religious inspiration at sixteen, and under whose influence she first learnt about Locke, Hartley and the principle of sensation. In order to understand Harriet Martineau's attitudes and her ambience it is necessary to examine briefly current educational theory and the origin of that theory in the seminal writings of John Locke (1632-1704). Locke believed that all knowledge was the product of experience. It was by experience and through the senses that an individual achieved identity and acquired perception. As

a more or less passive recipient of life's impressions a person learnt by the association of pleasure and pain. More played upon than player, the individual was, simply, the effect of environmental causes. Locke's hypothesis that the human mind was devoid of preconceptions until influenced by experience and exposed to environment, emphasized the significance of the senses in the learning process and implied the importance of the educator in providing the necessary stimuli for the developing mind. In his Essay Concerning Human Understanding which was published in 1690 Locke wrote:

> Let us then suppose the mind to be, as we say white paper, void of characters, without any ideas: how comes it to be furnished? . . . To this I answer, in one word, from experience. In that all knowledge is founded, and from that it ultimately derives itself.[44]

Locke proposed the concept of the tabula rasa by which eighteenth- and nineteenth-century educators comprehended the awesome power of Pygmalion which enabled them to breathe whatever life they chose into the human clay delivered into their hands.

In England David Hartley (1705-1757) restated the tabula rasa theory in his Observations on Man written in 1749. Hartley was largely unread in his own time but was popularized later in the century by Joseph Priestley (1777-1804) and Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832). In Europe Locke's ideas were taken up by the French Encyclopedists and eventually through Rousseau were reintroduced to England by the English Romantics. The schools of both Bentham and Rousseau found in the tabula rasa an earnest commitment to the cause of education. They both believed that the educative process was a product of the environment; both sought to control that environment; and both sought to isolate the awakening cognizance of

the child from the corrupting influences of the world. But here, however, the similarity ended: in their methods, in their aims and in their expectations the two schools of thought were diametrically opposed.

In its purest form Benthamism found practical expression in the carefully controlled atmosphere in which Jeremy Bentham's chief spokesman, James Mill, reared his famous son. James Mill created an environment from which all alien corruptions had been deliberately excluded and in which John Stuart's mind could receive only those impressions which his father permitted it to receive: those impressions which according to the elder Mill's judgment would "render the individual, as much as possible, an instrument of happiness, first to himself, and next to other beings."[45] The aim was admirable and although it is dubious that it succeeded in making John Stuart Mill an instrument of his own happiness, it may account in some measure for his keen awareness of and concern for the happiness of others.

John Stuart Mill's highly literary and rational education is familiar to readers of his Autobiography. He was a prodigy who at twelve was familiar with all the major classics, had learnt differential calculus, and had already begun to study logic. His youthful experience was the very antithesis of that depicted by Rousseau for his fictional Émile. Where James Mill forced premature wisdom to bloom artificially in a hothouse atmosphere, Rousseau preferred to let his child grow naturally like the flowers of the field. As Peter Coveney says:

> At each stage he [Rousseau] demanded that the child's particular nature should be respected. In infancy, everything should stimulate his senses and cultivate his body. His mind, his reasoning faculty, should be kept dormant for as long as possible. In childhood, his rational powers should be stimulated by activity

> only, and never by argument, never by words. Throughout his education the child should be confronted by the consequences of action, and never be deadened by the weight of abstract words. 'What do they teach? Words, words, words! To conceal their deficiencies teachers choose the dead languages![46]

Rousseau's attitude toward education was anti-intellectual. He all but banished books and looked instead to nature for his classroom. Wordsworth who celebrated the symbiosis of childhood and nature, and who in the Prelude converted his own childhood into a celebration of that experience, is generally considered to be Rousseau's chief English disciple. But the Hartleyan element in Wordsworth should not be overlooked. Harriet Martineau did not do so. As Francis Mineka has pointed out in the Dissidence of Dissent, Harriet Martineau's two essays for the Monthly Repository of 1829: "On the Agency of Feelings in the Formation of Habits," and "On the Agency of Habits in the Regulation of Feelings," were notable as explanations of the Hartleyan theory. Her allusions to and quotations from Wordsworth, says Mineka, "demonstrate that modern critics were not the first to recognize the links between Hartley and Wordsworth."[47]

Like Wordsworth Coleridge had been an Hartleyan before he came to query the basic Locke-Hartley premise and the passivity which the theory of sensation implied. He began to place the emphasis on eduction rather than induction--of bringing something out from the child rather than of putting something into it.[48] He substituted creativity for receptivity and differentiated between the Reason of the creative mind and the Understanding of the simply receptive mind: it was not, he thought, nature which instructed the individual mind, but the individual mind which gave

meaning to nature. In a letter written in 1801 to his friend Thomas Poole he said:

> My opinion is this - that deep Thinking is attainable only by a man of deep Feeling, and that all Truth is a species of Revelation. The more I understand of Sir Isaac Newton's works, the more boldly I dare utter . . . [that] Newton was a mere materialist - Mind in his sytem is always passive - a lazy looker-on on an external World. If the mind be not passive, if it be in deed in God's image, and that too in the sublimest sense - the Image of the Creator - there is ground for suspicion that any system built on the passiveness of the mind must be false as a system.[49]

However flawed and however derivative Coleridge's own philosophy was, his emphasis on the creative mind was influential: it influenced John Stuart Mill to renounce the Benthamism under which he was educated. In his essay "Coleridge" (1840) Mill rejected as insidious the influence of Locke. Locke, he said, acted only according to the dictates of externalized facts and ignored "inward consciousness" and the intuitive:

> Every consistent scheme of philosophy requires as its starting-point, a theory respecting the sources of human knowledge, and the objects which the human faculties are capable of taking cognizance of. The prevailing theory in the eighteenth century, on this most comprehensive of questions, was that proclaimed by Locke, and commonly attributed to Aristotle - that all knowledge consists of generalizations from experience. Of nature, or anything whatever external to ourselves, we know, according to this theory, nothing except the facts which present themselves to our senses, and such other facts as may, by analogy, be inferred from these. There is no knowledge a priori; no truths cognizable by the mind's inward light, and grounded on intuitive evidence. Sensation and the mind's consciousness of its own acts, are not only the exclusive sources, but the sole materials of our knowledge.[50]

Locke certainly denied the existence of innate ideas: "ideas as it were stamped upon the mind of man; which the soul received in its first being, and brings into the world with it." But his definition of intuitive knowledge--which he did not deny--was in essence identical with that of

Coleridge who said that a truth once appreciated--and he used the mathematical example that two sides of a triangle are together greater than the third--would always be appreciated: "perceived at once by the intuitive reason, and independently of experience."[51] In essence Locke's argument was not dissimilar:

> . . . sometimes [Locke wrote] the mind perceives the agreement of two ideas immediately by themselves, without the intervention of any other; and this I think we may call intuitive knowledge. For in this the mind . . . perceives the truth, as the eye doth light, only by being directed towards it. Thus the mind perceives that white is not black, that a circle is not a triangle. . . . Such kinds of truths the mind perceives at the first sight of the ideas together by bare intuition . . . and this kind of knowledge is the clearest most certain that human frailty is capable of. . . . It is on this intuition that depends all certainty and evidence of all our knowledge.[52]

He never denied the intuitive and in fact expressly allowed for it. His philosophy embraced the concept of the intuitive along with the concept of the sensational but his interpreters from the French Encyclopedists on down seem to have ignored the former and stressed only the sensational aspects of Locke's philosophy. Apart from a little read work, The Scottish Philosophy written by James McCosh in 1875, most commentators agreed with Coleridge and John Stuart Mill that the Locke hypothesis "affected to resolve all the phenomena of the human mind into sensation."[53] It was certainly this aspect of the Locke-Hartley philosophy which had the most profound impact upon nineteenth-century theories of learning.

Whatever their prescribed methods of education or their definitions of 'mind,' by the nineteenth century most educators appeared to have agreed to a greater or lesser extent that the senses were the initial instruments of information. Effects followed antecedent causes and

therefore experience and the environment became primary factors in the molding of character and intellect. Whether educational theorists were of the schools of Bentham, Rousseau, Coleridge, or somewhere in between; whether their principal aim was to stimulate the Reason, the Feelings, or the Imagination; they agreed that the trainers of the young had it in their power to provide the required conditions of learning.

Most educators borrowed something from each of the schools and Harriet Martineau who was a teacher of the young in theory rather than in practice, was similarly eclectic. She used, along with her own experiences of childhood and practical observations on the rearing of children, liberal borrowings from the educational theorists. Her final synthesis of these elements found its most complete expression in Household Education which was published in 1849 when she herself was forty-six.[54] It was addressed not to philosophers of education but to literate and concerned parents of all classes: to the "well-conditioned artisan," as well as to the couple then rearing their growing family in the royal nursery at Buckingham Palace. It was written in recognition of the fact that most children were never sent to school and that parents rather than professional educators reared and educated their children at home.

Harriet Martineau unquestioningly accepted the precept that experience informed the human mind, but she did not ascribe all influences to the "aliment on which the genius is nourished:"[55] she did not endorse the concept of a passive mind. The mind, she conceded, created its own vision of the world. Though she failed to define Imagination in any Coleridgean sense, she gave prominent place to what she called "the highest of human faculties." And if she fell short of a truly conceptive

vision of mind it was not because she was unacquainted with the works of Coleridge and Kant but because she was of a more prosaic cast of mind than they.[56] She appreciated the difference between creative imagination and passive receptivity, but she was so lacking in Imagination herself that she could suggest that Imagination be taught by the inspiring examples of those who had achieved nobility of mind. She was too much of an environmentalist and a pedant to concede that anything could not be taught, and she was by nature and affiliation much closer to the school of experience than she was to the German school. Despite her concessions to the latter she believed that education depended primarily on the stimulation of the perception and the senses: the sensibilities of the student and his or her capacity for pleasure and pain.[57] But she managed to chart a careful course between the structured and the structureless: between the methods of James Mill and those of Rousseau:

> In preparation for the more serious work to come [she wrote], the parent has chiefly to watch and follow Nature; - to meet the requirements of the child's mind, put the material of knowledge in his way, and furnish it with the arts necessary for the due use of its knowledge and nobler powers . . .[58]

The chief aim of education as she saw it was to encourage each individual to achieve his or her fullest potential.[59] The principal methods of education were to be by the stimulation of the perceptive faculties, and the provision of as various an experience as could be obtained.[60]

An unfaltering belief in the perfectibility of humankind through education was implicit in Harriet Martineau's acceptance of the _tabula rasa_ theory. It was a belief which remained the chief source of her inspiration: her _raison d'être_ and her _idée fixe_. Like many although by no means a majority of her contemporaries she celebrated childhood as a

new innocence and substituted the concept of original virtue for that of original sin:

> The fatal notion that human beings are more prone to evil than inclined to good, and the fatal practice of creating factitious sins, are dreadfully in the way of natural health of conscience. Teach a child that his nature is evil, and you will make him evil. . . . It is a far safer and higher way to trust to his natural moral sense, and cultivate his moral taste: to let him grow morally strong by leaving him morally free, and to make him, by sympathy and example, in love with whatever things are pure, honest, and lovely . . . and, let it be remembered, man has no faculties which are, in themselves and altogether, evil.[61]

In Household Education she provided a manual of gentle, natural and gradual instruction which emphasized the innocence and the individuality of the child. The more practical aspects of her theory owed a great deal to Richard and Maria Edgeworth's Practical Education (1798).[62] And to the ideas which her teacher Lant Carpenter had expressed in Principles of Education (1820).[63] Both the Edgeworths and Carpenter were Hartleyans, and both emphasized the importance of love in the administration of children--a recognition which the nineteenth-century was generally slow to accept. But both Richard and Maria Edgeworth and Lant Carpenter wrote for parents about children. Their emphasis was on the educator rather than on the child. Carpenter, for example, spoke about the cultivation of the child's affections "as a most important means of acquiring power over their minds."[64] He admitted his chief aim to be "less to secure affection than to secure influence."[65] In this one essential area Harriet Martineau's educational treatise differed from that of her old teacher and of most other contemporary educators. She did not think of love as merely the tool of parental discipline but saw it as essential to the security and happiness of the child itself.[66] Her shift in emphasis was largely a product of her own experience and her empathy for the child was perhaps the most

original aspect of Household Education which in some ways was less an educator's manual than a plea for childhood: a cri de coeur. The frightened lonely child whom Harriet Martineau had been never entirely disappeared from the consciousness of the assured woman whom she became.

Harriet Martineau was herself a product of her environment. Certainly her religious, political and intellectual development owed a great deal to her parents and to the circumstances of her birth. Republicanism and industrialization--defined by Eric Hobsbawm in The Age of Revolution (1962) as the chief forces of the nineteenth century--were the most important molding influences of her youth. Her father was an industrialist, a Unitarian and a political radical. He imparted his religious and political radicalism along with his other middle-class values to all the children of the Martineau family.[67] These views and these values were reinforced in chapel by the Rev. Thomas Madge the Unitarian minister, and they were reinforced by the press in the Globe,the Free Trade, middle-class newspaper which the Martineau family read.

Thomas and Elizabeth Martineau's ideas on the education of their children were in some respects in advance of their time: they believed in providing all their children--regardless of sex--with an adequate education. And, although they differentiated somewhat between the schooling they gave their sons and their daughters, they nevertheless provided their girls with a far deeper and more rounded education than that received by the daughters of most middle-class families. When the average English parents thought of education at all they generally thought of it as it concerned their sons, and even then, as Harriet Martineau

recognized in Household Education, their aims were severely limited. The aim of the parent was, she said:

> . . . that his child should be docile and obedient, clever enough to make teaching him an easy matter, and to afford promise of his being a distinguished man; truthful, affectionate, and spirited; that as a man he should be upright and amiable; sufficiently religious to preserve his tranquility of mind and integrity of conduct: steady in his business and prudent in his marriage, so far as to be prosperous in his affairs.[68]

She recognized that English society was not ready to accept the best that human attainment could achieve but she did not agree that the sons of Englishmen should aspire to nothing more than the above understated ideal. She recognized that theirs was a wealth-gathering society in which perfect honesty would be unable to survive; in which religious fervor would be suspect; and in which adherence to principle would make the individual a martyr to that same principle. She acknowledged that public opinion for all its pernicious influence helped shape the environment and that social mores were as much a part of the circumstantial training of the child as were the other factors in his education.[69]

Harriet Martineau believed that education should be indiscriminate, doing justice to all classes and to both sexes. She was sensitive to the disparity between the educations of boys and girls and believed that no subject and no educational opportunity should be exclusively male-dominated. Boys did not learn the classical languages and mathematics in order to practice their professions--although this was generally the reason given for excluding girls from such studies--but in order to improve the quality of their minds. And as such studies did not distract men from the counting-house, then why, she argued, should similar studies unfit women for the work-basket or the kitchen?

> If it be true that women are made for these domestic occupations then . . . no book study will draw them off from their homely duties. . . . Every woman ought to have that justice done to her faculties that she may possess herself in all the strength and clearness of an excercised and enlightened mind, and may have at command for her subsistence, as much intellectual power and as many resources as education can furnish her with. Let us hear nothing of her being shut out, because she is a woman, from any study that she is capable of pursuing. . . .[71]

Even Rousseau, for all his vaunted egalitarianism, had believed that:

> . . . the education of women should always be relative to men. To please, to be helpful to us, to make us love and esteem them, to educate us when young, and to take care of us when grown up, to advise, to console us, to render our lives easy and agreeable: these are the duties of women at all times, and what they should be taught from their infancy.[72]

But Harriet Martineau was clearly of too independent a frame of mind to agree to any such subservience. Much of her independence was a result of the more negative aspects of her upbringing: her isolation had taught her self-reliance. But her independence also resulted in large part from the liberal education which she herself had received. Her parents were devoted to the schooling of their children, and Harriet was always eager to credit them with the educational advantages they had provided.[73] She was grateful for having had a much better educational experience than the majority of English girls of the period, and she never complained of the differences between her own education and that of her younger brother James who was given many more years of formal schooling than she, and who in the interim came under the superior tutelage of the Rev. Thomas Madge.[74] She accepted as a fact of nineteenth-century life that boys had to be trained for professions and that girls had to be taught to perform domestic duties. She did not think that this necessarily excluded them

from intellectual pursuits but neither did she consider such domestic accomplishments as demeaning.

Rachel and Harriet were taught--according to the Lancastrian monitorial system--by their older siblings. Elizabeth, the oldest and nine years Harriet's senior, taught them French; Thomas taught them Latin; and Henry taught them writing and arithmetic. It was far from being a completely satisfactory arrangement. Elizabeth "expected too much from us, both morally and intellectually; and she had not been herself carried on so far as to have much resource as a teacher." However, both Elizabeth and Thomas gave the two girls an adequate grounding in both languages--and as Latin was not generally taught to girls at all this gave them a background superior to most. But Henry, who was too young for the role of school-master, inflicted a "droll system of torture" on his younger sisters and made their lesson period "his funny time of day; and sorely did his practical jokes and ludicrous severity afflict us."[75]

Between 1813 and 1815 Harriet and Rachel had formal schooling. They were occupying the desks vacated by the sons of more orthodox Dissenters who had left the school on the conversion to Unitarianism of the school master, the Rev. Isaac Perry. Of the fourteen girls ranging in age from eleven to sixteen, Harriet was the youngest. The girls sat in the front desks from where they were unable to see the boys who sat behind them. They were given separate instruction but were taught in the same way and according to the same curriculum as the boys: they learnt Latin, French, composition, and arithmetic. For Harriet the experience was "delectable," she clearly enjoyed the work and the challenge, and she was happy under the gentle supervision of the schoolmaster with his old-fashioned

powdered hair and his grey eighteenth-century pantaloons. But the financial difficulties facing Mr. Perry's school were insurmountable and in 1815 he was forced to close its doors permanently.[76]

For the next two years Harriet and Rachel were taught by masters in Latin and French. And Harriet, who displayed a fine musical talent before deafness made performance impossible, had private piano lessons. But her music teacher was an impatient and hard taskmaster and instead of Harriet enjoying her gift, she was reduced by her twice weekly music lessons to a state of nervous collapse. The family also read a great deal of history, biography, and critical literature. And Harriet, who was an avid reader from the age of seven and the discovery of Paradise Lost, was seldom seen without a book in her pocket, under her pillow, or on her lap, even during meals. With the other daughters of the family she was also obliged to do a great deal of sewing and by the time she was a young woman she was making all her own clothes.[77]

Harriet had never been vain as a child but she had not thought herself to be ugly until one day she overheard a cousin say, "How ugly all [her] mother's daughters were, Harriet in particular."[78] She had a grave countenance dominated by a firm rather protuberant chin which underlined her obstinacy, and in childhood gave her a somewhat sulky expression. Her large rather fine blue eyes were usually red with weeping. Her dark hair grew untidily low over her forehead.[79] Her family considered her to be dull, awkward, and difficult, and clearly she thought so too. What little positive image she had of herself was indirectly gleaned from her mother's rare and strangely oblique compliments: "Why Harriet!" said her mother trying to remove an insect from her eye, "I know you have

resolution, and you must stand still till I get it out." On another occasion, when Harriet had been weeping over some compulsory needlework while Rachel played outside with a guest, "If you go on in this way you will soon be the best needle-woman of us all." And when her tippet slipped askew before Sunday chapel and her mother pinned it in place, "Superior book-knowledge will never make up for being troublesome."[80]

At twelve this already isolated child began to notice a "scarcely perceptible" loss of hearing. By the age of sixteen it had become very noticeable and was causing her considerable personal agony and social distress.[81] At eighteen her hearing was further impaired, she thought, by an accident to which she referred on three separate occasions: she steadfastly refused to describe the circumstances of the accident but she clearly blamed the unnamed person responsible for the aggravation of her aural problem.[82] She now felt more than ever alone and excluded from the rest of the family. And she seems to have received very little sympathy from either her parents or the other Martineau children:

> Now and then some one made light of it; now and then someone told her that she mismanaged it, and gave advice which being inapplicable, grated upon her morbid feelings; but no one inquired what she felt, or appeared to suppose that she did feel. Many were anxious to show kindness, and tried to supply some of her privations; but it was too late. She was shut up, and her manner appeared hard and ungracious while her heart was dissolving in emotions.[83]

At first the family had tried to ignore her deficiency. They blamed her for not attending to what was said and when it became evident that she really did not hear what had been said, they blamed her for not asking.[84] But Harriet had been forewarned by the example of irritating deaf acquaintances of the family who always asked to have everything repeated

and were considered a jest and a nuisance by the Martineau children. She determined never to become a burden herself. She knew that her friends could be relied on to repeat pertinent information unasked. And, in her twenty-eighth year, when her little vanity succumbed before necessity and she acquired an ear-trumpet, she reduced the barrier which her impaired hearing had imposed between herself and the rest of the world. In the meantime, however, she had come to realize that:

> I must take my case into my own hands; and with me, dependent as I was upon the opinion of others, this was redemption from probable destruction. Instead of drifting helplessly as hitherto, I gathered myself up for a gallant breasting of my destiny; and in time I reached the rocks where I could take a firm stand. I felt that here was an enterprise; and the spirit of enterprise was roused in me. . . .[85]

But despite her resolution she continued to be miserable. She performed her duties with a bad grace and was the constant butt of familial criticism. At fifteen the combination of her deafness, her poor health, and her unhappy disposition caused her parents to once again consider the possibility of sending her away from home.[86] She was told that she was to visit her Aunt Kentish, Mrs. Robert Rankin, who ran a school for girls in Bristol. She was not told beforehand that her absence was to be a prolonged one, and her feelings on later discoverying the deception were those of contriteness and shame rather than of blame. However, the fifteen months which she spent in Bristol were the happiest of her young life. In her Aunt Kentish, for the first time, "a human being whom I was not afraid of," she found a confidante at last.[87] Her aunt and cousins received the unhappy girl with a warmth which thawed the cold repellent protective wall which she had erected about herself. And although her schoolfellows found her quiet and uncommunicative, they did not dislike

her. They thought her clever, conscientious, but rather humorless. She laughed rarely and her plain passive face was usually expressionless--perhaps on account of her deafness as well as her personal reservedness.[88]

Her aunt and cousins were accomplished and scholarly and her acquaintance with them had a stimulating effect on her own studies. She also came under the influence of the Unitarian minister, the Rev. Lant Carpenter. The religious influence of Carpenter was a profound one and although she was to describe him in her Autobiography as "superficial in his knowledge, scanty in ability, narrow in his conceptions, and thoroughly priestly in his temper," she had by then passed beyond his philosophy to a state of unbelief and her disparagement was a product of this conversion. At sixteen, however, she had been his devoted disciple "living wholly in and for religion, and fiercely fanatical about it."[89]

Although she was happy in Bristol she missed home. Despite her personal reticence, she spoke of her family frequently, and in such glowing terms that her school fellows were accustomed to joke about all Norwich geese being swans. She herself wrote:

> My home affections seem to have been all the stronger for having been repressed and baulked. Certainly, I passionately loved my family, each and all, from the very hour that parted us; and I was physically ill with expectation when their letters became due . . .[90]

She was happy when the time came to return to the familiar bickerings at 24 Magdalen Street. But this time she returned with a new assurance. Her aunt had taught her the beauty of reciprocated affection; she had stimulated Harriet's interest in intellectual pursuits; and she had shown her how to make the most of her appearance. Lant Carpenter had

strengthened her already strong religious convictions and soon the family came to regard her with a new and surprising respect.

Harriet was entering womanhood. She was still meekly obedient to her mother's will--forced, for example to go to balls and parties although her deafness made such occasions an ordeal--yet there began now a period of genuine friendship between Harriet and her mother. Harriet was no longer a difficult little child but an increasingly self-assured young woman. To be sure, much of her outward show of assurance still masked her own private uncertainties, but she was gaining new strength from her studies, her religion and even from the deafness which threw her increasingly on her own inner resources.[91] Much of her studying had to be conducted in private because it was considered improper for young ladies to study "too conspicuously." She meekly took her place at the work-table when the women of the house were plying their needles, and she reluctantly accompanied them on their social outings and decorous walks. But every moment that could be stolen from such compulsory activities was spent in the solitude of her own room. Late at night she read philosophy, and before breakfast she and James met to read and translate Latin. She studied the Bible and the scriptural commentaries. And with Rachel she learnt Italian.[92]

It was Harriet's enthusiastic description of Lant Carpenter which had persuaded her parents to send James to Carpenter's school for boys in Bristol. This deepened the bond between the brother and sister and their relationship ripened into a close personal, religious and intellectual affinity. It came as a severe blow to Harriet when in 1821, James left home for college and she was abandoned to her "widowhood."[93] But James's

new status, his new friendships, his new interests, and even his new love, and future wife Helen Higginson did not sever the ties which bound them. Their correspondence continued frequent and affectionate.[94] And in the summer of 1824 the brother and sister set off together on a five-hundred-mile walking tour of Scotland. They took a steamer from London to Edinburgh, and then a coach to Perth from whence they proceeded on foot. Carrying their knapsacks and a hand-basket, they walked fifteen miles a day across glen and through forest. For the two town-bred Martineaus it was a Wordsworthian experience, and James later described it in those terms:

> To both of us it was a first free admission into the penetralia of natural beauty; and we walked everywhere with hushed feeling and reverent feet. We were perfectly at one . . . both intensely alive to the appeal of mountain forms and channeled glens, and the play of light and cloud with the forest, the corrie, and the lakeside. And in the fresh morning hours before fatigue had made us laconic, the flow of eager talk - as is usual with young people - ran over all surfaces, - even plunged into all depths, - human and divine; with just the right proportion of individual difference to prevailing accordance for the maintenance of healthy sympathy. That journey lifted our early companionship to a higher stage, and established an affection which, though afterwards saddened, on one side at least never really changed.[95]

James's departure in 1821 had threatened to leave an aching vacuum in Harriet's life, and it was he who suggested that she seek a diversion in writing. Her first literary publications made their appearance in the Monthly Repository in 1822 and 1823. And it was surely no coincidence that both articles: "Female Writers on Practical Divinity" and "On Female Education," revealed an intelligent awareness of the subordination of women at precisely the time when she, the older sister, was being left at home while her already educationally advantaged younger brother went off to establish a career.[96]

In the first of the articles, "Female Writers on Practical Divinity," she wrote of the "peculiar susceptibility of the female mind," for the promotion of religion and virtue. The belief in a superior feminine morality was common and current throughout much of the nineteenth-century, but her own conformity was temporary; in principle she was an egalitarian and within the decade had renounced the belief in any distinctly sexually oriented mental differentiation. But in 1821 she saw in this fashionable dispensation a personal commission: a <u>raison d'etre</u>. She pointed to successful women writers on divine and moral subjects who exemplified this special female calling; religious as she then was, she probably identified with these women and saw herself as a likely successor. Although, for example, dissenting strongly from Hannah More's religious beliefs, she nevertheless identified herself significantly with certain aspects of Mrs. More's evangelicalism: with the task of bringing "the <u>spirit</u> of religion into company," and of teaching the finest aspects of Christian morality through personal example. Implicit in this first hesitant publication was Harriet Martineau's own intent: to teach by her writing.[97]

In the second of the two articles, "On Female Education" Harriet Martineau launched out with a greater self-confidence. And although she sought the shelter of a male pseudonym--"Discipulus"--in the second as in the first article, one can nevertheless sense in this an early intimation of the mature journalist who would seek shelter from none. This was her first significant work on the position of women, and in sentiment and opinion it differed little from her later works on the subject.[98] Her views on the subject of female education were far in advance of

contemporary opinion, and it would be helpful to know--though it is impossible to guess--to what extent these views were her own and derived from her own increasing independency, and to what extent they reflected the opinions of the family.

In "On Female Education," she launched out against the alleged differences between male and female intellects. Hartleyan that she was, she attributed such differences as did exist not to innate qualities but rather to educational discrimination:

> In our own country, we find that as long as the studies of children of both sexes continue the same, the progress they make is equal. After the rudiments of knowledge have been obtained, in the cultivated ranks of society, (of which alone I mean to speak,) the boy goes on continually increasing his stock of information . . . while the girl is probably confined to low pursuits, her aspirings after knowledge are subdued, she is taught to believe that solid information is unbecoming her sex, almost her whole time is expended on light accomplishments, and thus before she is sensible of her powers, they are checked in their growth, chained down to mean objects, to rise no more; and when the natural consequences of this mode of treatment arise, all mankind agree that the abilities of women are far inferior to those of men.[99]

Women, she concluded, were not deficient in natural ability but were kept in ignorance from their earliest formative years.

She did not try to imply that women's domestic obligations should be neglected in the pursuit of knowledge. Like the majority of nineteenth-century feminist thinkers, Harriet Martineau did not deny the role of home-maker, wife and mother. She applauded domestic virtues, but believed that they would be strengthened rather than diminished if woman's educational opportunities were extended:

> If the whole mind be exercised and strengthened, it will bring more vigour to the performance of its duties in any particular province. . . . If 'great thoughts create great minds,' what can be expected from a woman whose whole intellect is employed

> on the trifling cares and comparatively mean occupations, to which the advocates for female ignorance would condemn her?[100]

As a mother a woman was responsible for the training of the young, and as a wife she should be an intellectual companion to her husband. In both instances the cultivation of mind was imperative, and in neither would the cultivation of mind lead to the neglect of domestic duty. If women were considered frivolous she conjectured, their frivolity arose from their lack of intellectual opportunity and not from their lack of intellect.

> . . . when woman is allowed to claim her privileges as an intellectual being, the folly, the frivolity, and all the mean vices and faults which have hitherto been the reproach of the sex, will gradually disappear. As she finds nobler objects presented to her grasp, and that her rank in the scale of being is elevated, she will [falling again into the contemporary dogma that woman had a special virtue] engraft the vigorous qualities of the mind of man on her own blooming virtues and insinuate into his mind those softer graces and milder beauties, which will smooth the ruggedness of his character.[101]

Mr. and Mrs. Martineau had originally intended that their youngest son, James, enter the engineering profession and it was with this intention that James left home in 1821. But the interest in religion which had claimed his sister's soul had also claimed his, and in the following year he entered Manchester New College at York as a seminarian, and embarked on what was to be a long and distinguished career in theology.[102] At the end of his first college term, in August 1823, James returned from York bringing with him a fellow divinity student, John Hugh Worthington. John Worthington, as far as is known, was the only man ever to "stir hope" in the heart of Harriet Martineau. But the nature of her feelings for Worthington remains unclear. Unfortunately the more

detailed account which she gave of the episode in the original draft of the Autobiography was altered on the advice of her friend Henry Atkinson. And we are therefore left to reconstruct the affair--if such it can be called--from James's transcription of Harriet's letters to him at the time, from her guarded statements in the final version of the Autobiography, and from James's defensive reminiscences of 1884 when he was in his eighties.[103]

James's own role in the affair is ambiguous. Harriet claimed that Worthington's first visit had resulted in an attachment which her parents had not discouraged, but which was initially thwarted through "the evil offices" of some third person, presumably James. But James denied having ever placed an obstacle in the young couple's path although in his own transcription of Harriet's letter to him on October 1, 1825 he referred to "some apprehensions which I had expressed in my last letter."[104] Judging by subsequent events, however, James's hesitation to give the match his blessing were less "evil" than solicitous. And Harriet herself revealed a remarkable ambivalence towards her suitor. True, her disclaimers may have been nothing more than a conventional coy modesty, but her insistence that she felt little more than friendship for Worthington had the ring of conviction. Most of her misgivings centered on the frailty of Worthington's precarious health, and when the couple eventually became engaged in 1826 her feelings seem to have been more of apprehension than of eager anticipation, and less of passion than of compassion:[105]

> I was at first very anxious and unhappy [she recalled in the Autobiography]. My veneration for his morale was such that I dared not undertake the charge of his happiness: and yet I dared not refuse, because I saw it would be his death blow. . . .[106]

John Hugh Worthington had suffered a physical and mental collapse before his engagement to Harriet Martineau. But, in December 1826, not quite four months after their betrothal, the strain of his Manchester ministry proved too much for him. He relapsed into an insanity from which he never recovered and under which he succumbed a few months later. For Harriet the shock of learning of his seizure was staggering. But she was told that his condition was incurable and she did not linger in hope. She was able almost instantly to diffuse her emotions--to desensitize herself. The abruptness with which she shut him from her mind seemed selfish and callous and was much resented by Worthington's family. But it was Harriet's only defense mechanism. She insulated herself against hurt by being able to convince herself that "the present sufferer . . . [is] not her John Hugh Worthington, but another existence, whose conscious experience has no relation [to] that of her beloved. For her, the real John Hugh Worthington _is_ what he _was_, and he will be when they meet in Heaven; hence she is calm, and can wait till she is fit to join him."[107] She took comfort in the Bible which Worthington had given her, but she broke off the engagement and even refused to go to Leicester to see him. She so successfully divorced him from her life that when his death finally came she appeared to have been unaffected by it.[108] She demonstrated, in the instance of her broken romance, an extraordinary ability to desensitize herself, to untrammel the emotions and to devote her energies completely to the life of the mind. She succeeded in making her professional rather than her emotional or domestic life the undistracted focal point of her existence. And she recognized that:

> My business in life has been to think and learn, and to speak out with absolute freedom what I have thought and learned.

> The freedom is itself a positive and never-failing enjoyment to me, after the bondage of my early life. My work and I have been fitted to each other, as is proved by the success of my work and my own happiness in it. The simplicity and independence of this vocation first suited my infirm and ill-developed nature, and then sufficed for my needs . . . and I long ago came to the conclusion that . . . I am probably the happiest single woman in England.[109]

She was deaf, she knew herself to be plain, and with the family fortunes tumbling at that time, she must have had further rational inducements to lower any expectations and sublimate any romantic inclinations. She had no subsequent love-affairs and considered her immunity a blessing. But she had a fond nature and conceded that "there is a power of attachment in me that has never been touched." However, looking back at the Harriet Martineau of 1826, she felt only relief:

> If I had had a husband dependent on me for his happiness, the responsibility would have made me wretched. I had not faith enough in myself to endure avoidable responsibility. If my husband had not depended on me for his happiness, I should have been jealous. So also with children. The care would have so overpowered the joy, - the love would have so exceeded the ordinary chances of life, - the fear on my part would have so impaired the freedom on theirs, that I rejoice not to have been involved in a relation for which I was, or believed myself unfit.[110]

Meanwhile Harriet was suffering other bereavements too. She had developed a deep attachment to her oldest brother Thomas and his wife. The newly married couple had taken the lonely young woman to their hearts and into their home. Thomas was consumptive, however, and visits to Torquay and Madeira in search of an elusive cure proved futile. To the grief of the family on Magdalen Street and to the inexpressible distress of Harriet, Thomas died in 1824.[111] But sorrows did not come singly and it was at precisely this time that the house of Martineau began to falter. The effects of the Yorkshire power mills were making their impact

on the small textile manufactories of Norwich. And in 1825-26 a national economic crisis dealt an additional crushing blow to Thomas Martineau's business interests. He managed to avert the bankruptcy which forced many other businesses to close in the panic, but only by extending his credit. Now his health began to fail too. He was suffering from a liver ailment from which there was no cure and on June 21, 1826 he followed his oldest son to the grave.[112]

In her grief over her father and brother and with the further sorrow of her romantic disappointment, Harriet grew closer to her mother.[113] She at last felt "beloved at home," and, in spite of her wretched health and emotional afflictions, she was happy.[114] In the year following the deaths of her father and Worthington, she immersed herself in writing. She began the life-long practice of sending the first draft of her manuscripts directly to the publisher without either rewriting or recopying. She decided what she had to say, and then, in clear precise prose and a firm legible hand she committed herself to paper. She composed religious works like Addresses Prayers and Hymns (1826); she wrote novellas like Principle and Practice; or, The Orphan Family (1827); and she composed her first industrial stories The Rioters (1827) and The Turn-Out (1827). But the short stories, essays and tracts of the 1820s--apart, perhaps, from the first two Monthly Repository articles--are of little interest today. Their significance lies in the intimations they gave of what was to follow: the dedication, the wide range of concerns, and the prolificity. However, they were important milestones not only in the career of Harriet Martineau, but also in her life. She channeled the frustrated passions which had plagued her childhood, and the disappointments of her

youth, into her work: a preoccupation with duty began to replace a preoccupation with self.

It is really not difficult to reconcile the self-assured woman Harriet Martineau became with the frightened child she had been, for it was out of the crucible of loneliness and fear that her independency was molded. But although she resolved her youthful problems in her own unique way, her childhood experiences were not too unusual. It was an age when an invisible but impenetrable barrier separated the generations, and when countless girls and boys endured torments of a nature similar to those which had scarred Harriet Martineau's first years. The terrors of the red-room in Jane Eyre (1847) and the subtle tortures which Maggie Tulliver suffered in Mill on the Floss (1860) were like echoes of Martineau's own unhappy childhood. Indeed, when it was first published, Martineau was taxed with the authorship of Jane Eyre by friends and relatives familiar with her youth. And later Charlotte Brontë told Martineau that reading those parts of Household Education which related to Martineau's own experience "was like meeting my own fetch, - so precisely were the fears and miseries there described the same as her own, told or not told in 'Jane Eyre.'"[115]

Harriet Martineau eventually resolved the difficulties of her anxious childhood. Instead of defeating her, the isolation of her youth, her increasing deafness, and the bereavements of the 1820s combined to give her strength. The emotional poverty of her early years--which, perhaps, was in some way related to her inability to form close personal relationships of a sexual nature--led her to a determined self-dependency. She turned to a life of the mind for fulfillment; and immersed herself in

work. Her early attempts at authorship even when lacking intrinsic merit were an important step towards the realization of self, the emancipation of spirit, and the establishment of identity.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Harriet Martineau, Household Education (1849; American edition, Philadelphia: Lea Blanchard, 1849), p. 49. And see also Harriet Martineau, Society in America, 3 vols. (1837, London: Saunders and Otley, 1839), III, 169-170.

[2]Harriet Martineau, Autobiography with Memorials by Maria Weston Chapman, 3 vols. (London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 1877), I, 9.

[3]Autobiography, I, 29.

[4]Household Education, pp. 61-62. And see Autobiography, I, 10-11, 15-16, 43.

[5]Autobiography, I, 11.

[6]Erik Erikson, Childhood and Society (1950, New York: Norton, 1963), p. 249.

[7]Household Education, pp. 58, 62.

[8]Harriet Martineau, "Amelia Opie," in Biographical Sketches (1869; American edition, New York: Leypoldt and Holt, 1869), p. 20.

[9]C. B. Hawkins, Norwich: A Social Study (London: Philip Lee Warner, 1910), p. 7. Power mills were installed in Yorkshire in 1812, but the effect on the Norwich manufacturers was not felt until 1825.

[10]James Drummond and C. B. Upton, Life and Letters of James Martineau, 2 vols. (London: J. Nisbet & Co., 1902), I, 3-4.

[11]Theodora Bosanquet, Harriet Martineau: An Essay in Comprehension (1927; rpt. St. Clair Shores, Michigan: Scholarly Press, Inc., 1971), p. 5.

[12]From the notebook of a Norwich neighbor, The James Martineau Papers, Manchester College, Oxford. Hereafter references to The James Martineau Papers will be cited as M. Coll.

[13]Drummond, James Martineau, I, 3-4.

[14]Autobiography, III, 11-12.

[15]Harriet Martineau, Miscellanies, 2 vols. (Boston: Hilliard Gray and Company, 1836), I, 182.

[16]Autobiography, I, 22.

[17]Autobiography, I, 21.

[18]Household Education, p. 106.

[19]See for example: Society in America, I, 134; Household Education, p. 2; The Crofton Boys (1842) in The Playfellow (London: George Routledge and Sons, Limited, 1895), p. 114.

[20]Autobiography, I, 99; Drummond, James Martineau, I, 9.

[21]Autobiography, I, 99.

[22]Autobiography, I, 13-14, 17-18, 58-59; Harriet Martineau, Life in a Sick-Room (1844; second American edition, Boston: William Crosby, 1845), pp. 111-112.

[23]Autobiography, III, 11.

[24]James Martineau, "Biographical Memoranda," unpublished MS. pp. 38ff., M. Coll.

[25]For the estrangement between Harriet and James Martineau, see Chapter VII.

[26]Autobiography, I, 51-52.

[27]Autobiography, I, 52-53; Household Education, p. 37.

[28]Autobiography, I, 19.

[29]Autobiography, I, 85-87.

[30]Erikson, Childhood and Society, p. 256.

[31]Ibid.

[32]Autobiography, I, 10.

[33]J. E. Amoore, "Olfactory genetics and anosmia,' in Handbook of Sensory Physiology, Vol. IV, "Chemical Senses," Part I, ed. L. M. Biedler (New York: Springer Verlag, 1971). I am indebted for this citation to Professor Howard Gadlin, Department of Psychology, University of Massachusetts.

[34]Household Education, p. 185; Autobiography, I, 10.

[35]Henry George Atkinson and Harriet Martineau, Letters on the Laws of Man's Nature and Development (1851; American edition, Boston: Josiah P. Mendum, 1851), pp. 124-125, 164.

[36]Erikson, Childhood and Society, p. 249.

[37]Autobiography, I, 12.

[38]Stephen Kern, "Explosive Intimacy: Psycho-dynamics of the Victorian Family," History of Childhood Quarterly, 1 (1974), 437-461. The author notes (pp. 456-457) the frequency of nineteenth-century child-suicide and cites an 1879 study by Enrico Morselli which suggested shame and fear as the most frequent causes. See Autobiography, I, 18-19.

[39]Autobiography, I, p. 45. She also used the incident in her novel Deerbrook, 3 vols. (London: Edward Moxon, 1839), II, 58.

[40]Harriet Martineau to Henry Crabb Robinson, October 29, 1842, Dr. William's Library. Hereafter cited as DW Lib.

[41]Autobiography, I, 22.

[42]Autobiography, I, 35-36.

[43]Life in a Sick-Room, pp. 177-178.

[44]John Locke, An Essay Concerning Human Understanding, 1690, ed. Alexander Campbell Fraser, 2 vols. (1894; New York: Dover, 1959), I, 121-122; II, 305ff.

[45]James Mill's Essay on Education is quoted in W. H. Burston, James Mill on Philosophy and Education (London: University of London the Athlone Press, 1973), p. 97.

[46]Peter Coveney, Poor Monkey: the child in literature (London: Rockliff, 1957), p. 8.

[47]Francis E. Mineka, The Dissidence of Dissent: The Monthly Repository 1806-1838 (Chapel Hill, N. C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1944), p. 239.

[48]Alice D. Snyder, Coleridge on Logic and Learning (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1929), pp. 44ff.

[49]Basil Willey, Samuel Taylor Coleridge (London: Chatto and Windus, 1972), p. 88.

[50]John Stuart Mill, "Coleridge" 1840 in ed. Marshall Cohen, The Philosophy of John Stuart Mill (New York: Random House, 1961), p. 66.

[51]Coleridge in Table Talk quoted in ed. Kathleen Coburn, Inquiring Spirit: A new presentation of Coleridge from his published and unpublished prose writings (New York: Pantheon Books, 1951), p. 125.

[52]Locke, Essay, II, 177.

[53]James McCosh, The Scottish Philosophy (1875; rpt. Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1966), p. 295; John Stuart Mill, "Coleridge," p. 71.

[54]John Saunders the publisher of the People's Journal suggested that Martineau write a series of essays on education for the Journal, but the Journal was short-lived and after its demise she issued her essays in book-form.

[55]"Characteristics of the genius of Scott," in Miscellanies, I, 12.

[56]Household Education, pp. 19, 159, 164.

[57]"On the Agency of Feelings in the Formation of Habits," Miscellanies, I, 203. Originally published in Monthly Repository 3 (1829), 102-6. All identification of Martineau's MR articles is from Francis E. Mineka, The Dissidence of Dissent.

[58]Household Education, pp. 39, 148.

[59]Household Education, p. 13.

[60]Household Education, pp. 16-17, 123-133, 136-137; "Essays in the Art of Thinking," Miscellanies I, 99 [MR 3 (1829)]; Harriet Martineau, Retrospect of Western Travel 2 vols. (London: Saunders and Otley, 1838), II, 132.

[61]Household Education, p. 116.

[62]Practical Education was retitled Essays in Practical Education in 1801. See Marilyn Butler, Maria Edgeworth: A Literary Biography (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1972).

[63]The Rev. Lant Carpenter, Principles of Education (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme & Brown, 1820). Originally in The New Cyclopedia (1802-1820) ed. Abraham Rees. See Autobiography, I. 103ff.

[64]Autobiography, I, 44, 171ff.

[65]Autobiography, I, 185.

[66]Household Education, pp. 62-65.

[67]From a note by Ellen [Martineau] Higginson quoted in Drummond, James Martineau, I, 8.

[68]Household Education, p. 22.

[69]Ibid., pp. 23-24.

[70]Ibid., p. 13.

[71]Ibid., pp. 156-158.

[72]Quoted in John Langdon Davies, A Short History of Women (New York: The Viking Press, 1927).

[73]Autobiography, I, 27; Harriet Martineau, "An Autobiographical Memoir," Daily News, June 29, 1876. Hereafter cited as DN.

[74]Drummond, James Martineau, I, pp. 16-17.

[75]Autobiography, I, 53-54.

[76]Autobiography, I, 162-169; Household Education, p. 154.

[77]Autobiography, I, 53-56, 69; Household Education, pp. 145-147; "An Autobiographical Memoir," DN, June 29, 1876.

[78]Autobiography, I, 39.

[79]Autobiography, III, 7, 11.

[80]Autobiography, III, 7, 21.

[81]Autobiography, I, 72.

[82]Autobiography, I, 124; II, 150; "An Autobiographical Memoir," DN, June 29, 1876.

[83]Household Education, pp. 83-84.

[84]Autobiography, I, 72-78.

[85]Autobiography, I, 83.

[86]Autobiography, I, 83.

[87]Autobiography, I, 190-194.

[88]Autobiography, III, 13-14.

[89]Autobiography, I, 95-96.

[90]Autobiography, I, 92; II, 13.

[91]Autobiography, I, 185.

[92]Autobiography, I, 100-103, 142; "On Female Education," MR, 1st series, 18 (1823) p. 79.

[93]Autobiography, I, 118.

[94]See Harriet Martineau to James Martineau, Transcript Letters, M. Coll.

[95]James Martineau, "Biographical Memoranda," M. Coll; and in Drummond, James Martineau, I, 39.

[96][Discipulus] "Female Writers on Practical Divinity," MR, 1st series, 17 (1822), 593-596; [Discipulus] "On Female Education," MR, 1st series, 18 (1823), 77-81.

[97]"Female Writers," 593-596.

[98]cf. Household Education, pp. 156-158, quoted p. 22 above.

[99]"On Female Education," 77.

[100]"On Female Education," 78.

[101]"On Female Education," 80. She wrote these lines twenty-five years before Tennyson wrote The Princess but the sentiment had changed remarkably little in that time. See John Killham, Tennyson and The Princess; reflections of an age (London: University of London Athlone Press, 1958).

[102]Manchester New College was founded in Manchester in 1786 as a Unitarian educational institution. In 1803 it was moved to York but it returned to Manchester in 1840. See Drummond, James Martineau, I, 25-26.

[103]Autobiography, I, 130ff; Harriet Martineau to James Martineau, Transcript Letter 1825-1827, M. Coll; James Martineau, "The Early Days of Harriet Martineau," DN, Dec. 30, 1884.

[104]Harriet Martineau to James Martineau, Oct. 1, 1825, Transcript Letters, M. Coll.

[105]Harriet Martineau to James Martineau, Aug. 18, 1826; Aug. 22, 1826, Transcript Letters, M. Coll.

[106]Autobiography, I, 130-131.

[107]Harriet Martineau to James Martineau, Dec. 2, 1826, Transcript Letters, M. Coll.

[108]Harriet Martineau to James Martineau, May 14, 1827, M. Coll.

[109]Autobiography, I, 133.

[110]Autobiography, I, 131-134.

[111]Harriet Martineau to James Martineau, Oct. 13, 1822; March 2, 1823, Transcript Letters, M. Coll.

[112]Harriet Martineau to James Martineau, Oct. 12, 1825; Dec. 22, 1825; Jan. 12, 1826; Feb. 7, 1826, M. Coll.

[113]Harriet Martineau to James Martineau, Feb. 2, 1824, M. Coll.; _Autobiography_, I, 127.

[114]For her description of continuing digestive problems and attempts to improve her hearing see Harriet Martineau to James Martineau, Aug. 31, 1827; Sept. 27, 1827; Nov. 16, 1828, M. Coll.

[115]_Autobiography_, II, 324. Charlotte Brontë did not, of course ever read the _Autobiography_ which was, perhaps, even more revealing. Brontë died in 1855; the _Autobiography_ was published in 1877.

CHAPTER II

ALL THINGS HOLD THEIR MARCH

Beneath this starry arch,
Nought resteth or is still;
But all things hold their march
As if by one great will.
Moves one, move all;
Hark to the foot-fall!
On, on, for ever.

(MR, 8 (1834), 533)[1]

The Octagon Chapel which was just visible from the house on Magdalen Street symbolized for Harriet Martineau the Unitarian tradition in which she was raised. The basic precept of Unitarianism was the denial of the divinity of Christ and, as a consequence, the rejection of the Trinity. Denial of the Trinity went back to fourth-century European Arianism. In England it was a doctrine considered heretical. It was punishable by death until the sixteenth century; and then by legal sanction following the Test Acts of the late seventeenth century. But, in spite of legal and social sanctions, the number of Dissenters who refused to acknowledge the divinity of Christ increased. They began to call themselves Unitarians: the first church specifically designated 'Unitarian' was founded in London in 1774 by Theophilus Lindsey.[2] Thereafter the creed spread rapidly. Its influence was chiefly felt among English Presbyterians but it numbered among its membership converts from all the sects.[3] The newly formed congregations, including among them the Octagon Chapel, were neither nationally organized nor even formally affiliated until the formation of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association in 1825. A

national Unitarian Church was not established in England until a hundred years later.[4]

Traditional Unitarianism was fundamentalist. It looked to the Bible for its authority, and claimed to represent the original and undefiled essence of primitive Christianity. But for those Unitarians who were becoming influenced by Enlightenment theories of natural law. the accommodation between omnipotent Deity and scientific law had increasingly become more difficult to accept. It was a problem analagous to the paradox of predestination and free will which had perplexed theologians for centuries. And it eventually split Unitarianism into two camps: those who accepted biblical authority without questioning it, and those who tried to reconcile religious belief and scientific theory.

When she was only eleven Harriet Martineau happened upon the contradiction implied by predestination and free will. How, she had then asked her brother Thomas, if God foreknew everything, could we be blamed or rewarded for conduct which had already been decided beforehand. Thomas, only eighteen himself, evaded the question. But telling his sister that she was too young to understand did not make the question go away.[5] She clung to the problem with all the tenacity which even then was characteristic of her. She endured in secret the "horrors of doubt," and the obsessive guilt of knowing that such doubt was sinful. She wanted to pray and she wanted to praise but found herself incapable of doing either:

> I listened for the song of praise, and felt that I also would adore if I knew whither to refer my adoration, and if I could offer it unmixed. I was oppressed with a sense of the marvellous beauty of the face of things, and the immeasurable might

> of that which organized them. But what and where was this principle? Could it be reached; could it be worshipped?6

It was unlikely that at eleven Harriet Martineau was conscious of looking for a 'principle,' but when she wrote those lines in 1831 she had found her answer in a principle: the principle of Necessity. She credited James, when a young seminarian at York, with first defining the doctrine for her, but she was, by that time, familiar with Lant Carpenter's Necessarian views and with the works of Priestley to which Carpenter had introduced her during her stay in Bristol.[7] The doctrine of Necessity which provided Harriet with a new certitude and enabled her to reaffirm her faith was, simply, the doctrine of causation: that everything is a necessary consequence of what has preceded it. In other words, there can be no effect without a previous cause, and as man himself is the effect of previous causes, his freedom of will is an illusion. His actions are dictated by a mind which has been predetermined by antecedent events and by present circumstance over which he has no control. Because even his motives are the effects of earlier causes, man's freedom of choice is circumscribed and even predictable. He inhabits a teleological universe whose course even God cannot alter. Although still considered the first cause, God according to Necessarian logic is as bound as man by natural precedence. He cannot intercede; He cannot answer prayers; and He is, furthermore, without the arbitrary will which characterizes the God of the Old Testament.

Necessarian logic had its origins in empiricism. Bacon (1561-1626) had described man as "the servant and interpreter of nature [who] can only understand and act in proportion as he observes or contemplates the

order of Nature: more he can neither know nor do."[8] Spinoza (1632-1677), anticipating Necessarianism, had written, "Given a determinate cause, the effect follows OF NECESSITY, and without its cause, no effect follows."[9] But nineteenth-century Necessarianism owed its greatest debt to John Locke who combined Baconian empiricism and Spinozan causality in his Essay Concerning Human Understanding. Locke's theory of sensation, as we have noted, was a synthesis of observation and causation: all knowledge was the product of experience. However, Locke made one important exception to his rule, he conceded the existence of an inexplicable non-mechanistic deity in his otherwise empirical universe. Knowledge of God, he said, was the result of revelation and not experience. Locke's disciples David Hartley and Joseph Priestley, accepted his compromise. Priestley, through whom the ideas of Locke and Hartley percolated to the nineteenth century and by whom Harriet Martineau's early religious thought was more deeply influenced, was able to draw a distinction between the knowable world and the unknowable God. "All that we can pretend to know of God is his infinite wisdom, power, and goodness," Priestley had written in his Disquisition Relating to Matter and Spirit, ". . . of the nature of the existence of this primary cause . . . we cannot have any conception."[10] It was sufficient to abide in the certainty that God was the first cause, and that all things emanated from Him for the greatest good of humankind.

> The scheme of philosophical necessity [wrote Priestley] has been shown to imply a chain of causes and effects, established by infinite wisdom, and terminating in the greatest good of the whole universe; evils of all kinds natural and moral, being admitted, as far as they contribute to that end. . . . God, the author of all, is as much to be adored and loved for what we suffer as for what we enjoy. . . .[11]

Priestley's philosophy affirmed the existence of a divine controlling mind. It described God's purposes as benign; it explained that prayers were unanswerable because God was limited by the restraints of His own law; and it showed that the individual, despite an apparent lack of free will, was the active agent by whose efforts new effects were created and the continuum of causation perpetuated. It was precisely the philosophy which answered to Harriet Martineau's needs at this period of her life. It obviated her doubts and strengthened her faith. And although at first reluctant to abandon the concept of a "special Providence," she grasped eagerly the idea of an inexorable law inspired by a divine first cause:

> God not only instituted all the principles on and by which man works [she wrote in an essay in the Monthly Repository in 1832], - He also gives the sagacity to discern, and the impulse to act. He disposes the circumstances, he molds the will, he confers the power, he offers the result. It is all of him, and through him, and to him.[12]

The fallacy of the Priestleyan argument lay in the arbitrary assumption that there were two kinds of knowledge: the revelatory and the empirical. But by accepting the former and the Scriptural verifications of it along with the latter, Priestley, and with him Martineau, were guilty of intellectual inconsistency. As Leslie Stephen was to point out:

> Priestley caricatures the ordinary English tendencies to make a compromise between things incompatible. A Christian and a materialist . . . abandoning the mysterious and yet retaining the supernatural elements of Christianity . . . he flashes out at times some quick and instructive estimate of one side of a disputed argument, only to relapse at the next moment into crude dogmas and obsolete superstitions.[13]

Of Locke's disciples it was David Hume (1711-1776) who carried the doctrine of causation to its logical--and skeptical--conclusion. Hume allowed only the knowable; he admitted of no revelation and of no anthropomorphic first cause:

> But are we not [Hume wrote in An Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding] . . . ignorant of the manner or force by which a mind, even the Supreme Mind, operates, either on itself or on body [sic]? Whence, I beseech you, do we acquire any idea of it? We have no sentiment or consciousness of this power in ourselves. We have no idea of the Supreme Being but what we learn from reflection on our own faculties. Were our ignorance the good reason for rejecting anything, we should be led into that principle of denying all energy in the Supreme Being as much as in the grossest matter. We surely comprehend as little the operations of the one as the other.[14]

But Priestley, unlike Hume, was able to define a causal universe without denying God. The religion which he, Harriet Martineau, and other Necessarians affiliated to the Unitarian church, professed was an uneasy accommodation between rationalism and biblicism.

The biblicism of Unitarians differed from the bibliolatry of Evangelicals in that it regarded the Bible not as the literal word of God but as the record of those who had been privileged to observe His revelations. This view liberated Unitarians from the confines of restricted fundamentalism. It enabled them--on the pretext of weeding out the later corruptions from the original Scriptures--to edit the Bible so that it would affirm their beliefs. As Martineau herself later admitted, Unitarianism took what liberties it pleased with the revelation it professed to receive. Unitarianism, she said:

> . . . made its own choice what to receive and what to reject, without perceiving that such a process was wholly incompatible with the conception of the Scriptures being the record of divine revelation at all. . . . Unitarianism is a mere clinging, from

> association and habit, to the old privilege of faith in a divine revelation, under an actual forfeiture of all its essential conditions.[15]

Her observation, written in 1855, was more than a product of her later religious disillusionment. In The Victorian Church (1966-1970) Owen Chadwick describes nineteenth-century Unitarianism as "a wobble between confident faith and confident scepticism."[16] And, in the 1820s and early 1830s, Harriet Martineau hereself 'wobbled' somewhere between the biblical Unitarians in whom "revelation controlled reason," and the deistical Unitarians in whom "reason controlled revelation." She took, as she later admitted, "monstrous liberty with the Gospel," selecting those aspects of it which answered her purpose, and rejecting those which failed to do so. For example, she refused to acknowledge the divinity of Christ, but she accepted the resurrection; she rejected spiritual pre- or post-existence, but she believed in the after-life; and while dismissing parts of the Christian doctrine as the products of a later corruption, she nevertheless "took all the miracles for facts, and contrived to worship the letter of the Scriptures."[17]

The Unitarian conception of Christianity as defined by Priestley was:

> . . . a belief of all the historical facts recorded in the Old Testament, in which we are informed of the creation and government of the world, the history of the discourses, miracles, death and resurrection of Christ, and his assurance of the resurrection of all the dead to a future life of retribution; and this is the doctrine that is of the most consequence, to enforce the good conduct of men.[18]

Priestley, in common with other Unitarians, resorted to the Bible to prove the main tenets of his faith. In An History of the Corruptions of Christianity (1782) and in An History Concerning Jesus Christ; Compiled

from Original Writers, Proving that the Christian Church was first Unitarian (1786), Priestley set out to prove that Unitarianism represented the faith of the first Christians , and that the Trinity, the divinity of Christ, vicarious atonement, the immaculate conception, arbitrary predestination, and the apostolic succession were all accretions which had been superimposed on the original faith by later interpreters.[19]

Martineau's argument that Christianity was unitarian in its original form followed closely along Priestleyan lines.[20] Her essays in the Monthly Repository supported the belief that the ideology of Unitarianism was in essence primitive Christianity. And when in 1830 the British and Foreign Unitarian Association established an essay competition aimed to argue the superiority of Unitarianism and to prove the misconceptions of Catholicism, Mohammedanism and Judaism, Harriet Martineau entered the competition and won the prizes in all three categories.

The essays addressed to Mohammedans and Jews made almost as much of a plea for Christianity as they did for Unitarianism, but the Catholic essay was addressed specifically to the question of unity: the credo basic to the Unitarian faith. In this essay, The Essential Faith of the Universal Chruch,[21] Martineau argued that the earliest Christians had been converts from the monotheistic Hebrew faith; that they had accepted Christ as the messiah but had not supposed him to have been divine: to have assumed Christ divine would have been to have assumed more than one god, and this the converts from Judaism would not have done. It was the later adherents to Christianity, those who came from polytheistic faiths, who corrupted the original unitarian concept. The first of these, she believed, were the Gnostics who converted to Christianity some twenty

years after the death of Christ. It was they who first embraced the concept that Christ was a god. Subsequent converts made additional elaborations; they conceived the divinity of Mary and a panoply of saints and martyrs. But the first followers of Christ had not found it necessary to pray through the intercession of Mary, the saints or even Christ himself: They worshipped " . . . not through the ministrations of inferior spirits, but face to face in the sanctuary of his presence."[22]

> By the unity of God we understand not a unity of substance connected with a variety of persons, or a unity of persons accompanied with a division of attributes; but a concentration of attributes of Deity in one eternal, indivisible substance.[23]

The purpose of Christianity was not, she insisted, to worship Christ, but to comprehend his divinely inspired message and to understand that the significance of his life had been in his godly example and in his resurrection. It was by the resurrection that God had revealed to mankind the hereafter which till then had not been comprehended by Mosaic law. And it was in the resurrection that Christianity chiefly differed from Judaism as she pointed out in the prize essay, The Faith as manifested through Israel--inspired to a large extent by Lessing's Hundred Thoughts on the Education of the Human Race which she had just reviewed in the Monthly Repository.[24]

Like Priestley, Harriet Martineau, while denying the world of the spirit, believed implicitly in the resurrection. Priestley had been able to persuade himself that a mechanistic, physical interpretation of the resurrection was possible. Resurrection, he said, was a recomposition of the body from the elements out of which it was first made, " . . . whatsoever is decomposed may be recomposed by the Being who first composed

it."[25] Martineau did not accept Priestley's rationale. She rejected the concept of recomposition and in "Physical Considerations connected with Man's Ultimate Destiny," in the Monthly Repository of 1831 she wrote:

> The caravan of the desert leaves no trace of its perished thousands when the moist and the dry, the jackal and the carrion bird, have done their work. The sunken vessel with all that it contained of human or inanimate, is dissolved into its elements before the neighbouring coral reef has been built up to the surface. And what is to be said of cannibalism, where one human frame is immediately incorporated with another? The resurrection of each entire body is manifestly impossible.[26]

But how then could she account for the resurrection and the after-life if she denied Priestley's argument and rejected the concept of soul? It was imperative that she affirm the doctrine of the hereafter because she considered it central to Christianity, but the ratiocinative process by which she did so was largely semantic. Attempting to differentiate between 'spiritualization' and 'etherealization,' she claimed that although there was no soul, an etherealized body could, after death, evolve from a material body.[27] How the "spiritual essence"[28] in which she did believe differed from the spirit or soul in which she professed not to believe it is impossible to say. But the ambiguity of her argument was illustrative of that awkward position which she and other rationalists of her faith were forced to occupy. She could not discard the resurrection without destroying a fundamental aspect of Christianity; but she could not explain it either without resorting to explanations which could not logically be accommodated by a rational philosophy.

It was necessary for Harriet Martineau at this stage of her life to believe that "death is only an eclipse, and not an extinction."[29] The little girl who had imagined that the angels would descend upon the

congregation of the Octagon Chapel and take her to heaven, and who had fantasized about an after-life happier than that which she had known on earth, still, in early adulthood, needed to believe in the hereafter. She permitted herself to contemplate what was in fact the spiritual world, and in a flight of fancy imagined her own etherealized post-existence:

> It is my hope to be permitted, in the days of my immortality, to overtake the planets at will: and, while thrilled with the perception of the perfect fitness of their frame, to look back on worlds in the process of formation. But more vivid is my expectation that I shall pass hither and thither in the spiritual universe, empowered to apprehend truth after truth; and, on the way, to discern from afar how the elements of the moral creation are gathered together, and organized and vivified by creative power, as they are sent forth on their everlasting way.[30]

The diverting thought of Harriet Martineau flying about the heavens replete with ear-trumpet like a female Gabriel should not distract us from recognizing that at this time in her life, her faith was strong enough to overcome her rational objections, and to reconcile her to what could not have been a logically satisfying compromise. As John Henry Newman claimed:

> . . . in the presence of faith reason bows and retires; or rather in words already quoted, faith is itself _the reasoning of the religious mind_. Such a mind holds the gospel to be probable because it has a strong love for it, even when the testimony is weak.[31]

In its search for origins Martineau's Catholic essay, _The Essential Faith of the Universal Church_, typified nineteenth-century religious thinking: it characterized the Tractarians and the Broad Church Higher Critics as much as it did the Unitarians. It owed little to the continental tradition of biblical criticism--it was much less sophisticated,

for example, than the Unitarian, Charles Hennell's Inquiry Concerning the Origin of Christianity (1838)[32]--and was much more a Unitarian polemic than it was a scholarly textual analysis of the Scriptures. But it exemplified that interest in historicity which put Unitarians in the vanguard of nineteenth-century biblical scholarship. Unitarians did not fear biblical analysis because they believed in the spirit rather than in the letter of the Bible. Necessarians in particular appeared to be proof against the challenges of the nineteenth century. Their belief in a divinely inspired natural law instead of being antithetical to fault was an affirmation of it. For the more one knew of the mysteries of God's universe the more, they believed, would one appreciate the splendor of God the Creator:

> A world of truth is before us [wrote Martineau in 1830]. We cannot help desiring to explore it; and we know of no interdiction which need exclude us from any part of it. We ought, therefore, to disregard the mistaken advice and impotent threats which would deter us, and press forward to the limits of science, determined to ascertain for ourselves where we must stop, and to heed no prohibition but that of Nature, or of Him who constituted nature.[33]

Harriet Martineau needed to believe and even the ambiguities in her rationale could not undermine the apparent security of a faith which rested on the twin pillars of Unitarianism and Necessarianism.

In 1829 it was worldly rather than religious problems which pressed upon the Martineau family. In that year the final collapse of the Norwich manufacturing house of Martineau occurred. Harriet had been left a small sum in her father's will, but it was not enough to sustain her and she was faced with the problem of having to contribute to her own

support.[34] Hitherto the tracts and stories published by Houlston had produced only small sums and her Monthly Repository contributions had been gratuitous. The new editor of the Repository, the Reverend William Johnson Fox, on learning of her predicament could offer her no more than fifteen pounds a year for her continued and expanded efforts. Other sources of income had therefore to be found. Governessing, the traditional occupation for young ladies without means, was closed to her on account of her deafness. She considered teaching by correspondence and went as far as to send out a prospectus but found no takers. Both Ellen and Rachel went out to teach but it was decided that Harriet should supplement her income by sewing. She was to stay home with her mother, her Aunt Lee, and her somewhat erratic brother Henry in whose hands the family manufactory had met its final demise.

It is unlikely that Harriet Martineau would long have submitted to the back-breaking toil of needle-work by day, and to the nightly labor of desultory writing. In June of the same year, 1829, she had already decided upon a higher calling:

> I have determined that my chief subordinate object in life shall henceforth be the cultivation of my intellectual powers, with a view to the instruction of others by my writings. On this determination I pray for the blessing of God. . . . I believe myself possessed of no uncommon talents, and of not an atom of genius; but as various circumstances have led me to think more accurately than some women, I believe that I may so write on subjects of universal concern as to inform some minds and stir up others . . . of posthumous fame I have not the slightest expectation or desire. To be useful in my day and generation is enough for me.[35]

With this purpose no doubt in mind she went to London in the winter of 1829. There, staying in the home of an aunt and uncle, she spent the daylight hours poring over her fancy-work, and in the evenings she retired

to her room to write--sometimes until the early hours of the morning. But apart from the Monthly Repository, she found no buyers for her literary efforts, and except that she was offered a job proof-reading, her only possibility of income remained her needle-work and the fifteen pounds she was getting from Fox. This would have sufficed, but in the mean time, without her knowledge, her aunt had written home to advise her mother that Harriet had better content herself with earning a certain living by the needle rather than indulge herself in vainglorious ideas of success in the masculine world of literary London. Her mother immediately upon receipt of this missive ordered Harriet's return to Norwich. And despite her mature twenty-seven years the would-be author returned meekly home. The old habit of obedience had prevailed, but beneath it there was a burning resentment at being remanded "to a position of helpless dependence, when a career of action and independence was opening before me."[36] Her mother received her kindly, however, and she was able to extract from her the promise that she could spend at least three months every year in London so that without "deserting home duties," she would be able to keep in touch with literary society there.[37]

The chief intellectual influence on Harriet Martineau at this time was the Reverend William Johnson Fox who had become sole editor of the Monthly Repository in 1828. When Harriet Martineau made her first contribution to literature, "Female Writers on Practical Divinity," to the Monthly Repository in 1822, the journal was primarily a vehicle for Unitarianism. It was then edited and owned by the Reverend Robert Aspland who had founded it in 1806. Harriet Martineau was to describe Aspland as "the formidable prime minister of his sect,"[38] but despite his religious

purpose, his journal, as Francis E. Mineka points out in The Dissidence of Dissent, had a much wider social and political conscience than did other contemporary religious publications. The Unitarians were, in fact, considered by their opponents as "a political rather than a religious sect - radical to a man."[39] And it was therefore not uncommon to find radical expressions in Aspland's Monthly Repository. The journal had always pleaded the cause of reform, defended the spirit of both the American and French Revolutions, lamented the perfidy of the Lake Poets when they rejected their earlier more revolutionary convictions, and had even, in 1821 and 1823, given qualified support to Owenism.[40] In general the Platform of the Monthly Repository was one with which Harriet Martineau could sympathize: she supported reform, and she opposed legal inequities, slavery, and the established Church and government. She spoke out against the wrongs of war, and spoke out in favor of the rights of women: her "On Female Education," set the tone which the journal would follow on this question.[41]

The Monthly Repository under Aspland was therefore far from being a narrowly sectarian publication but in 1826 it looked as if it might become so, for in that year the newly formed British and Foreign Unitarian Association acquired it from Aspland with the intention of making it the official organ for Unitarianism. Then, in 1828, Fox who had been on the original editorial board of the new series became sole editor, and three years later bought the journal outright from the Association. He broadened the outlook and the appeal of the Monthly Repository, extending its circulation and increasing its literary contributions from those outside the Unitarian circle. Eventually he liberated it from its religious

moorings completely. It became a vehicle for liberal thought and radical idealism; it lost all connection with Unitarianism; and, although retaining many of its old readers and some of its old contributors, it lost large numbers of its former supporters because of its now supposedly radical tendencies: by the early 1830s most Unitarians, in common with many other Dissenters, had become satisfied with the extent of the national reforms which had been achieved.[42] The Unitarians were, on the whole, middle-class reformers not revolutionaries and they had aimed to displace the Establishment and not to foster a popular movement. Now that they had secured the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, and were in the process of achieving electoral reform, they felt that their revolution had been achieved. In fact, with the passage of the Municipal Reform Act in 1835, they began assuming positions of prominence in cities all over the country and became part of the establishment themselves.[43] Confident that they had at last arrived, many of them joined with "Finality John" Russell in proclaiming that reform had gone far enough.

Among those Unitarians who remained faithful to the radical cause were some who had become associated ideologically with Utilitarianism. Utilitarians shared with Unitarians the Priestleyan concept of the "greatest happiness." They had long cooperated with one another on various reform issues. They had shared in the demand for political reform, and had sponsored common educational endeavors: they had combined to support Lancastrian schools, and Mechanics Institutes, and had joined in the struggle to secure a charter for the University of London. It is therefore not surprising that among the Unitarians of Fox's South Place chapel there should have been a number of prominent Utilitarians. The

most distinguished of these were probably Dr. Southwood Smith and John Bowring, and the latter in particular contributed significantly to the Monthly Repository. Bowring was Bentham's assistant, his most sycophantic disciple, and himself the initial editor of the Utilitarian Westminster Review when it was founded in 1824. Fox, although never in complete sympathy with all aspects of the Utilitarian creed, was himself a contributor to Westminster Review, and he welcomed the articles of his Benthamite colleagues.[44] Although--despite his association with Harriet Taylor--not a Unitarian himself, and already emerging in 1830 from under the Benthamite umbrella, John Stuart Mill was another of Fox's important contributors. In fact, as Mineka notes, Mill felt secure enough in the anonymity of the Monthly Repository to express in its pages his earliest opposition to the "demoralizing plan of individual competition," which he still publicly upheld.[45] Like most of Fox's other contributors--Harriet Martineau excepted--Mill was unpaid but he was satisfied to have in the Repository a platform for his ideas.[46]

Although, as we have mentioned, Fox lost some of the contributors of the first series, others like Bowring and Crabb Robinson continued their support. Among the hold-overs was Harriet Martineau who, in the view of Mineka, became the Monthly Repository's leading writer from 1829 to 1832.[47] She contributed some original stories and poems, but most of her articles were reviews of books--mainly on religion, philosophy, morals and biography. She had made her initial second series contributions in reply to an advertisement which Fox had placed when he first became editor in 1828. Like most nineteenth-century journals, the Monthly Repository was chronically in the red, and like most of its contributors,

Harriet Martineau at first wrote without remuneration. Now, at fifteen pounds a year, she became the Repository's only paid writer. Her labors for this small sum were prodigious, especially for the year 1830 which Fox's biographer Richard Garnett described as the "annus mirabilis of her connection with the Repository, which would have fared badly without her aid."[48]

By her own account she produced fifty-two separate items for the Monthly Repository in that year. This was in addition to the fancy-work which continued to be her chief means of support, and in addition to the three prize essays for the Unitarian Association, an essay on baptism for which she won third prize, Five Years of Youth, Traditions of Palestine and seven tracts for her old publisher Houlston.[49] Of the fifty-two items, thirty-five were reviews, but as was the custom at this time, reviewers devoted their articles not merely to the books under consideration but also used the opportunity to express their own opinions.[50] Harriet Martineau was no exception, and most of her opinions on religious matters found expression in such reviews. In the next year she wrote another thirty-three reviews from a total of thirty-seven items. But in 1832 she became involved in her political economy series and her contributions dropped off.

Harriet Martineau's association with Fox was, by her own admission, "unquestionably the occasion, and in great measure the cause, of the greatest intellectual progress I ever made before the age of thirty."[51] She believed that, next to her brother James, Fox understood her better than anyone.[52] She had not yet, she said, emerged from that sullenness which had made her so disagreeable and ungracious in her youth, and she

was, furthermore, still "strictly sabbatarian and subject to many prejudices." Yet Fox and his friends had welcomed her to their circle with the utmost kindness and patience.[53] She quickly became intimate with Fox, his wards the Flower sisters, and the other distinguished members of their literary circle. She warmed to the unaccustomed experience of friendly social intercourse and was in great measure assisted in this by the gift of an ear-trumpet from her Aunt Lee.[54] In fact her emergence from the silent and lonely shadows in which she had so long abided can be attributed both to the ear-trumpet which helped her to communicate with the hitherto silent world, and to the kindly ministrations of Fox and his friends. She wrote happily of the latter to James, describing the intimacy of the circle, their honest evaluations of one another, and their mutual confidences. But James was not as enthusiastic as she. He sourly commented that

> The whole process of self-analysis and mutual admiration and criticism appears to me unhealthy and repulsive, and not without a considerable taint of indelicate freedom. The account confirms rather than lightens my impression of the questionable tone of their free-thinking and free-living clique.[55]

This comment tells us more about James than about Harriet, but it is impossible to say whether he communicated his feelings at this time or whether he only made the comment when he transcribed his sister's letters several years later.

Harriet Martineau's friendship with Fox had first been cemented during the winter of 1829 before her recall to Norwich. She had spent day after day in his study and he had closely supervised her work.[56] Although there was no "trace of sentiment" in their relationship according to Garnett, she provided Fox with a needed and enlightened companionship,

> . . . his intellectual relations with [Harriet Martineau] were in one respect closer than those with Eliza Flower, their objects had more in common. . . . With Harriet Martineau's wide range of topics . . . he was perfectly at home.[57]

Furthermore, Garnett added, her letters to Fox at this time revealed a desire to bestow sympathy and affection and to receive it in return.[58] Despite the intellectual and platonic nature of their relationship, it was not without warmth, and Harriet Martineau may have come as close to a dependency as she was ever to do. Her gratitude to Fox and the Flowers long survived the friendship itself and did not "wait on principle" as R. K. Webb alleges.[59] When she came to write her Autobiography in 1854 she recalled that "their gentleness, respect and courtesy were such as I now remember with gratitude and pleasure," and if they were not ready to accept the later changes in her religious and philosophical opinions it did "not lessen my sense of obligation to them for the help and support they gave me in the season of intellectual and moral need."[60]

In 1830 Fox was forty-four with, according to Carlyle, "a tendency to pot-belly and snuffiness."[61] He was however at the peak of his influence and popularity both in the pulpit and in the press. He had started life as the son of an impoverished East Anglian farmer. He had first earned his living as a bank clerk in Norwich but had later turned to the ministry. Originally, a Calvinist he had, after much inner turmoil, converted to Unitarianism in 1812. He had had at this time an early and tepid romance which had been blighted by his gloomy financial prospects, but with his success in the ministry and with a decline in her family's fortunes, Eliza Florance had returned to his life and presuming upon his earlier intentions had obligated him to marry her. By 1820 whatever

passion he had once felt for her had long since faded, but he was made to feel honor-bound, and he went through with the ceremony. It was an action which he regretted almost immediately,

> Very soon after my marriage I found I had made a blunder; and though a moderate share of comfort, and dispositon to help me in my exertions, at least some sympathy with these . . . would have pretty well contented me, I did not find even these.[62]

The strain of his loveless marriage occasioned a mental break-down in 1822 and to add to his domestic trials the eldest of the three children of the union was a deaf mute whom his mother constantly abandoned to Fox's care. He was an extremely sensitive man with an obvious need for companionship and his wife provided him with none: he sought not subservience in a wife, but equality and friendship. "Man has crippled female intellect and thereby enfeebled his own," he said. "In training a dependent he has lost a companion."[63]

It is not surprising that Fox should have turned elsewhere for that affection and encouragement of which he stood in need. Eliza Flower was the older of the two daughters of Benjamin Flower, a long-time friend of Fox's. Flower was an uncompromising radical who in his early days as editor of the Cambridge Intelligencer had been sentenced to six months in Newgate by the House of Lords for his outspoken opposition to the established order. Immediately upon his release from prison he had married Eliza Gould, a woman of like mind and equal integrity. She had risked dismissal as a school mistress rather than give up her subscription to the Intelligencer, and although she did not know Flower at the time, had visited him in Newgate. It was from this union that Eliza and Sarah Flower were born.

Benjamin Flower's wife died in 1810 and he had reared his daughters himself. Their education was far from orthodox. Although there were masters in the village whom Flower employed from time to time, most of their education was received from the hand of their eccentric and peripatetic father. He did not cultivate in the them the traditional femine and domestic virtues but rather informed their minds by drawing upon life with eclectic catholicism. Both were--even allowing for the artist's flattery--delicately beautiful. They were also musically gifted; Eliza in particular having a genius for musical composition.

When Flower died in 1829 the two young women became the wards of William Fox and it soon became evident that Eliza in particular was supplying the place in his affections which his wife had forfeited so early in their marriage. Eliza Flower--whom Fox called Lizzie in order to distinguish her from his wife and daughter of the same name--became his amanuensis; used her considerable musical gifts to write hymns for his services; and provided the spiritual support which he had been denied. Their relationship deepened and in 1832 Eliza Fox was stirred to protest. Although still living in the same house as her husband, Mrs. Fox made her protest in writing--perhaps an indication of how little communication then existed between the husband and the wife. Unfortunately the letter itself has been lost but Garnett was able to quote from Fox's reply to it.[64] In his reply, Fox--despite an outspoken advocacy of divorce--had cited his ministerial position and fiscal responsibilities as barriers to a separation, and had suggested that they continue to live, as before, discreetly but independently in the same household. So for two more years the status quo was maintained. But then Mrs. Fox unable to endure

the situation any longer, carried her objections to two members of her husband's congregation and the upshot of the ensuing furor was that a large minority left Fox's congregation and that the Unitarian ministers of London formally denounced their erstwhile colleague who thereafter dropped his affiliation with that body and stopped using the title Reverend despite his continued service to the remaining congregants at South Place Chapel.[65]

After his severance from the Unitarian Association, Fox became more and more rationalist in his attitude toward religion. He rejected the supernatural aspects of religion, accommodated more and more to the evolving scientific revolution, and stated an abhorrence to both the ritual and the "prostration of the understanding," which a submission to the authority of priesthood implied.[66] As he came to devote himself more and more to literary and later parliamentary duties,[67] his clerical functions became fewer. He also had to give up the Monthly Repository in 1836 because the journal continued to be a source of financial drain and he was in need of funds. First Richard Henry Horne and then Leigh Hunt assumed the responsibility for the journal but no effort was sufficient to keep the ailing Monthly Repository afloat and its final issue was published in March of 1838. Fox himself had by this time become a member of the daily press writing for the Morning Chronicle and The True Sun.[68]

In 1835 Fox and Eliza Flower set up a separate establishment in Bayswater and by this open avowal of the situation estranged many of their oldest friends. Even John Stuart Mill although never formally breaking with Fox felt that he could no longer continue their personal relationship.[69] Old line Unitarians were almost unanimous in their

disapproval, and among them was Harriet Martineau who until the time of Fox's actual separation from his wife had been convinced that the relationship between Fox and Lizzie Flower was an innocent one. In fact, in 1834, just before the couple began living together, Harriet had descended upon Lizzie and presuming upon their close relationship had asked for and received an explanation. Apparently satisfied, she told Fox that:

> Lizzie has done what was due to my friendship to her and told me all. You are aware that I must be more grieved than surprised. You know too what my opinion has been throughout, and you know me. What follows? That, no change having taken place in either of you, my respect and friendship are precisely what they were before [my italics].[70]

She did not at first, as Betty Miller wrongly suggests, suspect the platonic nature of the Fox-Flower situation.[71] She only acted to sever her social connection with them after they committed the impropriety of setting up a separate establishment together. Harriet Martineau probably considered the action to have been a denial of the assurances which Lizzie had given her. Untouched as she was by experience of physical passion or a need for dependency she had decried their behavior. In a letter written to Richard Monckton Milnes several years later she said:

> Mr. Fox, who has left his (very disagreeable) wife, and loves another openly can't forgive me my belief in the remediableness, through the practice of duty, of a moral mistake. Because I think love, like other passions, guidable by duty, he pities me as an unfeeling person. . . .[72]

Although all social contact between Harriet Martineau and Fox had ended, they resumed their corespondence in 1838 and continued it until 1857. They wrote on matters of common interest: reform, women's rights, abolition, the corn laws, India, etc. Their correspondence survived the chilly first years after the estrangement, Fox's disapproval of Harriet's

1844 cure by mesmerism, and her injunction at that time to have her letters destroyed. But although Fox's letters to her were full of the same old affection and appreciation as before, the mutual regard of the earlier years could not but have been affected.[73] And in spite of Fox's pleadings, Harriet remained adamant in her disapprobation. He wrote:

> The language of your great work [Society in America (1837)] is that of the paramount worth of thorough sincerity, and the right of all to act upon their own principles. And yet towards myself, and that purest and noblest of beings with whom I am identified, and whom you recognise as such, your position is one of practical condemnation.[74]

The impact which the lovely Flower sisters had on the plain, lonely and provincial young Harriet Martineau survives in her fiction: in Five Years of Youth; Or Sense and Sentiment published in 1831, in the Monthly Repository story, "Liese," and in Deerbrook, her three-volume novel of 1839.[75] Five Years of Youth is a slight novella patterned on the early life of Benjamin Flower's daughters. As the sub-title would indicate, Harriet Martineau tried to create an Austen-like domestic novel. It is, however, a trivial work lacking the perception which was becoming apparent in her better review articles of the period. She was then and continued to be at her weakest when she wrote fiction. Her fiction lacked personal commitment; she neither developed character nor evoked realism; her dialogues were wooden and didactic; and she relied upon the narrative to carry the action along. In Five Years even the plot is without merit. It is the story of the two Byerly sisters brought up, like the Flowers, by their widowed father. Their musical talent, their beauty, their obviously disordered youth closely paralleled what Harriet Martineau knew of the Flowers' childhood. Harriet Martineau even succeeded in weaving into

the tale the story of Bemjamin Flower's imprisonment, but here it is depicted has having taken place in his old age with his daughters and not the faithful Eliza Gould visiting him in his prison cell.[76]

An under-developed and superficial work, Five Years is of greater interest for what it tells us about Harriet Martineau herself than for what it relates about the well-publicized youth of her much admired friends Eliza and Sarah Flower. It hints at her admiration for them, and because of her unequal treatment of the two sisters, it also suggests that she may have preferred Eliza to Sarah. There also may have been a barely conscious parallel drawn between the relationship of the Byerlys and her own experiences with Rachel. But the most important aspect of Five Years is what it tells us about the intellectual change of focus which was then becoming apparent in Harriet Martineau's outlook. She said later in her Autobiography that her prize essays marked her final connection with official Unitarianism:

> This last act in connexion with the Unitarian body was a bona fide one [she wrote about the three essays in her Autobiography]; but all was prepared for that which ensued, - a withdrawal from the body through whose regions of metaphysical fog in which most deserters from Unitarianism abide for the rest of their time. . . . I had now plunged fairly into the spirit of my time, - that of self-analysis, pathetic self-pity, typical interpretation of objective matters, and scheme making, in the name of God and Man.[77]

This could be interpreted as merely the hindsight of a disillustioned cynic, but Five Years of Youth bears out her claim. It reveals that she was, in fact, at this time emerging from her earlier religious orthodoxy into a region of "metaphysical fog." For in Five Years she descanted on organized religion and spoke of God and worship not in Unitarian but in pantheistic terms.[78] At the same time, she did not permit the 'fog' to

engulf her completely, she came to realize that her religion till then had been largely a self-serving preoccupation with her own religious conscience. And she began to see religion more and more in terms of her duty toward humanity. Five Years reveals the start of her transition from a preoccupation with religion to a preoccupation with society. She had begun to realize, as Mill was to do in On Liberty, that Christianity should not be a "doctrine of passive obedience," but an "energetic Pursuit of Good."[79] And she was beginning to pound away in Five Years on those arguments of Political Economy which were to become her new gospel.[80]

"Liese" is of greater importance for the study of Harriet Martineau than is Five Years, for although the heroine of the tale, Liese, bears a superficial resemblance to Eliza Flower--for whom she was obviously named--she bears a strong if perhaps unselfconscious resemblance to Harriet Martineau herself. It is perhaps the only identifiable self-portrait in Harriet Martineau's fictional work. The tale was set in Reformation Germany just after the issuance of the decree for the dissolution of the monastic orders. Liese, a nun, was forced to leave the sanctuary of her sisterhood and to re-enter the world from which she had escaped many years earlier. She was accepted into the home of a family who had embraced Luther's new faith but she remained steadfast in her old beliefs. Because her religion set her apart, she was isolated even among these friends, but as she opened her mind to Luther's new creed and gradually came under the influence of the reformer himself, she emerged from a self-centered, self-imposed solitude. She began to look outward and to dedicate herself to serving others. She joined Luther's household,

assisted him as a scribe and wrote hymns which inspired the converts to his new churches--in fact did all the things for Luther which Eliza Flower was then doing for the Reverend William Fox. The parallel between the two couples has not been lost on readers of the tale, but what has not been remarked is the less obvious parallel between Liese and Harriet Martineau herself. The Liese who had shut herself into a convent in order to escape to a place where "new griefs could not reach her," bore a more than passing resemblance to the Harriet Martineau who only a short time earlier had shut herself into a silent world in which only religion had sustained her.[81] Liese progressed from her narrow religious preoccupation toward a new sense of purpose and a fulfillment which she had not known in the old self-contemplating days, in much the same way as Harriet Martineau was being coaxed from the silent insularity of her lonely deaf world by Fox and his friends. Like Liese she had been "wretched in her loneliness of soul," but now she warmed to the kindly considerations of friends who, like Liese's had the patience to wait out her prejudices.[82]

Her association with the South Place Chapel set was obviously a marked turning point in Harriet Martineau's life. The friends who had known her before that time, she said in later years, scarcely recognized her afterwards:

> The frown of those old days, the rigid face, the sulky mouth, the forbidding countenance, which looked as if it had never had a smile upon it, told a melancholy story which came to an end long ago: but it was so far from its end then that it amazes me now to think what liberality and forebearance were requisite in the treatment of me by Mr. Fox and the friends I met at his house, and how capable they were of that liberality. . . . They saw that I was outgrowing my shell, and they had patience with me till I had rent it and cast it off.[83]

As Liese began to learn from Luther, so Harriet Martineau was learning from Fox. Liese studied, communed with nature, and performed deeds of piety:

> She was happier than formerly, more useful, more beloved, and her devotions therefore had more of praise in them, and less of penitence; there was full employment in the present for all her faculties of mind and soul, and she therefore looked back into the past but seldom, and contemplated the future more in the realities before her, than in the visions which floated afar.[84]

Liese now learnt to love God more than she had done when, as a nun, her whole life had been supposedly dedicated to loving him.[85] She was immersing herself in a religion of nature. And so too was Harriet Martineau.

Necessarianism was basically consistent with pantheism--as Coleridge had found before he shifted to greater orthodoxy--and Harriet Martineau was becoming persuaded that: "The highest condition of the religious sentiment is when . . . the worshipper not only sees God everywhere, but sees nothing which is not full of God."[86] She expressed herself thus in her Monthly Repository articles of the period, and in the introduction to the articles when they were published in Miscellanies in 1836. When she wrote the introduction to Miscellanies she stated her belief that religion advanced through three stages: the first was simply obedience to form; the second was a self-inquisitorial search for God; and the third and final stage--the one which she later categorized as "metaphysical fog"--was reached when God was found to be present in all things: in the "glories of the sunrise, the sublimity of the stormy ocean, [and] the radiant beauties of the night."[87]

Her Monthly Repository articles were redolent with Wordsworthian sentiments. In nature she saw a symbolic expression of her faith. She wrote, for example, of the sea as a triumphant affirmation of her own belief:

> Now may I be freely wrought upon by sound and motion, stimulated and soothed by influences which man can only interpret to me, and not originate. Thou rolling sea: thou shalt by my preacher. Of old was that office given to thee. Wisdom was in her native seat before the throne of God when thy bounds were fixed; and from her was thy commission received to be the measure of time, a perpetual suggestion of eternity, and admonition to "rejoice ever before Him." Thine is the old unwearied voice: thy sound alone hath not died away from age to age: and from thee alone is man willing to hear truth from the day that his spirit awakes to that when his body sleeps forever. By the music of thy gentle lapse [sic] it is thine to rouse the soul from its primal sleep among the flowers of a new life: blossoms whose beauty is unseen, whose fragrance unheeded, till at thy voice all is revealed to the opening sense. . . . Every other voice utters, and is again silent: men speak in vain and are weary: if they are regarded they still become weary. The nightingale that sings far inland, nestles in silence when the moon goes down. These winds which tune their melodies to thine, pause that thou mayest be heard; and yonder caverns which sing a welcome to the winds as they enter, are presently still. But if thou shouldst be hushed, it would be as if Wisdom herself were struck dumb; to me cummuning with thee in this lonely cove. . . . If at noon day thou shouldst be stilled, men would look up to the sun to see it shaken from its sphere: if midnight, all sleepers would rise to ask why God had foresaken them. . . . How oppressive would be the silence, how stifling the expectation, how hopeless the blank if we should call upon thee and find no answer.[88]

And similarly, in "Sabbath Musings II" written for Monthly Repository in 1831 she wrote of retiring to the sanctuary of the poplar grove in order to properly communicate with God.

> Perhaps, [as] the cowled devotee retired hither to pay his debt of devotion, to transfer his prayers from his girdle into the care of his saint. Perhaps, as he stood beneath this shelter, some wandering breeze came to sweep aside the foliage, and give [sic] him a glimpse of the wide champaigne studded with hamlets, speckled with flocks and herds, and overspread with the works of man's busy hands. Perhaps he crossed himself, and thanked heaven that he was not like these busy men, destined "to fret and labor on the plain below," but rather withdrawn into the

> stillness of retreat, where the songs with which the reaper cheers his toil could never come to disturb the orisons of the devout.[89]

But although Harriet Martineau could contemplate retreating on the sabbath to worship God through nature she could not retreat permanently from the world or from duty toward man. It is the imagery and not the sentiments which force a comparison with Matthew Arnold's "Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse,"

> Oh, hide me in your gloom profound,
> Ye solemn seats of holy pain:
> Take me cowled forms and fence me round,
> Till I possess my soul again;
> Till free my thought before me roll,
> Not chafed by hourly false control:[90]

For where Arnold bade the banners pass, Harriet Martineau was prepared to do no such thing, her pantheistic retreat and her adoration of God through nature was preliminary to the shouldering of her social conscience and her duty toward those who suffered on the "darkling plain." God-consciousness was not consciousness of self but mindfulness of humanity: "the service of the life."[91]

Just as Harriet Martineau was discovering this new sense of duty through Fox, so Liese found it through Luther. Liese relinquished her old religious rites and devotions and found renewal through nature and duty and "watched, with wondering consciousness, the expansion of her own intellect, and the affections which thence arise; an intellect more shackled than weakend by former influences, and affections which only needed scope to become as divine as earthly existence allows."[92]

From this burgeoning renaissance Liese was rudely summoned by her old abbess in much the same way as Harriet Martineau had been recalled

from London by her mother. The comparison is forced upon us by the use in both the Autobiography and "Liese" of the word "peremptory" to describe the recall. So too does the fact that Liese's friends pressed upon her the need to assert her independence and return to them compare with the way in which Fox had insisted that Harriet Martineau return to London and a career in letters. Like Harriet Martineau in whom "the instinct and habit of old obedience" prevailed, Liese was conditioned by her old obediences and she returned temporarily to the abbess.[93] But neither the cruel abbess of fiction nor Mrs. Martineau, in fact, prevailed. Harriet Martineau broke loose from her maternal moorings and dedicated herself to the "cultivation of [her] intellectual powers, with a view to the instruction of others by [her] writings." And in the same way Liese, "cultivated her intellect and her tastes, as husbanding a possession common to society."[94]

As in "Liese," Martineau's other Monthly Repository articles of the period revealed a growing certainty that there should be harmony between the life of the spirit and the life of the flesh. Without "man-ward sympathy," a "God-ward sympathy" was without meaning. Christ himself had not been an anchorite but had walked among men and had reconciled the worship of God with service toward man.[95] A religion which nourished only itself was not enough.

> I hear an universal acknowledgement of the obligation to do good to the souls as well as the bodies of men: and yet, what comes of it? Some are too indolent to give, others too proud to receive instruction. Some are too selfish to inquire, others too timid to reveal. Men meet to worship God, and separate without trying to do his work upon each other. . . . They thank God for the honor of being his vicegerents, and then compose themselves to sleep at their posts. . . .

> When I see a physician ministering to the soul as tenderly as to the body of his patient, when I see a preacher of the gospel discoursing more eloquently by his life than his lips, when I see a student gathering together the treasures of wisdom only to distribute them with increase. . . . I rejoice to see how the will of God is done on earth as in heaven.[96]

The dedication to service and good works which Harriet Martineau was here advocating was as much a part of the Unitarian as it was a part of the Evangelical code. Although the Evangelicals may have emphasized the spiritual rather than the physical salvation of suffering humanity, and may have interpreted good works and devotion to duty in terms of their own personal salvation, they shared with their Unitarian and German Romantic contemporaries that dedication to duty, philanthropy, and principle which was so much part of the nineteenth-century work ethic. As Walter Houghton has noted in The Victorian Frame of Mind,

> Except for "God," the most popular word in the Victorian vocabulary must have been "work." It was, of course, the means by which some of the central ambitions of a commercial society could be realized: money, respectability, and success. But it also became an end in itself, a virtue in its own right.[97]

And it is no coincidence that both Harriet Martineau and Thomas Carlyle writing within a few years of one another, and as yet unacquainted, should have selected as their text the line from Ecclesiastes (14, 10):

> Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.

Harriet Martineau used it in "On the Agency of Feelings in the Formation of Habits," in the Monthly Repository of 1829, and Carlyle used it in Sartor Resartus published in Fraser's Magazine between November 1833 and August 1834. Harriet Martineau read the 1836 Emerson edition of Sartor Resartus and was herself instrumental in getting it published in book from England after her return from the United States.[98] The "Everlasting

Yea" which Carlyle was affirming in Sartor appealed to that part of Harriet Martineau which cried out for an affirmation: action upon principle, a vindication of truth, and an assertion of human rights.[99] It appealed too to the inflexible determination with which she invariably confronted that which she interpreted as her Duty. She doubtless gave her emphatic approval to Carlyle's invocation:

> Fool: the Ideal is in thyself, the impediment too is in thyself: thy Condition is but the stuff thou art to shape that same Ideal out of: what matters whether such stuff be of this sort or that, so the Form thou give it be heroic, be poetic?
>
> . . . Produce! Produce! Were it but the pitifullest infinitesimal fraction of a Product, produce it, in God's name: 'Tis the utmost thou hast in thee: out with it then. Up, up: Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy whole might. Work while it is called Today; for the Night cometh, wherein no man can work [my italics].[100]

For it echoed her own earlier more prosaic appeal:

> We should not wait till some object of misery presents itself to our gaze, to awaken the sensibility which has hitherto been the spring of our actions; but, remembering that what our hand findeth to do we are to do with all our might, we should relinquish our inactive meditations, exclude selfish regrets, and hasten to the performance of some active duty.[101]

It was no mere semantic exhortation; it was becoming, and was to be the rule by which Harriet Martineau endeavored to live her life.

FOOTNOTES

[1]From "Stanzas," Miscellanies I, 345 ["Harvests of all Time," MR, 8 (1834), 533].

[2]A. G. Dickens, The English Reformation (NY: Schocken Books, 1964), p. 238; Dennis George Wigmore-Beddoes, Yesterday's Radicals: A Study of the Affinity betweeen Unitarianism and Broad Church Anglicanism in the Nineteenth Century (Cambridge: James Clarke, 1971), pp. 15-16.

[3]Olive M. Griffiths, Religion and Learning, (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1935) p. 149; Owen Chadwick, The Victorian Church, 2 vols. (1966-1970, London: Adam and Charles Black, 1971), I, 391 ff. Chadwick notes that the conversion of more than half the Presbyterian congregations in England to Unitarianism resulted in a legal battle over endowed chapels.

[4]Wigmore-Beddoes, Yesterday's Radicals, p. 124. A national Unitarian Church was founded in England in 1925.

[5]Autobiography, I, 44-45; Household Education, p. 151.

[6]"Sabbath Musings," Miscellanies, I, 163 [MR, 5 (1831), 684-90].

[7]Autobiography, I, 103-104, 108-109.

[8]Quoted in Charles Bray, The Philosophy of Necessity, 2 vols. (London: Longman, 1841), I, 1.

[9]Quoted from Spinoza's Ethics in Gertrude E. M. Anscombe, Causality and determination: an inaugural lecture, (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1971), p. 3.

[10]Quoted in Anne Holt, A life of Joseph Priestley (1931, Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1970), p. 116.

[11]Quoted in Joseph Priestley, Selections from his Writings, ed. Ira V. Brown (1962 rpt., University Park, Penn. State University Press, 1967), pp. 274-275.

[12]"On Nature and Providence to Communities," Miscellanies, II, 273 [MR, 6 (1832) 248-257]; and see Autobiography, I, 110-111.

[13]Quoted from History of English Thought (1876) in Mineka, The Dissidence of Dissent, p. 20.

[14]David Hume, An Inquiry concerning Human Understanding, (1748) ed. Charles N. Hendel (Indianapolis and New York: Bobbs Merrill, 1955), pp. 83 ff., 90 ff., 177.

[15] Autobiography, I, 37-40.

[16] Chadwick, The Victorian Church, I, 396-397.

[17] Autobiography, I, 39.

[18] Quoted in Holt, Joseph Priestley, pp. 140 ff.

[19] Priestley, An History of the Corruptions of Christianity in ed. Ira V. Brown, Joseph Priestley, Selections, pp. 282 ff; Holt, Joseph Priestley, pp. 138 ff.

[20] Harriet Martineau to James Martineau, March 17, 1822; Dec. 7, 1823; Dec. 22, 1825, Transcript Letters, M. Coll.

[21] Harriet Martineau, The Essential Faith of the Universal Church (1830); The Faith as Unfolded by Many Prophets (1831); The Faith as Manifested through Israel (1831) (Boston: Leonard C. Bowles, 1833).

[22] The Essential Faith, pp. 33, 15-17, 29, 48-49, 51, 53-55.

[23] The Essential Faith, p. 29.

[24] "Lessing's Hundred Thoughts on the Education of the Human Race," Miscellanies, II, 333 [MR, 4 (1830), 511-517]; and see Autobiography, I, 153.

[25] Quoted in Holt, Joseph Priestley, p. 117.

[26] "Physical Considerations connected with Man's Ultimate Destiny," Miscellanies, II, 212 [MR, 5 (1831), 217-229].

[27] Ibid., 219.

[28] Harriet Martineau to James Martineau, Oct. 21, 1830, Transcript Letters, M. Coll.

[29] "Sabbath Musings III," Miscellanies, I, 145 [MR, 5 (1831), 139-146].

[30] Ibid., 155.

[31] Quoted from Newman's Oxford Sermons in Bernard M. G. Reardon, From Coleridge to Gore: A Century of Religious Thought in Britain (1961, London: Longman, 1971), p. 134.

[32] Basil Willey, Nineteenth-Century Studies (1949, New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1966), pp. 209 ff.

[33] "Lessing's Hundred Thoughts," Miscellanies, II, 338; "Theology, Politics, and Literature," Miscellanies, I, 191-201 [MR, 6 (1832), 73-79]; "Crombie's Natural Theology," Miscellanies, II, 267 [MR 4 (1830), 145-154, 223-230].

[34]Autobiography, I, 141-143; Harriet Martineau to James Martineau, Jan. 2, 1829; July 9, 1829; July 17, 1829; Aug. 18, 1829, Transcript Letters, M. Coll.

[35]Autobiography, III, 32-34 from a private memo of June, 1829.

[36]Autobiography, I, 149.

[37]Harriet Martineau to James Martineau, Jan. 26, 1830, Transcript Letters, M. Coll.

[38]Quoted in Richard and Edward Garnett, The Life of William Johnson Fox: Public Teacher and Social Reformer 1786-1864 (London and New York: John Lane, 1910), p. 94.

[39]Quoted from the Christian Remembrance of 1825 in Mineka, The Dissidence of Dissent, p. 22.

[40]Mineka, The Dissidence of Dissent, pp. 144 ff., 163-164.

[41]"On Female Education," MR, 1st series, 18 (1823), 77-81.

[42]Mineka, The Dissidence of Dissent, pp. 170, 247, 249n.

[43]Chadwick, Victorian Church, I, 111-112.

[44]Friedrich A. Hayek, John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), p. 29.

[45]Mineka, The Dissidence of Dissent, p. 277.

[46]Garnett notes that despite the wealth of talent upon which Fox drew the MR failed to reflect some of the more significant events of the era: scientific development, the changes brought about by railway construction, Tractarianism, and, were it not for Harriet Martineau, systematic colonization. In Fox, p. 134.

[47]Mineka, The Dissidence of Dissent, p. 207.

[48]Garnett, Fox, p. 80.

[49]Autobiography, I, 154. Note: the first tale in Traditions of Palestine was published in MR, 4 (1830) 101-108.

[50]Mineka, The Dissidence of Dissent, p. 241.

[51]Autobiography, I, 140.

[52]Garnett, Fox, p. 81.

[53]Autobiography, I, 148.

[54]Harriet Martineau to James Martineau, Jan. 26, 1830, Transcript Letters, M. Coll.

[55]Harriet Martineau to James Martineau, May 5, 1830, Transcript Letters, M. Coll.

[56]Harriet Martineau to James Martineau, Jan. 26, 1830. This differed slightly from the account she gave of her daily routine in _Autobiography_, I, 146-147. See p. 59 this chapter.

[57]Garnett, _Fox_, p. 75.

[58]Ibid., p. 81. According to R. K. Webb, _Harriet Martineau: A Radical Victorian_ (New York: Columbia University Press; London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1960), p. 99, this correspondence has been destroyed.

[59]R. K. Webb, _Harriet Martineau_, 99.

[60]_Autobiography_, I, 148.

[61]Quoted in Maisie Ward, _Robert Browning and his World_, 2 vols. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1967), I, 29.

[62]Quoted in Garnett, _Fox_, pp. 43-44.

[63]Ibid., p. 112.

[64]Ibid., pp. 158-159.

[65]Ibid., pp. 169-170. A group of Unitarian ministers outside London censured the action of their London colleagues. Among these was James Martineau who had no sympathy for Fox's "obnoxious opinion on the subject of marriage," but who deplored the fact that Fox had not been allowed to defend himself.

[66]Ibid., pp. 296-298.

[67]Fox became M. P. for Oldham in 1847.

[68]Garnett, _Fox_, p. 131.

[69]Ibid., p. 186.

[70]Quoted Ibid., p. 189.

[71]Betty Miller, _Robert Browning: A Portrait_ (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1952), p. 48.

[72]Harriet Martineau to Richard Monckton Milnes, Apr. 21 [1844], Houghton Papers, Trinity College Cambridge. Hereafter cited as Milnes, Tr. Coll.

[73]Harriet Martineau to James Martineau, March 6, 1838, Transcript Letters, M. Coll.

[74]Quoted in Garnett, Fox, p. 189.

[75]Five Years of Youth; Or Sense and Sentiment (London: Harvey and Dalton, 1831); "Liese; or, The Progress of Worship," Miscellanies, II, 1-42 [MR, 6 (1832), 153-161, 239-248, 324-333]; Deerbrook, 3 vols. (London: Moxon, 1839).

[76]Fox's daughter, Mrs. Bridell-Fox identified details of the story with events in the lives of the Flowers.

[77]Autobiography, I, 157.

[78]Five Years of Youth, p. 114.

[79]John Stuart Mill, On Liberty (1859) ed. Currin V. Shields (Indianapolis and New York: Bobbs Merrill, 1956) p. 60.

[80]Five Years of Youth, pp. 150-152, 62.

[81]"Liese," Miscellanies, II, 2.

[82]Ibid., p. 11.

[83]Autobiography, I, 148.

[84]"Liese," Miscellanies, II, 27.

[85]Ibid., p. 14.

[86]Miscellanies, I, vii.

[87]"On the Agency of Habits in the Regeneration of Feelings," Miscellanies, I, 214 [MR, 3 (1829), 159-162].

[88]"Sabbath Musings I," Miscellanies, I, 122-123 [MR 5 (1831), 73-77].

[89]"Sabbath Musings II," Miscellanies, I, 130 [MR, 5 (1831), 235-239].

[90]From Matthew Arnold, "Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse," (1855).

[91]Miscellanies, I, viii; "Sabbath Musings VI," Miscellanies, I, 168 [MR, 6 (1831), 763-70].

[92]"Liese," Miscellanies, II, 35-36.

[93]Ibid., p. 28-29; Autobiography, I, 149.

[94]Autobiography, III, 32; "Liese," Miscellanies, II, 38.

[95]"On Moral Independence," Miscellanies, I, 182 [not listed in Mineka]; and see also Briery Creek in Illustrations of Political Economy (London, Charles Fox, 1832-1834),pp. 91-92.

[96]"Solitude and Society," Miscellanies, II, 56, [MR, 4 (1830), 442-9].

[97]Walter Houghton, The Victorian Frame of Mind (1957, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1972), pp. 242-243.

[98]"On the Agency of Feelings in the Formation of Habits," Miscellanies, I, 207 [MR, 3 (1829), 102-106]. Thomas Carlyle, Sartor Resartus: The Life and Opinions of Herr Teufelsdrockh, ed. Charles Frederick Harrold (New York: The Odyssey Press, 1937), p. 197.

[99]"On Moral Independence," Miscellanies, I, 182.

[100]Thomas Carlyle, Sartor Resartus, 196-197.

[101]"On the Agency of Feelings, etc." Miscellanies, I, 207.

CHAPTER III

A SIGN OF THIS COUNTRY AND TIME[1]

The greatest happiness principle like the doctrine of Necessity depended on causation: by avoiding pain and seeking pleasure the individual could achieve his own happiness and increase the sum of all human happiness. The concept, generally associated with Jeremy Bentham, was current in the eighteenth century before Bentham articulated it. Professor of Moral Philosophy, Francis Hutcheson (1694-1746) had expounded the theory at Glasgow University; at Cambridge John Gay (1699-1745) had written a treatise on the subject in 1731; and Joseph Priestley, the most direct influence on Bentham, had first used the felicitous phrase, "the greatest happiness of the greatest number," in his Essay on the First Principles of Government (1768). The social implications of the theory had not been lost on Priestley, but Bentham put his personal stamp on the philosophy when he converted it into an instrument of social change. Out of the greatest happiness principle--which he first called Utilitarianism in 1802--Bentham conceived a philanthropic legal and political program which aimed, as John Stuart Mill later defined it, to educate the individual to understand what his and society's best interests were, and to associate his happiness with the happiness of the social whole.[2]

Benthamite Utilitarians placed a Hartleyan reliance on education, and expressed a faith in laissez-faire. However, they recognized the fallibility of human nature and realized that even educated individualism might be subject to selfish motivation and might require the reinforcement of prescribed sanctions. In his Introduction to the Principles of

Morals and Legislation (1780), Bentham said that individuals, motivated as they were by pleasure and pain, should be induced to act in a manner which would benefit the general good. Private interests should be made to coincide with public welfare by the employment of legal, moral, physical and--though a skeptic himself--religious sanctions.[3] Benthamite laissez-faire did not mean no government; it meant good government. It sought to destroy the old governmental forms but was not simply an anarchic destructive process. In the place of the old system it proposed new legal codes and new institutions. Those closest to Bentham himself--the Mills at India House and Chadwick in public health, for example--came to champion a greater rather than a lesser degree of administrative supervision, and to represent something other than the laissez-faire associated with free trade liberalism and the Manchester School.

Free trade was the economic complement of the greatest happiness theory, and Political Economy was the economic corollary to Utilitarianism. As a legislator and jurist Bentham thought in terms of administrative change. Adam Smith, using the same philosophic elements, thought in terms of economics. Smith had been the student of and successor to Francis Hutcheson at Glasgow. When he wrote his Inquiry Concerning the Wealth of Nations in 1776 it was more than a blueprint for free trade; it was a classic statement of the greatest happiness principle. Smith perceived that this society was the product of inequities perpetuated by ancient privilege and entrenched monopoly. In such a society men were not free to seek their best interests, and, as long as their individual interests were not served, as long as poverty and misery persisted, the society as a whole could not flourish. Smith believed that the happiness

of each individual contributed to the total quantum of human happiness because unless all members of a society were happy, none could be so. He recommended that each individual have the freedom to seek out his own happiness so that he could thereby contribute towards the good of the whole society. He called his theory 'identity of interests,' and used it to justify the argument for personal as well as international freedom of competition.[4]

Adam Smith had a more sanguine opinion of human nature than did Bentham. Smith and his free trade followers had confidence that, left alone, the individual would act for the good of society as well as himself. Because he believed that there was an identity of interests, and because of an optimistic Necessarian view of the ultimate benificence of untrammelled natural law, Smith and his followers in political economy embraced unqualified laissez-faire as the means to the greatest happiness. Benthamite political economists on the other hand were inclined to preserve some of Bentham's original reservations, and with the rising star of David Ricardo they further amended their position, substituting Ricardian pessimism for Adam Smith's optimism: John Stuart Mill's mature rejection of complete laissez-faire--socially, politically, and economically--was representative of the evolving mind of Utilitarianism. There were others, however, who remained satisfied with the more palatable solutions of Adam Smith and who, in a world where only the fittest survived, came eventually, though such was not their intention, to be identified with selfish individualism, with the interests of the middle-class merchant and manufacturer, with self-help, and with the exploitation of the working classes.

Apart from the classic interpreters of each school, both the Utilitarians and the liberal free traders defy strict definition. Joseph Schumpeter in his posthumously published work of 1954 confined Utilitarianism to Bentham and the two Mills. But Lord Robbins in The Evolution of Modern Economic Theory (1970) believed Schumpeter's designation to be far too restricted,[5] and, if we accept the greatest happiness principle as the basis of Benthamite Utilitarianism and the fundamental philosophy of a large number of nineteenth-century reformers, then we must also agree to a considerable expansion of Schumpeter's narrow interpretation of the creed.

Like most of her contemporaries Harriet Martineau was difficult to categorize. Although generally more closely allied with Adam Smith and the identity of interests principle--in 1832, for example she was telling her Monthly Repository readers that:

> Every man knows his interests best, and as the interest of the public is that of congregated individuals the part of justice and benevolence is to interfere with none in the direction of their own concerns.[6]

--she nevertheless was in harmony with many aspects of the Benthamite interpretation of the greatest happiness principle. She was an enthusiastic supporter of education as a means of social improvement; she was by no means averse to all governmental interference in the private sector; and she endorsed most of the Benthamite reform proposals of the 1830s. When R. K. Webb in Harriet Martineau A Radical Victorian denies that she was a Benthamite, he points up the danger of trying to classify any of that school. The reasons for Webb's definition are far from clear. He admits that Harriet Martineau sympathized with the 'criterion of utility'

and that she admired the Benthamite social reforms, but he nevertheless concludes that "she was a better revolutionist than administrator" and for this debatable and rather obscure reason rejects her identification with Benthamism:

> An optimistic perfectibilist [he writes], she would enforce and reinforce inevitable change. It was not only that things could be done, but that they would be done. Because she knew where society was heading - her thinking was teleological not instrumental - she was capable of revolution (or of talking it) in almost the wildest Jacobin sense. Not for nothing is one reminded from time to time in reading her of Karl Marx. Not in programme, to be sure, but in spirit. Hers was a clean manifestation of the radical temper.[7]

One of the chief difficulties in trying to label Harriet Martineau or any one else is that their ideas change with time. Harriet Martineau's opinions on Utilitarianism and political economy altered considerably during her life-time and it is therefore hazardous to classify her as one thing or another without specifying the period to which one is referring. In 1832 she was something of a convert to the concepts of both Utilitarianism and political economy despite her own later denials to the contrary.[8] Although she came to regard Bentham's philosophy with condescension in after years, she nevertheless admitted that his influence had been pervasive.[9] At mid-century she was to write:

> The greatest happiness of the greatest number is not now talked of as the profession of a school: but the idea is in the minds of politicians, and shapes their aims. The truest welfare of the largest classes has been the plea for much of our legislation; and especially for the whole grand achievement of the completion of free trade.[10]

"We are all [she said] living and acting under the influence of [Bentham's] aspiration for the 'greatest happiness of the greatest number.'"[11]

To Harriet Martineau in 1832, political economy was a means to a more equitable society. Her interest in the 'dismal science' was really more social than commercial or fiscal except in so far as the former was dependent upon national economic prosperity. In other respects her concern with the pecuniary aspects of political economy--the free trade concept excepted--was largely academic. Having read The Wealth of Nations she agreed with Smith that the society could not prosper while the rich surfeited and the poor starved.[12] She agreed with Smith's conclusions and with his method for alleviating the national ills by encouraging each individual to seek his own best interests. It seemed to her that the truths of political economy were basic and simple, and like the truths of Necessarianism, were ultimately dependent on the unimpeded functioning of natural law. But she over-simplified, and there is some justification to Mill's accusation that she reduced the laissez-faire system to "an absurdity." It was an accusation which Mark Blaug in Ricardian Economics (1958) considered "less than fair," for Blaug described hers as "a perfectly standard treatment of the proper scope of government."[13] On the other hand however Blaug criticized her for accepting Smith's interpretation of economics as the final word on the subject, and Smith's view of political economy as 'complete.' Blaug is partially correct, for when she wrote her Illustrations of Political Economy, Harriet Martineau believed political economy to be a 'complete science' which provided all the answers to the nation's socio-economic problems. But this was in 1832, and Blaug should also have acknowledged that, to her credit, she later on her own came to the conclusion that she had earlier been wrong:

> The pretended science [she wrote in 1855] is no science at all, strictly speaking . . . so many of its parts must undergo

> essential change, that it may be a question whether future generations will owe much more to it than the benefit of establishing the grand truth that social affairs proceed according to general laws, no less than [do] natural phenomena of every kind.[14]

Harriet Martineau never laid claim to the title of economist. She was aware that she was merely the popularizer of other people's ideas.[15] Her knowledge of economics was superficial, impressionistic, and often ill-digested. With perhaps unwarranted acerbity but not without justice John Stuart Mill called her a "mere tyro". Nevertheless, upon her contemporaries she exerted an extraordinary degree of influence. And this influence Blaug believed was dangerous. "New ideas," he wrote, "are not likely to be welcome when everyone is already furnished with easy answers to difficult questions."[17] It is in the ready acceptance by the reading public of her pat answers that the Illustrations of Political Economy assume significance for the twentieth-century historian, for Harriet Martineau's little volumes were extremely popular and they furnished an exceptionally large number of readers with the elements of political economy as she understood them. By 1834 her series was selling ten thousand monthly copies while by contrast John Stuart Mill's Principles of Political Economy (1848) sold a mere three thousand copies in four years.[18] Although in 1855 she would declare that, "After an interval of above twenty years, I have not courage to look at a single number, - convinced that I should be disgusted by bad taste and metaphysics in almost every page,"[19] she nevertheless took great pride in the influence which the series had exerted:

> [Political Economy] was never heard of outside of the Political Economy Club, except among students of Adam Smith; but the 'series' made it popular, aided as it was by the needs and events of the time . . .[20]

It was to a large extent Harriet Martineau's sense of timing which made the series an instant success. As a journalist she recognized a latent interest in a subject about which all but the charmed inner circle were abysmally ignorant. She realized her own inadequacies as a political economist, however, and admitted to Lord Brougham that she suffered from "a sense of helpless ignorance," and felt panic at the thought of "stereotyping a hundred blunders with each number."[21] Nevertheless, she saw it as her duty to "my great pupil, the public" to fill the void:

> These are times for testifying [she wrote to William Tait], as much as the old times of religious reformation. There is as much religion in our political reformations as there ever was in the theological, - and as much more as the glory of God is more involved in the happiness of his children than in the framing of creeds.[22]

She had first learnt the basic principles of political economy in the Globe, the Martineau family newspaper, "which, without ever mentioning political economy . . . taught it, and viewed public affairs in its light."[23] In 1827, however, she read Mrs. Marcet's Conversations on Political Economy. She was influenced by Mrs. Marcet's arguments, and from the Conversations derived the idea of teaching the principles of political economy by narrative illustration.[24] Martineau was scrupulous about acknowledging her debt to the first popularizer of political economy. The Conversations had been very successful. It was first published in 1816 and went through seven editions in the next twenty years. But as a dialogue between the teacher, Mrs. B. and the pupil, Caroline, it had a somewhat limited appeal. It was addressed primarily to young people and therefore pre-dated by four years James Mill's much more formal treatise to the young, Elements of Political Economy.[25]

In her Conversations Mrs. Marcet set out to prove how

> Political Economy treats of the formation, the distribution, and the consumption of wealth; [how] it teaches us the causes which promote or prevent its increase, and their influence on the happiness or misery of society.[26]

And how, far from encouraging a materialistic devotion to riches,

> Political Economy tends to moderate all unjustifiable ambition, by showing that the surest means of increasing national prosperity are peace, security, and justice; that jealousy between nations is as prejudicial as between individuals; that each finds its advantage in reciprocal benefits; and that far from growing rich at each other's expence, they mutually assist each other by a liberal system of commerce.[27]

She quoted at length from Smith's Inquiry Concerning the Wealth of Nations to prove the efficacy of the division of labor, and to stress that an identity of interests bound capitalist and laborer. She quoted from Malthus's Principles of Political Economy. And she revised the second edition of Conversations, after reading Ricardo's Principles of Political Economy which had not yet been published when her first edition went to press. As with Martineau Mrs. Marcet's ideas were not her own. She aimed only to popularize and to a great extent she succeeded. But where Mrs. Marcet had limited her audience to young people of the middle and upper classes and James Mill had intended his Elements as a primer for students of the subject, Harriet Martineau addressed the "mass of the people."

> We do not dedicate our series to any particular class of society [she declared in the preface to the first volume], because we are sure that all classes bear an equal relation to the science, and we much fear that it is as little familiar to the bulk of one as of another.[28]

Every member of the community needed to understand the elements of political economy if the condition of England was to be improved:

Unless the people will take pains to learn what it is that goes wrong, and how it can be rectified, they cannot petition intelligently or effectually.[29]

Harriet Martineau had already had some response from working class readers to her two early tales The Turn-Out and The Rioters which Houlston had published in 1827. Two years later, in a letter to Fox, she had expressed the intention of setting forth those questions of political economy which she felt it important for the working people to know.[30] Despite her growing journalistic commitment to the Monthly Repository, she began writing the first number, Life in the Wilds, in 1831.[31] Her plan was to write twenty-four monthly volumes each one illustrating a specific aspect of political economy. But she was unable to interest a publisher in her idea and when her letters from Dublin, where she was visiting James, and then from Norwich, met with no positive response from those publishing houses which she had approached, she determined to go to London herself. With her mother's somewhat hesitant blessings on her solitary venture, she packed her bags that "foggy and sleety" December in 1831 and set off for the metropolis. London was in the grip of a cholera epidemic and was also being swept by the fever of the reform agitations. No publisher was willing in those perilous times to take a chance on an obscure provincial authoress.[32] Finally, totally discouraged, she accepted with some reluctance a contract which William Fox proposed on behalf of his brother Charles, then first setting up as a publisher. Because of his own financial vulnerability the terms which Charles Fox proposed were somewhat harsh. By the terms of the contract Harriet Martineau was to guarantee five hundred subscribers, and even then if fewer than a thousand copies had sold by the end of two weeks, Fox would

be relieved of the obligation of publishing more than the first two numbers.[33] At that time and for that period a thousand copies in so short a time must have seemed a complete impossibility. In addition, the prospect of having to solicit subscriptions was thoroughly disagreeable. It was therefore without much hope and in wretched health that Harriet Martineau returned to Norwich and to the unpleasant and onerous tasks of appealing to subscribers and completing her monthly volumes.

The first number was published in February 1832 and within ten days the entire first edition of 1,500 copies was sold. By the end of the year she was telling her brother James that Fox had released her from the subscription clause, and that sales for each number had reached a daily total of one hundred.[34] Miss Harriet Martineau was obscure no longer. This time when she packed her bags for London, she left Norwich for good.

> I fully expect [she wrote to her mother from London] that both you and I shall feel as if I did not discharge a daughter's duty, but we shall both remind ourselves that I am now as much a citizen of the world as any professional <u>son</u> of yours could be.[35]

The simplicity and ease of her style was one of her greatest assets, and it accounted in part for her success as a journalist, but it is nevertheless difficult for the modern reader to readily appreciate the reasons for the success of her Illustrations. The moralistic little stories, with one or two notable exceptions, were dull and often overdrawn. Her characters were generally two-dimensional and she belabored much of the message by means of wooden, didactic and unrealistic dialogue. She herself acknowledged that the chief difficulty of the Illustrations was the necessity of having to introduce a 'discourser' to explain the theory.[36] Nevertheless, basing her Illustrations on the

principles set out in James Mill's Elements of Political Economy and on standard works like The Wealth of Nations and Malthus's Essay on Population, she conscientiously tackled every aspect of her subject. She utilized government blue books and the library of the House of Commons, and she relied on the advice of friendly experts like Francis Place, Joseph Hume, and William Tait.[37]

Each number dealt primarily with a particular aspect of political economy. After ascertaining and summarising the main points which she wished to illustrate, she decided upon a setting for her story, researched the topography of the locale, outlined the chapters, and once having erected this skeletal framework, "all the rest was easy . . . and the story went off like a letter."[38] Once she had committed a word to paper she never changed it. She wrote with ease and never felt the need to revise. Her technique of never recopying her manuscripts for her publishers simplified her task, accounted in large measure for her prolific output, and explained Jane Welsh Carlyle's sarcastic comment that:

> Harriet Martineau used to talk of writing as such a pleasure to her. In this house we should as soon dream of calling the bearing of children "such a pleasure" - but betwixt writing and writing there is a difference, as betwixt the ease with which a butterfly is born into the world and the pangs that attend a man-child:[39]

The series, as Empson her Edinburgh Reviewer accurately pointed out, was uneven in quality.[40] This can in large measure be attributed to the haste with which the twenty-five volumes were written, as well as to her uncertain health at this time, her family obligations--her mother and aunt came to live with her in London and she was responsible for the move to their house on Fludyer Street--and to the fact that some aspects of

the subject held less interest for her than did others. Her diligent little volumes were meticulously based on the main points of James Mill's Elements and she paid sedulous attention to all the aspects of political economy as she understood them. But the banking, currency and commercial tales, for example, lacked the impact of those stories which dealt more primarily with social issues. A Manchester Strike in particular is not usually, but should be considered with the industrial novels of the succeeding decades. Harriet Martineau was probably one of the earliest of the English nineteenth-century writers to perceive that:

> The true romance of human life lies among the poorer classes; the most rapid vicissitudes, the strongest passions, the most undiluted emotions, the most eloquent deportment, the truest experience are there. These things are marked on their countenances, and displayed by their gestures; and yet these things are almost untouched by our artists; be they dramatists, painters, or novelists.[41]

However, where most of the later industrial novelists--Dickens and Disraeli, for example, but not Mrs. Gaskell--[42] viewed industrialization with gloomy foreboding, Harriet Martineau was optimistic about "perpetual progress." Instead of having a nostalgic conception of a golden past, she described contemporary difficulties as the product of a corrupt aristocratic past. The Sir Thomas More of her Illustrations of Political Economy tale The Three Ages was not a 'Tory' like the More of Southey's Colloquies (1829) but a 'Benthamite' with a lusty contempt for corruption in government and a deep sympathy for the suffering peasant farmer. Where the industrial novelists tended to blame political economy for what they took to be the worsening condition of England, Harriet Martineau saw political economy as the solution to this condition. But she was not complacent about the present. Like the industrial novelists she had

learnt the gruesome truths about the social standards of the working poor from government reports. She realized that even the blue books told little of the "awful interior history of the time."[43] And she attempted to convey some of the horror and tragedy of that "awful interior" in tales like Ireland and A Manchester Strike.

We will not here be concerned with the individual tales so much as with the social theory which emerged from the Illustrations as a whole.[44] It was a theory based primarily on Bentham's greatest happiness, Smith's laissez-faire, Malthus's Essay on Population, and Ricardo's attack on the Corn Laws. It was Harriet Martineau's vision of society as she perceived it in 1832; it was the philosophy with which she familiarized her reading public; and it was a viewpoint which began to elicit growing support in nineteenth-century England.

Ricardo wrote his Principles of Political Economy in response to the Corn Laws of 1815. It was Ricardo's considered opinion that the corn monopoly was a basic cause of the unhappy condition of England. Departing from Smith's identity of interests principle, he claimed that landlords alone benefitted from the artificially high price of protected corn. It was only because the price of corn was high that more and poorer quality land was placed under cultivation. This increased the rents of the landlords, and made landlords the only segment of the community which derived any advantage from this circumstance. The farmer who paid the rents and grew the corn did not benefit because he had to pay higher production costs on the inferior soils. These higher costs were passed along to the manufacturer who had to pay his workmen higher subsistence wages, and who in

consequence of the higher wage-packet, increased the price of his product. The worker therefore paid more for manufactured goods, still expended the same proportion of his income on bread--estimated at from forty to sixty per cent of his weekly wage[45]--and therefore did not improve his position despite the increase in his wages. The sole beneficiary of the system was the landlord whose rent rolls increased as inflation spiralled upward. "Corn is not high because rent is paid," Ricardo concluded, "but rent is paid because corn is high."[46]

According to Ricardo's theory, the Corn Laws which kept the price of grain high had to be diminished if Britain's other economic ills were to be solved. It was an argument which proposed a simple solution to complex national problems, and Harriet Martineau who had a penchant for seemingly simple solutions enthusiastically joined the anti-Corn Law forces. In the thirties she drove the argument home in the Illustrations, and in the forties she became a publicist and pamphleteer for the Manchester School. Free Trade, and the repeal of the Corn Laws in particular, became her panacea for the national condition and it was probably her dogmatism on this question which gave rise to J. S. Mill's charge that she had reduced laissez-faire to "an absurdity."

Martineau followed the Ricardian model in For Each and for All where she attributed the fall of profits and of real wages to "the inequality in the fertility of the soils."[47] In Ella of Garveloch she quoted Ricardo almost verbatim, "A rise in prices, therefore creates, and is not created by rents."[48] But in Sowers not Reapers, although arguing against the cultivation of inferior soils, she departed from Ricardo and James Mill by including the landlords among the casualties of corn protection.[49]

With fidelity to the identity of interests principle she insisted that what was bad for one segment of the economy would in the long run be detrimental to all segments. She supported this conclusion with the argument that the cultivation of inferior soils would beggar the tenant farmer who would not be able to keep up his payments to the landlord. Therefore in the end, even the landlord would become a victim of the pernicious system which he had created.

She summed up the Anti-Corn Law position in her Monthly Repository article of 1832, "A Summer's Dialogue between an Englishman and a Pole." A nation, she said, should not bury its resources in its "own bad soils."

> . . . this country is destined, by nature and circumstance, to be a commercial rather than an agricultural country; and it would in no wise trouble, but rather rejoice me to see her supplying every region of the world with her manufactures, and receiving, in return, from east and west, the produce of wider and more fertile fields than she can boast.[50]

It was an argument which critics of political economy like Charles Bray could use to justify their accusation that the repealers were acting in behalf of the manufacturing interest. Manufacturers, said Bray, supported the repeal of the Corn Laws merely because they wished to lower the cost of subsistence, and increase their profits.[51] But Harriet Martineau did not consider the increase in profits to be in the selfish interests of the manufacturers. The growth of capital meant the directly proportional growth in the wage-fund. This meant more jobs or more wages, depending on the number of workers in the labor market. "The interests of the two classes of producers, are therefore the same; the prosperity of both depending on the accumulation of CAPITAL."[52]

Because its opponents identified political economy with the manufacturing class, it is important, if we are not to dismiss Harriet

Martineau as merely a propagandist for that lobby, to understand that as a convert to Adam Smith's identity of interests premise she believed completely in the inter-dependence of all segments of the society. Labor was the basis of all production; without it capital could not be built; and without the productive employment of capital new labor could not be created. Therefore labor and capital had to co-operate in order to perpetuate a prosperous continuum.[53] Operatives and employers had to be taught the principles of political economy in order to understand their symbiotic relationship; for without a knowledge of these principles Martineau rather feared that men of commerce and industry might become "the money grubbers of the community."[54] Once properly instructed, however, all segments of the economy would function in their own and in each other's best interests. Her undaunted optimism was based on an idealised perception of human capabilities, and on a faith in the benificence of an unimpeded natural law. Charles Bray, although a fellow student of Necessarianism,[55] placed no such confidence in the philanthropic intentions of the manufacturing class. To Bray the interests of employer and employee were antithetical and capitalism was the means by which poverty was perpetuated. The political economists he said were interested not in the increase of the total of human happiness but only in the increase of production. If the greatest good was to be found, he sought it not by *laissez-faire* but by socialism.[56]

> The principle cause, then of the evils [of capitalism] . . . we conceive to be the present division of society into the class of those who possess every thing, and that of those who possess nothing - into capitalist and labourer, rendering the latter by many times the most numerous class, altogether dependent on the former . . . and the remedy we conceive to be, the establishment of a system in which Property should be held in trust

> by society for the production of the largest sum of enjoyment to all.[57]

The alterations which John Stuart Mill made to the succeeding editions of his Principles of Political Economy (1848) on the subject of socialism indicated his constant re-evaluation of the relative merits of socialism and individualism. In his preface to the second edition of 1849, he stated that his original condemnation of the specific schemes of "some Socialists have been erroneously understood as a general condemnation of all that is commonly included under that name." In the third edition of 1852, the chapter on property and socialism was almost completely re-written and whereas in 1848 he had come down on the side of the competitive system, in 1852 he was prepared to concede that Fourierist and Owenite Socialism (rather than revolutionary communism).

> . . . does no violence to any of the general laws by which human action, even in the present imperfect state of moral and intellectual cultivation, is influenced; and that it would be extremely rash to pronounce it incapable of success . . . [although] the object to be principally aimed at, in the present stage of human improvement, is not the subversion of the system of individual property, but the improvement of it, and the full participation of every member of the community in its benefits.[58]

At that time he concluded that:

> We are too ignorant either of what individual agency in its best form, or Socialism in its best form, can accomplish, to be qualified to decide which of the two will be the ultimate form of human society.[59]

But in a series of articles written in 1869 and published posthumously in the Fortnightly Review of 1879 he ultimately rejected the socialist solution:

> . . . an entire renovation of the social fabric, such as is contemplated by Socialism, establishing the economic constitution of society upon an entirely new basis, other than that of private property and competition, however valuable as an ideal, and even

> as a prophecy of ultimate possibilities, is not available as a present resource, since it requires from those who are to carry on the new order of things qualities both moral and intellectual, which require to be tested in all, and to be created in most; and this cannot be done by an Act of Parliament, but must be on the most favourable supposition, a work of considerable time. For a long period to come the principle of individual property will be in possession of the field. . . .[60]

Only a very small number of English reformers took their permanent inspiration from Robert Owen. Although Harriet Martineau came later to consider that the greatest danger of Owenism was that his method of organization might, in less benevolent hands, "be turned to excellent purpose by an arbitrary government,"[61] in 1832 her primary argument against Owenite socialism was economic. She conceded that each individual had a right to compete for the pie, but denied that they had the right to expect an equal share in it. When she spoke of equality it meant "an open field and fair play to every one." It meant a right to the product of one's labor but it did not mean the right to an equal share in production. Although she admitted that the competitive system precluded complete equality, she nevertheless believed that this was society's only acceptable alternative. Anything less than individual liberty would blunt initiative and reduce personal incentives and responsibilities.[62] In addition she had serious reservations about the economic feasibility of the socialist scheme. Using an argument which Robert Torrens would popularize later in the century, she voiced the doubt that the type of self-sufficient communal society which Owen proposed could in the long run prosper. She feared that it would make too many demands on the diminishing resources of the soil because men would not be impelled to limit the size of their families or migrate to labor-shy areas if they knew that the community would provide.[63] The only

types of co-operative venture which she ever whole-heartedly endorsed were those like the Rochdale Pioneers which relied on individual participation. She had no faith that the greatest happiness of the greatest number could be achieved without the motivation of individual needs and desires. Eventually, however, she modified her earlier blanket condemnation of Owenism and some twenty years after writing her 'anti-socialist' tale For Each and All was to say of it:

> I cannot recal [sic] that story, more or less; but I know it must have contained the stero-typed doctrine of the Economists of that day. What I witnessed in America considerably modified my views on the subject of Property; and from that time forward I saw social modifications taking place which have already altered the tone of leading Economists and opened a prospect of further changes which will probably work out in time a totally new social state. If that should ever happen, it ought to be remembered that Robert Owen was the sole apostle of the principle in England at the beginning of our century.[64]

Although she was happier leaving the direction of society to natural law rather than to Owenite paternalism, even in 1832 Harriet Martineau was prepared to depart from the extreme laissez-faire position in certain matters. She had not yet come to Nassau Senior's position of a decade later:

> It is the duty of governemnt to do whatever is conducive to the welfare of the governed. The most fatal of all errors would be the general admission that a government has no right to interfere for any purpose except the purpose of protection.[65]

But she conceded that apart from military and judicial protection there were other areas of legitimate government concern. Education and public works were to her mind too important and too complex to be left to individual initiative. In the Illustrations of Political Economy tale The Three Ages she drew attention to the fact that the same government which had been killing British trade with its kindness was sadly deficient in

the areas of education and public works. She listed in order government's spending priorities as she perceived them: education, public works, government and legislation, law and justice, diplomacy, defense, and, finally, running a poor last, the dignity of the sovereign.[66] And she noted that in terms of existing government spending the order was almost completely reversed. More than half the annual peace-time budget was devoted to military expenses and to servicing a national debt which was the legacy of war. Like Bentham and Smith she opposed war because it disrupted peaceful trade. She also believed that an impoverished people should have the right to consent to a war for which they and their future generations would be taxed.[67] It was also immoral, she thought, to tax a hungry people in order to perpetuate a state church which did nothing to educate them and which catered to the religious needs of only a part of the population. In the Illustrations of Taxation tale The Tench Haycock her economic arguments against the Established Church were given added vigor by her noncomformist opposition to that church. The glories of war, the extravagances of the Church, and the pomp of the court were luxuries a nation could not afford when its social ills were still so pressing. Public money ought to be expended only for the public benefit, and ought to be collected only in an equitable manner.

Although opposing all taxation of a mercantilist nature, Martineau recognized that a government had to impose taxes in order to function. She was against revenue-raising by the taxation of necessary commodities, not so much in this instance because of the adverse effect which such taxes would have on trade, but because their imposition would cause an undue hardship for the poor. She supported the idea of a graduated

income tax and also approved of a tax on property.[68] Once collected, however, she believed that the government's revenue should be spent only on that which would benefit the people:

> Government does not earn the wealth it spends; and each act of waste is an injury to those who have furnished the means, and an insult to every man who toils hard for scanty bread.[69]

Harriet Martineau would have concurred with the Mill of the *Principles of Political Economy* when he said that "*Laisser-faire* . . . should be the general practice: every departure from it, unless required by some great good, is a certain evil."[70] She would not, however, have agreed with all the exceptions he made to this rule. She did *not*, in the 1830s, agree to the protection of child labor.[31] And although she later made exceptions in the case of certain forms of child and female labor,[72] she remained dogmatically opposed to the *principle* of factory legislation. Although not behindhand in joining the chorus of dismay which greeted the 1832 Sadler Committee Report on the condition of child labor in the factories and mills of the nation, and although she drew attention to the plight of young factory workers in *A Manchester Strike*, she refused to be ambivalent on the question of regulating labor:[73]

> Legislation [she wrote to her mother] *cannot* interfere effectually between parents and children in the present state of the labour market. Our operations must be directed towards proportioning labour and capital, and not upon restricting the exchange of the one for the other, - an exchange which *must* be voluntary, whatever the law may say about it.[74]

In 1849 she sounded the same note when, in her *History of the Thirty Years Peace*, she questioned the feasibility of legislating between parents and children, "in defiance of the great natural laws which regulate the operation of labour and capital."[75] Recalling the factory legislation agitation of the 1830s she said:

> People who thought only of the children's instant welfare, and not of the considerations of justice and of actual practicability with which the case was complicated, clamoured for a law which would restrict the hours of labour and determine the wages of the persons who should be employed in the cotton and silk mills. Economists showed how vain had always been, and must ever be, laws to regulate labour and wages. Statesmen knew how vain it was to interfere by law with private regulations: and the mill owners complained of the injustice of arbitrarily raising wages; while this was exactly the prospect which delighted the operatives. They began to see before them a long perspective of legal protection and privilege, by which they as well as their children should obtain the same wages for less and less work, while too few of them perceived that *any law which should deprive them of the free disposal of their own labour would steal from them their only possession, and be in fact a more flagrant oppression than any law had inflicted on their order for centuries* [my italics].[76]

It is difficult to see how anyone with the humanitarian concerns of Harriet Martineau could have so lightly dismissed the "children's instant welfare." But Harriet Martineau saw herself as a champion of the people's right to dispose of their own labor and she thought this right to have priority over all other considerations. Many of the Political Economists were, however, prepared to yield on this point. Mill, as already noted, as well as McCulloch made an exception in this instance. And even Nassau Senior the most consistent opponent of the Ten Hours Bill on economic grounds, nevertheless conceded that in the case of child labor there ought to be regulation.[77] At this time, however, Harriet Martineau remained steadfast in her opposition to factory legislation and was one of Lord Ashley's most determined critics. Only in the case of women and children in mines was she then prepared to bow to Ashley's persuasions, but even there, she reminded her readers:

> . . . the great permanent objection remained, of the disastrous consequences of interfering with the labour market. The great majority of the nation [meaning Harriet Martineau herself] however felt that it was better to have the burden thrown on the parishes for a time than to let such abuses continue.[78]

It should be remembered that mines were generally on the estates of the large landowners and that Harriet Martineau's reversal of opinion may have been affected by this awareness along with the special brief which she carried for the working woman. Generally, however, Harriet Martineau believed that short-term humanitarianism should be sacrificed in favor of the long-term benefits of political economy. She was not oblivious to the privations of the poor, but she genuinely believed that charitable expedience was detrimental to the future happiness of the greatest number.

Her attitude can partly be explained by her confidence in the benevolent intentions of the manufacturing class. Her knowledge of industrial relations came primarily from the smaller manufactories of her father's Norwich and her brother Robert's Birmingham where employer-employee relations had not yet become as impersonalized and depersonalized as they had in large industry. She herself was not familiar with the large factories of Lancashire, and Francis Place warned her that she would be unable to "form a correct opinion of the monstrous iniquity of our factories . . . they are too scandalous and too infamous to be told, even to a searcher after truth like you. . . ."[79] Nevertheless, Martineau received much of her information for A Manchester Strike--probably the best of the Illustrations--from the written testimony of the factory workers themselves. And in A Manchester Strike she painted a sympathetic portrait of the suffering operatives and showed that without knowledge of the correct principles, the factory owners could be appallingly selfish.

Where Carlyle vented his considerable spleen denouncing "the brutish empire of Mammon" and its emphasis on production, and where even moderate

opponents of industrialization ventured the opinion that it had done little to advance the position of the working class, Harriet Martineau remained convinced that, in spite of the sometimes appalling conditions of labor, the situation of the operative had actually improved in the three decades since the turn of the century. She claimed that "the factory people are better off than any others of our labourers."[80] This observation is not without merit. In the never quite ending debate among economic historians on the condition of the laboring class, even Eric Hobsbawm has conceded that it was the condition of the domestic worker--the piece-worker for example--rather than that of the factory worker which deteriorated in the nineteenth century.[81] The most recent quantifiers have quite convincingly shown an increase in the value of real wages as the nineteenth century progressed; and Martineau looking back at the first decades of the century in her Introduction to the History of the Peace (1851) certainly believed this to have been the case.[82] In line with political economic thought, she believed that the industrializing process and the increase of productivity could have only beneficial results. Like Adam Smith, she saw technical advance as a stimulant to the economy which rather than displacing the worker would actually assist him. Mechanization, according to the generally accepted rationale of the political economists, would increase production, lower prices, stimulate further production and consequently enlarge the number of employment opportunities while at the same time it increased the buying power of the workers.[83] "It may safely be affirmed," wrote John Stuart Mill, ". . . that improvements in production generally tend to cheapen the commodities on which the wages of the labouring classes are expended."[84] In

Life in the Wilds, Briery Creek, and The Hill and the Valley, Harriet Martineau argued forcefully for the industrialization process which, she said, would have a two-fold benefit for the operatives: it would not only increase capital and therefore proportionately increase the wage-fund, but it would also relieve workers of the more mechanical aspects of their labor and therefore give them more leisure time for creative occupations.[85] Ricardo, who in this instance had only a small following among his fellow economists, believed that, immediately following the introduction of new machinery, there would be an initial period of disorientation and unemployment. Martineau, however, in line with the majority of economists, saw only the long-term benefits which would be derived from industrialization and she was therefore a critic of Ludaism in all its manifestations. She failed to appreciate the fine distinction which E. P. Thompson has drawn between the unskilled workers who actually benefitted by the industrialization of the weaving industry, and the skilled artisans--the Luddite core--whose craftsmanship was suddenly outmoded, and whose jobs were threatened by the machines which they sought to destroy.[86]

Like most members of her class Harriet Martineau probably felt threatened by violence, but the reasons which she gave for deploring disruptive action were mainly pragmatic. Her argument against strikes was that they drove the less profitable establishments out of business and reduced the capital of those businesses which survived. The end result of strike action would, therefore, inevitably be either fewer jobs or lower wages as the wage-fund would decline in proportion to the decline in capital. This was the burden of her tale A Manchester Strike, and she

further elaborated on the subject in an 1834 pamphlet The tendency of strikes and sticks to produce low wages, and of union between masters and men to ensure good wages which she published at the request of Lord Durham:

> The question is [she wrote] whether masters and men shall bear one another up till a favourable change comes . . . or whether the men, by demanding higher wages, shall knock up the poorer masters, and destroy their own chance of getting wages at all.[87]

A Manchester Strike illustrated the futility of strike action. In this story she drove home her argument by engaging the reader's sympathies for the union leader and his men.[88] She did not--as with Dickens in Hard Times--blame strikes on outside agitators, nor did she try to minimize the conditions which drove the workers to strike. In fact she supported the concept of combinations:

> . . . it is necessary for labourers to husband their strength by union, if it is ever to be balanced against the influence and wealth of capitalists. A master can do as he pleases with his hundred or five hundred workmen, unless they are combined.[89]

But once combined she would have denied the workers the only form of action by which they could have obtained redress. She refused to endorse strike action because she considered it detrimental to the identical interests of the manufacturer and the worker. She believed, along with James Mill and the other political economists that "The rate of wages depends on the proportion between Population and Employment, in other words, Capital."[90] And that because strikes would deplete capital without changing the ratio of population to employment, they would either drive up unemployment or drive down wages.

In spite of her opposition to strike-action Martineau treated her fictional strikers in A Manchester Tale with sensitivity and evident

sympathy. But in the two years between writing A Manchester Tale, one of the first of the Illustrations of Political Economy, and completing the five volumes in the supplmentary series, Illustrations of Taxation (1834), her attitude underwent a change, and in The Scholars of Arneside she treated unions and union leaders with severity.[91] Her hardened attitude probably owed a great deal to the industrial unrest of 1834, and to the poor press which unions received at that time. The establishment of the Grand National Consolidated Trades Union must also have posed the threat of a new and frightening trade monopoly. And although the GNCTU was shortlived, the events of the thirties were sufficient to permanently arouse Martineau's opposition to unionization and union leadership. In her retrospective comment on the thirties in her History of the Thirty Years Peace she patly repeated all the allegations which had been made by union opponents in 1834: that the union leaders brutally intimidated their fellow workers, that they were responsible for the wanton destruction of property and the disruption of industry, and that they misappropriated union funds. Indiscriminately tarring all combinations with the same brush, she described trade unions as "the greatest apparent danger" then facing the United Kingdom.[92]

Harriet Martineau placed the responsibility for almost all aspects of the worker's welfare squarely on his own two shoulders. She believed that an uncontrolled increase in the population would diminish the prospects for all workers, and that only by the efforts of each individual worker could the ratio of population to employment be kept in favor of the operatives. The wage-fund was always a constant percentage of capital, and the benefit derived from the wage-fund by each worker depended

on the number of workers by which the fund had to be divided. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries it had become apparent that the population of Britain was rising sharply. Between 1801 and 1851 the total population had doubled.[93] This increase was attributable to a declining death-rate, but it was seen by contemporaries as evidence of a rising birth-rate.[94] For Harriet Martineau and her era Malthus's Essay on Population expressed:

> . . . the all-important fact which lies at the bottom of the poverty of society-that the number of consumers naturally presses on the means of subsistence; and that while numbers and the means of subsistence are not proportional to each other by the exercise of enlightened prudence, poverty and misery must always exist . . . human families expand in numbers while corn-fields do not expand in size.[95]

Although the increase in population was viewed as a threat to limited resources, few dared suggest birth-control as a palliative. The question was certainly not thought to be the proper subject for the consideration of an unmarried young woman, and it was therefore not without an inner struggle that Harriet Martineau faced up to her moral and social obligations as she saw them.[96] Even so she skirted the issue, and her recommendations were not very specific. She suggested in Weal and Woe in Garveloch that because "the happiness of the people does not depend on the total amount of wealth, but on its proportion to those who are to enjoy it," it was necessary to limit the size of the population. She hinted that the imprudent indulgence of love would increase impoverishment. But she recommended nothing more stringent than late marriages and prudence.[97] She was criticized for her timidity by Empson in the Edinburgh Review,[98] and by Francis Place, who was an active supporter of birth control. Place had publicized the concept of contraception and

had circulated the idea in the working-class press. He recognized the inadequacy of her recommendations in Weal and Woe in Garveloch, and wrote her a gentle remonstrance:

> Can or will the people refrain from producing children in such numbers? I answer not by those [methods] suggested by you and others - not by delayed marriages. It is utterly useless to preach abstinence . . . chastity and late marriages are as much opposed as any two things can be. . . . The consequences of delayed marriages are dissolute practices. . . . You can form nothing like a correct opinion of these evils, no respectable woman can do so. . . .[99]

Nevertheless Place commended her "excellent tales" for bringing the matter to the public's attention. He sent her a book on the subject of birth control by Robert Dale Owen, "the son of my old and somewhat crazy friend Robert Owen." And her later more practical position on the question probably owed a great deal to the influence of Francis Place.

Most of the criticism of Weal and Woe and its author came, however, from those who rather than being upset by her timidity, were shocked by the fact that she should have broached the subject at all.

> It is quite impossible [wrote the Quarterly Review] not to be shocked, nay disgusted, with many of the unfeminine and mischievous doctrines on the principles of social welfare, of which these tales were made the vehicle. . . . A little ignorance on these ticklish topics is perhaps becoming a young unmarried lady. But before such a person undertook to write books in favour of the preventive check; she should have informed herself somewhat more accurately upon the laws of human propagation. Poor innocent! She has been buzzing over Mr. Malthus's arithmetical and geometrical ratios for knowledge which she should have obtained by a simple question or two of her mama.[100]

The review in the Quarterly was written by George Poulett Scrope, an economist of some distinction although out of sympathy with the political economists in general. According to Harriet Martineau, the "insulting" remarks were later "inter-larded" by John Wilson Croker and by John

Gibson Lockhart, the editor.[101] She never forgave either of the latter gentlemen and years later had a belated revenge when she wrote their obituaries in the Daily News.

The question of over-population had a remedy less controversial than that of birth control. And in Homes Abroad Martineau offered this alternative. A worker, she said, could keep the ratio of labor to wage-fund favorable either by migrating to a part of the country where there was no unemployment, or by emigrating to the colonies. She did not consider the latter to be a desertion of the homeland but rather the patriotic duty of those who numbered among the surplus population:

> After all, a state is made up of individual members; and, therefore, whatever most benefits these individuals must benfit the state. Our duty to the state and our duty to ourselves are not opposing duties. . . . On the contrary, a man's duty to his country is to provide honestly and abundantly, if he can, for himself and his family; and when this cannot be done at home it is a breach of duty to stay and eat up other men's substance.[102]

Under the influence of Edward Gibbon Wakefield she made emigration and colonization another exception to laissez-faire. In Homes Abroad and Ireland she made a case for subsidized and government supervised emigration.[103] But she was in no way an imperialist. True to the creed of Adam Smith she opposed mercantilism and favored the ripe fruit theory: "The States of America are a source of much greater wealth and power to Great Britain than when she had a ruler in each of them."[104] She deplored the exploitation of colonies. And noted the irony of sending missions to convert the heathen or trying to impose a veneer of civilization while simultaneously robbing the country of its natural resources and depriving the natives of the means to a civilized standard of living. But despite her opposition to colonies of exploitation, she had a quite

different opinion of colonies of settlement. The latter, she thought, would benefit by the influx of British immigrants, would provide a market for British manufactures, and would solve the over-population question. She did not mean by this that colonies should become convenient dumping grounds for the unwanted and she especially opposed the concept of penal settlements not only because of the detrimental influence which a large body of criminals would have on a young settlement, but because she thought it unfair to leave the honest worker to starve at home and to give the criminal an opportunity to benefit as a consequence of his crimes.[105] Using Wakefield's theory, she argued for a balanced emigré community which would duplicate in microcosm the economic structure--without the aristocratic element--of the mother country. She saw the danger of denuding the homeland of its able-bodied young people but she noted the wisdom of encouraging the young to emigrate where they could build a new society and where their off-spring would people an under-developed land rather than over-populate the British Isles.

Birth control, labor-migration and emigration were the methods by which the poor could influence their future and ameliorate their present condition. Indigence was therefore neither understandable nor forgivable. Almost without exception nineteenth-century political economists believed that a permanent pauper who was neither sickly nor disabled was either idle, dissolute or foolish. They were unable to comprehend a condition of permanent unemployment. "If there are human beings capable of work," wrote John Stuart Mill in Principles of Political Economy "they may always be employed producing something."[106] Political economists asserted that assistance to the indigent would serve only to perpetuate

poverty. Until the 1830s they believed that pauperism could and should be completely eliminated and that the old Poor Law ought to be abolished. By then, however, they began to acknowledge that though indigence ought to be discouraged it could not be eradicated root and branch. They still denied that a pauper could claim alms as a right, but at least they acknowledged the existence of want. The chorus for repeal of the Elizabethan Poor Law began to fade, and leading economists began to talk of amendment instead. Appreciating the existence of want did not, however, mean condoning charity, and they still opposed private or local charitable institutions and argued for regulation by government agency. Making one of their earliest exceptions to the laissez-faire rule, they argued that under strict state control the reliance upon relief could be minimized and outdoor assistance--which they had come to consider the most pernicious aspect of the Old Poor Law--eliminated: the Speenhamland system of supplemental wages became their chief target, and so frequently did they fulminate on the subject that Southey described their outpourings as a "diarrhoea of the intellect."

The campaign to amend rather than to repeal the old Poor Law was peaking when Martineau came to write her Illustrations. But she had not yet caught up with the recently modified views of the economists and still believed that it was possible to completely eliminate pauperism. In Cousin Marshall she advocated the gradual reduction of assistance, and predicted empty poorhouses and the end of Speenhamland. She dragged up all the classic arguments against guaranteeing a subsistence wage: it encouraged idleness; it fostered the attitude that the community would provide and therefore encouraged profligacy and increased the birth-rate;

it drove up the poor-rates; it added the small farmers who could not afford to pay the poor-rates to the ranks of the "rate-receivers;" and it thereby increased poverty and added to the burden on the community.[107]

> It is rather hard on the poor [she wrote] . . . that we should complain of their improvidence when we bribe them to it by promising subsistence at all events. Paupers will spend and marry faster than their betters as long as this system lasts.[108]

Her arguments against Speenhamland were specific. She recounted the history of the system and concluded that in the southern counties of England where it was practiced, "the most deplorable misery prevails." She did not take into account the fact that the southern Speenhamland counties were almost wholly agricultural and that lacking industrial alternatives seasonal unemployment and suffering were inevitable and some kind of relief was imperative.[109]

Harriet Martineau believed along with most of the political economists that "every diminution of the inducements to indigence is necessarily an increase of the inducements to independence."[110] It was one of the basic arguments against relief that it rewarded the idle at the expense of the industrious and therefore discouraged industriousness. With this in mind the new Poor Law Commissioners set out to eliminate outdoor relief and to ensure that public charity would in no way provide a better standard of living than that secured by the very meanest independent worker.[111] The poorhouse would be the only alternative to self-support and it should act as a deterrent to indigence and as an incentive to work. As Edwin Chadwick said, it would act as "a cold bath - unpleasant in contemplation but invigorating in its effects."[112] As John Stuart Mill put it:

> If the condition of a person receiving relief is made as eligible as that of the labourer who supports himself by his own exertions, the system strikes at the root of all individual industry and self-government. . . . But if, consistently with guaranteeing all persons against absolute want, the condition of those who are supported by legal charity can be kept considerably less desirable than the condition of those who find support for themsleves, none but beneficial consequences can arise. . . .113

Harriet Martineau's four dreary tales Poor Laws and Paupers elaborated on the theme set out in Cousin Marshall but now brought up to date. They were commissioned by the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge[114] and were used in the campaign which preceded the amendment of the old Poor Law. She was furnished with volumes of material by the Poor Law Commissioners and the bias of her tales followed the bias of the Commission which had set out to prove the pernicious effect of the outdoor system, and which argued for the workhouse to act as an incentive to work. The Hamlets which is probably the best of these drab stories, describes the beggaring of a poor family unable to pay the rates and forced to accept "Queen Elizabeth's hospitality." Its main argument was the now discredited theory that pauperism so burdened the rate-payers that they became paupers themselves thus causing the noble yeoman farmer to vanish. It is impossible to say whether or not Harriet Martineau's Poor Law tales influenced the easy passage of the Poor Law Amendment, but the fact that Lord Brougham turned to her as a publicist for the campaign was an indication of the esteem which the Illustrations had brought her.

Of the Illustrations Lord Chancellor Brougham had said

> . . . they are of the highest merit, and indeed are of very great importance. It is difficult to estimate the good they are likely to produce. . . . She is as prolific as Scott . . . and she has the best feelings and, generally the most current principles of any of our own political economists.[115]

Brougham besieged her with requests to transfer publication of the Illustrations to the S.D.U.K. but she was not willing to break her contract with Fox and accepted instead the contract to write Poor Laws and Paupers.[116] Even so, William Fox warned her, via the medium of a Monthly Repository review article, that her new association might be construed as an alliance with Whiggism and would make her "a less efficient, because less trusted, national instructor."[117] Fox's criticism put her on her guard and she felt called upon to defend the purity of her Radicalism and to deny any association with the Whigs.[118] It was probably on this account that she scrupulously refused to affiliate with any political party and refused all offers of a government pension.

Harriet Martineau's favor and assistance was courted by many prominent politicians and public men. Lord Althorp, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, asked her advice on the question of direct taxation.[119] Lord Durham became her intimate friend and invited her to stay at Lambton Castle while she wrote the Poor Law tales. Brougham, until differences of opinion drove them apart, was her great admirer.[120] And the Edinburgh Reviewers, Jeffreys, Smith, and Empson were constant visitors to the house on Fludyer Street.

Empson's review in the Edinburgh acknowledged that:

> We have heard more political economy [since the publication of the Illustrations] . . . than we believe was ever before heard outside the Political Economy Club."[121]

But Empson was an as yet unconverted Whig. He disagreed with many of the theories of the economists and much of his criticism was aimed at political economy rather than at Harriet Martineau herself. "The excellences are her own," he wrote, "and . . . the defects are, in some

degree, those of other people." Nevertheless, he thought it highly presumptuous of Harriet Martineau, a mere woman, to claim to "legislate for mankind anew on its most complicated institutions." He admired her descriptive talents but criticized her inconsistencies: her support for public education for example, he found to be contrary to "the universality of her principle." He observed the deterioration of the Illustrations after the first more successful volumes, and of the latter singled out Ella of Garveloch, Weal and Woe in Garveloch, and A Manchester Strike as "so beautiful in their poetry and their painting, and so important in their moral, that, were we to begin to praise them, we should not know where to stop."

The Tory journals were considerably less kind. William Maginn in Fraser's Magazine was upset by Martineau's "tirade" against charity, her denunciation of the Poor Law and the "disgusting" dissemination of the "topic of generation."[122] But despite Maginn's sarcasms it was the Quarterly Review which Martineau thought the least charitable of her critics. Like Fraser's it denounced her for thinking "child-bearing a crime against society," and deprecated her opposition to alms. It examined the individual tales, generally came to conclusions which differed from hers, and summed up its opinion thus:

> There is, we admit, much which it is impossible not to admire in Miss Martineau's productions - the praiseworthy intention and benevolent spirit in which they are written, - and the varied knowledge of nature and society, the acute discrimination of character, and remarkable power of entering into, and describing the feeling of the poorer classes, which several of her written narratives evince. But it is equally impossible not to laugh at the absurd trash which is seriously propounded by some of her characters, in dull didactic dialogues, introduced here and there in the most clumsy manner, and what is worst of all, it is quite impossible not to be shocked, nay disgusted, with many of

> the unfeminine and mischievous doctrines on the principles of social welfare, of which these tales are made the vehicle.[123]

After the vindictiveness of the Tory journals and the luke-warm praise in the Edinburgh Harriet Martineau must have found the appreciation of those who did not oppose political economic theory very comforting. John Stuart Mill was kind in a Monthly Repository review. And on a more personal level Francis Place was consistently encouraging. He told her that she delighted well-informed people with the able and "enticing manner" in which she elucidated difficult subjects. He himself found the tales exhilarating and no work "so practicably valuable" as the summarizing volume, The Moral of Many Fables. If he had been a rich man, he said, he would have endowed every library and book club with copies of her tales.

> It is not easy for me [he wrote] to express to you the admiration I feel, on reflecting that you - a woman - should have excelled them all, that you should have set at naught the odium which has palsied almost everyone else.[124]

In the Moral of Many Fables, Harriet Martineau summarized the arguments and conclusions of the preceding twenty-four volumes. She argued again for the interdependence of capital and labor, for mechanization, for repeal of the Corn Laws, and for free trade. She repeated her arguments against strikes and against charity. And she stressed the importance of population control and emigration. She acknowledged that British society was still imperfect but she believed that it had made "a prodigious advance." With her confidence in perpetual progress she did not doubt that the greatest happiness of the greatest number could be achieved. Much of her optimism was founded on the theory that natural resources and man's ingenuity were inexhaustible.[125] She failed to

appreciate the discrepancy between this argument and the logic of the Malthusian belief in the diminishing returns of the soil. She did not question that progress would be anything but beneficial, nor did she ask where it ultimately tended.

To Harriet Martineau at this time political economy offered a happy prospect and she saw it as "a positive obligation on every member of society who studies and reflects at all, to inform himself of its leading principles."[126] She reinforced the chief doctrines of 'the science' in many of her subsequent writings. Dawn Island (1845) and the Forest and Game Law Tales (1845 and 1846) were written specifically on behalf of the Anti-Corn Law League. Her History of England during the Thirty Years Peace can logically be called the laissez-fairist's interpretation of early nineteenth-century British history. And even in her novels and children's stories the message of political economy was seldom absent. But except for the Forest and Game Law Tales she did not repeat the didactic experiment of teaching by illustration. The concept was revived, however, in 1874 by Millicent Garrett Fawcett who wrote Tales in Political Economy with apologies to Harriet Martineau "for my plagiarism of the idea." For all its defects the Illustrations of Political Economy had significantly filled a void and had made its author a celebrity.

Time was eventually to modify Martineau's opinions. In 1849, for example, she was to say of the competetive principle:

> If . . . [a man] were perfectly honourable and generous, he might find it impossible to trade or labour on the competetive principle, and might thus find himself helpless and despised among a busy and wealth-gathering society.[127]

But in 1832 she was the unhesitating champion of individualism. She did not appreciate the ambiguities inherent in her philosophy, and failed to understand that laissez-faire and the greatest happiness principle were fundamentally incompatible; that individual freedom could become synonymous with personal greed and private interest; and that it was too often antithetical to social responsibility. She believed that by teaching the rules of political economy to a society its individual members would be induced to act in behalf of the greatest happiness of their greatest number. In this--despite the exceptions she made in the case of education, public works and the Poor Law administration--she was closer to being a free trade liberal than to being a Benthamite Utilitarian. She had a sanguine view of human nature and unlike Bentham and his immediate disciples who knew the importance of reinforcing sanctions, she opted for a reliance upon individual virtue based on a knowledge of the correct principles. She chose to believe in the finest rather than the meanest attributes of human nature, and it was upon the rock of her naive and undaunted optimism that her philosophy foundered.

FOOTNOTES

[1]John Stuart Mill to Thomas Carlyle, Nov. 22, 1833 in Mill, Collected Works, 13 vols., ed. J. M. Robson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963-), XII, 152. " . . . [Harriet Martineau] and her Tales are surely a sign of this country and Time."

[2]John Stuart Mill, Utilitarianism [Fraser's Magazine, Oct. - Dec. 1848] (1863, 9th edition, London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1885), pp. 9-10, 16, 25.

[3]Richard Norman, Reasons for Actions: A Critique of Utilitarian Rationality (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1971), pp. 32-34; Anthony Quinton, Utilitarian Ethics (London: Macmillan, 1973), p. 29. John Stuart Mill added the sanction of private conscience, Utilitarianism, pp. 60-61; and see "Bentham" ed. Marshall Cohen, The Philosophy of John Stuart Mill, pp. 26, 29-30.

[4]A. W. Coats in The Long Debate on Poverty, gen. ed. Arthur Seldon (London: Institute of Economics Affairs, 1972), p. 159.

[5]Joseph A. Schumpeter, History of Economic Analysis (1954, New York: Oxford University Press, 1961), pp. 407-408; Lord Robbins, The Evolution of Modern Economic Theory (London: Macmillan, 1970); p. 56.

[6]"On the Duty of Studying Political Economy," Miscellanies, I, 281 [MR, 6 (1832), 24-34].

[7]R. K. Webb, Harriet Martineau, pp. 88-90.

[8]See for example Harriet Martineau to Henry Crabb Robinson, Jan. 8, 1841, DW Lib.

[9]The History of England from the Commencement of the XIXth Century to the Crimean War (Philadelphia: Porter and Coates, 1864), I, 449-50.

[10]The History of England during the Thirty Years' Peace 1816-1846, 2 vols. (London: Charles Knight, 1849-1850) II, 715.

[11]The History of England from the Commencement, I, 450.

[12]Illustrations of Political Economy, 25 parts in 9 vols. (London: Charles Fox, 1832-1834), Life in the Wilds, p. vi. In addition during the period 1832-1834 she wrote Illustrations of Taxation 5 parts (London: Charles Fox, 1834) and Poor Laws and Paupers, in 4 parts, under the superintendence of the S.D.U.K. (London:Charles Fox, 1833-1834).

[13]Mark Blaug, Ricardian Economics: A Historical Study (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1958), pp. 138-139; and see John Stuart Mill's review "Miss Martineau's summary of Political Economy," MR, 8 (May, 1834) 318-322 in John Stuart Mill Collected Works, IV, 225-228.

[14] Autobiography, III, 245.

[15] Illustrations of Political Economy, the Moral of Many Fables, p. vi.

[16] John Stuart Mill to Walter Coulson, Nov. 22, 1850 in Robbins, Economic Theory, p. 125.

[17] Blaug, Ricardian Economics, p. 139.

[18] Ibid., p. 129n.

[19] Autobiography, I, 258.

[20] Autobiography, III, 401; and see also III, 411 her letter to Mrs. Chapman, July 8, 1862.

[21] Harriet Martineau to Lord Brougham, [n.d.] University College, London.

[22] Harriet Martineau to William Tait, Aug. 29, 1833; and Sept. 14, 1833, University Coll.

[23] Autobiography, I, 70.

[24] Autobiography, I, 138; and see Biographical Sketches, Martineau's obituary notice for Mrs. Marcet who died June 28, 1858.

[25] Jane Haldimand Marcet, Conversations on Political Economy: In Which the Elements of that Science are Familiarly Explained (1816, 6th ed. London, Longman, 1827); James Mill, Elements of Political Economy (1821, 3rd edition 1844, rpt. New York: Augustus M. Kelley, 1963).

[26] Marcet, Conversations, p. 18.

[27] Ibid., p. 25.

[28] Illustrations of Political Economy, Life in the Wilds, p. xiv.

[29] Ibid., p. viii.

[30] Garnett, Fox, pp. 83-84.

[31] Harriet Martineau to James Martineau, Nov. 1, 1831, Transcript Letters, M. Coll.

[32] Autobiography, I, 161 ff.

[33] Harriet Martineau to James Martineau, Dec. 13, 1831, Transcript Letters, M. Coll. And for her agreement with Charles Fox see Dec. 16, 1831, Harriet Martineau Papers 1048, Birmingham University Library. Hereafter cited as B. U. Lib.

[34]Harriet Martineau to James Martineau, Nov. 18, 1832, Transcript Letters, M. Coll. Her figures may well be inflated.

[35]Harriet Martineau to Mrs. Martineau, July 8, 1833 in Autobiography, III, 91.

[36]Harriet Martineau to Brougham [?1832] Univ. Coll.

[37]See for example Harriet Martineau to Francis Place, March 29, 1832, B. Mus. Add MS. 35149/145; April 7, 1832, B. Mus. Add MS. 35149/146; Harriet Martineau to William Tait, Aug. 29, 1833; Sept. 14, 1833; Feb., 1834, Univ. Coll.

[38]Autobiography, I, 193-195.

[39]Jane Welsh Carlyle to Helen Welsh, Dec., 1843 in ed Leonard Huxley, Jane Welsh Carlyle: Letters to her Family 1839-1863 (New York: Doubleday, Page and Co., 1924) p. 164.

[40]Edinburgh Review, 57 (Apr., 1833), 1-39 [William Empson: Wellesley Index].

[41]Illustrations of Political Economy, For Each and All, p. 127.

[42]Michael Jefferson in The Long Debate on Poverty, gen. ed. Arthur Seldon, p. 209.

[43]History of the Peace, II, 154.

[44]There have been some attempts to summarize Illustrations but they have not met with much success: Elizabeth Escher, Harriet Martineaus sozial politische Novellen (Zurich: Doctoral Disseration, 1925); Narola Elizabeth Rivenburg, Harriet Martineau: An Example of Victorian Conflict (Philadelphia: Columbia University Doctoral Dissertation, 1932); and more recently a superficial and unsatisfactory chapter in Dorothy L. Thomson, Adam Smith's Daughters (Hicksville, New York: Exposition, 1973).

[45]Blaug, Ricardian Economics, p. 10.

[46]Ibid., quoted p. 13.

[47]Illustrations of Political Economy, For Each and for All, pp. 82-83, 131.

[48]Illustrations of Political Economy, Ella of Garveloch, p. 144.

[49]Illustrations of Political Economy, Sowers not Reapers, p. 145.

[50]"A Summer's Dialogue between an Englishman and a Pole," Miscellanies, I, 290, 294 [not listed in Mineka].

[51]Charles Bray, The Philosophy of Necessity, II, 349.

[52]Illustrations of Political Economy, The Hill and the Valley, p. 140; Sowers not Reapers, pp. 120 ff.; The Loom and the Lugger, II, p. 82.

[53]The Hill and the Valley, pp. 139-140

[54]How to Observe Morals and Manners (1838).

[55]Charles Bray, The Philosophy of Necessity, II, 386 ff.

[56]Ibid., II, 347.

[57]Ibid., II, 402-403.

[58]John Stuart Mill, Principles of Political Economy (1848, 7th edition 1871) ed. Sir W. J. Ashley (1909 rpt. New York: A. M. Kelley, 1969), Preface to 1849 edition quoted xxix; Appendix K p. 985; pp. 215-217.

[59]Ibid., p. 209.

[60]Ibid., Appendix K, p. 989.

[61]Biographical Sketches, p. 276.

[62]Illustrations of Political Economy, For Each and for All, pp. 58-59.

[63]For Each and for All, p. 126; The Moral of Many Fables, pp. 40-41.

[64]Autobiography, I, 232.

[65]Quoted in Arthur J. Taylor, Laissez-faire and State Intervention in Nineteenth-Century Britain (London: Macmillan, 1972) pp. 21-22.

[66]Illustrations of Political Economy, The Three Ages, p. 115.

[67]Ibid., pp. 59, 111, 103.

[68]Illustrations of Political Economy, The Moral of Many Fables, pp. 103 ff.; The Farrers of Budge-Row, p. 135; Illustrations of Taxation, The Park and the Paddock, p. 53.

[69]Illustrations of Political Economy, The Three Ages, p. 41.

[70]John Stuart Mill, Principles of Political Economy, p. 950.

[71]Ibid., pp. 958, 962 ff., 967 ff.

[72]See for example "Female Industry," Edinburgh Review, 109 (April, 1859) pp. 151-173. Mill, in 1832, advised against the use of female workers in factories, but later revised his position to conform with his feminist ideas. Martineau though a feminist and an advocate of equal employment, supported legislation in the case of women in mines and the sweated industries in spite of her laissez-faire and feminist ideals. See Chapter VIII.

[73]Illustrations of Political Economy, A Manchester Strike, pp. 64-65. Note: because of its education clause she supported Graham's Factory Act see, Henry Crabb Robinson to Thomas Robinson, Dec. 4, 1843, DW Lib; Harriet Martineau to Brougham [?1832] two letters recommending Dr. Southwood Smith to investigate the condition of child operatives, Univ. Coll.

[74]Harriet Martineau to Mrs. Martineau [n.d.], Autobiography, III, 87-8.

[75]History of the Peace, II, 90.

[76]Ibid., II, 91

[77]Blaug, "The Classical Economists and the Factory Acts Re-Examined," Quarterly Journal of Economics, 63 (May, 1958), 211-226; J. T. Ward, The Factory System, 2 vols. (Newton Abbott, David and Charles, 1970), II, 149.

[78]History of the Peace, II, 555.

[79]Francis Place to Harriet Martineau, Sept. 8, 1832, B. Mus. Add. MS. 35149/145; and see also Harriet Martineau to Francis Place, Mar. 29, 1832.

[80]Harriet Martineau to Crabb Robinson, May 11, 1844, DW Lib; and see Harriet Martineau to Milnes, June 12 [?1844], Trinity Coll.

[81]Eric J. Hobsbawm, Labouring Men (New York: Basic Books, 1964).

[82]History from the Commencement, I, 26.

[83]Blaug, Ricardian Economics, pp. 65-73.

[84]John Stuart Mill, Principles of Political Economy, p. 715.

[85]Illustrations of Political Economy, Life in the Wilds, pp. 116-118; Briery Creek, pp. 80 ff.

[86]Illustrations of Political Economy, The Hill and the Valley, p. 140; History of the Peace, I, 368, 508; E. P. Thompson, The Making of the English Working Class (New York: Pantheon Book, 1963).

[87]The tendency of strikes and sticks to produce low wages, and of union between masters and men to ensure good wages (Durham: J. H. Veitch [1834] p. 11. Note: "sticks" is a north country word meaning combinations.

[88]A Manchester Strike, pp. 60, 75, 97-99.

[89]Ibid., p. 49.

[90]James Mill, Elements of Political Economy, pp. 41 ff.

[91]Illustrations of Taxation, The Scholars of Arneside, pp. 35 ff.

[92]History of the Peace, I, 369; II, 154-155, 179-180, 408; History from the Commencement, I, 9.

[93]Dorothy Marshall, Industrial England 1776-1851 (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973) p. 3.

[94]The declining death-rate was due less to increased longevity than to decreased infant mortality.

[95]History of the Peace, II, 468; and see R. M. Hartwell in The Long Debate on Poverty gen. ed. Arthur Seldon, pp. 17, 20.

[96]Harriet Martineau to James Martineau, June 11, 1832, Transcript Letters, M. Coll.

[97]Illustrations of Political Economy, Weal and Woe in Garveloch, pp. 96-99, 102.

[98]Edinburgh Review, 57 (Apr., 1833), 27 [William Empson: Wellesley Index].

[99]Francis Place to Harriet Martineau, Sept. 8, 1832, B. Mus. Add. MS. 35149/189.

[100]Quarterly Review, 49 (Apr., 1833), 139, 141 [George Poulett Scrope: Wellesley Index].

[101]Harriet Martineau to James Martineau, Apr. 25, 1833, Transcript Letters, M. Coll; Harriet Martineau to Frederick Knight Hunt [?1854] 483 BU Lib. She writes of doing Lockhart's obituary: "I did not personally know him because I declined it; in the wickedest days of the Quarterly, when he and Croker deserved ill of honest people . . . I will be as gentle as possible. It is impossible to rank him with the earnest, and pure and good-natured. But his deserts are in some respects great; and he shall have his due." In Croker's case, however, ". . . one must be outspoken, as to untruth and malice, or be silent altogether about him." The Daily News obituaries are reprinted in Biographical Sketches, pp. 29 ff., 60 ff.

[102]Illustrations of Political Economy, Homes Abroad, pp. 124-125; and see also History of the Peace, I, 371.

[103]Homes Abroad, pp. 124, 14; and Ireland: A Tale, pp. 58-59.

[104]Illustrations of Political Economy, Cinnamon and Pearls, pp. 21-23, 77, 114, 124.

[105]The Moral of Many Fables, pp. 79-81.

[106]John Stuart Mill, Principles of Political Economy, p. 66.

[107]Illustrations of Political Economy, Cousin Marshall, pp. 47-54, 88, 111, 119; and Ireland, p. 54.

[108]Cousin Marshall, p. 52.

[109]Blaug, "The Myth of the Old Poor Law and the Making of the New," Journal of Economic History, 23 (June, 1963), 151-184; and "The Poor Law Report Re-Examined," Journal of Economic History, 24 (June, 1964), 229-245.

[110]The Moral of Many Fables, pp. 66-67.

[111]History of the Peace, II, 84.

[112]Norman Longmate, The Workhouse (London: Temple Smith, 1974), quoted p. 62.

[113]John Stuart Mill, Principles of Political Economy, p. 968.

[114]For her correspondence with the S.D.U.K. see Brougham Papers, Univ. Coll. and S.D.U.K. Papers, Univ. Coll.

[115]Brougham to Macvey Napier [?June] 1832, B. Mus. Add. MS. 34615/443.

[116]Harriet Martineau to James Martineau, October 13, 1832, Transcript Letters, M. Coll.

[117]Garnett, Fox, quoted p. 88.

[118]Harriet Martineau to Francis Place, March 24, 1834, B. Mus. Add. MS. 35149/276; Harriet Martineau to James Martineau, Jan. 2, 1834, Transcript Letters, M. Coll.

[119]Mrs. John [Elizabeth] Farrar, Recollections of Seventy Years (Boston, Ticknor and Fields, 1866) p. 260.

[120]The SDUK paid Martineau its share for Poor Laws and Paupers but the amount promised from Brougham was not forthcoming. Brougham's bitter quarrel with Lord Durham, Martineau's friend, also did little to amend matters.

[121]Edinburgh Review, 57 (Apr., 1833), 1-39 [William Empson: Wellesley Index].

[122]Fraser's Magazine, 6 (Nov., 1832), 403-413 [William McGinn: Wellesley Index]; and see Fraser's Magazine 8 (Nov., 1833); New Monthly Magazine, 37 (Jan. - Feb., 1833), 146-151 [Edward Bulwer-Lytton: Wellesley Index].

[123]Quarterly Review, 49 (Apr., 1833), 136-152; and on political economy 44 (Jan., 1831) [Both by George Poulett Scrope: Wellesley Index], Autobiography, I, 199, 205 ff.

[124]"Miss Martineau's Summary of Political Economy," MR, 8 (May, 1834) 318-322 in John Stuart Mill, Collected Works, IV, 225-228; Francis Place to Harriet Martineau, Sept. 9, 1832, B. Mus. Add. Ms. 35149/192; March 4, 1834, B. Mus. Add Ms. 35149/276; March 31, 1834, B. Mus. Add. Ms. 35149/278.

[125]The Moral of Many Fables, pp. 4, 8.

[126]"On the Duty of Studying Political Economy," Miscellanies, I, 276.

[127]Household Education, p. 23.

CHAPTER IV

THE RETROSPECTIVE TRAVELLER: OF SLAVES, WOMEN AND DEMOCRACY IN AMERICA

When the sailing ship the United States left Liverpool harbor in August of 1834, Harriet Martineau and her travelling companion Louisa Jeffreys were aboard.[1] Martineau had completed the Illustrations and was escaping the literary commitments, the social obligations, and the increasing demands and tensions of the house on Fludyer Street. She went to America, she said, for rest and recreation and denied that her tour was ever a premeditated "book-making expedition."[2] But despite her denials, the prospect of writing about her experiences could never have been far from her mind. Originally the idea of going to America was suggested to her by Lord Henley who had said that:

> Whatever else may or may not be true of the Americans, it is certain that they have got at principles of justice and mercy in the treatment of the least happy classes of society which we should all do well to understand. Will you not go and tell us what they are?[3]

It was a suggestion which was bound to appeal to Harriet Martineau's didactic instincts. So although she declined the advance offers of publishing houses, and publically denied any ulterior purpose in her journey --probably for the benefit of her American hosts who would otherwise have been put on their guard--she nevertheless kept copious journals of her itinerary and her experiences, and admitted privately as early as 1833 that:

> If I am spared to come back, this country shall know something more than it does of the principles of American institutions. I am tired of being kept floundering among the details which are all that a Hall and a Trollope can bring away; and it is urged upon me by some of our philanthropists, that I should go

> and see for myself. - What I have said seems presumptuous. But the thing should be done, and I will do it, as far as in me lies.[4]

It was an ambitious, and as she acknowledged, a "presumptuous" proposal, but in it lay the germ of modern sociology.[5] She realized that it was important to make an objective study of the political and social institutions of a nation, and en route to New York she outlined a primitive sociological methodology which was later published as How to Observe Morals and Manners.[6]

Martineau was determined to avoid partiality. She advised would-be travellers not to judge foreign lands by their own countries or to censure manners or customs because they differed from those to which they were used. She had been forewarned by the example of Frances Trollope's Domestic Manners of the Americans which was published in 1832.[7] Mrs. Trollope had come to America in 1827 when she was forty-seven, the wife of an unsuccessful barrister, and the mother of several children. She had regarded with scorn and impatience any deviation from the standards and morals to which she was accustomed. She was neither a democrat nor a reformer and she was proud rather than critical of her own country. Although a woman without radical tendencies or even strong philosophical persuasions, she had met and been inspired by the utopian socialist Frances Wright, and had come to America ahead of her husband and with three of her children to join Wright's communal settlement at Nashoba in Tennessee. But Nashoba was no utopia and Mrs. Trollope was instantly disillustioned upon her arrival there. With sudden and bewildering speed she turned from ideological socialism to pragmatic capitalism and made her way to Cincinnati where she hoped to establish a successful family

business. But both financial and social success eluded Mrs. Trollope in America and doubtless her personal failure colored her attitude towards a country which she never considered home in all her four years there. Unlike Martineau who was prepared to adopt the manners and accept the habits of the natives, Mrs. Trollope was unwilling to adapt to the conditions of the country. She commented with unremitting frequency upon the "want of refinement"[8] which everywhere affronted her. She described with acid humor the tedious social evenings where women talked of their illnesses and eyed each other's clothes and men discussed politics and spat. She illustrated her account with conversations designed to portray Americans at their most ignorant and crude. She made no secret of her opinion that Americans were poorly educated and ill-read. She was plainly offended by the familiarity of those she considered her social inferiors, and doubtless she felt injured by her own exclusion from the best social circles.[9] Superciliously she promised her American readers that if they should ever "embellish" their lives with the arts and the graces she would return and write a different kind of book.[10]

> . . . if refinement once creeps in among them [she condescended], if they once learn to cling to the graces, the honours, the chivalry of life, then we say farewell to American equality, and welcome to European fellowship one of the finest countries on the earth.[11]

Mrs. Trollope's tory prejudices tell the reader as much about her attitude towards her own country as they do about her opinions of the United States. Her sarcasms may have emanated from her personal disappointments but her preconceptions were those of the English establishment. Unlike her contemporary traveller Alexis de Tocqueville, she was appalled rather

than impressed by the "equality of condition" which existed among Americans.[12]

Where Mrs. Trollope refused to associate with those she did not consider her social equals, Harriet Martineau realized that as a celebrity--her Illustrations had brought her fame even in America--she stood in danger of associating exclusively with those who were her social equals and of therefore having only a "partial intercourse with the nation."[13] So although she was fêted by the famous, Martineau made a point of meeting with ordinary Americans too. Over the two year period of her stay in the United States she travelled some ten thousand miles. She journeyed by Mississippi riverboat, by canal barge, by railway, on horseback and by stage. On these expeditions she encountered people from all walks of life. She lived in private homes as the guest of the illustrious, but she also lived in boarding-houses and met with the common people.

Nevertheless, although she came to America with objectivity in mind and although she managed to avoid Mrs. Trollope's particular prejudices, Harriet Martineau was more partial than she realized for she came armed with expectations:

> I went with a mind, I believe, as nearly as possible unprejudiced about America, with a strong disposition to admire democratic institutions, but an entire ignorance how far the people of the United States lived up to or fell below their own theory.[14]

She had come from an intensive study of the condition of human happiness in England where the society had not yet shaken off the burden of ancient aristocratic dominion. And she came to America with high hopes that in this new republic at least the people would be living up to the ideals of humanity manifested in their own Declaration of Independence. She

therefore arrived with eager preconceptions which could not but have colored her final judgment of the United States and its people.

Harriet Martineau arrived in New York on September 19, 1834 in a state of high excitement, her spirits in a "holyday dance." She proved to be an indefatigable tourist, acutely observant and serenely oblivious of the discomforts of nineteenth-century travel. She sailed up the Hudson. She went to Niagara Falls twice. She sailed the Great Lakes. She visited the grave of Joseph Priestley. She had dinner at the White House with President Jackson whom she did not much like despite his laissez-fairist anti-monopolist philosophy and because of his attitude and actions towards the Indians and the slaves. She stayed with former President Madison whom she did like, and except for the question of slavery got along famously with the old statesman. She visited Capitol Hill and attended debates in the Senate which she considered unrepresentative, southern-dominated and aristocratic. But she was unable to attend debates in the House because the acoustics of the chamber made it difficult for her to hear. She journeyed south from Washington through the Carolinas and Georgia to New Orleans and then sailed northwards up the Mississippi. She visited Tennessee, Kentucky and Ohio, and formed a much more favorable impression of the latter than Mrs. Trollope had done. She made several trips to New England where she toured the Connecticut Valley with the historian George Bancroft, climbed the White Mountains and attended a Harvard Commencement. She stayed at the home of Dr. William Channing, the Unitarian divine. And she met the Garrisonian abolitionists and embraced their cause. She visited prisons as Tocqueville had done.[15] She went to asylums for the insane, and schools

for the handicapped. She visited industrial centers in the north, and plantations in the south. She spent time in the major cities, and enjoyed the unspoilt beauty of the frontier regions. The list of celebrities she met was so prodigious that it does not bear repeating. She was in her own words "lafayetted"--the best homes were open to her, carriages were sent for her, attentions were showered upon her, and she basked "in one bright sunshine of goodwill" from the moment she disembarked in New York until the dark specter of slavery cast its shadow across her path.

Americans, she noted with some amusement, were still smarting from Mrs. Trollope's criticisms and had been warned before her own arrival not to chew tobacco or praise themselves in her presence "under penalty of being reported in London for these national foibles."[16] In her two American books--Society in America (1837) and Retrospect of Western Travel (1838)--she was therefore careful to avoid Mrs. Trollope's particular aversions. She did complain quite pettishly, however, about the disquieting national partiality for rocking-chairs. She found it unsettling to watch ladies "vibrating in different directions, and at various velocities."[17] And perhaps there was a relationship between this discomfort and the childhood fear of the magic lantern and of terrifying rythmic echoes.[18] But by and large she bore her experiences with good humor. She endured with considerable stamina the rigors of travel: the stranding of her boat on the Lakes, the near-over-turning and the miring of her carriage, and the endless delays and wearying over-night journeys in creaking, jolting carriages which bumped their unceremonious way along primitive corduroy roads.[19] And all the time she meticulously noted her

impressions in her journals, nothing escaping her keen observing eye. She knew that her deafness would be regarded as a handicap and she admitted that while losing nothing in private discussion, she missed "the casual conversation of all kinds of people, in the streets, stages, hotels &c." She acknowledged regretfully that "the lights which are thus gathered up by the traveller for himself are far more valuable than the most elaborate accounts of things offered to him with an express design."[20] But nevertheless, she more than compensated visually for her aural deficiency, and her enthusiastic portrait of America in the 1830s is as vibrant and contemporary today as it was when she wrote it. Just as the Illustrations had demonstrated the deficiencies of her fictional prose, so her American volumes illustrated her strengths as a journalist. She achieved maturity as an author in her American books, and independence as an individual on her American tour.

After her two years among the Americans Martineau returned to England, and in the following year, 1837, she published Society in America. In Society in America she proposed to implement the sociological theories which she had outlined in the as yet unpublished How to Observe Morals and Manners. But her purpose was also:

> . . . to compare the existing state of society in America with the principles on which it is professedly founded; thus testing Institutions, Morals, and Manners by an indisputable, instead of an arbitrary standard. . . . In working according to this method, my principal dangers are two. I am in danger of not fully apprehending the principles on which society in America is founded; and of erring in the application to these of the facts which came under my notice.[21]

Alexis de Tocqueville had just made a similar examination of American institutions and democratic principles and it is with this aspect of Martineau's Society in America that we shall be principally concerned. The first volume of Tocqueville's Democracy in America was published in 1835 while Harriet Martineau was still abroad. Both writers were therefore simultaneously and independently engaged in surveying the institutions and the applications of democratic theory in America. But where Tocqueville was concerned primarily with democracy as a practical expedient, Harriet Martineau used the principles of democracy as a criterion of judgment:

> The inalienable right of all the human race to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, must control the economical, as well as the political arrangements of a people; and . . . the law of universal justice must regulate all social intercourse. . . .[22]

She divided Society in America into three sections: the first dealt with political structure, the second with the economy, and the third, 'Civilization,' with various aspects of the society and its mores. As a sociological study Society in America was very uneven in quality. Perceptive observations were interspersed with untidy rambling anecdotes and tangential personal reminiscences which although interesting enough in themselves detracted from the purpose of an objective survey of society. It was unfortunate that Harriet Martineau wrote Society in America before she wrote Retrospect of Western Travel. If the order of writing had been reversed she would have been less tempted to digress from her expressed aim in Society in America. Retrospect professed to be nothing more than a book of travel, and although it was not without some social commentary, it was an unpretentious book with serious considerations

clearly subordinated. In its coherence and in its structure Retrospect of Western Travel was superior to the earlier work and was considered so by many of her contemporaries. She herself later described it as "more creditable to her mood, and perhaps to her powers, than the more ambitious work,"[23] and when he read it, even Carlyle was "vehement" in his delight.[24] It captured much of Martineau's infectious enthusiasm and her most hostile American critics were prepared to concede the excellence of her descriptions.[25] Nevertheless for the student of nineteenth-century America Society in America remains the more important publication, and it is worth recording John Morley's retrospective estimate:

> We do not suppose that they [Society in America and Retrospect of Western Travel] are worth reading at the present day, except from a historical point of view. But they are really good specimens of a kind of literature which is not abundant, and yet which is of the utmost value - we mean the record of the sociological observation of a country by a competent traveller, who stays long enough in the country, has access to the right persons of all kinds, and will take pains enough to mature his judgments. It was a happy idea of O'Connell's to suggest that she should go over to Ireland, and write such an account of that country as she had written of the United States. And we wish at this very hour[1886, a fateful year for the Irish and the Liberal Party] that some one as competent as Miss Martineau would do what O'Connell wished her to do.[26]

When Harriet Martineau came to the United States in 1834 it consisted of twenty-four states, and Andrew Jackson was President. She came from the old world to a new world in "the process of world-making."[27] Pioneers were still extending the frontier into the diminishing wilderness and even the eastern cities were still in embryo. History was in the making and she sensed the dramatic importance of the moment:

> The present . . . is an age in which societies of the whole world are daily learning the consequences of what their fathers did, the connexion of cause and effect being too palpable to be disputed.[28]

America was suspended between past and future "with many of the feudal prepossessions of the past mingled with the democratic aspirations which relate to the future:"[29] a Necessarian and latent Comtean Martineau believed that a society grew out of the national experience and was therefore infinitely mutable.

But she insisted that the principles of justice upon which the United States had been founded should remain immutable.[30] She expected to find the spirit of 1776 incarnate in America and her expectations were only partially fulfilled. America compared well with England where the individual was exalted only in the abstract but was still despised in the mass.[31] There was no "hereditary humbug" in the United States, and "the English insolence of class to class"--except in the reprehensible case of Black Americans--had not been reproduced on American soil. For those Americans who considered themselves "Exclusives" because of wealth or family position, Harriet Martineau had nothing but contempt. She believed that the natural aristocracy of the country was to be found "not only in Ball-rooms and bank parlours, but also in fishing-boats, in stores, in college chambers, and behind the plough."[32] Unlike Fanny Trollope who hardly knew how to receive "the uncouth advances" of her poorer neighbors, Harriet Martineau had no objections whatever to the levelling effects of republican equality.[33]

Mrs. Trollope had disapproved of social democracy, but she _had_ reluctantly acknowledged that in America "any man's son may become the equal of any other man's son."[34] For Harriet Martineau such an acknowledgment did not come grudgingly. To her the United States appeared to exemplify and substantiate the theories of political economy.

> One remarkable effect of democratic institutions is the excellence of the work turned out by those who live under them. In a country where the whole course is open to every one; where, in theory, everything may be obtained by merit, men have the strongest stimulus to exert their powers, and try what they can achieve.[35]

But, though less disturbed than Frances Trollope by "the unceasing goad which necessity applies to industry," she was nevertheless disquieted by evidence of materialism in American society. Because she tried to deny that the free enterprise system encouraged a "sordid love of gain," she did not want to find it there, but despite her loyalty to the principles of political economy and individual competition she could not ignore that the mercenary spirit existed. She made the precipitous discovery that economic laissez-faire and individual human liberty were incompatible. And she amended her old uncritical acceptance of political economy and generously--albeit temporarily and inconsistently--endorsed instead the principles of socialism: Despite all her fulminations against Owenism in the Illustrations, and particularly in For Each and for All, Martineau was prepared to change her mind:

> . . . there is [she wrote in Society in America] no way of securing perfect social liberty on democratic principles but by community of property.[37]

To her brother Robert her about-face seemed complete. "How long have you been an Owenite?" he exclaimed on reading the manuscript of Society in America.[38]

Martineau was never an Owenite nor a communist. She never endorsed the arbitrary equalization of property, and she never entirely relinquished her faith in the competitive principle. But in America she became aware of the obsessive nature of economic individualism.

> If money, if success, apart from the object, could give happiness, who would be so happy as the merchants of America? In comparison with merchants generally, they are happy: but in comparison with what men are made to be, they are shackled, careworn, and weary as the slave. . . . Are the mechanic and farming classes satisfied? No: not even they: outwardly blessed as they are beyond any class that society has ever contained. They, too, are aware that life must be meant to be passed far otherwise than in providing the outward means of living. They must be aware that though, by great industry, they can obtain some portion of time for occupations which are not money-getting, there must be something wrong in a system which compels men to devote almost the whole of their waking hours to procure that which, under a different combination of labour, might be obtained at a saving of three-fourths of the time. Whether their thoughts have been expressly turned to this subject or not, almost all the members of society are conscious that *car for their external wants is so engrossing as to absorb almost all other cares; and that they would most thankfully agree to work in their vocation for the community for a short portion of every day, on condition of being spared all future anxiety about their physical necessities* [my italics].[39]

Martineau momentarily forgot her earlier imprecations against communal societies in her new almost Marxian concern about leisure time. She ignored her previous argument that communal responsibility enervated initiative, eroded progress, and was the nemesis of personal responsibility and endeavor. She acknowledged instead Godwin's claim that "leisure [was] the birth-right of every human being," and she despaired that without "community of property" it could ever be secured to everyone.[40] She conceded that the majority of Americans would be opposed to an equalization of property, but she did not think that they were beyond the pale of reclamation and she hoped that the false steps which they had taken in imitation of the old world could be retraced. She was confident that the time would come when Americans would recognize where their own best interests lay.[41] But the English she thought were too mired in the past, and too enmeshed in the intricacies of ancient property claims to easily

find their own rescue. And it is ironic that two world wars and a century later exactly the converse has proved to be true!

Whether Martineau's altered attitude toward Owenism came from her visit to Rapp's communist community at Economy Pennsylvania, or merely from her observation that Americans were too preoccupied with material success, her reversal of opinion was astounding. It was a remarkable concession from one who continued to be numbered among the laissez-fairists, and for the student of Martineau it was the most interesting and significant of her comments upon the American economy. The section of Society in America devoted to the American economy was in fact the least impressive part of her three-volume work and was the section which would most have benefited if Retrospect of Western Travel had been written first. Instead of providing a critical commentary on the economic fabric of the United States she gave her impressions of the economy as she saw it functioning. She did not consider the geographical ignorance of her English readers and skipped from one part of the country to another with alarming inconsistency. And she did not consider her economist friends who doubtless agreed with her criticism of the American tariff but who would have welcomed a more scientific analysis of the United States economy. But perhaps the reader expecting to find a professional assessment of the American economy expects too much, after all, Martineau herself had acknowledged in the preface to her Illustrations that she was not an economist.

It was less American materialism than American subservience to public opinion which disturbed Martineau.[42] Public opinion in America could not be regarded as a convenient Benthamite sanction for the curbing of

anti-social behavior: it had become a major obstacle to independence of thought and action. She thought that the pressure of conformity was ominous, and realized that as long as opprobrium was attached to the minority view the influence of the majority would remain oppressive: as long as "the will of the majority decides all political affairs, there is a temptation to belong to the majority."[43] Therefore, instead of finding freedom of expression in America, she found a "deficiency of moral independence" which fed upon bigotry and intolerance and which mocked the spirit of democracy.[44] She admitted that the tyranny of the democratic majority could be as vicious as any aristocratic tyranny of the past had been. But she refused to regard this as anything but a temporary phenomenon and her faith in the ultimate triumph of democracy remained unshaken. She believed--as she had believed in the case of political economy--that the principle would be vindicated if only the people could be properly educated to an unselfish dedication to the greatest happiness of the greatest number:

> The majority eventually wills the best; but in the presence of imperfection of knowledge, the will is long in exhibiting itself; and the ultimate demonstration often crowns a series of mistakes and failures.[45]

Tocqueville had been similarly impressed by American subservience to public opinion. He said that he knew of no other country where there was "so little independence of mind and real freedom of discussion as in America."[46] He saw in America a levelling down rather than a levelling up and he was less optimistic than Martineau about the majority ever willing the best.

> In the United States [wrote Tocqueville] . . . the majority . . . exercise a prodigious actual authority, and a power of opinion which is nearly as great; no obstacle exists which can impede or

> even retard its progress, so as to make it heed the complaints of those whom it crushes in its path. This state of things is harmful in itself and dangerous for the future.[47]

Tocqueville's critique of democracy may well have sown in the mind of John Stuart Mill the seeds of doubt which blossomed in On Liberty, for it was Mill who reviewed Democracy in America for the London and Westminster Review in 1835 when the first volume was published.

Democratic theory presumed that the majority was a more reliable basis for authority than the minority and that it therefore selected the best measures and elected the best leaders. But Martineau found that in the United States, at least, the actuality lagged behind the theory.[48] She discovered that elected officials in national and state governments were not the most honest nor the ablest men, but usually those who were best able to propitiate public opinion:

> It has become the established method of seeking office, not only to declare a coincidence of opinion with the supposed majority, on the great topics on which the candidate will have to speak and act while in office, but to deny, or conceal, or assert anything else which it is supposed will please the same majority. The consequence is, that the best men are not in office.[49]

Politicians courted the people with lies, flattered them from the rostrum, and generally and inevitably accommodated themselves to expediency. There was little mutual faith between elected officials and their constituents. And as a consequence the electorate was skeptical and apathetic.[50] A disquietingly large percentage of the electorate failed to perform their duty at the polls and by their omission abused those democratic privileges which the English radicals had so recently--if restrictedly--sought to achieve:

> If it were only borne in mind [she pleaded] that rulers derive their just powers from the consent of the governed, surely all conscientious men would see the guilt of any man acquiescing

> in the rule of governors whom he disapproves, by not having recorded his dissent. Or, if he should be in the majority, the case is no better. He has omitted to bear his testimony to what he esteems the true principles of government. He has not appointed his rulers; and, in as far as he accepts their protection, he takes without having given, he reaps without having sown; he deprives his just rulers of a portion of the authority which is their due - of a portion of the consent of the governed.[51]

As usual she was optimistic that democracy would utlimately triumph and that the majority would eventually be right although in the United States of the 1830s this was far from being the case.

> The experiment of the particular constitution of the United States may fail; but the great principle which, whether successfully or not, it strives to embody, - the capacity of mankind for self-government, - is established.[52]

America was founded upon the right principles but thus far it had not only failed to implement those principles but had also failed to correctly define them. As long as slaves and women were excluded from citizenship the leadership of America and the edicts of its government did not reflect the will of the true majority of its people. The existence of human bondage, and the almost equally intolerable political non-existence of women were unrepublican and undemocratic. And it was to these two particular anomalies that Harriet Martineau expressly addressed herself in Society in America.

Harriet Martineau had joined the anti-slavery cause before her visit to the United States. She had written on the subject in the Illustrations of Political Economy tale Demerara in which she had been as much concerned with the economics as with the immorality of slavery.[53] And she had contributed two anti-slavery articles to the Monthly Repository: "West India Slavery" and "Liberia."[54]

> It is most painful to think on the condition of our Negro bretheren [she had written in "W. I. Slavery"]; of their tortured bodies, their stunted intellects, their perverted affections, their extorted labour, their violated homes.[55]

Her feelings on the question of slavery were therefore unambiguous. And the captain of the United States had doubted the wisdom of permitting her to disembark in New York where there had recently been anti-abolitionist riots. He had taken her companion, Louisa Jeffreys, aside in order to ascertain Harriet Martineau's opinions on slavery and had only consented to allow her ashore when assured that although "an abolitionist in principle" she had come to America "to learn and not to teach."[56]

Her first lessons had come from those of the middle and southern states who were opposed to the abolitionists and who thought of them as a violent radical group whose disruptive methods were injuring rather than helping the cause of emancipation. But her final and most important lessons were learnt from William Lloyd Garrison and his disciples, and so closely did her subsequent arguments follow the Garrisonian line that is impossible to say where Garrison leaves off and Martineau begins. Garrison, like Martineau had earlier been a supporter of the American Colonization Society and of gradualism. The American Colonization Society was founded in 1817[57] and coming as it did at the time of the English anti-slavery agitation it had made converts of Clarkson, Wilberforce and the other champions of the anti-slavery cause. Martineau had enthusiastically supported the aims of the Society in both Demerara and "Liberia." These aims were to transport fifty-two thousand liberated blacks to Liberia annually. As this number represented the approximate yearly natural increase in the slave population, it was hoped that by

these means slavery would gradually be eliminated. However, there was a serious discrepancy between the Society's intentions and its achievements. Garrison realized this and he withdrew his support from the Society and by 1830 had begun to press for immediate abolition instead of the gradual emancipation which the Society purported to endorse. When Harriet Martineau came to write Society in America the Society had been in existence for twenty years and in that time, she pointed out, it had succeeded in transporting only two to three thousand persons--a pitiable fraction of the two and a half million slaves and three hundred and sixty-two thousand free blacks then living in the United States. It was in her words "a miserable abortion."[58] And she saw that it was not a solution to the problem of slavery but that it merely served as a conscience salver to its members many of whom were slave-owners themselves.

Garrison had been stung by the hypocrisy of a Society which professed to have the interests of black Americans at heart but which in reality denied that the co-existence of black and white Americans was possible. He therefore aimed not only to emancipate but also to integrate the black man. He realized that the north was as guilty as the south in this respect. And Martineau too remarked upon the intolerance of northerners who locked free blacks out of their schools, closed church pews to them, and excluded them from their colleges, their restaurants, their municipal offices, their professions and even their literary and scientific associations. Like Tocqueville who discovered that

> . . . slavery is fatally united with the physical and permanent fact of color. The tradition of slavery dishonors the race, and the peculiarity of the race perpetuates the tradition of slavery.[60]

Martineau came to realize that in the minds of Americans race and slavery were inextricably associated. Even former President Madison, President of the American Colonization Society and a slave owner had admitted to her that if he could make all the blacks white he would "do away with slavery in twenty-four hours."[61] And the significance of the admission was not lost upon her. She acknowledged

> . . . that all the torturing associations of injury have been connected with color, that an institution which hurts everybody and benefits none, which all rational people who understand it dislike, despise and suffer under, can with difficulty be abolished, because of the hatred which is borne to an irremovable badge.[62]

For Garrison slavery made a mockery of the pious protestations of northerners, of the Colonization Society, and of Christianity itself. Even northern clergymen closed their doors to Garrison when he sought to preach the gospel of universal freedom from their pulpits, for when he brought his anti-slavery message to New England in 1830 even Lyman Beecher and William Channing who ultimately supported abolitionism refused to underwrite his cause. With a few exceptions like Martineau's friend, the Unitarian minister the Rev. Samuel May, leaders of the organized religions remained aloof and disapproving. The only religious community to offer Garrison a platform in those first pioneering days was not the Christians but the deists of the First Society of Free Inquirers. Gradually from these beginnings the New England and the American Anti-Slavery Societies were founded, and by 1833 each of the New England States had its own Anti-Slavery Society. Organized religion, however, remained aloof and a disenchanted Garrison withdrew his allegiance from the forms and orthodoxies of religion.

To all appearences Harriet Martineau still conformed to the Unitarian creed when she arrived in the United States. And although Necessarianism was not an accepted doctrine among American Unitarians, as the author of the Three Prize Essays she was welcomed as something of a religious authority by the American Unitarian community. But except for her friends May, Follen and Channing, who by this time had issued a statement in support of abolition, the Unitarian clergy, like the clergy of most other denominations, had remained unmoved by Garrison's crusade.[63] Martineau was dismayed by the apparent hypocrisy of their position and she proclaimed them "too destitute of the apostolic spirit to be adequate to the needs of the time:"

> They [the clergy] all say (in private) that Slavery is demoralizing , and that the duty of clergymen is to advocate good morals. Well then, if they have done anything, - preached, - written, - opened pews to coloured people, supported their charities, and treated them like bretheren, by all means let us know it. If not - where's the use of praising them for their private sentiments?[64]

Describing Christianity as "the root of all democracy, the highest fact in the Rights of Man," she condemned American Christianity as a "spurious offspring of that divine Christianity."[65] When in June, 1837 the General Association of Massachusetts Clergymen took a stand against the growing female participation in the cause of abolition, and even used the Bible to justify the subordination of women as southern clergy used it to justify slavery, her disillusionment was complete.[66] She continued to profess Christianity for another decade, and even, in a later comment described this as "the highest point of the metaphysical period of her mind."[67] But her American experience sowed the seeds of her later

skepticism, and in Society in America one sees the earliest intimations of what was to follow:

> The clerical profession is . . . too much opposed to the spirit of the gospel, to outlive long the individual research into religion, to which the faults of the clergy are daily impelling the people.[68]

Harriet Martineau the Necessarian was not originally in tune with Garrisonian thought. Garrison rejected Necessarian causation because he believed that it tended to exonerate the slave-owners as "'the creatures of circumstnace' - not inwardly corrupt, but outwardly trammelled."[69] Instead he took the position that people were individually responsible for their actions and that there were no pardonable excuses for slave-owning apologists. Martineau had at first regarded slave-owners as the victims of circumstances, and in her letters and journals of 1835 she tended to exculpate them on this account.[70] However, once exposed to Garrison's rationale Martineau was prepared to deviate from causal dogma: she was never so immured in principle as to deny justice when she saw it miscarried. She conceded that the same circumstances which had produced the slave-holder had also produced the Grimke sisters who left their southern estates to become abolitionists; and she concluded from this that the same causes could differently affect different individuals.[71] However, in the case of the slaves themselves she could in all conscience remain an Hartleyan. She believed in the essential equality of men and was convinced that only their circumstances had reduced the slaves to a "brutish" condition and that only circumstances--freedom and education--would restore them to a position of dignity. She noted with unmixed horror the awful hypocrisy of an Alabaman law which fined masters only two

hundred dollars for torturing a slave, but which fined them five hundred dollars for teaching a slave to read![72] Southerners she noted were perfectly secure as long as their slaves were ignorant and docile, but they became suspicious and fearful if once their slaves exhibited the traits of rational human beings.[73]

Southerners insisted that slaves were contented with their lot but Martineau's own observations convinced her to the contrary. She had seen 'dehumanized' beings trudging home from the fields like so many beasts of burden. She had witnessed the unspeakable condition of slave quarters. And most depressing of all she had gone to the Charleston slave market and had felt a humiliation which "might stagger the faith of the spirit of Christianity itself."[74] After this she concluded that only those slaves who had been completely demoralized and utterly degraded could be content with the condition of their servitude:

> Slaves are more or less degraded by slavery in proportion to their original strength of character or educational discipline of mind. The most degraded are satisfied, the least degraded are dissatisfied with slavery. The lower order prefer release from duties and cares to the enjoyment of rights and the possession of themselves; and the highest order have a directly opposite taste. The mistake lies in not perceiving that slavery is emphatically condemned by the conduct of both.[75]

Slaves were to Martineau's uneasy conscience "deeply injured fellow-beings." She felt awkward in their presence because she bore the guilt of the society which had injured them. Her first conscious contact with a slave was in Washington:

> She was a brighteyed merry-hearted child; confiding like other children, and dreading no evil, but doomed hopelessly doomed, to ignorance, privation and moral degradation. When I looked at her and thought of the fearful disobedience to the first moral laws, the cowardly treachery, the cruel abuse of power involved in thus dooming to blight a being so helpless, so confiding, and so full pf promise, a horror came over me which sickened my very soul.[76]

The horror lingered in Martineau's consciousness and weighed upon her conscience. And when in New Orleans some time later she met Ailsie, she decided to adopt her. Ailsie was eight years old. She served her white owner by dressing her hair and by fanning flies from the dinner table with a huge brush of peacock feathers. As a slave her future was too bleak to contemplate and thus Harriet Martineau, spinster, decided to have her sent to England as her adopted child. But Ailsie never arrived. She changed ownership and was lost to Martineau and to posterity. Because the relationship between Harriet Martineau and Ailsie never really began it is impossible to guess what it might have become. But it would be safe to conclude that Martineau was motivated less by maternal than by paternalist instincts. She wanted to give Ailsie a chance in a free society. She planned to bring her up not as a daughter but as a kind of apprentice whom she would train for domestic or industrial employment in England.[77] But why were her ambitions for Ailsie so modest? Was it because she was black? Was Harriet Martineau to some extent influenced by the nineteenth-century belief in innate racial differences?[78] And if so was there more than a modicum of hypocrisy in her protestations of human equality? She approved of miscegenation, and she condemned social discrimination but why we wonder did she think of Ailsie as her probable servant rather than as her possible child? Was it not her heart but only her conscience which had been stirred? The answer will remain elusive. And Martineau should rather be applauded for her intentions than condemned for her shortcomings. For an unmarried English woman of her time and place her commitment was generous and her gesture was superb.

Harriet Martineau had made many personal friends in the south and had enjoyed the generosity of southern hospitality. Because she had been led to believe that the abolitionists were anarchistic revolutionaries she had been disinclined to receive their overtures when she first arrived in New England. However, she proclaimed herself to be an impartial observer and it was in this guise that she was persuaded to attend a meeting of the Boston Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society. In the same year, 1835, the Boston Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society meeting had been mobbed and there was a serious risk of physical danger involved in her attendance.[79] But Martineau refused to be intimidated by warnings or even by the ominous presence of hooting boys at the entrance to the meeting place. Clothed in objectivity she felt unafraid and even a little skeptical. But her immunity was not inviolable. While seated in the audience she was handed a pencilled note requesting that she address a few words to the meeting on behalf of the cause. She knew that her compliance would be a commitment, and she foresaw that every house in Boston but those of the abolitionists would be closed to her. She had sensed the omnipotence of public censure and she knew that her endorsement of an unpopular cause would condemn her in the eyes of her erstwhile friends and would turn her triumphal tour into something less than cordial. But personal consequences never deterred Harriet Martineau from her duty.

> The case was clear as daylight to my conscience. If I had been a mere stranger, attending with a mere stranger's interest to the proceedings of a party of natives, I might and ought to have declined mixing myself up with their proceedings. But I had long before published against slavery, and always declared my conviction that this was a question of humanity, not of country or race; a moral, not a merely political question; a general affair, and not one of city, state, party, or nation. Having thus declared

> on the safe side of the Atlantic, I was bound to act up to my declaration on the unsafe side, if called upon. I thought it a pity that the call had been made, though I am now very glad that it was. . . .[80]

Her social fears were largely realized. She now had no callers in Boston except for those who were known to sympathize with abolitionism, and during the remaining months in America "she was subjected to insult and injury, and was even for some weeks in danger of her life while travelling where the tar-barrel, the cow-hide, and the pistol were the regimen prescribed for and applied to abolitionists, and threatened esp - cially in her case."[81] But the bond which she forged with the abolitionists that day in Boston was to last throughout her lifetime. She carried on their fight on the other side of the Atlantic until their cause was won. She wrote on behalf of emancipation not only in her two American books and in articles in the New York National Anti-Slavery Standard, but she also addressed her English readers in the Edinburgh Review, the Westminister Review and the Daily News, endorsing the Garrisonian principles of immediate abolition and racial integration by peaceful a-political methods.[82] Despite her adherence to the cause of democracy and her support for democratic principles, Harriet Martineau was convinced that abolition would not be achieved by the democratic process. She had scant faith in the majority system as it operated in mid-nineteenth-century America. She pointed out that the south with its small white electorate had an unequally large voice in Congress. In the senate with equal states' representation, with the connivance and compromises of northern politicians, and with the accretion of new slave territories, the south could perpetuate its sectional interests.[83] But she did not despair of

the Union and she did not at that time see abolition and Union as incompatible. In fact, she considered the threat of dissolution as a red herring designed to detract from the question of slavery:

> . . . those who threaten the dissolution of the Union, do it in order to divert towards this impracticable object the irritation which would otherwise, and which will ere long, turn against the institution of slavery.[84]

But despite her characteristic long-term optimism, she did not minimize the difficulty of achieving abolition. In "Martyr Age of the United States" which was republished in America from a Westminster Review article,[85] she compared the task of the abolitionists with the English reformers' attempt to overthrow the aristocratic system:

> Slavery is as thoroughly interwoven with American institutions - ramifies as extensively through American society, as the aristocratic spirit pervades Great Britain. The fate of Reformers whose lives are devoted to making war upon either the one or the other must be remarkable.[86]

Her comparison was perspicacious. Slavery--the "solitary feudalism" of the south--was the only apparently enduring institution in the changing structureless society of early nineteenth-century America.[87] And she foresaw that the caste system and the feudal notions it engenered in America would be as or more difficult to overthrow than the English system of class. It was not enough she realized, to free the slaves or the English working class; both had to be restored to human dignity:

> You [the Abolitionists] are strengtheneing us [the English] for conflicts we have to enter upon. We have a population in our manufacturing towns almost as oppressed, and in our secluded rural districts almost as ignorant as your negroes. These must be redeemed. We have also negroes in our dominions, who, though about to be entirely surrendered as property, will yet we fear, be long oppressed as citizens, if the vigilance which has freed them be not as active as ever. I regard the work of vindicating the civil standing of negroes as more arduous and dangerous than freeing them from the chain and the whip.[88]

She did not underestimate the difficulty of this undertaking, but as usual she was convinced that eventually "the natural laws which regulate communities" would remove the curse of slavery and would restore "the universality of that generous attachment to their common institutions which has been, and will again be, to the American people, honour, safety, and the means of perpetual progress."[89]

Harriet Martineau's efforts on behalf of American abolition were deeply appreciated by her American colleagues in the movement. Her articles were eagerly reprinted in America, and her American correspondence and her American friendships never flagged. In 1838 she was made an honorary member of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society, and in 1840 she was elected as a delegate from Massachusetts to the London Anti-Slavery Convention. When she was thought to be dying in 1856 Garrison proposed a resolution to the annual meeting of the American Anti-Slavery Society expressing to her "while yet there is time, our deep, affectionate, and reverential gratitude for the benfit of her labours, the honour of her friendship, and the sublime joy of her example."[90] And he wrote to her privately saying:

> . . . twenty years ago, caricatured, reviled, hated and ostracized as I was universally, because I would not be dumb in regard to the all-pervading crime and curse of chattle slavery, words of sympathy and approval . . . you gave me . . . with equal courage and generosity, at the risk of social outlawry, popular contempt and indignation, and pecuniary loss . . . you . . . have ever since been the unflattering championess of justice, humanity and freedom on a world-wide scale.[91]

The Anti-Slavery Society meetings began with a solemn reading of a Declaration of Sentiments which was based upon the Declaration of

Independence. And it might well have been this fact which inspired Martineau to compare American society with the principles it had proclaimed in 1776. In the following decade, the women's movement in America also read a Declaration of Sentiments at its conventions, but even before the conscious feminist movement started, Martineau had noted that the existence of slavery as well as the position of women made a mockery of democratic idealism in America. In Society in America she wrote a chapter entitled: "Political Non-Existence of Women," which is a too much neglected early manifesto in the women's rights campaign: To her it seemed intolerable that:

> Governments in the United States have power to tax women who hold property; to divorce them from their husbands; to fine, imprison, and execute them for certain offences. Whence do these governments derive their powers? They are not "just," as they are not derived from the consent of the women thus governed.[92]

Both in England and America women were classified as minors whose interests were represented by adult male voters. And she pointed out that even supposedly radical thinkers like Thomas Jefferson in America and James Mill in England concurred in this opinion. But for her own part Martineau would not accept surrogate representation:

> I, for one, do not acquiesce. I declare that whatever obedience I yield to the laws of the society in which I live is a matter between, not the community and myself, but my judgment and my will. Any punishment inflicted on me for the breach of the laws, I should regard as so much gratuitous injury; for to those laws I have never, actually or virtually, assented.[93]

As a little girl growing up in early nineteenth-century England Harriet Martineau had received a fairly good education. But even she soon became aware of the limitations of female education and of female prospects. It was probably no coincidence that she made her first

contributions to literature and to the feminist cause when her younger brother James went off to college and left her at home.[94] A few years later when she became a regular reviewer on the Monthly Repository, her feminism was further reinforced by William Fox and his like-minded circle. As a female radical in the year 1832 she felt compelled "to do something with the pen, since no other means of action in politics are in a woman's power."[95] She resented her inferior status and the subjection of women generally and confided to Francis Place, "I would fain treat of Woman . . . for there is much to be said upon it."[96]

In England the women's movement advanced with the utmost restraint. It was not until the 1840s that the first pioneering efforts in female education were made. And it was not until the 1850s that the first modest assault was made on the marriage laws. In America in 1834, however, the feminist movement already existed in embryo. American women had become involved in the humanitarian causes of the early nineteenth-century: the peace crusade, the temperance societies, and the anti-slavery movement. Women had been present at the first meeting of the American Anti-Slavery Society. They had organized their own branches of the Society raising funds and writing for the cause as the auxiliaries of the male leaders of the organization. But it soon became apparent that women were no longer playing a subordinate role in the movement. Some of the most popular speakers on the anti-slavery circuit were the Grimkes and other female abolitionists. And in 1837, the year after Martineau's departure from the United States, the Massachusetts Clergy felt compelled to issue their Pastoral Letter condemning these women for their unfeminine behavior: using biblical texts to support their

charges, they contended that women belonged at home and not on public rostrums.[97]

The Massachusetts clergy made feminism an issue in the anti-slavery campaign and split the abolitionist movement. Those abolitionists who were not sympathetic to the feminist cause harkened to the clerical admonition and formed their own branch of the abolitionist movement--the National Anti-Slavery Society. The Garrisonians of the American Anti-Slavery Society, however, upheld the rights of women to equality although they always considered the question subordinate to that of abolition and were not as dedicated to the cause of feminism as were others, like Susan B. Anthony, who made women's rights their first priority. Nevertheless, both the Liberator and the National Anti-Slavery Standard--the chief organs of the American Anti-Slavery Society--supported the women's fight and regularly reported the Women's Rights Conventions. Garrison in particular became a champion of the feminist cause:

> As Our object is Universal Emancipation [Harriet Martineau quoted Garrision in "Martyr Age"] to redeem woman as well as man from a servile to an equal condition - we shall go for the Rights of Woman to their fullest extent.[98]

When the World Anti-Slavery Convention meeting in London in 1840 refused to seat Lucretia Mott and Ann Phillips, the delegates from Pennsylvania and Massachusetts, Garrison absented himself from the main body of delegates and joined the women in the gallery saying, "After battling so many long years for the liberties of African slaves, I can take no part in a convention that strikes down the most sacred rights of all women."[99] Martineau, herself too ill to attend as a delegate from Massachusetts,[100] could only admire the magnanimity of Garrison's gesture:

> Garrison was quite right, I think, to sit in the gallery at the Convention. I conclude you think so. It has done much for the woman question, I am persuaded. You will live to see a great enlargement of our scope, I trust, what with the vices of some women and the fears of others, it is hard work for us to assert our liberty. I will, however, till I die, and so will you; and so make it easier for some few to follow us than it was for poor Mary Wollstonecraft to begin.[101]

Harriet Martineau was never slow to applaud those who acted upon their principles; she never hesitated to do so herself. She had acted on principle when she tackled the awkward matter of birth control in Weal and Woe in Garveloch. She had acted on principle when she accepted the abolitionist's invitation to speak in Boston in 1835. And she was to act on principle again: when she affronted public opinion with her endorsement of mesmerism; when she disavowed the Christian faith in the Letters on the Laws of Man's Nature and Development (1851); and when she took up the fight against the Contagious Diseases Acts in the 1860s. It was not surprising therefore that in Society in America she should have acknowledged the courage of the female abolitionists who defied the social conventions which would have robbed them of their freedom of speech:

> The incessant outcry about the retiring modesty of the sex proves the opinion of the censors to be, that fidelity to conscience is inconsistent with retiring modesty. If it be so, let modesty succumb.[102]

Nevertheless upon most men and women the effect of the Pastoral Letter and the biblical justifications of the clergy were considerable.[103] Religion, as Martineau had observed, played a very large part in the lives of a majority of American women. She attributed this excessive devotion to the fact that outside marriage and the family women had little to occupy their minds. In this assessment she and Frances Trollope[104] were in agreement for both considered the piety of

American women to be exaggerated, insincere and a substitute for boredom:

> The way in which religion is made an occupation by women [Martineau wrote], testifies not only to the vacuity which must exist when such a mistake is fallen into, but to the vigour with which the religious sentiment would probably be carried into the great objects of life, if such were permitted.[105]

She perceived that if only women were permitted the opportunity, they would apply their misdirected energies to 'the great objects of life.' But in America, as in England, female education was superficial, professionalism was frowned upon, and except for those women who were forced by circumstances to support themselves, the lives of most women were vacuous:

> While woman's intellect is confined, her morals crushed, her health ruined, her weaknesses encouraged, and her strength punished, she is told that her lot is cast in the paradise of women: and there is no country in the world where there is so much boasting of the "chivalrous" treatment she enjoys. That is to say, - she has the best place in stage coaches: when there are not chairs enough for everybody, the gentlemen stand: she hears oratorical flourishes on public occasions about wives and home, and apostrophes to woman: her husband's hair stands on end at the idea of her working, and he toils to indulge her with money: she is at liberty to get her brain turned by religious excitements, that her attention may be diverted from morals, politics, and philosophy; and especially her morals are guarded by the strictest observance of propriety in her presence. In short, *indulgence is given her as a substitute for justice*. Her case differs from that of the slave, as to principle, just so far as this; that the indulgence is large and universal, instead of petty and capricious. In both cases justice is denied on no better plea than the right of the strongest [my italics].[106]

Because of what Harriet Martineau described as the 'chivalrous taste and temper' of Americans, it was made almost impossible for women to earn their own livings. The only respectable employments for women of the middle class were teaching,[107] sewing and the keeping of boarding houses.

But the women of the New England operative class had more opportunities for employment. New England was without slaves and had a surplus female population. Therefore with the growth of the manufacturing industry in the early nineteenth century, women became the major employees in the mills of Waltham and Lowell. Unlike their English sisters they were country rather than urban women, their period of employment was usually temporary, and their conditions of labor were fairly good. In Lowell women numbered seventy per cent of the labor force. They worked long hours, but they earned enough to save. They lived in a company-town with company-provided housing. They had the use of a community library, they could attend lectures in the community Lyceum and they could hear sermons in the community church.[108] Like almost every other nineteenth-century Briton who toured the United States--with the exception of Frances Trollope--Harriet Martineau was taken to see the model town of Lowell. And despite its paternalism she was impressed by what she saw there and even suggested that similar experiments be tried in Great Britain.[109] However, recent scholarship paints a less than impressive picture of Lowell, and apparently the period of its success and prosperity was transient. But Martineau did not know that in 1835. She saw an orderly community where women of the operative class could live respectably and achieve independence. And she inferred from this that it might be possible for women of all ranks to burst the bonds of prejudice which had hitherto restricted them.

The sphere of woman, Martineau concluded, had been narrowly defined for her by man when it ought to have been circumscribed only by her own natural abilities.[110] Like Margaret Fuller who believed that "what a

woman needs is not as a woman to act and rule, but as a nature to grow, as an intellect to discern, as a soul to live freely and unimpeded, to unfold such powers as were given her when we left our common home."[111] Harriet Martineau was convinced that woman should not acquiesce to the limits which had been set on her social role and her political position:

> The truth is that while there is much said about "the sphere of woman," two widely different notions are entertained of what is meant by the phrase. The narrow, and, to the ruling party, the more convenient notion is that sphere appointed by men, and bounded by their ideas of propriety; - a notion from which any and every woman may fairly dissent. The broad and true conception is of the sphere appointed by God, and bounded by the powers which he has bestowed. . . . That woman has power to represent her own interests, no one can deny till she has been tried. . . . The principle of the equal rights of both halves of the human race is all we have to do with here.[112]

Like most contemporary feminists, Harriet Martineau saw no conflict whatever between homely duties and intellectual or professional attainments. She did not deny the importance of domestic accomplishments but she did deny that marriage should be woman's sole aim and her only place. Unlike de Tocqueville who believed that equality of the sexes would degrade both men and women and who said:

> It is not thus that Americans understand that species of equality which may be established between the sexes. They admit that as nature has appointed such wide differences between the physical and moral constitution of man and woman, her manifest design was to give a distinct employment to their various faculties; and they hold that improvement does not consist in making beings so dissimilar to do pretty nearly the same things, but in causing each of them to fulfill their respective tasks in the best possible manner. The Americans have applied to the sexes the great principle of political economy which governs the manufacturers of our age, by carefully dividing the duties of man from those of woman in order that the great work of society may be the better carried on.[113]

Martineau emphatically denied that there was any occupation for which women were physically suited that they could not accomplish as well as

men. But Tocqueville, though he approved of the intellectual improvement of women still believed that they should be restricted to a peculiarly feminine sphere of influence. Catherine Beecher whom Martineau met in Cincinnati agreed with Tocqueville.[114] Beecher supported and even led the drive to improve the quality of female education in America. She encouraged the training of women teachers, but she did not condone any other form of professionalism for women. She opposed the feminists who sought to play public roles. And in common with Tocqueville she perceived women not as the equals of men but as their source of moral and domestic inspiration.[114] This special elevated view of the role of woman was as common in nineteenth-century America as it was in nineteenth-century France and nineteenth-century Britain. Even Tennyson conceding the desirability of equality in The Princess acknowledged that there were innate differences which made women somehow gentler and more moral than men:

> Yet in the long years like must they grow;
> The man be more of woman, she of man;
> He gain in sweetness and in moral height,
> Nor lose the wrestling thews that throw the world;
> She mental breadth, nor fail in childward care,
> Nor lose the childlike in the larger mind
> Till at last she set herself to man,
> Like perfect music unto noble words.
> (vii, 263-270)

Martineau did not agree with sex role differentiation. She now saw the seeming elevation of women as false and degrading. In America she was affronted by that chivalry, particularly in the south, which to her substituted condescension for respect:

> I have seen, with heart-sorrow, the kind politeness, and gallantry, so insufficient to the loving heart, with which the wives of the south are treated by their husbands. . . . I know the tone of

> conversation which is adopted towards women; different in its topics and style from that which any man would dream of offering to any other man.[116]

She denied that there were hardy masculine virtues and different gentle feminine ones, but she recognized that such an opinion existed. There was, she said, a "prevalent persuasion that there are virtues which are peculiarly masculine, and others which are peculiarly feminine,"[117] and that such a "separate gospel" for men and women implied higher expectations of morality for women than it did for men and reinforced the existing and insidious double standard.

As a single woman and a successful professional she thought it reprehensible that woman's prospects should be confined to matrimony especially as the arrangement of marriage in America, as in England, usually concerned itself with status rather than affection. A woman was therefore seldom able to find satisfaction in marriage and was not permitted to seek intellectual, professional or romantic gratification outside it as her husband was able to do. Because of her supposedly higher morality a woman was expected to be chaste, and once again the double standard worked to her disadvantage. Martineau understood the causes of infidelity and recognized that, "If men and women marry those whom they do not love, they must love those whom they do not marry."[118] But despite this recognition, she did not condone marital faithlessness and saw divorce as the solution to the unhappy marriage.[119]

As a critic of marriage, a proponent of divorce and a supporter of the equally reprehensible demand for women's rights Martineau stood outside the mainstream. She was known to embrace these unpopular views and therefore received more than one warning to say nothing in Society in

America regarding the position of women because of "the unacceptableness of the topic."[120] But instead of persuading her to remain silent the implied censorship of these strictures only encouraged her the more. Martineau was never one to step aside when her duty seemed clear. In fact, she appeared to have rather enjoyed her temerity, and indeed probably derived as much secret satisfaction from the adverse criticisms of her opponents as she did from the praise of her supporters. In the weeks prior to publication she had no regrets about her decision, and would have regarded the suppression of her convictions as a "damning sin." Nevertheless she was uneasy as she sat "in the calm, and awaiting the storm of criticism."[121] And when the storm eventually burst she was consoled by the warm appreciation of her friends and appeared seemingly unaffected by the condemnation of the more hostile elements of the press which she found to be "so completely a matter of course, so temporary, and . . . so absurd, that it does not trouble me more or less."[122]

Her books were received in America according the persuasions of the readers, and both praise and blame were abundantly meted out to her.[123] The anti-slavery press was predictably enthusiastic. The Liberator described Society in America as "perhaps the most remarkable work ever written by a foreigner on the United States, for its extent of information, its freedom, its sincerity, and its affectionate, yet judicious appreciation of our institutions and people."[124] But the more numerous anti-abolitionist critics whose criticisms were directed as much against Martineau's philosophical allies as against her own pronouncements were equally uniform in their condemnation. The American Quarterly Review described her tour as an "espionage" and her criticisms as an

"insolence." And thanked heaven that it knew of no women who would "get up at a public meeting and make an abolition, an amalgamation, or a Malthusian speech." And that

> . . . excepting it be Fanny Wright or Harriet Martineau there is not a sane woman in the world, much less in the United States, who has a desire to enlarge her sphere of action beyond the limits of her domestic home.[125]

The New York Review attacked her Unitarianism along with her abolitionism and her feminism.[126] But clearly it was the latter which most profoundly shocked her critics. Mrs. Chapman recalled in the Memorials to the Autobiography that along with such epithets as "incendiary," "radical," "amalgamationist," and "pitiless," the American press had perjoratively described her as "masculine," and "Amazonian."[127] One anonymous reviewer depicted the natural role of woman to be that a wife and mother, and he inferred thereby that as the author under review was neither she had no natural rights to demand.[128] And the American Monthly Magazine which conceded the excellence of her observations and the judiciousness and candor of her expression nevertheless described her views on women as "absurdities."[129]

Martineau herself had obviously expected more blame than praise even in England. She confessed to William Tait that except for the hostile review--for which she was sure he was not responsible--in his Edinburgh Magazine:

> The reception of my book has taken me wholly by surprise. I fully expected it would ruin me, and the writing of it was, I think, the most solemn act of my life. I hope I shall never again want faith in the sympathies of my readers, for never can I put their generosity to a severer test than I have now done, and I have met with nothing but the most entire trust and generous sympathy (with the single exception of this review) from all kinds of readers.[130]

She was obviously ignoring the less than cordial reception which the tory press gave her book and was thinking in this instance of the more liberal reviews. In the London and Westminster, then under the proprietorship of John Stuart Mill, Society in America was described as "incomparably the ablest and most instructive" work on the subject of the United States, and it called her book "a work which deserves the highest encomiums for the boldness and freedom of thought which it displays, and the many important truths which it inculcates and helps to diffuse."[131] The Edinburgh Review described her as impartial, tolerant and entertaining if a little too "rectified" in her Jacobinism.[132] And William Johnson Fox was naturally laudatory in Monthly Repository.[133] But the evaluations of conservative critics were less heart-warming. Fraser's called her a "female Quixote" whose utopian, unrealistic visions had succeeded in proving the impracticabity of democratic institutions. She was, it said, as manifestly wrong in assuming that all men were created equal as she was in assuming that men and women could ever be equal. It described her as one who "has grown old [she was then thirty-five] in single blessedness" and was therefore incapable of appreciating the joys of feminine dependency:

> . . . she allows herself to indulge in ascetic reflections upon the tyranny of man, in denying woman that independence which woman, as a class, would refuse if it were offered to her, as being inconsistent with her nature; and affects to look down upon and despise, as incompatible with the existence of the intellect, that softness and tender susceptibility which is the chief charm of the sex, but which incapacitates alike her body and mind for independent action. . . . If Miss Martineau, therefore, or any other maiden malcontent, should again venture to assert the equality of man and woman, our only advice to whomsoever that lady may be, is to turn, before sitting down to her task to the book of Genesis.[134]

Disraeli reviewed Society in America in The Times. He noted that Martineau instead of enlightening her English readers with accurate descriptions of America had been intent upon "her own impracticable schemes for what she esteems the amelioration of the species and the emancipation of her sex." She was, he said:

> . . . armed only with the absurd axioms of an arbitrary scheme of verbiage which she styles philosophy, and which appears to be a crude mixture of Benthamism, political economy, and sans cullotte morality, she hurries over the vast regions of the United States . . . analyzing, resolving, defining, subdividing, and mapping out "the morals" of America . . . not as they appear . . . but as they ought to figure according to the principles which she imbibed before her visit.[135]

He perspicaciously observed that while she had stubbornly persisted in the conviction that the majority is always right, her evidence had pointed to the obvious conclusion that the majority was always wrong.

Martineau would not admit the fallibility of democratic principle, but she was forced to admit the failure of democracy in the United States. Her attacks on slavery and the position of women in American society were nothing less than an admission of this failure. She appreciated that as long as slaves were exploited, Indians were systematically dispossessed,[136] and women were subordinated, American democracy would remain a hollow theory. She regretfully acknowledged that "The civilization and morals of Americans fall far below their principles." Nevertheless compared with the English and Europeans she recognized that Americans had made considerable advances: they had achieved self-government and admitted democracy in principle. Despite their subservience to public opinion, their racial and religious intolerance, and the tyrannies of the majority, they made no obeisance to an hereditary aristocracy and she

therefore did not doubt their ultimate moral progress. The mere fact that there were in America those who fought to secure the just exercise of those fundamental truths upon which the nation had been founded, was sufficient to sustain her in the conviction that "the national heart" was sound.

Society in America stressed democracy, abolitionism and feminism and these three questions continued to preoccupy Martineau especially in her final years as leader writer for the Daily News. Unlike her review articles in the Monthly Repository and the Illustrations of Political Economy both of which commented upon or explained the ideas of others, Society in America was the product of her own thoughts and experiences. Its philosophical pronouncements were sometimes inconsistent but its factual observations were generally accurate. And--what made it good journalism--it had a considerable contemporary impact. As a vehicle of reform propaganda it disquieted conservative forces on both sides of the Atlantic and succeeded in stirring consciences and publicizing the needs of the hour. And although Maria Chapman's assessment in the Memorials to the Autobiography was the evaluation of an abolitionist and a friend it is nevertheless worth recording that 1877 assessment:

> "Society in America" is not only by far the best book of travels in that country, in the judgment of the best qualified Americans and Englishmen, but it needs remain of permanent value as a picture of the United States towards the middle of the nineteenth century. Painted at a moment when the land dared neither to see nor to know itself. . . . Its fairness, its largeness and accuracy, the truth and beauty of its impartial reprehension of all that was bad and its sympathetic admiration of all that was good, are not only universally acknowledged among intellectual Americans at the present time, but they were so at the very period of publication, when moral opposition was at its hottest.[137]

FOOTNOTES

[1] Autobiography, II, Appendix B, "A Month at Sea," originally in the Penny Magazine, Oct. - Nov. 1837, recalls the voyage to the United States.

[2] Autobiography, II, 2-3.

[3] Autobiography, I, 270.

[4] Harriet Martineau to William Tait, Aug. 29, 1833, Univ. Coll.

[5] Alice Rossi refers to Harriet Martineau as "the first woman sociologist," in ed. Alice Rossi, The Feminist Papers (1973, New York: Bantam Books, Inc., 1974) p. 124.

[6] How to Observe Morals and Manners (1838, American edition, New York: Harper Brothers, 1838).

[7] Frances Trollope, Domestic Manners of the Americans 2 vols. (1832, New York: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1894).

[8] Ibid., I, 64.

[9] Henry Crabb Robinson Diary, Oct. 22, 1837, DW Lib. "Miss M: gave an amusing account of Mrs. Trollope who she says was admitted to no decent society in Cincinnati."

[10] Trollope, Domestic Manners, II, 9.

[11] Ibid., II, 304.

[12] Alexis De Tocqueville, Democracy in America 2 vols. (1835 and 1840), tr. Henry Reeve (1835 and 1840) rev. Francis Bowen, ed. Phillips Bradley (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1945), I, 3.

[13] How to Observe Morals and Manners, p. 62.

[14] Society in America 3 vols. (1837, second edition, London: Saunders and Otley, 1839), I, x.

[15] Her views on prison reform owed a great deal to Howard, Fry, Bentham, and the Hartleyan theory of causation.

[16] Retrospect of Western Travel 2 vol. edition (London: Saunders and Otley, 1838), I, 34.

[17] Ibid., I, 72.

[18] See Chapter I.

[19]Society in America, II, 178.

[20]Ibid., III, xvii-xviii.

[21]Ibid., I, viii.

[22]Ibid., I, 5-6.

[23]"An Autobiographic Memoir," DN, June 29, 1876.

[24]Harriet Martineau to James Martineau, Feb. 7, 1838, Transcript Letters, M. Coll.

[25]New York Review, 3 (July, 1838), 129-149.

[26]John Morley, Critical Miscellanies (1886-1908), 4 vols. (London: Macmillan, 1909) III, 193.

[27]Society in America, I, 209-213.

[28]Retrospect of Western Travel, II, 26.

[29]How to Observe Morals and Manners, 105.

[30]Society in America, I, viii, 2-8.

[31]Ibid., I, 40-41.

[32]Ibid., I, 26-29, 87-88; II, 27; III, 29-30, 36-37; Retrospect of Western Travel, II, 104.

[33]Frances Trollope, Domestic Manners, I, 64, 138-139; II, 159-160.

[34]Ibid., I, 61-62, 96, 171; II, 296.

[35]Society in America, II, 352-353; and see II, 252.

[36]Ibid., II, 360-361, 365; III, 37-38.

[37]Ibid., III, 39; and see II, 54 ff.

[38]Harriet Martineau to the Rev. William Ware, Apr. 6, 1837, Boston Public Library, MS Eng. 244 (1-16). Hereafter cited as Boston P. Lib.

[39]Society in America, III, 46-49.

[40]Ibid., III, 43-44.

[41]Ibid., III, 51-52.

[42]Ibid., III, 8.

[43]Ibid., II, 7-8.

[44]How to Observe Morals and Manners, p. 42.

[45]Society in America, I, 32-33.

[46]Tocqueville, Democracy in America, I, 263.

[47]Ibid., I, 257.

[48]Society in America, I, 32-33.

[49]Ibid., I, 114.

[50]Ibid., I, 117, 118.

[51]Ibid., I, 158.

[52]Ibid., I, 3.

[53]Her view that slavery was uneconomic (see especially, Illustrations of Political Economy, Demerara, pp. 30 ff.) has been recently challenged. See Robert W. Fogel and Stanley L. Engerman, Time on the Cross: the Economics of American and Negro Slavery 2 vols. (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1974); Kenneth Stamp, The Peculiar Institution (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1956). The Fogel-Engerman thesis has in turn been challenged.

[54]"West India Slavery," Miscellanies, II, 375-389 ["Negro slavery," MR, 4 (1830), 4-9]; "Liberia," MR, 5 (1831), 758-61. "Liberia," was not reprinted in Miscellanies in 1836 because it had endorsed the American Colonization Society of which she had now become critical.

[55]"West India Slavery," Miscellanies, II, 378.

[56]Retrospect of Western Travel, I, 33.

[57]Alice Felt Tyler, Freedom's Ferment (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1944), pp. 476 ff.

[58]Society in America, II, 103 ff., 109 ff.

[59]Ibid., I, 193-194.

[60]Tocqueville, Democracy in America, I, 357-358.

[61]Retrospect of Western Travel, I, 191 ff.; Society in America, II, 153 ff.

[62]Society in America, II, 153-154.

[63]Ibid., III, 277 ff.

[64]Harriet Martineau to Henry Crabb Robinson, Nov. 27, 1843, DW Lib.

[65]Society in America, III, 226 ff.

[66]The Martyr Age of the United States (Boston: Weeks, Jordan and Co.; Otis; Broaders and Co., 1839) from WR, 32 (Dec., 1838); Society in America, III, 231.

[67]"An Autobiographic Memoir," DN, June 29, 1876.

[68]Society in America, III, 295.

[69]Aileen S. Kraditor, Means and Ends in American Abolitionism (New York: Pantheon Books, 1967), quoted p. 254.

[70]Autobiography, III, 109 ff.

[71]Retrospect of Western Travel, I, 237-238.

[72]Society in America, II, 144 ff.

[73]Ibid., II, 152-153.

[74]Ibid., I, 302; II, 53; Retrospect of Western Travel, I, 235.

[75]Retrospect of Western Travel, I, 242-243 ff.

[76]Ibid., I, 142.

[77]Harriet Martineau to James Martineau, July 29, 1838, Transcript Letters M. Coll., Autobiography, II, 143-144; and see also for her attitude on the treatment of blacks, Autobiography, II, 14-15; Society in America, II, 328-330; III, 98-99; Retrospect of Western Travel, II, 38.

[78]See Philip D. Curtin, The Image of Africa: British Ideas and Actions, 1780-1850 (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1964).

[79]It was on this occasion that Maria Weston Chapman who became Martineau's close friend refused to retreat before the mob. "If this is the last bulwark of freedom, we may as well die here as anywhere," she said. Quoted in Louis Filler, The Crusade Against Slavery (New York: Harper and Row, 1960), pp. 76-77.

[80]Retrospect of Western Travel, II, 159 ff.

[81]"An Autobiographic Memoir," DN, June 29, 1876.

[82]Harriet Martineau to Brougham, Nov. 21, 1858 [copy], BU Lib. Let. Add. 18.

[83]Retrospect of Western Travel, II, 26 ff; Society in America, I, 106-107.

[84]Society in America, I, 108.

[85]The Martyr Age of the United States.

[86]Ibid., p. 4.

[87]Kraditor, Means and Ends in American Abolitionism, pp. 12-13, 20; Retrospect of Western Travel, I, 240-241.

[88]Autobiography, III, 223, Harriet Martineau to Abby (Kelly) Foster, June 20, 1838.

[89]Society in America, I, 108-109; II, 123, 137.

[90]Autobiography, III, 365-6.

[91]William Lloyd Garrison to Harriet Martineau, Dec., 1855, BU Lib., 349.

[92]Society in America, I, 199 ff.

[93]Ibid., I, 204.

[94]"Female Writers on Practical Divinity," (1822); and "On Female Education" (1823).

[95]Harriet Martineau to William Tait, Dec. 28, 1832, Univ. Coll.

[96]Harriet Martineau to Francis Place, May 12, 1832, B. Mus. Add. MS. 35149/147.

[97]Aileen S. Kraditor, Means and Ends in American Abolitionism, pp. 42 ff.; Alice Felt Tyler, Freedom's Ferment, pp. 444 ff.

[98]"The Martyr Age of the United States," p. 54.

[99]Miriam Schnier ed., Feminism: The Essential Historical Writings (New York: Random House, 1972), quoted p. 86.

[100]John L. Thomas, The Liberator: William Lloyd Garrison (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1963), p. 294.

[101]Autobiography, III, 233, Harriet Martineau to Mrs. Henry G. Chapman, July 1840.

[102]Society in America, III, 110-112.

[103] Aileen S. Kraditor, Up from the Pedestal (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1968), pp. 108 ff. In which a similar but later debate on the same subject is examined.

[104] Trollope, Domestic Manners, I, 102-104.

[105] Society in America, III, 268.

[106] Ibid., III, 106.

[107] It was not until the nineteenth century that women began to replace men as teachers in America.

[108] Harriet Martineau in Mind Amongst the Spindles: The Lowell Offering: A Miscellany Wholly Composed by the Factory Girls of an American City, ed. Charles Knight (London: Knight, 1844) pp. xvii, xix; "Female Industry," ER, 109 (April, 1859), 186-7; Barbara Leigh Smith Bodichon, An American Diary 1857-58, ed. Joseph W. Reed (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul 1972); Alice Felt Tyler, Freedom's Ferment, p. 212.

[109] The Rev. William Wood to Harriet Martineau, Feb. 19, 1856, BU Lib. 1031-1035.

[110] Society in America, I, 206.

[111] Alice Felt Tyler, Freedom's Ferment, quoted p. 430; and see also Margaret Fuller Ossoli, Memoirs, 2 vols. (Boston: Phillips, Sampson and Co., 1857) I, 151, in which she described her meeting with Martineau in Massachusetts.

[112] Society in America, I, 206-207.

[113] Tocqueville, Democracy in America, II, 211-2; and see II, 214.

[114] Retrospect of Western Travel, II, 39.

[115] Kathryn Kish Sklar, Catherine Beecher (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973).

[116] Society in America, II, 338.

[117] Ibid., III, 115.

[118] Ibid., III, 128.

[119] Ibid., III, 119 f.

[120] Autobiography, II, 163-165.

[121] Harriet Martineau to the Rev. William Ware, Apr. 6, 1837, Boston P. Lib. Eng. MS. 244 (1-16).

[122]Harriet Martineau to the Rev. William Ware, Sept. 15, 1837, Boston P. Lib. Eng. MS. 244 (1-16).

[123]Dr. Sprague (Albany, New York) to Henry Crabb Robinson, June 1838, DW Lib.; and see Autobiography, III, 165-184.

[124]Liberator 7 (July 28, 1837) 124, reprinted from the Daily Advocate; the Liberator did not generally do book reviews. See also Liberator 7 (June 30 and July 14, 1837).

[125]American Quarterly Review, 22 (Sept., 1837), 21-53.

[126]New York Review, 3 (July, 1838), 129-149.

[127]Autobiography, III, 183.

[128]Anon, A Review of Miss Martineau's Work on "Society in America" (Boston: Marsh, Capen and Lyon, 1837) p. 3.

[129]The American Monthly Magazine, ns. 4 (July, 1837), 80-94; (Aug., 1837), 190-193.

[130]Harriet Martineau to William Tait, July 16 [1837], Univ. Coll.

[131]London and Westminster Review, 27 (July, 1837), p. 94; 30 (Oct., 1837), 470-502.

[132]Edinburgh Review, 67 (April, 1838), 180-197 [unidentified: Wellesley Index].

[133]See Garnett, Fox, p. 189.

[134]Fraser's Magazine, 19 (May, 1839), 557-592, 560 [unidentified: Wellesley Index].

[135]The Times, May 30, 1837, p. 5.

[136]For the Indians whom she described as "the injured and exasperated red men of the wilderness," see Society in America, I, 127, 244, 353; II, 18, 25; Retrospect of Western Travel, I, 81.

[137]Autobiography, III, 163-169.

CHAPTER V

SUDDENLY INTO SUMMER

Harriet Martineau's independence was unusual in a woman of the nineteenth century. It owed something to the peculiarities of her personality, something to the circumstances of her childhood, something to her professional acceptance by the literary world, and a great deal to her own acceptance of her hearing disability.

Modern psychologists of the deaf agree that the hearing-afflicted are subject to severe psychological stresses, and are prone to grave emotional disturbance unless they are prepared to adjust to their condition.[1] It is common for those with a hearing deficiency to be more introverted, more isolated, more detached and at the same time more dependent than are individuals with normal sensory perception. The most severe cases of emotional disturbance are usually found among children who are congenitally deaf, or who become deaf before they are old enough to acquire the mechanics of language. Nevertheless, an acquired deafness is an acquired deprivation and it carries its own special psychological burdens. Progressive deafness is generally accompanied by progressive fear: fear of losing a vital link with one's environment, fear of failure, and fear of ridicule. To be deaf is to be vulnerable, hypersensitive, and suspicious--sometimes even to the point of paranoia.[2] These emotional pitfalls can be avoided only if there is a general acceptance of the handicap by the individual and by his or her family and friends.

It is common for the family of the progressively deafened to ignore the reality of the situation and to attribute the child's behavior to inattentiveness, stupidity or disobedience. This type of avoidance and blame increases the emotional burden which the child already bears by adding to it a sense of guilt and resentment. In the case of Harriet Martineau, as we have noted, there was just such an initial reaction by her family. And it was not until they accepted the inevitability of her affliction that she was able to completely adjust to it herself. In her Letter to the Deaf in 1834 she lectured against such avoidance--"When every body about us gets to treat it as a matter of fact, our daily difficulties are almost gone"--and stressed the need to minimize dependence.[3] She instinctively appreciated the importance of compensating for her handicap visually, intellectually and professionally; and she thereby naturally sought those avenues to a healthy adjustment which are recommended by modern therapists.[4] In a sense then, Harriet Martineau's achievements as a writer may not have been despite her deafness but, perhaps, because of it. At fifty-two, after almost forty years of deafness, she admitted:

> Yet here I am now, on the borders of the grave, at the end of a busy life, confident that this same deafness is about the best thing that ever happened to me; the best in a selfish view, as the grandest impulse to self-mastery; and the best in the higher view, as my most peculiar opportunity of helping others, who suffer the same misfortune without equal stimulus to surmount the false shame and other unspeakable miseries which attend it.[5]

There is not sufficient evidence to ascertain the origin or even the true extent of Harriet Martineau's deafness. Her hearing loss could have been caused by any number of childhood illnesses. It could have been the result of a trauma. And it could have been psychogenic. The first two of these are fairly common causes of acquired deafness. The third, which

is of an hysterical nature in which an evident dysfunction occurs without there being any physiological abnormality, is extremely rare, and although the possibility of this having occurred should not be ruled out--especially considering Martineau's other sensory losses--it would be fruitless to speculate on the subject without more evidence than is available.[6]

Because Martineau's hearing loss was acute in one ear but only partial in the other, it would be more accurate to describe her as hard of hearing than as deaf. We know that she was able to communicate on a complex intellectual level even before she acquired an ear-trumpet at age twenty-eight, and that once able to amplify sound, she was able to adjust almost normally to social intercourse. She was not able to hear peripheral sounds and was most comfortable in intimate discourse, but her deafness did not apparently impose a serious social barrier and few if any of her friends ever complained of communication problems in their correspondence about her. Her own observations on her deafness indicated a fluctuation in her aural responses. Thomas Malthus, for example, whom other people had difficulty in understanding because of his cleft palate, she could hear without recourse to amplification.[7] But William Wordsworth she could only hear when he addressed her directly: especially if he was not wearing his teeth![8] In the senate in Washington she could distinguish the quality of Daniel Webster's "beautiful" voice, but in the larger chamber of the House she could not hear at all.[9] We know that she went to the theatre and to the opera.[10] And that she could hear the "intolerably delicious" sounds of musical boxes when she placed them directly on her head.[11] In 1827 her hearing temporarily improved after

trying Galvanism, which was a form of electrical shock treatment.[12] In 1844 after mesmeric treatment she spoke of being "less deaf than for twenty years past."[13] In the dry atmosphere of Egypt in 1846 she was briefly able to hear without the use of her trumpet.[14] And after an illness during which she had suffered from ear-ache and aural discharge, she told Joseph Toynbee, the noted physician and the father of Arnold Toynbee, that she had recovered her "modicum of hearing, - and somewhat more. I heard my clothes again today, and the towel upon my skin."[15]

Life for the hard of hearing is more difficult and stressful than it is for the normal individual.[16] Apart from the psychological problems associated with the deficiency, there is the dual strain of trying to hear and of constantly modulating one's own unheard voice so as not to be misunderstood. As Martineau acknowledged:

> Life is a long, hard, unrelieved working-day to us, who hear, or see, only by express effort, or have to make other senses serve the turn of that which is lost. When three out of five are deficient, the difficulty of cheerful living is great, and the terms of life are truly hard.[17]

Harriet Martineau refused to allow her deficiency to become a burden on others. She consciously compensated for her hearing loss by seeking out "impressions and influences," and she substituted acute visual perception for her other sensory limitations. In the intensity of her intellectual labors and in her dedication to her duty, as she perceive it, she sought avenues of escape from what would have been isolation and withdrawal had she made a less concerted effort to 'breast her destiny.'

With the success of the first volumes of Illustrations of Political Economy in 1832 Harriet Martineau went to London and took loagings in

Conduit Street.[18] In London she immersed herself in a giddy round of strenuous labor and exhausting social activity. At seven-thirty each morning she would be at her desk, her pen in hand, her windows "open to the freshly watered streets, and shaded with summer blinds, and the flower-girls stationing themselves below - their gay baskets of roses still wet with dew."[19] She worked from seven-thirty until two and then there were callers to entertain and calls to be made. In the evening she was generally invited out to dinner, and between mid-might and two in the morning she devoted her attention to the voluminous post which she received each day. In spite of her growing celebrity, however, her head was not noticably turned by the attentions she received. As Sydney Smith of the Edinburgh Review said of her, "She has gone through such a season as no girl before ever knew, and has kept her own mind, her own manners, and her own voice. She is safe."[20]

In August of 1833 Harriet was joined by her mother and Aunt Lee. Together they rented a small house on Fludyer Street which, if disconcertingly close to the dusty windows and curious clerks of the neighboring Foreign Office, had the advantage of being adjacent both to Downing Street and St. James's Park. But although the location of the house was eminently suitable, the domestic circumstances proved as difficult as Martineau had suspected they would. She knew that her literary commitments and social obligations would prevent her from undertaking the "undivided companionship" which her mother required. She had earlier suggested that her mother be accompanied to London by her aunt or Rachel, but Mrs. Martineau was unwilling to expose Rachel to the glare and competition of Harriet's "distinguished reputation."[22] So it was Aunt

Lee, Harriet's Father's sister, who was selected to complete the family circle.

Mrs. Martineau was difficult to please, and she especially resented playing a role inferior to that of her daughter:

> . . . my mother who loved power and had always been in the habit of excercising it, was hurt at the confidence reposed in me, and distinctions shown, and visits paid to me; and I with every desire to be passive and being in fact wholly passive in the matter, was kept in a state of constant agitation at the flux of distinctions which I never sought. . . .[23]

Harriet's mother became dissatisfied with the little house on Fludyer Street. She constantly worried her daughter to move to more fashionable quarters, but Harriet was without pretension and unwilling to "mortgage her brains" for the sake of social vanity. She endured her mother's displeasure while at the same time performing her normal domestic duties, participating in the life of London society, and completing her monthly volumes for Charles Fox. The strain told on her health. By the end of the series she was writing her volumes propped up in bed and dosed with sal volatile. It is little wonder that she found independent travel in America a welcome change after the domestic, professional and social demands of London.[24] Nevertheless it was _to_ these demands that she returned from America in 1836, and it was under these conditions that she completed _Society in America_, _Retrospect of Western Travel_, and _How to Observe Morals and Manners_.

However much Harriet Martineau enjoyed the intimate intercourse of friendship, she abhorred the 'lionizing' to which she as a celebrity was subjected.[25] Her deafness made large social gatherings a strain. And

writing to the Rev. William Ware after her return from the United States she conceded that:

> On coming back, I find so much more difficulty in society from this cause [her deafness] than before, that I rather think I shall go out less than I did, - for my sake and others, - tho' I mean to do brave battle with all anti-social inclinations. But when recreation becomes irksome and laborious, I think it is perfectly fair to reduce its proportion to solitary employment and enjoyment.[26]

But life in London between 1836 and 1839 was far from solitary for Harriet Martineau: everyone came to call at 17 Fludyer Street. There were the radical politicians, Charles Buller, John Roebuck and "that glorious man," Lord Durham.[27] There was Robert Owen, still under his grand "delusion."[28] There were the men of science Charles Babbage, Charles Lyell, and Erasmus Darwin who introduced Harriet Martineau to his brother Charles. There was the actor Macready who thought Miss Martineau a "fine-minded woman," except on the subject of women's rights which he did not at all understand.[29] And there were many of the chief literary figures of the day: Robert Browning who came to talk about his poetry,[30] Thomas Carlyle with a "terrible deal of the spirit of contempt,"[31] Empson and Smith of the Edinburgh Review, Leigh Hunt and Richard Henry Horne of the Monthly Repository, and Henry Crabb Robinson, a former contributor to the Repository, a Unitarian, a barrister, a founder of University College London, and the correspondent and friend of almost everyone of any importance in nineteenth-century England.[32]

Henry Crabb Robinson first made Harriet Martineau's acquaintance in October of 1837. He found her to be "agreeable in person and manners . . . not old maidish and not offensively blue in the colour of her conversation."[33] Two years earlier her friend Maria Weston Chapman had

described her face as being serene, with "self-sufficing dignity" and with "much light and sweetness in its play of feature."[34] Although one has to make allowances for the prejudices of friendship, the portrait of the period by Richard Evans, now in the National Portrait Gallery in London, bears out this impression. It delineates a slim, tall, not unattractive young woman with dark shiny hair, a mouth a shade too generous, and a slightly prognathus, determined chin which seems to belie the extraordinary benevolence of the fine blue eyes.

The contradiction which is revealed in Martineau's features was not placed there at the whim of the artist. The obstinacy which underlay the gentleness and calm, and which emerged not only in the determination with which she tackled her professional and moral obligations, but also in the dogged and sometimes arrogant resolution with which she pursued her convictions, was still as much a part of her personality as it had been in childhood. Harriet Martineau could be kind, playful, and generously affectionate, as her letters attest, but she could also be blunt and probably ungracious when crossed or affronted. Her normal good humor seldom survived any particular imposition or gaucherie. She often gave offense herself by indulging in gossip: "Amongst her good qualities," said George Eliot of her, "we certainly cannot reckon zeal for other people's reputation. She is sure to caricature any information for the amusement of the next person to whom she turns her ear-trumpet."[35] When she believed herself to be betrayed, her resentment could be implaccable. But her wrath was fairly infrequent, and though not all her friendships survived the vicissitudes of her religious and philosophical fluctuations, most of her friends remained loyal for life: the image of her

irascibility in Webb's Harriet Martineau: A Radical Victorian is very misleading:

> If one will make an omelette [writes Webb], they say, one must break eggs. Miss Martineau broke frinedships. Her servants and lesser people, her nieces and nephews remained fervently loyal, but of her own class and generation she seems to have quarrelled or drifted away from almost everyone.[36]

Friendship, especially in the relatively narrow circles of literary society in nineteenth-century London, was often a fragile thing. One has only to look at the letters of Jane and Thomas Carlyle to realize how ephemeral friendship could be. Carlyle, of course, may not be a good example, for he was not renowned for the docility of his temper. In 1837 Henry Crabb Robinson told Harriet Martineau that "he did not care if he never saw Carlyle again."[37] And in 1849, Henry Reeve, then on the staff of the Times but soon to be editor of the Edinburgh Review, found Carlyle to be "so offensive I never made it up to him."[38] Harriet Martineau actually became a very good friend of Carlyle's after her return from the United States. It was she who chiefly promoted the publication of a one-volume edition of Sartor Resartus which had formerly been published only in separate numbers of Fraser's Magazine. And it was she, acting in concert with other of his admirers, who sought to ease his financial distress by organizing a series of lectures for him in 1837.[39] At this time Jane Welsh Carlyle described Harriet Martineau in the warmest terms. She was Mrs. Carlyle said, "distinctly good-looking, warm-hearted even to a pitch of romance, witty as well as wise, very entertaining and entertainable in spite of the deadening and killing appendage of an ear-trumpet, and, finally, . . . very fond of me."[40] Harriet Martineau was then one of Carlyle's "host of lady admirers" and Mrs.

Carlyle described her as presenting her husband with her ear-trumpet--which seems to have repelled Jane Welsh Carlyle more than it did most--"with a pretty blushing air of coquetry, which would almost convince me out of belief in her identity."[41] But the admiration on both sides soon paled. When Martineau took ill in 1839 Carlyle's comment was one of relief that "her meagre didacticalities afflict me no more."[42] And by 1849 Jane Welsh Carlyle was calling Harriet Martineau "foolish" and writing about a "feud" which is nowhere properly explained and which never seems to have been satisfactorily resolved.[43]

John Stuart Mill described Carlyle as turning on all his friends, but Mill's own experience was little different.[44] Mill turned from Carlyle as well as from almost all his early friends of the days of Philosophical Radicalism: the Austins, the Grotes, John Roebuck and Harriet Martineau. He even cut himself off from members of his own family: his sister Caroline, her husband Arthur Ley, and his mother, whose depiction in the Autobiography may own more to this estrangement than has hitherto been suspected.[45] Mill's association with Harriet Taylor was the underlying cause of all these alienations but the couple's isolation was less the result of their ostracization by a disapproving society than of their own willing retreat from that disapproval. Nevertheless, apart from the obvious delicacy of Mill's social situation there were causes other than Mrs. Taylor for his attitude towards his former friends, the Philosophical Radicals. Packe believes that the underlying cause of Mill's disassociation from the old school was basically philosophical.[46] But although this may have been a contributory factor, it was surely more than coincidence that Mill's erstwhile intellectual

confrères should have been the very same friends who knew of and gossiped unforgivably about his friendship with Mrs. Taylor. Among these was Harriet Martineau who had been present at the couple's first meeting, and who tirelessly regaled her friends about the occasion to the undying annoyance of both Mill and Harriet Taylor.

Mill was the proprietor of the London and Westminster Review between 1837 and 1840. He aimed to liberalize the journal and free it somewhat from its Benthamite moorings. According to both Hayek in John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor, and Packe, in The Life of John Stuart Mill, Harriet Taylor, who was sometimes motivated by personal rather than literary reasons, had a pronounced influence on Mill's editorial decisions. Packe attributes to Mrs. Taylor the rejection of an article on the young Queen which Martineau contributed to the London and Westminster Review in 1837. Mill turned down the article over the objections of John Robinson, the editor of the Review, and probably the person responsible for Martineau's contribution in the first place. She had told a friend that the proprietors of the London and Westminster had been "seized with a sudden desire that I should do all I can for them since the appearance of my book [Society in America] has shown that I am still a radical." When the article was refused she was angered, and doubtless attributed the rejection to personal reasons. It is true that she told her brother, James, that she would make no further contributions to the journal "under its present management," but Packe exaggerates the effect on Martineau of this 1837 rejection. Although her personal feelings towards Mill were never thereafter very cordial, she made substantial contributions to the

London and Westminster Review during Mill's tenure as proprietor, and continued to do so until 1858.[47]

Some of Martineau's friendships were put under considerable strain first by her professions in behalf of mesmerism in 1844, and then by her religious renunciation of the 1850s. Her friends were of all ages and of both sexes. Of her female friends, those closest to her were Maria Weston Chapman, Lady Byron, the widow of the poet, Elizabeth Jesser Reid, the benefactoress of Bedford College for Women, Mrs. Elizabeth Ker, wife of the Member for Norwich, and Julia Smith, the aunt of Barbara Leigh Smith Bodichon.[48] Except perhaps for Julia Smith who was known more for her personal charm than for her strength of mind, they were all women of extraordinary ability, concerned about the causes of women, and of humankind in general.[49] It is not surprising that Harriet Martineau should have been drawn to them, nor they to her. In a society which considered women inferior to men, female friends were especially important. Evidence that Harriet Martineau had such friends does nothing to support R. K. Webb's unsubstantiated allegation of her "latent homosexuality."[50] As there is no evidence that Martineau herself was aware of lesbian inclinations or that any of her friends ever noticed such tendencies, the matter seems to be irrelevant. However, as the issue has been raised it ought to be examined.

Webb's evidence includes the fact that Harriet Martineau had female friends, and he especially emphasizes her unalloyed admiration for Maria Weston Chapman. But the deep affectionate friendships of women in the nineteenth century were usually innocent of sexual implication, and there is no evidence in the correspondence between Martineau and Chapman to

indicate the contrary.[51] Martineau's enthusiastic descriptions of Maria Weston Chapman were doubtless little more than the effusions of a plain woman for a lovely one; of a new recruit to the Abolitionist Movement for one of its leaders. In fact, her perhaps exaggerated opinion of Chapman's gifts found ready echo. Chapman's anti-slavery colleague, William Lloyd Garrison, who knew her as well as anyone, described her as having "genius, intuition, far-sightedness, moral heroism, and uncompromisisng philanthropy as well as . . . rare literary taste and culture."[52]

Besides her female friendships, Webb's further evidence of Martineau's "latent homosexuality" includes her supposed susceptibility to female mesmerizers--which takes no account of her susceptibility to male mesmerizers. He also cites her disapproval of the Fox-Flower, Mill-Taylor, and Eliot-Lewes liaisons, and in so doing misinterprets what was probably little more than Victorian prudery and intolerance: these couples were deserted by their closest friends: Harriet Taylor herself abandoned Eliza Flower: Mill was abandoned even by Harriet Grote; and, along with most of her other acquaintances, George Eliot's closest friends, the liberal minded Charles Brays, temporarily forsook her too.[53] In looking only at Martineau's disapproval of illicit alliances Webb ignores her hearty endorsement of happy, legitimate unions. And in looking only at the lack of romance in her own life he ignores the fact that she felt herself possessed of "a power of attachment . . . that has never been touched."[54] Webb cites as evidence of Martineau's apparent lack of interest in men, her rational acceptance of the loss of Worthington, and her instant recoil from the advances of an American host, the Rev. Ezra

Stiles Gannett. But Worthington was insane and it was easier and more sensible to rationalize his loss than to mourn it. And Gannett besides being Martineau's host and a clergyman was also a married man. Martineau's actions in the first instance were prompted by self-defense, and in the second they reflected little more than her sense of propriety and her sexaul immaturity and timidity.[55] Indeed it might, perhaps, be more accurate to describe Harriet Martineau as latently sexual than as latently homosexual.

R. K. Webb describes the period between Martineau's return to England from the United States and her tour of the continent in 1839 as one "without an outstanding accomplishment."[56] But in the brief space of three years she completed her two American books and How to Observe Morals and Manners; she wrote three volumes for The Guide to Service commissioned by the Poor Law authorities for the purpose of training girls for domestic service;[57] she wrote articles for the Westminster Review and the Penny Magazine; she was offered but did not accept the editorship of a proposed sociological journal which Saunders and Otley intended publishing;[58] and she thought about writing a novel. The first subject for her contemplated novel was the Haitian revolution and its hero Toussaint L'Ouverture, but the concept which became The Hour and the Man lay dormant until 1841. She was reading a great deal of Jane Austen and it was to be in the Austen genre that she would write her three-volume novel Deerbrook.[59]

Deerbrook was begun on June 12, 1838 and completed on February 1 of the following year. It was not conceived at a happy time for Martineau:

> . . . I am not near so happy as I was [she confided in her Diary]. I want inner life. I must take to heart the "Ode to Duty," and such things, and do without the sympathy I fancy I want. If I am not happy what matters it? But I am happy, only less so than I have been.[60]

This unusual ambivalence was the product of generally poor health and possibly the strain of over-work. The hectic pace of the "hackney-coach and company life," was wearying her--it was at this time that she wrote a denunciation of "Literary Lionism" in the Westminster Review.[61] And at home too she was subject to mounting domestic worry and irritation.[62] She had for some years been concerned about her brother Henry. It was he who had taken over the family business and had managed its affairs during its last distressful years. At the time he had earned the gratitude and respect of his family, but since then his behavior had caused them much concern. His personal habits had deteriorated; he kept late hours; he gambled; and he drank. He still had charge of the Norwich wine-importing business which had survived the collapse of the other Martineau interests in 1829, but in 1838 this too was dissolved. Through Harriet's connections a position as clerk was found for Henry at Somerset House, and he joined the three women in London.[63] Henry's arrival at Fludyer Street compounded Harriet's domestic difficulties. Her aunt was old and frail and had to be protected from worry. And her mother was clearly a trial. Harriet and Mrs. Martineau were alike in their obstinacy and friction inevitably resulted from their conflict of wills and differences of opinion. A single entry in Harriet's Diary for January 14, 1838 told the story all too plainly:

> Kept up too much talk about the Pictorial Bible and Prayerbook with my mother. I should have let her prejudice pass with a simple protest. . . . How difficult, in such a case, to reconcile truth, respect, and peace![64]

Mrs. Martineau's continued inability to reconcile herself to her daughter's social precedence still made enormous demands on the resources of Harriet's tact. And now, as Mrs. Martineau got older and became increasingly blind, Harriet's anxiety about her mother's well-being added to the already over-charged atmosphere in the small house:

> My mother was old, and fast becoming blind; and the irritability caused in the first place by my position in society, and next by the wearying trial of her own increasing infirmity, told fearfully upon my already reduced health. My mother's dignified patience in the direct endurance of her blindness was a really beautiful spectacle: but the natural irritability found vent in other directions; and especially was it visited upon me. Heaven knows I never sought fame: and I would thankfully have given it all away in exchange for domestic peace and ease: but there it was: and I had to bear the consequences.[65]

Martineau had begun "to sink under domestic anxieties, and the toil which was my only practicable refuge from them."[66] But although she was undeniably under considerable physical and emotional stress when she wrote Deerbrook, the novel should not be seen as the product of this stress or its mirror. It is true that Martineau turned to the writing of fiction in 1838 as a release: "a relief to many pent-up sufferings, feelings and convictions."[67] But the novel was in no sense confessional, and unlike Household Education and the Autobiography, was neither intentionally nor unintentionally autobiographical. Robert Lee Wolff's claim in Strange Stories and other Explorations in Victorian Fiction (1971) that Martineau turned to fiction "perhaps in an effort to relieve some of her aggressive feelings by saying in a novel what she could otherwise never say at all,"[68] is an unfounded hypothesis. Martineau's first choice of a subject for her novel, the life of Toussaint L'Louverture, would in no way have provided the opportunity for a catharsis. The plot

she eventually decided upon was taken from fiction, it bore no relationship to her own life, and the characters, if we are to believe Martineau herself, were not real.[69] "More or less suggestion from real characters there certainly is; but there is not one, except the hero, (who is not English,) that any person is justified in pointing out as 'from life.'"[70] Wolff's claim that the three chief female characters in Deerbrook may "safely" be regarded as "different aspects of Martineau herself," and that the unpleasant Mrs. Rowland, whom she in no way resembled, represented Martineau's own mother is little more than what Martineau herself would have called literary "fancy-work." In over-simplifying Martineau's psychological complexities, in placing them under the convenient umbrella of the term "neurosis," and in claiming that from 1835 Martineau was "neurotically ill," Wolff has leapt to dramatic conclusions which one should consider only with the gravest reservations.

Indeed, it might be true to say that Deerbrook reveals very little about its author besides her philosophical biases and preoccupations. She set out to write a novel as pragmatically as she had set out to write the Illustrations of Political Economy: she researched for a plot, and she studied Jane Austen. Deerbrook was a conscious imitation of the Austen model, and contemporary reviewers were not behind hand in noting the resemblance:

> It is a village tale [wrote the Athenaeum], as simple in its structure, and unambitious in its delineations, as one of Miss Austen's: but including characters of a higher order of mental force and spiritual attainment, than Miss Austen ever drew - save, perhaps, in "Persuasion."[71]

In The Westminster and the Edinburgh Martineau was favorably compared with Austen and Blackwood's though admitting no-one had yet equalled Jane

Austen concluded that "Miss Martineau in her late novel Deerbrook, has nearly approached her, and has added to her graphic and happy sketches of society, an analysis of the affections worthy of Madame De Stael."[72]

Instead of setting her work in the urban-commercial environment of her own experience, Martineau selected a rural Austen-like setting. The two matrons of the village, Deerbrook, were rather like good- and bad-natured versions of Mrs. Bennet: slightly vulgar, socially pretentious, decidedly trivial, and indubitably interfering. Their respective husbands, like Mr. Bennet, were sensible, bluff, and good tempered. The main protagonists, like their Austen precursors, were undeniably superior young people, discreet in their sentiments and elevated in their morale. Where Martineau broke with Austen and with literary tradition--to the displeasure of many of her readers and critics--was in drawing her characters out of her own middle-class background.[73] Martineau's heroes were not taken from the ranks of the landed gentry: Edward Hope was a country surgeon who earned his living without access to either patronage or private fortune, and Philip Enderby though a man of means entered the bar and achieved dignity through personal endeavor.[74] Hester and Margaret Ibbotson--reminiscent of Martineau's sisters in Five Years of Youth--were Dissenters from middle-class Birmingham. And Maria Young, crippled in body but not in spirit, was governess to the children of Deerbrook's leading citizens.

Before she started work on Deerbrook, Martineau had commented that in Austen "the story proceeds by means of the dialogue."[75] And it was by means of the dialogue--vastly improved since the Illustrations of Political Economy but without Austen's superior style--that Martineau's

three-volume work wended its sometimes laborious way. It was the story of a man who was obliged to marry the sister of the woman he loved. But although the circumstances which Martineau thus contrived were redolent with possibility, she failed to exploit the drama of the situation. In Hope she created too moral a hero; his feelings for Margaret, the sister he did not marry, were discreetly smothered by his rectitude and he was not permitted to let passion overcome his sense of honor. Martineau, innocent of passion herself, still thought, as she had in the case of Eliza Flower and William Fox, that love was "guidable by duty."[76] But these sentiments were not peculiar to Martineau, or even to maiden-ladies, they were clearly in tune with Victorian times: the Westminster Review considered Hope's devotion to duty an "admirable quality," Blackwood's liked the uniformity with which the reader was led to "observe and admire the simple performance of duty," and the Edinburgh Review was similarly approving.[77] What may strike modern readers as anti-climactic and sentimental evidently appealed to the more proper tastes of their Victorian predecessors.

Although Martineau could not of course avoid preaching her favorite gospels even in a novel, Deerbrook was not intentionally didactic. It was a romance: love was the chief preoccupation of its characters; and marriage the chief event of its plot. Hester and Margaret Ibbotson, Edward Hope, and Philip Enderby were the subjects of the romance. Mrs. Grey was the meddling matchmaker and the instrument by whom Hope was compromised into marrying Hester instead of Margaret. Philip Enderby's sister, the malevolent and ambitious Mrs. Rowland, like Bingley's sisters in Pride and Prejudice, sought to frustrate the expectations of Margaret

Ibbotson because she did not consider Margaret's family connections to be suitable. And finally there was the governess, Maria Young, standing apart from the action of the plot, and suffering from an anguished and humiliating unrequited passion for Philip Enderby because "there are no bounds to the horror and disgust, and astonishment expressed when a woman owns her love to its object unasked."[78]

Martineau had decided, even before she planned Deerbrook, to write about a fictional governess in order to show how bad at best the system was. Maria Young, however, represented more than this potential end, she symbolized the wider frustrations of nineteenth-century womanhood:

> . . . for an educated woman [Maria said], a woman with the powers which God gave her religiously improved, with a reason which lays life open before her, an understanding which surveys science as its appropriate task, and a conscience which would make every species of responsibility safe, - for such a woman there is in all England no chance of subsistence but by teaching, which can never countervail the education of circumstances, and for which not one in a thousand is fit.[80]

Maria Young, of all the Deerbrook characters, was most representative of the novel's author. It was through Maria that Martineau voiced her own sentiments and opinions. But despite a superficial resemblance--both the character and the author were single independent women the one crippled in body the other deaf--Maria Young was not intended as a self-portrait. Though solitary, without love, and having a "peremptory vocation, which is to stand me instead of sympathy, ties, and spontaneous action," Maria Young lacked a calling.[81] She bore her independence with reluctance and not with the happy resignation which eventually made Martineau "the happiest single woman in England." Maria symbolized the plight of the woman without means; she was the conduit for those opinions on the subject

which Martineau felt bound to express; but she did not reflect the psyche of her creator. Like the other characters in the novel, Maria's chief preoccupation was love, albeit frustrated love. And Martineau, in her own words had "been free from all idea of love-affairs," after the Worthington episode:[82] it was in great part this freedom from any romantic passion which made her depiction of the emotion so stylized and unrealistic in Deerbrook. Although in 1838 she was "less happy than I have been," her need of sympathy was related to her domestic circumstances and there is no evidence whatsoever of any sublimated affair of the heart. Her inner loneliness may have found a slight echo in the soltary figure of Maria Young, but the resemblance ended there.

Because Martineau confessed her jealousy towards Rachel in the Autobiography, Robert Lee Wolff has chosen to interpret Martineau's depiction of jealousy in Hester, the older sister, as further evidence that Deerbrook was a neurotic self-portrait. But Martineau's treatment of Hester was unsympathetic rather than empathetic, and Hester's jealousy was unrealistically drawn. There was little internalization of the passion: Hester talked rationally about her jealousy but did not subjectively experience it. It was as if Martineau consciously avoided introspection and deliberately refused to relate Hester's jealousy with her own. This avoidance was indicative of Martineau's general intention to abjure any identification with her characters. She did not choose to examine her personal emotions through the medium of the novel, nor could she be said to have written a novel in order to "relieve some of her aggressive feelings," as Wolff contends. It might be more accurate to interpret her disinterested and at times even antipathetic treatment of

Hester's jealousy as symptomatic less of neurosis than of healthy adjustment. After all, she was no longer the over-shadowed younger sister; she no longer needed to envy Rachel; and she could stand back and examine the emotion with detachment.

Martineau probably identified more closely with the gentle Margaret than she did with the jealous Hester, but even here the identification was superficial. Martineau could realistically depict Margaret's life with Hester and the physician Hope after their marriage because she herself had been an unattached younger sister in the homes of her physician brother Thomas, and of her older sister Elizabeth and her husband Dr. Thomas Greenhow. Margaret's childhood thoughts of suicide were also taken directly from Martineau's own experience. But Margaret's submissiveness--Robert Lee Wolff's argument to the contrary--was not a Martineau trait. Submissiveness may have been expected of Martineau but even in childhood her submission was never meek. She never paid lip-service to docility as a convention of female behavior and it would have been uncharacteristic for her to have wished to emulate the'virtue.' We cannot conclude that Martineau willfully or even wistfully attempted a self-portrait in Margaret. Nor did she provide any meaningful clue to her feelings and emotions in any of her other female characters.

All writers draw on their personal experiences and, to some extent there are aspects of all writers in their characters, but the literary critic and the historian are hard put to find any significant autobiography in Martineau's works of fiction. Deerbrook unfortunately adds very little to our knowledge of its author. In truth, it is a rather dull novel. The characters are not flesh and blood creatures but idealized

creations. Although Martineau claimed--in Deerbrook itself--that a novel should be "of the mind . . . not of the mere events of life,"[83] Deerbrook was little more than a tale. Martineau substituted monologue for introspection and failed utterly to penetrate the subconscious of her characters. Unlike Brontë or Eliot who succeeded her, she was concerned less with character development than with character delineation. Instead of becoming more complex and interesting with the evolution of the plot, her characters stood fully revealed from the first. They were superficial, two-dimensional and almost allegorical. Their chief preoccupation was love but Martineau's portrayal of that love was as idealized as her portrayal of the characters themselves. It is little wonder that, some time later, Charlotte Brontë's Villette should have stunned Martineau "with an amount of subjective misery which we may fairly remonstrate against."[84] Martineau's lovers did not love with a passion. They paled and pined and were painfully smitten in a manner which appealed to the Victorians who read Deerbrook, but which strikes the modern reader as over-drawn and sentimental. But to Martineau's contemporaries who at best had only read Scott and Austen--Oliver Twist and Nicholas Nickleby were only then appearing in monthly numbers, the Brontës and Thackeray did not publish until the following decade, and Eliot's first works of fiction did not appear until the late 1850s--Martineau's characters and situations seemed real enough. And it would be a mistake for us to judge Martineau's Deerbrook by the superb new generation of fictional works which it preceded. It was not a work of genius. Its chief importance was in breaking with the silver-fork tradition and in giving the middle-class hero a place in English literature. But otherwise it was in the narrative genre

of the eighteenth century. It was pleasant, contemporaneously popular, and even influential: foreshadowing, in Vineta Colby's words "the best work of the great novelists who followed."[85] But its success was fleeting. And perhaps John Morley, writing in 1886, described it best when he said of it: ". . . this is one of the books that give a rational person pleasure once, but which we hardly look forward to reading again."[86]

The reviews were, in fact, almost uniformly complimentary. The Athenaeum had some reservations about the 'idealized' characters, but nevertheless regarded Deerbrook as a book which "opens, elevates and humanizes the mind."[87] And the other journals joined the generally admiring chorus. Martineau's friends and acquaintances in the literary world--Carlyle excepted--were enthusiastic: John Sterling, Charles Knight, Crabb Robinson, Richard Henry Horne, Monckton Milnes and Lord Jeffery of the Edinburgh Review all admired Deerbrook.[88] And later, when she achieved fame of her own, Charlotte Brontë writing as Currer Bell said that:

> In his mind "Deerbrook" ranks with the writings that have really done him good, added to his stock of ideas, and rectified his views of life.[89]

After completing Deerbrook Martineau sought escape from the accumulated strain of her London life. She and some female companions crossed to Rotterdam with the intention of sailing down the Rhine to Switzerland and then going on to Italy. They got as far as the piazzas and canals of Venice, but there Martineau became so ill that her brother James and her future brother-in-law Alfred Higginson, who became Ellen's husband in 1841, were sent for to escort her home.[90] Apart from a general failure

of vitality she was having frequent menses and irregular discharges, there was a membranous protrusion from the vagina, she was suffering from sharp pains in the uterine area and there was a severe tenderness which centered in the left groin, extended to her back and legs, and made walking difficult. On her arrival in England she placed herself immediately under the care of her sister Elizabeth's husband, Thomas Greenhow, who practiced medicine in Newcastle. Harriet Martineau was not apparently inhibited by any 'becoming' Victorian modesty. She had already written to Greenhow from Italy describing her symptoms in some detail, and on reaching Newcastle she submitted to intensive and frequent examinations. Her brother-in-law found her uterus to be enlarged and retroverted. He removed a small polyp from the cervix, but suspected that the main problem was caused by a second and larger tumor. He prescribed carefully administered doses of opiates for her general discomforts and leeches for the pain in the groin.[91]

Martineau was convinced of the malignancy of the tumor and thought herself to be dying.[92] But because she attributed her illness to "the extreme tension of nerves under which I had been living for some years while the three anxious members of my family were, I may say, on my hands,"[93] Martineau must to some extent be held responsible for the theory that her illness was psychologically induced. She probably shared the conventional Victorian belief that nervous and intellectual strain harmed the reproductive organs. But even if she herself attributed the cause of her illness to psychogenic causes the symptoms of the disease were real enough, and any reasons she may have had to malinger--if such had indeed been her intention--disappeared in the first year of her

confinement: her mother moved to Liverpool where Ellen and James and their families lived; her aunt died; and Henry emigrated.[94]

R. K. Webb has already referred to Cecil Woodham Smith's contention that Martineau's illness was motivated by a need to escape from family responsibilities.[95] But although Webb has pointed out the very real medical nature of Martineau's symptoms, he has not effectively refuted Woodham Smith. Woodham Smith woefully misrepresented the facts: she confused the symptoms of Martineau's final illness with those of her earlier one: she was obviously unfamiliar with the detailed existing medical reports; she ascribed the Daily News leaders to the period after Tynemouth when Martineau was well, instead of to the period of her final illness; she exaggerated the extent of Martineau's isolation during her illness; she mistakenly suggested that Martineau was financially responsible for the other members of the family; and in referring to other notable Victorian invalids, Woodham Smith altogether underplayed, as she did in Martineau's case, the very real illnesses which plagued them. It is true that Victorians were preoccupied with their health; but it is less than accurate to ascribe their physical symptoms entirely to psychological causes. Genuine ill-health was common. At a time when medical knowledge was primitive at best, when sanitation was bad, and when diets were poor, consumption, influenza, rheumatism and digestive ailments were chronic, and the cures were often worse than the disorders. One has only to read the letters of Jane Welsh Carlyle, or Thomas Robinson's letters to his brother Henry Crabb Robinson, or Martineau's own correspondence particularly with Elizabeth Barrett, Florence Nightingale, and John Chapman to realize that the morbid interest in

unpleasant symptoms and the often histrionic sense of martyrdom which accompanied invalidism, were associated with extreme and genuine physical discomfort. This is not meant to imply that there were no psychosomatic disorders, but merely that Victorian ill-health has too often and too lightly been attributed to hypochondria or hysteria.

Hysteria was thought to be a female disorder which originated in the uterus. It counterfeited many diseases including loss of smell, taste and hearing. But although hysteria cannot be ruled out in the case of Martineau's sensory deprivations, it was clearly not the cause of the illness which laid her low in 1839. Both Greenhow's Medical Report of 1845 and the discussions of Martineau's case in the British Medical Journal in 1876 and 1877 provide definitive evidence of the clinical nature of her problem.[96] Martineau, in any case, did not fit the profile of the hysterical woman. According to nineteenth-century medical literature, the hysterical woman was:

> . . . a 'child-woman,' highly impressionable, labile, superficially sexual, exhibitionistic, given to dramatic body language and grand gestures, with strong dependency needs and ego weaknesses.[97]

Martineau was none of these. And however psychologically opportune her illness may have been, it was inspired neither by an hysterical need for attention, nor by the escapism suggested by Woodham-Smith.

Retirement was the preferred cure for female disorders, and Martineau spent the next five years 'between couch and bed.'[98] She was offered the guest room at her sister's home in Newcastle but she characteristically declined to impose her illness on a healthy household and instead retired to lodgings at nearby Tynemouth. At Tynemouth, a small unfashionable seaside town on the estuary of the Tyne, she could "enjoy

the feeling of giving no trouble, and, as Carlyle says, 'consuming one's own smoke,'"[99] She chose accommodations on the beach and a room which had a view of the sea and the downs. There, like Tennyson's Lady of Shalott, but with a telescope which Mrs. Reid had given her instead of a mirror, she could observe life outside her window. She became acquainted with the North Sea in its many moods, and with the rocky, wreck-lined strand where a lone sycamore braved the stormy east wind. She could see the lighthouse and could watch ships seeking shelter in the harbor inlet. On the downs she could see cows grazing, farmers making hay, boys flying kites, and washer women carrying their large bundles from the farmhouses to the village. She could see farms, paddocks, dairies, a colliery and a windmill. She had a partial view of the railroad and enjoyed watching trains careening down the level ground and then laboring up the incline. With the aid of her telescope she could almost forget that she was merely a distant observer and not a participant in the life outside, and when night shut her off from the visible world she could take solace in the stars and could watch the sun rise across the sea.[100]

Her two-room apartment was never without the rarest hot-house fruits and flowers, and except for the long dark winter months when visitors were rare, Martineau was seldom alone. At times the Tynemouth lodgings must have been reminiscent of the Fludyer Street drawing room, and it was, said Mrs. Reid, often a question of too much rather of than too little company.[101] All the faithful friends: Mrs. Reid, Julia Smith, Lady Byron, Milnes, Crabb Robinson, Erasmus Darwin and even the Carlyles made the pilgrimage to Tynemouth. Government Commissioners and political notables, like Cobden, came to consult. Her mother came up from

Liverpool to visit, and her other relatives were frequently in attendance. Martineau preferred not to have company when she was in pain.[102] She had, she said, "a great dread of exciting more compassion (and yet more sympathy) than my circumstances require."[103] She only saw her friends when she was "well-opiated," and they were, therefore, sometimes surprised by her appearance of vitality. Henry Crabb Robinson was amazed to find her "hardly . . . an invalide [sic]" and her conversation to be "very animated and agreeable."[104] And Jane Welsh Carlyle reported that Harriet Martineau had exhausted her in "every particle of intellect, imagination, and common sense."[105]

Although she enjoyed her visitors, the pressure of the tumor on her spine and on parts of her abdomen caused her increased discomfort. Her bowel and bladder functions were affected, and she was subject to nausea and constant headaches.[106] In the autumn she bade the last of her summer guests farewell with a sense of relief:

> My winter (that is my season of silence and solitude) began on Thursday, - the last of my friends having left me. Now for about seven months, (if I live) my days will pass in the deepest repose that can be had in this world by any but hermits. I shall see scarcely a face but those of my Doctor and maid, till June . . . this loneliness is altogether a matter of choice. I have at last persuaded my friends to indulge me in it.[107]

She derived strength from her period of self-imposed solitude and rest, but she never indulged herself in idleness. She had to write out of necessity for invalidism had made her penurious. Her writing had not made her wealthy in spite of its success, and she could not have afforded a maid during the Tynemouth confinement if not for the advances of her uncle, Peter Martineau. In 1843 Erasmus Darwin organized a testimonial which provided her thirteen hundred pounds. The income from this, she

felt would be sufficient for her needs and with some relief she announced her retirement as an author, she declined any further contributions from her uncle; and she renounced her future share of her mother's estate asking that it be divided among her three sisters and her brothers Robert and James.[108]

Although she gratefully accepted the testimonial offered her by her friends, she had earlier been reluctant to receive a government pension despite the fact that writers and artists were often thus rewarded. The first offer of a pension had been made by Lord Grey in 1832 when she was writing the Illustrations. She had then seriously considered accepting the honor but as it came from the Whigs she first discussed the matter with the Radicals Brougham, Fox, McCulloch and James Mill. They offered no great objections to the award but her brother James believed that her recompense should come from the reading public and not from a political party. James effectively discouraged her and she declined the offer, as she was to do again when Melbourne in 1842 and Gladstone in 1873 revived the idea of a government pension. Her attitude towards pensions became a matter of faith. Not only was she unwilling to compromise her objectivity by favors from a political party, but it also occurred to her that she would be receiving emolumets derived from the taxes of the unrepresented poor.[109] Her self-denial was nobly consistent with her political principles, but it did not meet with universal approbation. Her action was a criticism of the system, and her statement that "there can be no peace in benefitting by the proceeds of an unjust system of taxation," met with scornful rejoinders from the supporters of that system. "What does the poor good woman mean?" quizzed one critic, who quite missed her

point, "every officer of or under the crown then, every salaried man in the state, every paid magistrate, every soldier and sailor . . . is a thief who prays on the vitals of the poor. . . . I have no doubt that some of Miss M's radical admirers would gladly tie the noose for them all."[110]

Her friends' testimonial relieved Martineau of financial need, and in April 1843 she told Crabb Robinson that she had given up authorship. In the first years of her illness she had completed her Haitian novel, The Hour and the Man and had written the four children's stories which comprised the Playfellow series. However, her retirement was of brief duration, and despite her wish for "rest from the pen," by November of 1843 she was talking mysteriously about a new publication, the initially anonymous Life in the Sick-Room which was published in 1844.[111] At the same time she was connected with the strategy of the Anti-Corn Law League; she was involved in correspondence with Peel and Cobden; she was assisting a government commission then preparing an education bill, and she was opposing Lord Ashley's factory legislation. She had proofs to read. She was sent manuscripts by strangers who wanted her advice. She spent hours on her fancy-work which she donated to Anti-Slavery causes and to local Newcastle public works' projects. She had a voluminous correspondence: "My own large family incessantly and reasonably needing 'just a line' to say how I am: - a multitide of friends ditto." And there were always numerous personal demands on her time " . . . clothes to be made and mended and a poor capricious sinking body to be opiated and indulged."[112]

The idea of writing a novel based on the life of Toussaint L'Ouverture the former black slave who became the hero of the Haitian revolution had been germinating since 1838 when Martineau first contemplated writing a novel. On her abortive tour of Europe in 1839 she had slipped across the border from Switzerland to France in order to see the Castle of Joux where Toussaint had been incarcerated by the French, and where he was supposed to have died in 1803.[113] She had read whatever literature was available on the subject in English and French. She had studied the geography of the island. She was familiar with Wordsworth's sonnet on the black hero. And doubtless she had also read John Greenleaf Whittier's "Toussaint L'Ouverture," which was published in Garrison's Liberator of June 30, 1837.[114]

In Toussaint she found not only the subject for an historical romance but a means of promoting the anti-slavery cause. The Hour and the Man was an historical novel which though lacking depth or analysis, succeeded in capturing the impassioned spirit of late eighteenth century French colonial Haiti. The novel was about the island's struggle for independence from white domination, and in it Martineau probably came closer to endorsing revolution than at any other time. Toussaint was the symbol of black liberty. He knew that for his people the choice lay between "slavery or self-defence," and that by his own eventual overthrow only the trunk "of the tree of negro liberty is laid low. . . . It will shoot out again from the roots, they are many and deep."[115] But although she sympathized with the problem of black bondage, Martineau was not personally familiar with black Haitians, and her characters lacked ethnic authenticity. She was interested primarily in promoting the

cause of emancipation and racial equality. And if her urbane, philosophical Toussaint more than slightly resembled Shakespeare's noble Moor then it was probably because she wanted to convince her white readers of the essential dignity of all men. She made Toussaint larger than life: too virtuous to recognize villainy, too honest to flinch from the execution of impartial justice, and generally so idealized that she afterwards wrote in self-defense and in defense of the original Toussaint:

> . . . people will suppose Toussaint himself to be the fictitious part of the book: wheras I solemnly believe him to have been what I have represented; and the sayings which are called the finest in the book are his own . . . I am uneasy at having credit of originating what a dead hero thought and said.[116]

If her readers were perturbed by her choice of a middle-class hero in Deerbrook they were even more so by her choice of a black one in The Hour and the Man. In the Athenaeum, for example, she was told, "Do the negro justice, we say, by all means; but keep him, for half a century at least, out of our imaginative literature."[117] The Hour and the Man did not enjoy the success of its predecessor, Deerbrook, but it nevertheless went into several editions, and the author derived a good deal of satisfaction from the writing of it.[118]

Much more popular than The Hour and the Man was Martineau's Playfellow series of four children's books published between 1841 and 1843. To the modern reader the stories seem morbid and moralistic, but morbid, moralistic stories appealed to the Victorians, and Martineau's contemporaries of all ages enjoyed the Playfellow stories. Martineau's earliest children's story had been the anonymous and little known Principle and Practice; or, the Orphan Family which was published in 1827.[119] In this early novella, five orphaned children survived heroically under the

guidance of the eldest who "has had so much to do and bear, that she has learned not to look from side to side in hope and fear, but to go on, straight forwards, in the road to duty, whether an easy one or not."[120] This same sentiment pervaded all the Playfellow stories except for The Prince which was based on the tragic life of the young dauphin of revolutionary France and which was the only non-fictional tale of the four. The other three stories were all about children who succeeded in overcoming enormous odds without any significant adult assistance. The Robinson Crusoe element--so popular in the nineteenth-century especially with the middle-class--was strong especially in Settlers at Home and to a lesser extent in Feats on the Fiord where the resourceful children were pitted against the elements, and forced to cope with hazards which threatened their very survival. The Crofton Boys, the most popular of the tales, was much closer to the experience of the average middle-class Victorian child. It was one of the earliest of English boarding-school stories predating Tom Brown's Schooldays which was not published until 1857.

Martineau had been driven to write her Illustrations of Political Economy by conviction as well as necessity, but her Playfellow stories seem to have been inspired mainly by necessity. Although she regarded them as her final contribution to literature she did not use them for any significant final radical gesture. In fact, it was probably because she was relying upon the income which she would derive from them that she chose to write in the conventional genre of the children's story and to express the conventional sentiments. In spite of her earnest social consciousness she did not choose, as Dickens was doing, to write about

the underprivileged or abused child. And though she was concerned about children and abhorred the prevailing eighteenth-century convention of treating children like little adults, it was precisely as little adults that she depicted her boys and girls. Her children bore premature responsibilities, were expected to act with the propriety of their elders, and were made to mouth the proper pious cant. Her Necessarian logic and embryonic skepticism did not prevent her from expressing the usual religious dogmas and the belief in traditional prayer. Nor did her concern about the unequal role of women effect any concessions towards the conventional depiction of her little girls. The boys were the heroes of her stories; the girls were simply passive by-standers or at best help-meets. It was almost as if she went out of her way to avoid controversy and to give the public what it liked and expected.

After she had concluded the Crofton Boys and despite her announced retirement, she immediately took up the pen again and by the end of 1843 she had completed Life in the Sick-Room. Life in the Sick-Room was inspired not by a commercial motive but rather by that sense of duty and personal commitment with which she had written Letter to the Deaf in 1834. She felt that her illness had taught her the uses of suffering and she wanted to share the lesson. Professedly denying that pain was divinely inflicted for some good, Martineau nevertheless used her experience of illness, as she used all her other experiences, to instruct others:

> You know, as I do, how useful it is to human beings to have before them spectacles of all experiences; and we are all alike willing, having worked while we could, now to suffer as we may to help our kind in another mode.[121]

As with her advice to the deaf, the chief burden of her instruction was that the invalid give little trouble to others, and that the friends of the sufferer accept and speak the truth forebearing false consolation. She offered ideas about visiting hours, and sickroom procedures and made practical suggestions not dissimilar from those which Florence Nightingale was to make in Notes on Nursing in 1859.

In Life in the Sick-Room Martineau partially revealed the extent of her own suffering. And, using tantalizing generalities, described the pangs of conscience which tormented her solitary hours:

> . . . the invisible array which comes thronging into the sick-room from the deep regions of the past, brought by every sound of nature without, by every movement of the spirit within; the pale lips of dead friends whispering one's hard or careless words, spoken in childhood or youth - the upbraiding glance of duties slighted and opportunities neglected - the horrible apparition of old selfishness and pusillanimities - the disgusting foolery of idiotic vanities.[122]

She could not avoid sentimentalizing her mournful subject or lapsing into triteness or a self-dramatization of her own martyrdom. She wrote of aspring to attain "a trusting carelessness as to what becomes of our dear selves" but the very act of writing Life in the Sick-Room was a denial of that "carelessness." And throughout the pages of the self-righteous little volume there breathed a self-conscious air of noble suffering. However, to do her justice, she herself later denounced this offspring of her Tynemouth confinement as "the magnifying of my own experience, the desperate concern as to my own ease and happiness, the moaning undertone running through what many people have called stoicism."[123]

Life in the Sick-Room rapidly went into extra editions and its popularity says as much about the Victorian frame of mind as it does about

the author's. The anonymity of the author was very quickly penetrated and Henry Crabb Robinson became the recipient of all manner of compliments on Harriet Martineau's behalf. He was told, for example, that at Rydal Mount the Wordsworths "have been quite charmed, affected, and instructed by the Invalid's volume."[124] And Elizabeth Barrett who was thought at first to be either the anonymous author, or the "fellow-sufferer" to whom the book was dedicated, was quite flattered by both suggestions.[125] Barrett and Martineau had not met but they had corresponded from their sickbeds. And in December 1844 Elizabeth Barrett wrote:

> . . . with all my insolence of talking of her [Harriet Martineau] as my friend, I only admire and love her at a distance, in her books and in her letters, and do not know her face to face, and in living womanhood at all.[126]

Elizabeth Barrett regarded Harriet Martineau as "the most logical intellect of the age, for a woman." She shared Harriet Martineau's letters to her with her friends. In her room she hung a portrait of Harriet Martineau along with those of Browning, Carlyle, Wordsworth and Tennyson. She staunchly defended Martineau against Robert Browning's criticisms--the early friendship that had existed between Browning and Martineau having developed into something like a mutual and cordial antipathy. And so high an opinion did Elizabeth Barrett have of Martineau as an author and a critic that when a package containing some poems Martineau had read for her arrived she was "so fearful of the probable sentence that my hands shook as they broke the seal."[127] It is no wonder then that Elizabeth Barrett should have been flattered by the suggestion that she was thought to be the author of so popular a volume as Life in the Sick-Room.

Early in 1843 Martineau reached the nadir of her condition. It was then that she had considered ending her career as an author, and it was then that she, apparently contemplating death and conscious of posterity, demanded that her correspondents burn her letters. To her friends she was writing about her hopeless condition:

> My weariness of life - my longing to be non-existant - is indescribable [she wrote in April 1843]: the oppression of life grows heavier, almost from day to day . . . but the sufferings from nervous horrors and from bodily sickness are less than they were.[128]

But by the middle of the year, her condition apparently altered for the better. Mrs. Reid arrived in July to find her much improved. And she again took up the pen: first to write some public letters at the request of her political friends, and then to write Life in the Sick-Room.[129] In April of the following year Greenhow noticed a slight change in her general state of health. Her menses were resuming their normal cycle, her neusea was ceasing, the activities of her bowel and bladder were becoming easier and more regular, and there was more flexibility in the uterus although it was still enlarged.[130] These changes were probably associated with a shift in the position of the tumor so that it no longer oppressed the abdominal organs. But because these physical improvements were the first encouraging signs in five long years, and because they coincided with Martineau's first mesmeric treatment she quite naturally ascribed her cure to mesmerism.

Mesmerism was a scientific version of medieval exorcism; but it relied on physical and not on spiritual properties. The Austrian, Anton Mesmer (1734-1815) who founded the mesmeric school, based his theory on animal magnetism. He believed that because each individual possessed a

magnetic fluid, one individual could magnetize another. By this means, and using passes of the hands, a mesmeric practitioner could draw pain from the body of a patient. One of Mesmer's disciples, the Marquis de Puysegur, brought the mesmeric treatment of pain a step further when he discovered his ability to induce a magnetic sleep or artificial somnambulism during which he could elicit the patient's symptoms and prescribe a cure. In 1843 a Manchester physician, James Braid, called this practice 'hypnosis.' Mesmerism had acquired great popularity in Europe prior to the French Revolution and after the Napoleonic era it experienced a revival there. But in England it had had no significant following until the decade of the 1840s. John Elliotson, a doctor at the University College Hospital began using it on his hospital patients. But the medical profession was, by and large, antagonistic, and the hospital authorities forced Elliotson's resignation. He continued to practice privately, however, and his following grew. In 1843 he founded a mesmeric journal, the Zoist.[131]

Although Elliotson did have a small following among English physicians, he and other serious medical practitioners were often confused with the charlatans and rogues who preyed upon the unsuspecting. Mesmerism attracted many a crank and many a quack: somnambulism was after all only a short step away from clairvoyance. Because of this, the skeptics had a field day in the press. The Athenaeum from approximately 1838, gave the subject a great deal of critical attention. And in Blackwoods mesmerism was allied with necromancy and its practitioners with Friars Bacon and Bungay.[132]

Martineau's chief interest in mesmerism began with her cure, but she had been aware of the concept before she actually experienced it. In Life in the Sick-Room she had written:

> Who looks back upon the mass of strange but authenticated narratives, which might be explained by this agent [mesmerism], and looks, at the same time, into our dense ignorance of the structure and function of the nervous system, and will dare say that there is nothing in it? Whatever quackery and imposture may be connected with it, however its pretensions may be falsified, it seems impossible but that some new insight must be obtained by its means, into the powers of our mysterious frame.[133]

In a sense, it was Martineau's sophistication--she recognized, as many did not, "our dense ignorance of the structure and function of the nervous system"--and her genuine interest in furthering science, that led to her involvement with mesmerism. She was not, and did not consider herself to be, a superstitious woman. The mysteries of the mind as she saw them were physically not spiritually resolvable. Her brother-in-law, Alfred Higginson--Ellen's husband--a Liverpool physician had successfully performed an operation during which the patient had been under the influence of mesmerism. Some of Martineau's friends were already converts to mesmerism and had been urging her to attempt a cure as all other treatments had apparently failed. And though Greenhow was somewhat skeptical he was persuaded to introduce a noted visiting mesmerist, Spencer Hall, to his sister-in-law. The meeting took place on June 22, 1844. And Hall, by passing his hands over her head from behind succeeded in producing a sensation which she described as "a clear twilight" in which objects dissolved before her wide open eyes, and a langor affected her limbs. On this occasion she felt a hot oppression after the effect of the haziness wore off, but subsequently she experienced a "delicious

sensation of ease" and "the indescribable sensation of health, which I had quite lost and forgotten." She continued to be treated, first by Hall and then by Mrs. Wynyard. In the interim between the departure of Hall and the advent of Mrs. Wynyard, Martineau's maid successfully filled the gap. She imitated Hall's gestures and succeeded in relieving her mistress's symptoms.[134]

Martineau gradually gained strength and by October felt well enough to give up her dependence on opiates. She had her drugs hidden so that she would not be tempted to turn to them, and supported by mesmerism she began her "scramble out of the pit." It was a struggle, she said, "which can be conceived only by those who have experienced . . . a case of desperate dependence on [opiates] for years."[135] Between June and October she had so far regained her health that she could go outside for the first time in years. She basked on the rocks; took walks; and began planning excursions. She told Milnes:

> The fresh amazement at the feeling of health does not go off at all, though I have now been well for half a year. I do not in the least become familiarized yet with the wonder of day to day passed without pain, or fear or anxiety.[136]

In December 1844 she was walking fifteen miles a day. In January Henry Crabb Robinson reported that:

> Miss M's health in appearance at least is such as I never saw before - Her complexion is become beautiful - and her whole air is that of happiness. . . .[137]

Though less flattering than Robinson, Jane Welsh Carlyle who saw her a year later was no less impressed by Harriet Martineau's "rude weather-beaten health."[138]

Greenhow was offended by Harriet Martineau's mesmeric cure. He felt that his profesional reputation had been insulted, and it was to defend

his reputation that he hastened to publish his Medical Report of the Case of Miss H-M-. Most of the report contained his accurate day to day observations, but his conclusions should be read in the knowledge that he was writing after his sister-in-law's recovery, and in his own defense:

> Knowing well that no symptoms of maligant disease of the affected organ existed [Greenhow concluded], I always believed that a time would arrive when my patient would be relieved from most of her distressing symptoms. . . . She never willingly listened to my suggestions of the probability of such prospective events and seemed always best satisfied with anything approaching to an admission that she must remain a secluded invalid. . . . During the last year or two . . . I had frequent opportunities of observing the increased ease and freedom with which she moved about her sitting-room . . . the condition in December is but the natural sequel of progressive improvement begun in, or antecedent to, the month of April . . . the time had arrived when a new and powerful stimulus only was required, to enable the enthusiastic mind of my patient to shake them [the symptoms] off.[139]

Nineteenth-century medicine was not sophisticated enough for Greenhow to have been sure that no malignancy existed, and indeed his certainty of her recovery was nowhere expressed before his sister-in-law's actual cure. Spencer Hall recalling his first meeting with Greenhow said that on that occasion Greenhow had given no indication "that a cure of Miss Martineau's disease had already commenced (as his pamphlet now states it had) two months before."[140] In the first year of her illness Sir Charles Clark had pronounced Martineau's condition incurable, and as Greenhow then noted a concurrence in diagnosis, it may not be too rash to assume that the two physicians had also concurred in their prognosis.[141] But according to Greenhow's clinical notes and to Martineau's observation to Henry Crabb Robinson in 1843 there was a gradual improvement in her physical condition prior to the mesmeric treatment.[142] Greenhow could not claim that he had all along suspected a recovery but he was probably

correct, once having noted an improvement in Martineau's condition, that all she then needed was a psychological stimulus to shake off her illness. His claims to an earlier pre-knowledge that she would fully recover cannot however be fully credited and they probably originated in his damaged ego and not from any definite medical expertise. But in spite of Greenhow's obvious self-interest, R. K. Webb accepts the claim that the doctor had all along assured his patient that her disease was not fatal. Webb makes no allowances for the possible prejudices of a doctor who considered his medical reputation to have been slighted, nor does he take into account the fact that Greenhow's medical observations revealed no change in the actual condition of the uterus area until April of 1844. Webb therefore concludes that Martineau was "not so ill as she insisted." He denies the reality of her medical symptoms, ignores the possible ill-effects of her five-year dependency on drugs and suggests that she exaggerated her condition because she enjoyed the drama of martyrdom. To support his thesis he cites her admiration for those who suffered heroically and he even goes back to an early Monthly Repository article in which she wrote of a submission "to inevitable misfortune with humble acquiescence," and of welcoming "the dispensations of Providence, whatever they may be, to derive spiritual vigour from every alternation of joy and sorrow, to perceive the end for which those alternations are appointed, and to aid in its accomplishment." It is my belief that Martineau was as "ill as she insisted," and that even after her physical condition slightly improved she was still suffering from the morbidity which accompanied her disease, and from the prolonged effects of the drugs to which she had become habituated. Mesmerism filled an important

psychological need--and may also have been an effective face-saving device for someone who had been claiming mortal illness. But although Greenhow was correct in this one aspect, his other claims should not be used to support a contention that the period at Tynemouth was one of self-inflicted martyrdom.[143]

Whatever may have been the truth of her recovery, Martineau was convinced that it had been achieved through mesmerism.[144] As with all her lessons, she hastened to educate the rest of society too. She published her "Letters on Mesmerism" in the Athenaeum in 1844 in obedience to duty and in the full knowledge that she risked the opprobrium of the uninitiated. It was, however, less the facts of her cure than her naive attempt to link mesmerism with the suspect subject of clairvoyance that provoked adverse comment. She had been misled into believing that her landlady's niece and her sometime servant Jane Arrowsmith, was a somnambule and a clairvoyant and although she was soon undeceived and admitted her error, at the time of the Athenaeum letters she was insisting not only on the curative but also on the visionary powers of mesmerism.[145] It was this latter aspect of her tale that the critics pounced upon. Her credulous description of Jane's miraculous powers met with a sharp rejoinder from the Athenaeum critic Charles Wentworth Dilke, father of the Parliamentarian, and an angry correspondence began in the pages of the Athenaeum.[146] Even Martineau's friends who may have been prepared to accept the evidence of her recovery as a testimonial to the powers of mesmerism, were on the whole skeptical about Jane. Henry Crabb Robinson was led to say:

> Everybody joins in ridiculing her [Harriet Martineau]. And I am hard put to, not to join with the multitude - She may have confidence in the Somnabulism of her Servant, but she can't properly communicate her faith to others. . . .[147]

However, for a time at least Henry Crabb Robinson remained loyal. He dutifully attended a seance and found himself "in a state of humble uncertainty - Not daring to deny, and yet unable to assent."[148] The reaction from others was mixed. Robert Browning was utterly unwilling to accept Harriet Martineau's testimony but Elizabeth Barrett remained faithful and wistfully wondered whether Miss Martineau's "apocalyptic housemaid" could tell if her dog Flush had a soul.[149] Jane Welsh Carlyle with her accustomed acerbity commented that "Harriet Martineau expects that the whole system of Medicine is going to be flung to the dogs presently, and that henceforth, instead of Physicians, we are to have Magnetisers!"[150] William Fox with whom Martineau was still in correspondence, and who still shared a philosophy compatible with hers, could not sympathize on the subject of mesmerism.[151] And William Wordsworth thought that doubtless Harriet Martineau's imperfect hearing had misled her, that she jumped too quickly to conclusions and that it was hardly safe "for anyone's wits to be possessed in the manner this extraordinary person is by one subject be it what it may."[152]

Martineau's friends considered Greenhow's Medical Report to have been a scandalous violation of professional propriety and gentlemanly conduct.[153] He had asked her permission to publish a report of her case, and she, thinking that he would report it in the conventional Latin and would publish it in a medical journal, had given her consent. She was horrified to discover that instead he had published "in a shilling pamphlet - not even in Latin, - but open to all the world!"[154] The details which Greenhow revealed in his account of her case were of a very intimate nature and considering the period, it is not at all surprising that

she should have been incensed. She severed all connections with the Greenhows, but found herself isolated from most of the rest of the family as well. Her brother Robert and her sister Ellen remained loyal, but her mother, Rachel and James chose to interpret the publication of the "Letters" as an affront to the personal and especially the professional integrity of Greenhow.[155]

The relationship between Harriet and James had been deteriorating for some years. The brother and sister no longer occupied precisely the same philosophical territory: Harriet was still a Necessarian and still professed to uphold the basic Unitarian tenets but her enthusiasm for religion had waned while James's had increased. He had moved away from Necessarianism and in the direction of greater spiritualization. He was not fully sympathetic to some of his sister's more ardent personal causes: he did not condone either her abolitionism or her republicanism. And although in 1837 and 1838 she was still describing James as "that glorious personage the Reverend James . . . wiser, serener, more religious, and merry than ever," and as "more glorious than ever, - gentler, more moderate and noble than one often sees any men."[156] By 1841, according to James, "Harriet's tone of epistolary address to me" had altered, "from the superlative 'dearest brother' to the positive 'dear brother' which commenced with September 6, 1841."[157] James went to Europe to fetch his sister when she was taken ill in 1839, but he did not visit her in all the five years of her confinement in Tynemouth.[158] And when Harriet decided to have her correspondents destroy her letters in 1843 in order to prevent their posthumous publication, James refused to submit to the injuction. Thereafter her letters to him became in his

words "ever and more far between, limited to matters of fact, comparatively dry and cold," till they totally ceased a few years before the appearance of the Martineau and Atkinson Letters on the Laws of Man's Nature and Development in 1851.[159] Harriet discreetly by-passed the quarrel with James in her Autobiography and it was only in Maria Weston Chapman's Memorials which constitute the third volume of the Autobiography that the matter was discussed at all. According to Chapman's notes for the Memorial volume it was James who had inflamed Harriet's mother against her when the controversy over her mesmeric cure erupted. Harriet's nieces told Mrs. Chapman that the conduct of the family towards their aunt had been "all jealousy of her superiority."[160] And it is indeed quite possible that James's attitude towards his famous sister may have been inspired by envy; Harriet herself apparently thought so. She had privately told George Eliot that "from the very beginning of her success [James had been] continually moved by jealousy and envy towards her."[161] It was James who had first suggested in 1821 that she write, but with her increased success in the Monthly Repository he had become less than encouraging. He had criticized her intimate connection with her editorial colleagues of Fox's circle. He had been jealous of her American friendships. He had discouraged her acceptance of a Government pension. And he had advised her against becoming editor of Saunder's and Otley's proposed sociological journal in 1838, although she would have been the first Englishwoman to be afforded such a distinction. It was between 1839 and 1844 that the breach between the brother and sister widened, and when he sided with the Greenhows in their quarrel with Harriet, the damage done to their hitherto close relationship was all but

irreparable. Harriet made up with her mother shortly before the old lady's death in 1848, but with James the breach was to become complete. Harriet Martineau was an obstinate woman, and the opposition of her brother and the criticisms of her family and friends during the mesmerism controversy served only to reinforce her own convictions. She was able--as in the case of Worthington--to exclude from her life those to whom she did not wish to attend, and to seclude herself behind the wall of her own certitude:

> After the first stab of every new insult, my spirits rose, and shed forth the vis medicatrix of which we all carry an in exhaustible fountain within us. I knew, steadily, and from first to last, that we were right, - my coadjutors and I. I knew that we were secure as to our facts and innocent in our intentions: and it was my earnest desire and endeavour to be no less right in temper. How I succeeded, others can tell better than I. I only know that my recovery and the sweet sensations of restored health disposed me to good-humour, and continually reminded me how much I had gained in comparison with what I had to bear.[162]

Martineau's recovery in 1844 ushered in a decade which she described as "worth all the rest of her life."[163] In January of 1845 she left Tynemouth for the Lakes and from there went on to Birmingham where she spent "ten most happy" weeks with her brother Robert's family.[164] She had had every intention of returning to Tynemouth but during her absence the storm over the Medical Report broke, and there seemed little point to resuming life in an area where the main attraction had been the proximity of her sister's family. The Lakes had entranced her and she therefore decided to build a house at Ambleside. The decision was no sooner made then it was acted upon with her usual dispatch and the walls of her new home rose so quickly that Mrs. Wordsworth was led to exlaim: "Surely

she must have mesmerized her workmen, for our builders are never so alert."[165]

Martineau had spent her entire life either in her parent's home or in lodgings, and her decision to build "The Knoll," as her home came to be called, fulfilled a need for domesticity:

> I have a horror of mere booklife; or a life of books and society [as in London]. I like a need to have some express and daily share in somebody's comfort: & and trust to find much peace and satisfaction as a housekeeper in making my maids happy, and perhaps a little wiser - in receiving overworked or delicate friends and relations to rest in my paradise, & in the sort of strenuous handwork *which I like better than authorship* [my italics].[166]

"The Knoll" was situated near the village of Ambleside which nestled between Lake Windermere and the surrounding hills.[167] It was a wooded valley which abounded in wild flowers, and the garden of "The Knoll" was lovingly planted with the foxgloves, wood-anemones, ferns, pansies and primroses which Martineau gathered on her many rambles. The house was a simple two-storeyed stone residence covered with rambling vines and climbing roses. It boasted of indoor plumbing, but was otherwise unpretentious and not very large. Upstairs there were three bedrooms including one for the maids whom Martineau treated like her daughters--one of her maids was Jane of Tynemouth who was apparently forgiven her deception and remained with her mistress until she emigrated to Australia in 1852.[168] Below there was a kitchen, skullery, a sitting-room and a large study with a charming bay window which overlooked the terraced garden.[169] On her two-acre lot she kept cows, pigs and poultry. She had an orchard and a vegetable garden. And she built a cottage for the Norfolk farmer and his wife who ran her small self-sufficient agricultural experiment,

which in its turn produced Our Farm of Two Acres, a short book which soberly explained the practical aspects of small scale domestic farming.[170]

Although many of her new neighbors did not appreciate her obsessive interest in mesmerism, they soon warmed to her. "It is," said Henry Crabb Robinson, "no slight prooof of the kindness of her disposition that she seems to be not in the least offended by the opposition so generally raised against her." Her tolerance "even of intolerance" made friendly intercourse with the other Lakers, and especially Wordsworth, possible.[171] She and the Poet Laureate actually agreed on very little:

> I deaf [she told Henry Crabb Robinson], can hardly conceive how he [William Wordsworth] with eyes and a heart which leads him to converse with the poor in his incessant walks can be so unaware of their social state. I dare say you need not be told how sensual vice abounds in rural districts . . . [yet] here is good old W forever talking of rural innocence. . . . I feel a growing love and tenderness for him but cannot yet thoroughly connect - compact - incorporate him with his works. Cannot yet feel him to be so great as they.[172]

For Mary Wordsworth she had a great fondness, as she did for Mrs. Thomas Arnold. But except for these and a few other friends with houses in the vicinity, she did not visit much in the neighborhood. Her aunts, cousins nieces, nephews and innumerable acquaintances were frequent guests.[173] She was proud of her home and happy to share it. George Eliot who visited "The Knoll" in October 1852 recalled being met at the gate by her beaming-faced hostess. "Miss M is quite charming in her own home - quite handsome from her animation and intelligence. She came behind me, put her arms round me and kissed me in the prettiest way, this evening, telling me she was so glad she had got me here." She was, said George Eliot, a tonic, "with her simple energetic life, her Building

Society, her winter lectures and her cordial interest in all human things."[174] Charlotte Brontë also visited Martineau at Ambleside and she gave this description to her sister Emily:

> I am at Miss Martimeau's for a week. Her house is very pleasant both within and without; arranged at all points with admirable neatness and comfort. Her visitors enjoy the most perfect liberty; what she claims for herself she allows them. I rise at my own hour, breakfast alone . . . I pass the morning in the drawing-room, she in her study. At two o'clock we meet, talk and walk till five, her dinner-hour, - spend the evening together, when she converses fluently and abundantly, and with the most complete frankness. I go to my room soon after ten, and she sits up writing letters. She appears exhaustless in strength and spirits, and indefatiguable in the facilty of labour: she is a great and good woman; of course not without peculiarites, but I have seen none as yet that annoy me. She is both hard amd warmhearted, abrupt and affectionate. I believe she is not at all conscious of her of her own absolutism. . . . I have truly enjoyed my visit here. . . . Miss Martimeau I relish inexpressibly . . . and though I share few of her opinions, and regard her as fallible on certain points of judgment, I must still award her my sincerest esteem. The manner in which she combines the highest mental culture with the nicest discharge of feminine duties filled me with admiration; while her affectionate kindness earned my gratitude.[175]

The Building society and the winter Lectures which George Eliot mentioned were two of Martineau's attempts to elevate the Ambleside working class. The Building Society was a somewhat limited effort to improve the quality of working-class housing and to enable the "workies," as she somewhat condescendingly called them, to possess their own homes. But as no more than fifteen cottages were built and as the tenants were carefully selected and not at all representative of the working class, the endeavor was not a great success.[176] Her winter lectures, which included subjects ranging from English and American history to sanitation and local geography, were given two or three times a week to a working-class audience. These lectures, together with support for the local Mechanics

Institute were attempts to make self-improvement possible for the workers through education, but there is unfortunately no way of evaluating whether or not these efforts achieved any degree of success.

Besides her civic conscientiousness, her domestic occupations, and her rigorous walks--Wordsworth, himself an energetic pedestrian, was led to exclaim when he met her walking with Henry Atkinson, "Take care! take care! Don't let _her_ carry you about. She is killimg off half the gentlemen in the county!"--Martineau did not neglect her literary labors. Her day at Ambleside began at six. She had walked, bathed and breakfasted by seven-thirty, and from that hour until two she remained at her desk. In the decade which followed her recovery she wrote _Dawn Island, A Tale_ (1845) to raise funds for the Anti-Corn Law League; _The Forest and Game Law Tales_ (1845-1846) at the urging of John Bright who was seeking to end the ancient Game Law privileges of the landed classes; she compiled more than one guide to the Lakes; she went to Egypt in 1846 and after her return wrote _Eastern Life Present and Past_ (1848); _Household Education_ was written in 1849; the _History of England during the Thirty Year's Peace_ was composed in 1849 and 1850; in the following year she wrote _Introduction to the History of the Peace_, and with Henry Atkinson collaborated on Letters on the _Laws of Man's Nature and Development_; between 1851 and 1853 she translated and condensed the six volumes of Auguste Comte's _Positive Philosophy_; and she simultaneously contributed to the _Westminster Review_, _Household Words_, _The Leader_, and in 1852 began her long association with the _Daily News_.

Her activity seemed almost compulsive but she was happy: "the gayest of the gay, and perfectly well."[177]

> My life is now (in this season) one of wild roving [she told Emerson], after my years of helpless sickness. I ride like a Borderer, - walk like a pedlar, - climb like a mountaineer, - sometimes on excursions with kind and merry neighbours, - sometimes all alone for the day on the mountain.[178]

Her energies amazed her Ambleside acquaintances, and even those, like Edward Quillinan who were critical of her eccentric opinions conceded that "her manner [was] so pleasing, and friendly, that if I disliked some portions of her writings ten times more than I do I could not help liking her:"

> Miss Martineau's intellectual activity shames all to idleness [Quillinan told Henry Crabb Robinson]. Besides her contributions to I know not how many publications of the day . . . she finds time for much social service in various ways and gives evening lectures once or twice a week on political and household economy, etc. etc. to the labouring classes. I am told by those who have heard them that they are very good. . . . I confess that the [sic] Harriet Martineau is, all book writings apart, in herself and her own good natured and good hearted way, an agreeable neighbour, much to be liked.[179]

For all her earnestness, her formidable industriousness and the obstinacy of her pride, she was a very warm, sociable, garrulous and generous hearted human being. She had a fresh and amiable laugh and enjoyed "laughable stories." She loved and was beloved by children. She inspired affection in others and needed it herself. She had been described in America as "a lively, playful, child-like, simplicity-breathing loving creature."[180] And in the summer of her content these qualities ripened. "I am very merry," she wrote in 1852, "It is curious that one so solemn in youth should be growing merry in her 50th year."[181]

Nathaniel Hawthorne on a visit to the Lakes at this time described Harriet Martineau as:

> . . . a large, robust, elderly woman; but withal she has so kind, cheerful, and intelligent a face that she is pleasanter to look at than some beauties. Her hair is a decided grey. . . .

> She is the most continual talker I ever heard . . . very lively and sensible too. . . .[182]

The pleasing Richmond portrait of 1849 testifies to the serenity of her expression and to the handsomeness of her countenance. She was happy in her independence. She had achieved a rare prominence and stature. She enjoyed her work and her life. She was at the pinnacle of her professional career. And if some considered her a political and religious pariah it did not apparently bother her. She was secure in her own convictions and had the ability of shutting out the voices she did not wish to hear. She felt impregnable in her opinions, self-reliant in her resources, and at last the mistress in her own home. She now asked to be addressed as _Mrs._ Harriet Martineau, and the title was symbolic of more than her recognition that she was no longer either young or marriageable.[183] It was symbolic of her now unchallengable independence: she had come into her own. In the happy years which followed her Tynemouth confinement she emerged from the shadow of her mother, she shed the religious crutch which had been her support since childhood, and she produced some of the most significant of her literary and journalistic work. It is to these works, the _History of England during the Thirty Years' Peace_, _Eastern Life Present and Past_, _Letters on the Laws of Man's Nature and Development_, the translation of Comte's _Positive Philosophy_, and to the opinions expressed in her journal articles, that we shall turn our attention in the chapters which follow.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Edna Simon Levine, The Psychology of Deafness (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1960), pp. 61-62; D. A. Ramsdell, "The Psychology of the hard-of-hearing and deafened adult," in eds. Hallowell Davis and S. Richard Silverman, Hearing and Deafness (1947, New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston,1960), p. 469; Helmer R. Myklebust, The Psychology of Deafness (1960, New York and London:Grune and Stratton, 1964), pp. 117ff.

[2]Levine, op. cit., p. 60; Ramsdell, op. cit., p. 472.

[3]"Letter to the Deaf," Miscellanies, I, 248-265 [originally published in Tait's Magazine, 1834].

[4]Levine, op. cit., p. 67; Ramsdell, op. cit., 471; Richard E. Hardy and John C. Cull, Educational and Psychosocial Aspects of Deafness (Springfield, Ill.: Charles C. Thomas, 1974), pp. 179-180.

[5]Autobiography, I, 78.

[6]Myklebust, op. cit., pp. 29-43; Hardy and Cull. op. cit., 160-161.

[7]Autobiography, I, 327.

[8]Harriet Martineau to Henry Crabb Robinson [extract copied in Henry Crabb Robinson's hand] Feb. 8, 1846, DW Lib; Autobiography, II, 236.

[9]Autobiography, III, 126; and see Chapter IV.

[10]Gordon S. Haight, George Eliot and John Chapman, with Chapman's Diaries (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1940), p. 146, from Chapman's diary of March 15, 1851.

[11]Letters on the Laws of Man's Nature and Development (1851, American edition, Boston: Josiah P. Mendum, 1851), pp. 166-167; Retrospect of Western Travel, II, 140.

[12]Harriet Martineau to James Martineau, Aug. 31, 1827, Transcript Letters, M. Coll. and see "Letter to the Deaf," Miscellanies, I, 260.

[13]Harriet Martineau to Edward Moxon, Nov. 21 [1844], Fawcett Library, London; and see Harriet Martineau to Milnes [n.d.] Trinity Coll. in which she speaks of hearing with the ear "totally deaf for twenty years" after mesmeric treatment.

[14]Eastern Life Present and Past, 3 vols. (London: Moxon, 1848), II, 64-65.

[15]Harriet Martineau to Mr. [Joseph] Toynbee [n.d.], Yale, MS. Vault File 15/4.

[16]Myklebust, op. cit., p. 131; Levine, op. cit., pp. 64-65.

[17]Autobiography, I, 74-75.

[18]Conduit Street is now a highly commerical street in London's West End.

[19]Household Education, p. 184.

[20]Autobiography, III, 80.

[21]Harriet Martineau to the Rev. William Ware, June 21 [?1840] Boston P. Lib., MS. Eng. 244 (1-16), in which Martineau told ware that Fludyer Street was being torn down to make way for government offices. The site is now occupied by Whitehall offices and the Horseguards' Parade.

[22]Harriet Martineau to James Martineau, July 10, 1832; March 14, 1833, Transcript Letters, M. Coll.

[23]Autobiography, I, 249.

[24]For the voyage home see Mrs. John [Elizabeth] Farrar, Recollections of Seventy Years (Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1866), pp. 258-261.

[25]"Literary Lionism," WR, 32 (April, 1839), 261-281.

[26]Harriet Martineau to the Rev. William Ware, Oct. 11, [?1836], Boston P. Lib. MS. Eng. 244 (1-16).

[27]Harriet Martineau to William Tait, June 3, 1834, Univ. Coll.

[28]Autobiography, II, 207, Diary, 1837.

[29]Ibid., II, 196, from Macready's journal.

[30]Betty Miller, Robert Browing: A Portrait (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1952), 58 ff.; Autobiography, III, 202, 207, Diary, 1837.

[31]Autobiography, III, 201, Diary, 1837.

[32]Henry Crabb Robinson Papers, DW Lib.

[33]Henry Crabb Robinson Diary, Oct. 27, 1837, DW Lib.

[34]Autobiography, III, 135-136.

[35]Gordon S. Haight, ed., The George Eliot Letters, 6 vols. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954), II, 180.

[36]R. K. Webb, Harriet Martineau, p. 13.

[37]Autobiography, II, 201, Diary, Oct. 25, 1837.

[38]John Knox Laughton, ed., Memoirs of the Life and Correspondence of Henry Reeve, 2 vols. (London and New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1898), II, 216-217, Reeve Diary, Dec. 19, 1849.

[39]James Anthony Froude, ed., Letters and Memorials of Jane Welsh Carlyle, 2 vols. in one (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1883), I, 52.

[40]Trudy Bliss, ed., Jane Welsh Carlyle: A New Selection of her Letters (New York: Macmillan, 1950) pp. 61-62, Jane Welsh Carlyle to Mrs. Eliza Aitken, March 6, 1837.

[41]Froude, ed., Jane Welsh Carlyle, I, 50, Jane Welsh Carlyle to John Sterling, Feb. 1, 1837.

[42]Quoted in Theodora Bosanquet, Harriet Martineau: an Essay in Comprehension (1927, rpt. St. Clair Shores, Mich.: Scholarly Press Inc., 1971), p. 133.

[43]Alexander Carlyle, ed., New Letters and Memorials of Jane Welsh Carlyle, 2 vols. (London and New York: John Lane, 1903), II, 4; Trudy Bliss, ed., Jane Welsh Carlyle, p. 206, Jane Welsh Carlyle to Thomas Carlyle, Sept. 14, 1849. In 1852 Martineau sat next to the Carlyles at a Thackeray lecture in London and was invited to return to Chelsea with them but was unable to do so, Harriet Martineau to Emerson, Feb. 25, [1852], Harvard, b MS AM 1280.

[44]Michael St. John Packe, The Life of John Stuart Mill (London: Secker and Warburg, 1954), p. 327; Froude, ed., Jane Welsh Carlyle, I, 365-366.

[45]Packe, John Stuart Mill, 247, 288, 251-357, 452-253; Friedrich A. Hayek, John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor: their Correspondence and Subsequent Marriage (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), pp. 79-80, 88-90.

[46]Packe, John Stuart Mill, pp. 321 ff.

[47]Hayek, John Stuart Mill, p. 103; Packe, John Stuart Mill, pp. 128, 236; Harriet Martineau to the Rev. William Ware, July 14, Sept. 15, 1837, Boston P. Lib. MS. Eng. 244 (1-16); Harriet Martineau to James Martineau, Dec. 21, 1837, Transcript Letters, M. Coll. Note: Two of the more important articles of this period were to be London and Westminster, "The Martyr Age of the United States," WR, 31 (Dec., 1838); and "Literary Lionism," WR, 32 (Apr., 1839).

[48]Eliza Bostock to Harriet Martineau, Apr. 24, 1866, BU Lib. 80; Henry Crabb Robinson to Thomas Robinson, Sept. 8, 1841; July 17, 1842, DW Lib.

[49]Henry Crabb Robinson Diary, October 16, 1839, DW Lib.

[51]See Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, "The Female World of Love and Ritual: Relations between Women in Nineteenth-Century America," Signs, 1 (Autumn, 1975), 1-29.

[52]William Lloyd Garrison to Harriet Martineau, Dec. 4, 1853, BU Lib. And see Louis Filler, Abolition and Social Justice in the Era of Reform, pp. 55, 76-77 for a modern appraisal of Chapman. R. K. Webb considers Garrison and Chapman to have been "as securely second-rate as Harriet Martineau herself," Webb, Harriet Martineau, p. 23.

[53]Haight, George Eliot Letters, VI, 351, 353, 370-372.

[54]Autobiography, I, 133.

[55]Weston Papers [notes], MS. A.9.2. vol. 6, p. 4, Boston P. Lib; Harriet Martineau to the Rev. William Ware, July 8, [?], Boston P. Li ., MS. Eng. 244 (1-16).

[56]Webb, Harriet Martineau, p. 192.

[57]The Guide to Service: The Housemaid (1839); The Lady's Maid (1838); The Maid-of-all-work (1838), London: Charles Knight.

[58]Harriet Martineau to James Martineau, Dec. 12, Dec. 21, 1837. James discouraged her from accepting the editorial position. His reasons are nowhere clearly stated, Autobiography, II, 111.

[59]Autobiography, III, 214 ff.; Deerbrook, 3 vols. (London, Moxon, 1839).

[60]Autobiography, III, 220, Diary, June 30 [1838].

[61]"Literary Lionism," WR, 32 (April, 1839), 216-268.

[62]Harriet Martineau to James Martineau, Jan. 10 or 17, 1839, Transcript Letters, M. Coll.; Letters on the Laws of Man's Nature and Development, p. 69.

[63]Harriet Martineau to James Martineau, July 14, 1830; June 6, 1832; March 6, Aug. 4, 1838; Dec. 5, 1839, Transcript Letters, M. Coll.

[64]Autobiography, III, 216, Diary, Jan. 14 [1838].

[65]Ibid., II, 150.

[66]Ibid., II, 109.

[67]Ibid., II, 113.

[68]Robert Lee Wolff, Strange Stories and other Explorations in Victorian Fiction (Boston: Gambit, 1971), p. 86.

[69]Autobiography, II, 111. It was based on Catherine Sedgwicks "Old Maids," which in turn was based on a true story.

[70]Autobiography, I, 50. Probably an American friend Dr. Follen.

[71]Athenaeum, 597 (April 6, 1839), 254-256.

[72]WR, 34 (June - Sept., 1840), 502-504 [P.M.Y.]; ER, 69 (July, 1839), 494-502 [T. H. Lister: Wellesley Index] ; Blackwood's, 47 (Feb., 1840), 177-188, p. 180 [G. S. Venables: Wellesley Index].

[73]The WR, however, applauded this aspect of her novel. She had, it said, "daring for anything, and a talent to make her enterprise successful." op. cit., 502.

[74]See Ellen Moers, "Money, the Job, and Little Women," Commentary, 55 (Jan., 1973), 57-65.

[75]Autobiography, III, 218, Diary [1838].

[76]Harriet Martineau to Milnes, April 21 [?1844], Trinity Coll.

[77]WR, op. cit., 503-4; Blackwood's, op. cit., 118; ER, op. cit., 495.

[78]Deerbrook, I, 303-310.

[79]Autobiography, III, 189, Diary [1837].

[80]Deerbrook, III, 166.

[81]Ibid., I, 67.

[82]Autobiography, I, 132.

[83]Deerbrook, I, 115.

[84]Martineau's review of Villette appeared in DN, Feb. 3, 1853.

[85]Vineta Colby, Yesterday's woman: domestic realism in the English novel (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1974), p. 256.

[86]John Morley, Critical Miscellanies [London: Macmillan, 1909], III, 195.

[87]Athenaeum, op. cit.

[88]Harriet Martineau to James Martineau, April 18, 1839, Transcript Letters, M. Coll.: Henry Crabb Robinson, Diary, Sept. 14, 1839, DW Lib.; Autobiography, III, 221.

[89]Autobiography, II, 323, Currer Bell to Harriet Martineau, Nov. 7, 1849.

[90]Drummond, James Martineau, I, 106.

[91]Thomas M. Greenhow, A Medical Report of the Case of Miss H- M- (second edition, London: Samuel Highley, 1845)pp. 9 ff., 21-22.

[92]Frederic G. Kenyon, ed., The Letters of Elizabeth Barrett Browning, one volume edition (New York: Macmillan, 1899), I, 151, Elizabeth Barrett to Mrs. Martin, Sept. 4 and 5, 1843.

[93]Autobiography, II, 150.

[94]Harriet Martineau to Henry Crabb Robinson, Jan. 8, 1841, DW Lib.; Harriet Martineau to the Rev. William Ware, June [?1840], Boston P. Lib, MS. Eng. 244 (1-16).

[95]Webb, Harriet Martineau, pp. 7, 196, 312; Cecil Woodham Smith, "They Stayed in Bed," Listener, 55 (Feb. 16, 1956), 245-246; and see Narola Elizabeth Rivenburg, Harriet Martineau: an example of Victorian conflict (Philadelphia: Columbia University Doctoral Dissertation, 1932), pp. 3-4.

[96]British Medical Journal 2 (July 8, 1876), 64; (April 14, 1877), 449-50; (April 21, 1877), 496; (May 5, 1877), 543, 550.

[97]Caroll Smith-Rosenberg, "The Hysterical Woman: Sex Roles and Role Conflict in 19th Century America," Social Research, 39 (Winter, 1972), 652-678.

[98]Ann Douglass Wood, "The Fashionable Diseases: Women's Complaints and Their Treatment in Nineteenth-Century America," Journal of Inter-Disciplinary History, 4 (Summer, 1973), 25-52.

[99]Henry Crabb Robinson to Thomas Robinson, July 7, 1842, DW Lib.; Harriet Martineau to Milnes, Dec. 4, 1841, Trinity Coll.

[100]Life in the Sick-Room (1844, second American edition, Boston: William Crosby, 1845), pp. 52-53; Harriet Martineau to Milnes, Aug. 28 [1843], Trinity Coll.; Harriet Martineau to Henry Crabb Robinson, Jan. 8, 1841, DW Lib.

[101]Henry Crabb Robinson to Thomas Robinson, July 15, 1842, DW Lib.; Harriet Martineau to the Rev. William Ware, June 21 [?1840] Boston P. Lib., MS. Eng. 244 (1-16); Julia Smith to Milnes, [?1842], Trinity Coll.; Mrs. Reid to Henry Crabb Robinson, Aug., 1842, DW Lib.

[102]Life in the Sick-Room, pp. 125-126, 40-42.

[103]Harriet Martineau to Mrs. Marshall, Sept. 29, [?], Yale, MS. Vault File 15/4.

[104]Henry Crabb Robinson to Thomas Robinson, July 7, 1842, DW Lib.

[105]Leonard Huxley, ed., Jane Welsh Carlyle: Letters to her Family 1839-1863 (New York: Doubleday, Page and Co., 1924), Jane Welsh Carlyle to Helen Welsh, October, 1841.

[106]Harriet Martineau to James Martineau, April 15, 1843, Transcript Letters, M. Coll.; Greehow, passim; Letters on the Laws of Man's Nature and Development, p. 69.

[107]Harriet Martineau to Henry Crabb Robinson, Oct. 29, 1842; and see also Nov. 27, 1843.

[108] Erasmus Darwin to Henry Crabb Robinson, Mar. 15, 1843; Harriet Martineau to James Martineau, Aug. 6, 1843; Alexander Carlyle, ed., Jane Welsh Carlyle, 119-120, Jane Welsh Carlyle to Thomas Carlyle, July 17, 1843.

[109]Harriet Martineau to James Martineau, Nov. 14, 1832; Dec. 3, 1832; Aug., 1833; Sept. 20, 1833, Transcript Letters, M. Coll.; Illustrations of Political Economy, The Three Ages, pp. 112-3, 126; Harriet Martineau to Brougham [1832], Univ. Coll.; The History of England During the Thirty Year's Peace 2 vols. (London: Charles Knight, 1849-1850), II, 80-81; Harriet Martineau to Milnes [1843], Trinity Coll.; Thomas Robinson to Henry Crabb Robinson, Nov. 9, 1842, DW Lib.; Autobiography, II, 177, 500, 544; III, 445, 447.

[110]Edward Quillinan to Henry Crabb Robinson, Nov. 28, 1842, DW Lib.

[111]Harriet Martineau to Henry Crabb Robinson, Apr. 27, 1843; July 7, 1842, DW Lib.; Harriet Martineau to Mrs. Marshall, Sept. 29 [?], Yale, Ms. Vault File 15/4.

[112]Harriet Martineau to James Martineau, Jan. 1844, Transcript Letters, M. Coll.; Harriet Martineau to Milnes, Dec. 22 [? 1843]; Harriet Martineau to Henry Crabb Robinson, March 8, 1844, DW Lib.; Harriet Martineau to the Rev. William Ware, Feb. 3, 1841, Boston P. Lib., Ms. Eng. 244 (1-16).

[113]Autobiography, II, 145, 157; III, 216.

[114]The Hour and the Man, 3 vols. (London: Moxon, 1841). See her Bibliography in III, 256, 263 ff.; Liberator, 7 (June 30, 1837) 108.

[115]The Hour and the Man, II, 248; III, 166.

[116]Harriet Martineau to Henry Crabb Robinson, Jan. 8, 1841, DW Lib.

[117]Athenaeum, 684 (Dec. 5, 1840), 958-959.

[118]Autobiography, II, 156-9.

[119]Principle and Practice; or, the Orphan Family (Wellington: Houlston, 1827 and Sequel (London: Houlston, 1831).

[120]Principle and Practice, p. 126.

[121]Life in the Sick-Room, pp. x, 22-23.

[122]Ibid., p. 34.

[123]Autobiography, II, 172.

[124]Edward Quillinan to Henry Crabb Robinson, Dec. 9, 1843, DW Lib.; and in Thomas Sadler, ed., Diary reminiscences and correspondence of Henry Crabb Robinson, 3 vols. (London: Macmillan and Co., 1869), III, 235; Henry Crabb Robinson to William Wordsworth, Dec. 16, 1843; Jan. 27, 1844, DW Lib.

[125]Paul Landis, ed., Letters of the Brownings to George Barrett (Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 1958), Elizabeth Barrett to George Barrett, Dec. 21, 1843; Harriet Martineau to Henry Crabb Robinson, Jan. 3, 1844, DW Lib.

[126]Kenyon, ed., Letters of Elizabeth Barrett Browning, I, 227-8, Elizabeth Barrett to Mrs. Jameson [fragment, Dec., 1844].

[127]Frederic G. Kenyon, ed., Letters of Elizabeth Barrett and Robert Browning, I, 225, Elizabeth Barrett to H. S. Boyd, Dec. 24, 1844; Elvan Kintner, ed., The Letters of Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett Barrett 1845-1846, 2 vols. (Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1969), I, 306; and see also Weston Papers [notes] Boston P. Lib., Ms. A. 9. 2. vol. 5/108; Betty Miller, Elizabeth Barrett and Miss Mitford (London: John Murray, 1954), pp. 212-213, Elizabeth Barrett to Miss Mitford, Jan. 11, 1844; Kenyon, Letters of Elizabeth Barrett and Robert Browning, I, 196, Elizabeth Barrett to Mrs. Martin [Sept., 1844].

[128]Harriet Martineau to Henry Crabb Robinson, April 27, 1843, DW Lib.

[129]Harriet Martineau to Henry Crabb Robinson, July 20, 1843; Nov. 27, 1843, DW Lib.

[130]Greenhow, Medical Report, p. 18.

[131]Henri F. Ellenberger, The Discovery of the Unconscious (New York: Basic Books, 1970), pp. 57 ff.; Frank Podmore, From Mesmerism to Christian Science (1963 , New Hyde Park, N. Y.: University Books, 1965); Eric J. Dingwall, Abnormal Hypnotic Phenomena, 4 vols. (London: J. and A. Churchill, 1967-1968), IV, 84 ff.; Jonathan Miller, "Mesmerism," Listener, 90 (Nov. 22, 1973), 685-690.

[132]"Mesmeric Mountebanks," Blackwoods, 60 (Aug., 1846), 223-237.

[133]Life in the Sick-Room, p. 83.

[134]Harriet Martineau to Milnes, July 2, 1844, Trinity Coll.; "Letters on Mesmerism," Athenaeum, 891 (Nov. 23, 1844), 1071 ff.; 892 (Nov. 30, 1844), 1093 ff.; 895 (Dec. 21, 1844), 1174-1175; Autobiography, II, 191 ff. Note: except in the case of ill-health it was unusual for a social inferior to mesmerize a social superior, E. Dingwall, op. cit., p. 119.

[135]"Letters on Mesmerism," Athenaeum, 891 (Nov. 23, 1844) 1071; Harriet Martineau to Henry Crabb Robinson, Oct. 6, 1844, DW Lib.; Harriet Martineau to Milnes [? 1844]; Oct. 27 [1844], Trinity Coll.; Harriet Martineau to Lord Advocate Murray, Feb. 13, 1845, Yale MS. Vault File.

[136]Harriet Martineau to Milnes, May 23 [1845], Trinity Coll.

[137]Henry Crabb Robinson to Miss Fenwick, Jan 27, 1845; Harriet Martineau to Henry Crabb Robinson, June 24, 1845, DW Lib.

[138]Kintner, Letters of Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett Barrett, I, 349-350, Elizabeth Barrett to Robert Browning, Dec. 30, 1845; Henry Crabb Robinson to Miss Fenwick, Jan. 27, 1845; Harriet Martineau to Henry Crabb Robinson, June 24, 1845, DW Lib.

[139]Greenhow, Medical Report, p. 23.

[140]Spencer T. Hall, Mesmeric Experiences (London: H. Balliere, 1845), p. 68.

[141]Autobiography, III, 238, Diary, Sept. 24 [1841]; Greenhow, Medical Report, p. 15.

[142]Harriet Martineau to Henry Crabb Robinson, April 27, 1843, DW Lib.; Greenhow, Medical Report, p. 14.

[143]Webb's quotation is from "Essays on the Art of Thinking," MR, 3 (1829), his references to Greenhow are from Medical Report, p. 23.

[144]Harriet Martineau to Henry Crabb Robinson, Oct. 6, 1844, DW Lib.

[145]Even after Jane admitted the deception Martineau kept her on in domestic service. Jane was not the maid who mesmerized Martineau.

[146]Athenaeum, 896 (Dec. 28, 1844), 1198-1199; 897 (Jan. 4, 1845), 14; 908 (March 22, 1845), 290-291; 909 (March 29, 1845), 310-311; and see also Blackwood's, 70 (July, 1851), 70-85 [John Eagles: Wellesley Index].

[147]Henry Crabb Robinson to Thomas Robinson, Dec. 6, 1844; and see also Thomas Robinson to Henry Crabb Robinson, Dec. 25, 1845, DW Lib.

[148]Henry Crabb Robinson to Miss Fenwick, Jan. 27, 1845; and see Henry Crabb Robinson to Thomas Robinson, Oct. 5, 1844; Mrs. Arnold to Henry Crabb Robinson, Oct. 11, 1844, DW Lib.

[149]Kintner, op. cit., I, 424, Robert Browing to Elizabeth Barrett, Jan. 27, 1846; Kenyon, op. cit., I, 217, Elizabeth Barrett to Mrs. Martin [Sept., 1844]; I, 196-197, Elizabeth Barrett to Mrs. Martin, Nov. 26, 1844; I, 219-220, Elizabeth Barrett to James Martin, Dec. 10, 1844; I, 255-258, Elizabeth Barrett to Mr. Chorley, Apr. 28, 1845; I, 212; Elizabeth Barrett to John Kenyon, Nov. 8, 1844; Miller, op. cit., pp. 233-234, Elizabeth Barrett to Miss Mitford, Jan. 15 [1845].

[150]Alexander Carlyle, op. cit., I, 158, Jane Welsh Carlyle to Mrs. Russell, Dec. 27 [1844]; Froude, Jane Welsh Carlyle, I, 309-312, Jane Welsh Carlyle to John Welsh, Dec. 13, 1847.

[151]Garnett, Fox, p. 75.

[152]William Wordsworth to Henry Crabb Robinson, Feb. 2, 1845; Aug. 7, 1845; and see also Miss Fenwick to Henry Crabb Robinson, July 1, 1845, DW Lib.

[153]Henry Crabb Robinson to Thomas Robinson, Jan. 24, 1845, DW Lib.; Harriet Martineau to Milnes [n.d.], Trinity Coll.

[154]Autobiography, II, 198 n.; Harriet Martineau to Edward Moxon [dated 1841 but probably 1844 or 1845], Oxford, Bodleian, MS. Eng. Lett. d2 86.

[155]Harriet Martineau to James Martineau, 1845, Transcript Letters M. Coll.; Weston Papers (Notes), Boston P. Lib. MS. A. 9.2. vol. 16, p. 13.

[156]Harriet Martineau to the Rev. William Ware, July 14, 1837; July 8, 1838, Boston P. Lib. MS. Eng. 244 (1-16).

[157]Harriet Martineau to Henry Crabb Robinson, June 24, 1845, DW Lib. In 1841, however, she was still fondly recalling her pleasure at James's birth, Harriet Martineau to Emerson, Aug. 8, 1841, Harvard, b MS. HM 1280.

[158]Harriet Martineau to Henry Crabb Robinson, June 24, 1845, DW Lib.

[159]James Martineau, "The Early Days of Harriet Martineau," DN, Dec. 30, 1884. Note: Fox's biographer Richard Garnett who had read Martineau's letters to Fox said that "no one would gain so much from their publication as the writer." Fox, 80-81.

[160] Weston Papers (Notes), MS. A. 9. 2. vol. 16, p. 3.

[161] Haight, George Eliot Letters, VI, 371, George Eliot to Sara Sophia Hennell, May 15, 1877.

[162] Autobiography, II, 200-201.

[163] "Autobiographic Memoir," DN, June 29, 1876; Autobiography, II, 205.

[164] Harriet Martineau to Lord Advocate Murray, Feb. 13, 1845, Yale, MS. Vault File 15/4; Harriet Martineau to Milnes, Feb. 28 [1845], Trinity Coll.; Harriet Martineau to Henry Crabb Robinson, June 24, 1845, DW Lib.

[165] Mrs. Wordsworth to Henry Crabb Robinson, Sept. 16, 1845, DW Lib.

[166] Kintner, op. cit., I, 459-463, Harriet Martineau to Elizabeth Barrett, Feb. 8, 1846; and see I, 464, Robert Browning's comment to Elizabeth Barrett, Feb. 15, 1846; Autobiography, II, 225 ff.

[167] See A Complete Guide to the English Lakes (1855, second ed., Windermere: John Garnett, 1855); Autobiography, III, 262.

[168] Harriet Martineau to Arthur Allen, Oct. 19 [1852] Yale, MS. Vault File; Harriet Martineau to Florence Nightingale, Sept. 6, 1867, B. Museum 45788/314.

[169] The original plans for "The Knoll" are among Martineau's Papers BU Lib.

[170] Kintner, op. cit., I, 459-463, Harriet Martineau to Elizabeth Barrett, Feb. 8, 1846; Henry Crabb Robinson to Miss Fenwick, Jan. 15, 1848, DW Lib.; Our Farm of Two Acres, orig. in Once a Week (New York: Bunce and Huntington, 1865), pp. 8, 13.

[171] Henry Crabb Robinson to Miss Fenwick, July 16, 1845, DW Lib.

[172] Harriet Martineau to Henry Crabb Robinson, Feb. 8, 1846, DW Lib.

[173] William Wordsworth to Henry Crabb Robinson, Aug. 7, 1845, DW Lib.

[174] Haight, George Eliot Letters, II, 62, George Eliot to Mr. and Mrs. Bray, Oct. 21, 1852; and see also I, 188, 189, 192, 361; II, 4-5, 27, 32, 65, 80, 86, 88, 96, 122, 229, 258.

[175] Autobiography, III, 289-290, Charlotte Brontë to Emily Brontë.

[176] Webb, Harriet Martineau, 262; Autobiography, II, 306-308; Agreement of Rent, May 12, 1852, Bu Lib., HM 1312.

[177]Mrs. Wordsworth to Henry Crabb Robinson, Nov. 7, 1845, DW Lib.

[178]Harriet Martineau to Emerson, July 2 [1845], Harvard, b MS AM 1280.

[179]Edward Quillinan to Henry Crabb Robinson, June 6, 1848; Aug. 17, 1849, DW Lib.

[180]Autobiography, III, 110-112, Mr. Gilman to E. G. Loring [1835].

[181]Harriet Martineau to Emerson, Feb. 25 [1852], Harvard, b MS AM 1280.

[182]Autobiography, III, 275.

[183]Harriet Martineau to Arthur Allen, Dec. 16 [?], Yale, MS. Vault File 15/4.

CHAPTER VI

THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND DURING THE THIRTY YEARS' PEACE 1816 TO 1846[1]

In 1848, when Martineau began writing The History of the Thirty Years' Peace 1816 to 1846, she was writing of her own times. As a journalist rather than an historian she was, perhaps, singularly well-suited to her task. The reviewer in the Athenaeum was unequivocal on this score:

> There are few living authors who may be so implicitly trusted with the task of writing cotemporary [sic] history as Miss Martineau. She has spared no pains in investigating the truth, and allowed no fears to prevent her stating it. Errors will be found in her book; but they arise from imperfection of evidence - not from prejudice or from negligence.[2]

The reviewer described The History as "as impartial a contemporary history as could be hoped from any pen," but to the modern historian Martineau's objectivity is somewhat suspect and indeed, her History becomes important as much for her patently obvious bias as for her contemporaneity. Martineau viewed her times with the eyes of a Political Economist who, though intimidated by the enormity of the task before her, had from the outset every expectation of enjoying "not a little writing of the gains we have made in freedom through peace and its attendant influences."[3] Progress through freedom and peace were the essential ingredients of Political Economic philosophy, and, in a sense, concluding as it did in the year of Corn Law repeal, the History was a celebration of those laissez-faire ideals which Harriet Martineau had sought to propagate more than a decade and a half earlier; the History provided an epilogue to the Illustrations of Political Economy.

The Harriet Martineau who set her hand to the writing of the history of her times, was not the inexperienced author of the Illustrations. Her

professional skills had immeasurably improved, and her attitude had significantly broadened. Although still a laissez-fairist; although a Ricardian with regard to the Corn Laws, and a democrat with regard to government, Martineau recognized and was prepared to concede that in spite of the progress of liberalization and the implementation of the Utilitarian legislative proposals which she had agitated for in the past, her England was not yet utopia. Martineau, it is undeniable, wrote about progress, but she was not in Herbert Butterfield's sense a "Whig" historian. Elie Halévy, who used her History as a source for his classic History of the English People in the Nineteenth Century, noted that Harriet Martineau "generally regarded as nothing but a popularizer of orthodox utilitarianism in its most commonplace and middle-class form," had viewed the era which saw the apparent triumph of laissez-faire with less than equanimity.[4] Although her History was a history of progress, it was not whig history. It was not in the tradition of her contemporary, Thomas Babington Macaulay, who, in G. M. Young's phrase "brought all history to glorify the age of which he was the most honoured child."[5]

Macaulay's early radicalism was tinged with enough Benthamism to make him, initially at least, the hope and darling of the Utilitarians. But Macaulay's reformism was the reformism of eighteenth-century whiggery. His radicalism owed as much to Foxite attitudes towards administrative privilege and corruption, and to the Evangelical spirit of the Clapham sect, as it did to Benthamite philosophy. The confidence and expectation which Philosophic Radicals had reposed in Macaulay turned to disappointment long before the 1848 publication of the first volume of his History. Macaulay did not believe in limitless progress or all-

embracing democracy: he thought, like Lord "Finality John" Russell in the 1840s, that democracy had gone far enough when it embraced the middle class and that by the mid-nineteenth century the ends of progress had been achieved. Macaulay was, or appeared to be, content with his age, and although this apparent content may have masked an underlying disquiet, it nevertheless significantly colored his interpretation of history. He judged and justified the actions of the past as they related to the evolution of an evidently satisfactory present.[6] Harriet Martineau, for all her middle-class prejudices, did not accept Macaulay's interpretation. She described his History as "stimulating, and even, to a degree, suggestive," but it was "a brilliant fancy piece," "an historical romance;" it was not history or truth as she perceived it.[7] She could not accept as verity Macaulay's brilliant historical impressionism; she could not tolerate either his political bias or his treachery to the radical cause.[8] Her own social consciousness was not satisfied with the achievements of her era.

Martineau was a radical writing about a period of radical change and reform. But she did not regard the revolution as complete. As a Necessarian and an embryonic Comtean, Martineau considered her age as a period of "transition:" as a part of the evolutionary process--a "partial advance twoards the grand slow general advance which we humbly but firmly trust to be the destination of the human race."[9] Martineau was still imbued with much of the old optimism as late as 1843:

> We see [she had written in Life in the Sick-Room] that large principles are more extensively agreed upon than ever before - . . . . We see that the tale of the multitude is told as it never was before - their health, their minds and morals, pleaded for in a tone perfectly new in the world. We see that the dreadful sins and woes of society are the results of old causes, and

> that our generation has the honor of being responsible for their relief, while the disgrace of their existence belongs certainly not to our time, and perhaps to none. We see that no spot on earth ever before contained such an amount of infallible resources as our own country at this day, so much knowledge, so much sense, so much vigor, foresight, and benevolence, or such an amount of external means.[10]

But 1843 had been a bountiful year in England. The country had just come out of a six year period of depression, it had already achieved a measure of Parliamentary reform, and under Prime Minister Peel it was headed for the long-sought repeal of the Corn Laws--of this Martineau was certain. Then, hard on the heels of this respite from want and worker protest, had come the disastrous crop failures of 1845, 1846 and 1847, the famine in Ireland, and the Chartist protests and continental revolutions of 1848. Martineau's confidence was shaken. She could no longer be naively optimistic. The prescribed solutions had seemingly failed to achieve the desired results and the question of the Condition of England remained unresolved:

> The tremendous Labour Question [she confessed in the conclusion to her History] remains absolutely untouched - the question whether the toil of a life is not to provide a sufficiency of bread. No thoughtful man can for a moment suppose that this question can be put aside. No man with a head and a heart can suppose that any considerable class of a nation will submit for ever to toil incessantly for bare necessaries - without comfort, ease, or luxury, now - without prospect for their children, and without a hope for their own old age. A social idea or a system which compels such a state of things as this, must be, in so far, worn out. In ours, it is clear that some renovation is wanted, and must be found. . . . If it be true, as some say, that the labourer's life-long toil demands a return, not only of sufficient food, and a domestic shelter for his old age, but of intellectual and spiritual culture, what can we say to the intellectual and spiritual state of the lower portion of our working classes? . . . we ought to put ourselves in their place, . . . and then we shall understand how suspicious they must be of promises of unseen and future good [precisely the sort of promises she had made in the Illustrations] when it is offered as better than the substantial good which they see others enjoying,

> and feel to be their due . . . they will not acquiesce while they see that those who work less are more comfortable; and they are not told why. *This is what remains for us to do; - to find out the why, and to make everybody understand it* [my italics throughout].[11]

Martineau described her *History* as "the bulkiest of her works and the most laborious."[12] She had undertaken it at the request of Charles Knight. Knight, publisher for the S.D.U.K., disseminated many reasonably priced and informative publications by which it was hoped the less prosperous members of the society would improve their lot and their understanding: *The Penny Cyclopedia*, *The British Almanac and Companion*, *The Penny Magazine*, *The Library of Entertaining Knowledge*, *The Journal of Education*, and *The Gallery of Portraits*. He had started writing the *History* himself in 1846, and had intended it for the same middle and artisan class of reader as subscribed to his other publications. His intention was to give his readers an understanding of the events of their own times. And he planned to issue the work inexpensively in monthly numbers. After writing the history of the period from Waterloo (1815) to Peterloo (1819), however, Knight's business commitments made it impossible to continue with the project. The work lay uncompleted for two years and the subscribers were seemingly abandoned until 1848 when Knight was able to persuade Martineau to continue from where he had left off.[13] He supplied her with a bountiful quantity of reference materials, which she was careful to acknowledge in very correct footnotes, and with her usual determination, but somewhat oppressed by the enormity of the task, she began her work.

The *History of the Peace* consisted initially of six books, of which Martineau wrote all but the first. After the appearance of the last of

the monthly issues, the entire work was published in a two volume edition, in 1849 and 1850. It was so immediately successful that Knight suggested extending the work at both ends.[14] In 1851 Martineau published Introduction to the History of the Peace 1800 to 1815.[15] But she did not immediately began work on the concluding volume which was to have taken The History to the present. In 1851 a combination of Knight's financial difficulties and his shock over Martineau's and Atkinson's Letters on the Laws and Nature of Man's Development caused him to sell the entire series to W. S. Orr. The final chapters, which took the work up to the Crimean War, were not written until an American edition of the entire work was published in 1864. This publication, The History of England from the Commencement of the XIXth Century to the Crimean War was an enlarged edition of the original work. But although the additional section was briefer and less meticulous than the earlier sections preceding it, the American edition has its own significance for the modern historian. The original History had been written at the end of the hungry forties. The new work was written in the prosperous sixties; when Parliamentary Reform, so long delayed, appeared not too distant; when free trade was the established policy and British commerce and British prosperity seemed unchallengeable; when destitution seemed to have taken a holiday, and labor quiescence had replaced labor unrest; and when, in spite of the cotton famine caused by the American Civil War, the operatives had borne their temporary privations with fortitude. Yet, in spite of all this, Martineau chose to conclude the final volume with the cautionary paragraphs which had ended the earlier work. "The tremendous labor question," she reiterated, "remains absolutely untouched." On the face of

this evidence it would seem that Martineau remained as dubious about the true extent of Britain's progress as she had been fifteen years earlier. However, the reasons for her fear had shifted. In the Preface to the American edition she told her readers that the condition of British labor and British poor had improved and was improving, and that:

> The ground of fear is that popular liberty is overborne by the Trades Unions of our days. It seems to be so in every country where such combinations can take place; and the anxious questions are the same in all such cases; the questions how to protect the liberties of individual workers against the dictation and tyranny of leaders and pretenders of their own class; and what are the chances of the class becoming informed and enlightened in regard to their legal and constitutional liberties in time to check the spirit of despotism in the few, and animate that of peaceful resistance to oppression in the many. At present, the Trades Unions of the United Kingdom are its greatest apparent danger.[16]

Neither the introductory nor the concluding additions to the History was as well-wrought as the initial portion of the work. The final section provided a conclusion to some of the issues raised in the original publication, and in spite of its brevity it therefore has an intrinsic interest. But the first section, that which dealt with the years 1800 to 1815, was primarily a narrative of events. It lacked much of the insight and observation which characterized the History of the Thirty Years' Peace because she was writing about a period which she barely remembered. The Introduction lacked the immediacy and the personal bias which gave the original two volumes their contemporary importance and which continue to give them significance. Our attention, therefore, shall be focussed primarily upon the original five books of Martineau's History of Peace, and on the period from 1820 to 1846 which they covered.

Martineau's sources were the Annual Register, Hansard, leading political memoirs and biographies, and the most important current

journals and newspapers. She catalogued chiefly the political confrontations and Parliamentary proceedings which accompanied the enactment of reform legislation. She wrote about the nation's economic fluctuations. She was concerned about social problems especially as they affected the working class. She was interested in foreign and imperial policy. And she described the leading personalities of the period. But, as the reviewer in the British Quarterly Review pointed out:

> It [The History] is. . . . a series of review articles, not very dexterously fused together. The tendency of the author is not to tell the story of England during the thirty years, but to collect from the records of that story certain political events, and round them to group the rest as best she may.[17]

Nevertheless the reviewer recommended the History to the reader:

> The history of the Thirty Years' Peace painfully obtrudes . . . upon our notice . . . the most striking and universal advance in political knowledge and popular tendencies; and we are forced to reflect that this advance has not been accompanied by any adequate increase of comfort to the operatives, but rather by a gradual depreciation of labour.

The chief events of Martineau's History were the Reform Act of 1832 and the repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846. For Martineau both events symbolized progress: the first represented the democratization of the old aristocratic legislative process, and the second marked the end of ancient commercial monopoly and heralded the free trade era. However, as the British Quarterly Review had noted, there was a dark descant side to the story: the nagging question of working-class suffering and working-class protest remained. This, the third 'event' in Martineau's History punctuated the years from the time of Peterloo and culminated in the Chartist decade with which the original volumes of the History ended. Penetrating the History too, as it did the political, social, and

economic fibre of Britain, was the question of Ireland; the fourth 'event' in Martineau's History with which the present chapter will be concerned.

Martineau was writing about an England in which industrialization and urbanization had become irreversible facts. She recognized cotton manufacturing as "one of the leading social events of the last century."[18] And she noted the demonstrable demographic shift which had transferred thousands from the agricultural to the manufacturing center, and which had as a consequence significantly altered the balance between town and country.[19] But although aware of these collosal changes in the national life, Martineau devoted little time to them. She mentioned the technical advances of the industrializing process, especially as they affected the economy, but she did investigate the effects of this process on the society. She barely alluded to the urban conditions which so appalled Tocqueville and Engels. Martineau was a Radical writing about a period of reform and it was on this aspect of nineteenth-century history that she placed her emphasis, for in spite of her nagging doubts, her England seemed to be changing for the better, and her History reflected a pride in the achievements of the age.

She began, where Knight had left off, with the years which followed Peterloo. It was a period which symbolized for her the beginning of the reform process. The massacre at St. Peter's Fields in 1819 had marked the end of an era. The 1820s witnessed, as Halévy has pointed out, an emphatic change in the radical leadership of the country.[20] In place of the old Tory radicals Cobbett, Hunt and Carlyle had come the Utilitarian

reformers. Where Cobbett, for example had been a reactionary radical, resisting change and opposing the mechanization of a disappearing rural England, the new reformers were heralds of that change. Instead of seeking to reverse the trend of the industrialized age, the new reformers were advocates of the same industrial advancement which Cobbett had denounced. The radical leadership had shifted to middle-class reformers who supported change and opposed all that the past represented: the ancient privileges of the old landed and commercial aristocracies. But in spite of their origins and in spite of their proclivities, these reformers did not aim to represent the narrow sectarian interests of their own class. They were not simply the have-nots trying to wrest influence from the haves. As Joseph Hamburger has noted in Intellectuals in Politics (1965), the aim of these reformers was to promote good impartial government based upon the principles of Benthamite Utility.[21] And although they drew their chief support from the over-taxed and under-represented middle class, they did not consider themselves the spokesmen for that or any class. They believed, according to Adam Smith's identity of interests principle, that good government would benefit all the people.[22] These were the aims of James Mill and the early Benthamite reformers. Their tools were not those of demagoguery but of philosophical and political persuasion. And as early as the 1820s they began to insinuate their laissez-faire ideals into the lofty antique halls of government.

The 1820s witnessed not only a change in the radical leadership of the nation but also a subtle change in the country's administrative leadership. Gone with the Hunts and the Cobbetts were the Sidmouths and

Eldons, and in their place began to be heard more moderate voices. In her description of this period Martineau wrote of the reform trend, and of the men who became the agents of the laws which promoted laissez-faire in the economy, and liberalism in domestic and foreign policy. She credited Huskisson for seeing "furthest into the nature and necessity" of free trade, and she eulogized Canning as the chief architect of a liberalized political philosophy in government--she succumbed completely to the radical anti-Castlereagh propaganda of the day; she identified Castlereagh with the repressive policies of Sidmouth, and failed to attribute to him the earliest of Britain's liberal policies abroad.[23]

Martineau viewed this period of British history in Necessarian and Comtean terms: it was she wrote, a time of peace and "organic change" in which "the individual will succumbs to the workings of general laws. The statesman can no longer be a political hero, over-ruling influences and commanding events. He can only be a statesman in the new days who is the servant of principles - the agent of the great natural laws of society."[24] Martineau was writing of the 1820s but, writing in 1848, she clearly had the Peel of 1846 in mind. She may also have been referring obliquely to the philosophy of Carlyle who put his faith in men rather than principles. Martineau, however, in spite of the occasional 'hero' in her History saw all such men as the functionaries of irresistible natural laws. And in the 1820s, she believed that, "Men were going unconsciously into the great change which the next twenty years were to accomplish."[25]

Martineau appreciated the capacity of the Liverpool ministers to "reconcile themselves to the changes which they had found themselves

compelled to make."[26] Unlike Disraeli who described Liverpool as "the Arch-Mediocrity himself,"[27] she commended Liverpool for his ability to conciliate the disparate elements in his cabinet:

> [Lord Liverpool] was a good balance-wheel when the movements of parties might otherwise be going too fast. He had no striking ability, either in action or in speech. He was diligent, upright, exceedingly heavy, and, as his friends well knew, extremely anxious under his sense of responsibility. . . . It appears strange that a man of his cast, - merely respectable in abilities and characteristics, should have held office so long - (the premiership for fifteen years) - in times of such stir and convulsion: but the fact was, his highest ability was that of choosing and conciliating men [my italics]. . . . Nobody quarrelled with him: and he set his weight against his colleagues quarrelling with each other.[28]

Martineau appreciated that the 1820s had been a turning-point in the nation's history: that a time was coming "requiring for its administration a new order of men."[29] Because it had been a decade of transition it has been variously interpreted by later historians. Still perhaps the best authorities for the period are Halévy and William R. Brock, and each saw the Liverpool years in a different light. Halévy characterized the period as a time which saw the "decomposition of the Tory Party," but Brock in Lord Liverpool and Liberal Toryism (1941), interpreted the growth of tory liberalism in a more positive light.[30] What Halévy viewed as the administrative weaknesses of the Liverpool Ministry, Brock perceived as its administrative strengths. And for all their differing conclusions both historians were essentially correct in their interpretations. In essence the old Tory Party did decompose in the 1820s, but its survival in that decade owed a great deal to Liverpool's willingness to compromise with the ideas of change. When it eventually failed at the end of the decade it was because it had compromised too much for its traditional supporters and too little for the liberal wing of the party.

In her History Martineau selected the funeral of the Duke of York in January, 1827 to symbolize the passing of the old order:

> If those who attended that funeral could have seen their own position between the past and the future as we see it now, it would have so absorbed their thoughts as that the body might have been lowered into its vault unseen, and the funeral anthems have been unheard. A more singular assemblage than the doomed group about the mouth of that vault has seldom been seen. In virtue of our survivorship, we can observe them now, each one with his fate hovering over his uncovered head.

George IV, the eighteenth-century roué, was lingering himself and did not attend his brother's funeral. But the mourners who did attend were, as Martineau pointed out, doomed themselves to follow the royal Duke within but a little while. Liverpool, Canning and Huskisson--the essence of Tory liberalism--would all be gone from the scene before the end of the decade. And the policy of repressive conservatism which the Duke of York had represented and for which he had been a rallying-point would also be doomed not long after his demise. The Chief Mourner, his brother the Duke of Clarence, would be the monarch "in whose reign was to occur that vital renovation of our representative system." And York's successor as Commander-in-Chief, the Duke of Wellington would preside over a Tory cabinet which would yield the privileges which the established church had so long and jealously preserved, Wellington's government would repeal the Test and Corporation Acts, which had for so long disabled the Dissenters, and would pass the legislation, which would at last emancipate the Catholics:

> What a group was here collected, within the curtain of the future, seeing nothing but the vault at their feet, and the banners of the past waving above their heads. . . . But what they saw not, we, as survivors, see; and what they heard not, we hear; for now that curtain of futurity is hung up over our heads as banners of the past; and the summons of death and

> the popular will, and of individual conscience, are still audible to us, - not in their first stunning crash, but as funereal echoes to which those banners float.[31]

The Tory Chancellor, Lord Eldon also attended the Duke of York's funeral, but he had seemed utterly unaware of the symbolic importance of the moment so preoccupied had he been with the fear that he might catch cold that he had "stood upon his hat to avoid chill from the flags." Lord Eldon represented in Martineau's History that aristocratic spirit which she hoped to see supplanted "in all its manifestations."[32] Eldon was for her, the archetypal reactionary: "the grand impediment in the way of improvement - the heavy drag upon social happiness in the country he professed to love so well."[33] Her depiction of Eldon, could, therefore, hardly have been without bias. But she paid careful, if somewhat ironic attention to the opinions of the Tory Lord Chancellor, and she described him with a light, almost Gilbertian, touch. Her treatment was not without skill or method--by making his obfuscations seem a little ridiculous she reduced them from the sinister, but she made the reformers, by contrast, appear all the more earnest. Lord Eldon had been the staunchest upholder of the Church, and the last supporter of the ancient constitution. The decade of the twenties saw the erosion of old religious privileges. The thirties would be the decade of Parliamentary Reform.

Martineau had grown up in the reigns of the last Georges. Her family had had little reverence for the royal incumbents and she therefore came quite naturally by her republican sentiments. In her Illustrations of Political Economy tale The Three Ages she had listed the "Dignity of the Sovereign" last in her list of national spending priorities. Her

attitude toward William IV had been tolerant but hardly respectful. And although she had gone to Victoria's coronation in 1837, hopeful that the young girl who had wept over her Illustrations would restore the obligations of monarchy and resume responsibility for her people, her hopes had soon been disappointed.[34] She was to look back upon Victoria's coronation as an occasion which had:

> . . . strengthened, instead of relaxing my sense of the unreal character of monarchy in England. The contrast between the traditional ascription of power to the sovereign and the actual fact was too strong to be overpowered by pageantry, music, and the blasphemous religious services of the day. After all was said and sung, the sovereign remained a nominal ruler, who could not govern by her own mind and will; who had influence but no political power.[35]

She interpreted the Bedchamber Question of 1839 not as evidence of the reassertion of political power by the queen, but rather as a political ploy by the dying Whig administration to mislead the young sovereign, and to frustrate the formation of a Tory Government.[36] Indeed, by the time she came to write the History, Martineau had long concluded that the crown had "no longer any power but for obstruction."[37]

National power had passed from the monarchy to "a Venetian oligarchy," in Disraeli's phrase. And it was this aristocratic dominion which the Parliamentary Reformers threatened. Harriet Martineau, when a neophyte journalist writing for the Monthly Repository, had thrown her weight behind the movement which pledged to transfer the national leadership from its most ornamental members to its most productive ones. She had even written a "Reform Song" which, set to the music of "Scots, wha hae," had been sung at political union meetings and monster rallies:

Now's the day, and now's the hour!
Freedom is our nation's dower,
Put we forth a nation's power,
Struggling to be free!

Raise your front the foe to daunt!
Bide no more the snare, the taunt!-
Peal to highest heaven the chaunt,-
"Law and Liberty!"[38]

James Mill and, through his influence Jeremy Bentham, had endorsed the concept of democracy: of universal male suffrage. Without endorsing the system of party government, Mill had given his support to the principle of representative government. Political party, he believed, unavoidably represented its own special interests. As a proponent of impartiality in government Mill believed that no party could claim to speak for 'The People.' To him 'The People' did not simply mean the populace, but all the people.[39] And he believed emphatically in the ability of the greatest number of that people in achieving its own greatest happiness. Majority rule held no fears for the elder Mill. But other nineteenth-century thinkers, interpreting 'The People' to mean the mob, quailed before the concept of democracy. Carlyle descanted on:

> The notion that a man's liberty consists in him giving his vote at election hustings, and saying, 'Behold, now I have my twenty-thousandth part of a Talker in our National Palaver.'[40]

Matthew Arnold, who confided privately to Martineau that "The majority of the people have no ideas," stated publicly at the time of the second Reform Bill agitation that the English concept of equality had been:

> . . . convenient enough so long as there were only the Barbarians and the Philistines to do what they liked, but [was] getting inconvenient, and productive of anarchy, now that the Populace wants to do what it likes too.[41]

John Stuart Mill had raised the spectre of his doubt in his 1838 essay on Bentham, when he had first voiced his fear of the tyranny of the majority:

> . . . we cannot think that Bentham made the most useful employment which might have been made of his great powers, when, not content with enthroning the majority as sovereign, by means of universal suffrage, without kind, or house of lords, he exhausted all the resources of ingenuity in devising means of riveting the yoke of public opinion closer and closer round the necks of all public functionaries, and excluding every possibility of the exercise of the slightest or most temporary influence either by a minority, or by the functionary's own notions of right. *Surely when any power has been made the strongest power, enough has been done for it: care is thenceforth wanted rather to prevent that strongest power from swallowing up all others. Wherever all the forces of society act in one single direction, the just claims of the individual human being are in extreme peril* [my italics].[42]

The younger Mill later revived these doubts and restated them with greater force in *On Liberty* in 1859:

> The will of the people, moreover, practically means the will of the most numerous or the most active *part* of the people - the majority, or those who succeed in making themselves accepted as the majority. . . . there needs protection . . . against the tyranny of the prevailing opinion and feeling, against the tendency of society to impose, by other means than civil penalties, its own ideas and practices as rules of conduct on those who dissent from them; to fetter the development and, if possible, prevent the formation of any individuality not in harmony with its ways, and compel all characters to fashion themselves upon the model of its own. *There is a limit to the legitimate interference of collective opinion with individual independence*; and to find that limit, and maintain its encroachment, is as indispensable to a good condition of human affairs as protection against political despotism [my italics].[43]

Martineau did not ignore the doubts of those who could not give unqualified support to the ideals of democracy:

> A representative system is worse than a despotism for a nation which has no ideas to represent - no clear conception of its political duties, rights and privileges - no intellect and no conscience in regard to social affairs. The opponents of both Parliamentary and Municipal Reform feared the ignorance and

> the self-will of the mass of the people; and not without reason . . . the question was how to deal with it. Either the people must be governed without participation from themselves - that is England must go back into despotism; or the people must be educated into a capacity for being governed by themselves, through the principle of representation. The only possible education for political, as for all other moral duty, is by the exercise of the duty itself.[44]

Martineau did not appear to fear the levelling spirit which was abroad; and she had scant sympathy for the selfish fears of those who did:

> The fearful by nature [she had written in Society in America] would compose an aristocracy, the hopeful by nature a democracy, were all other causes of divergence done away. . . . Men who have gained wealth, whose hope is fulfilled, and who fear loss by change, are naturally of the aristocratic class. So are men of learning, who unconsciously identifying learning with wisdom, fear the elevation of the ignorant to a station like their own. So are men of talent, who, having gained the power which is the fit recompense of achievement, dread the having to yield it to numbers instead of desert.[45]

Martineau saw democracy as inevitable, and appeared to view the prospect with equanimity. In 1842, at the time of the Plug Riots and the Chartist Protests she had calmly warned Richard Monckton Milnes:

> Are you prepared, if you live to be old, to part with a good many of your social privileges? It is coming to that, depend upon it. We are not far from such a bouleversement as will throw every man of you on his manliness. . . . The smuggest of you will be shaken out of your nests and happy those who can fly, and not flutter or droop, in such a tempest as is driving up. We may get over this year quietly; but not thirty years, - nor twenty, - in my belief.[46]

Martineau was under no illusions about the Reform Act of 1832. She saw it as nothing more than a token gesture towards democracy, and she believed that its significance lay, not in its immediate effect upon the representativeness of Parliament, but rather in its promise of "the achievement hereafter of a real representation."[47] The Reform Act had left Parliament aristocratic in tone and corrupt in electoral practice.

All attempts by the Radicals to introduce a Ballot Bill had been baulked, and the Whigs had considered the 1832 achievement of limited Parliamentary reform as final.[48]

Many of the aristocratic members of the House who had voted for reform had done so out of fear of the violence which might ensure if they resisted the demand for change.[49] The Radical Reformers, unlike the Cobbetts and Hunts of a previous generation, had consciously employed the threat rather than the actuality of violence in order to achieve reform.[50] Martineau, was probably aware of these Radical tactics, and in the History, she commented on the disturbances which had given credence to the fear. There had always existed the possibility, she said, that "a protracted opposition would raise these poor people in riot, and turn the necessary revolution, from being a peaceful one, into an overthrow of law and order." But in spite of the hopes of the hungry who had misguidedly believed that Parliamentary reform would materially improve their condition, there had been very little actual disturbance of the public peace. Apart from the "revolutionary" state of the country, and a few isolated incidents, the non-electors had behaved, she said, so as to make "a satire on the then existing system of representation."[51]

But the threat of violence and revolution can be as effective as violence itself. And in the two years which preceded the Reform Act the climate of fear had undeniably existed. Not only had there been agitations in England, but on the Continent there had been effective revolutions. There has been much historiographic debate about the effect of the 1830 French Revolution upon the election of the Reform Parliament in that year. The election of 1830 was the first in which the King's

designated ministry failed to return to Parliament with an elective majority. As Martineau pointed out, the new Whig government returned with a mandate, but they were elected rather because of opposition to Wellington than because of overwhelming support for Reform--the Whigs had a majority in the House, but the first Reform Bill in 1831 was passed with a bare majority of one.[52] It was Halévy's theory that the French Revolution which overthrew Charles X and the repressive Polignac regime in 1830 directly influenced the electorate because of Wellington's attempted censorship of the British press, and his alleged sympathy for Polignac.[53] Norman Gash, however, has specifically attacked this hypothesis. Gash claims that most of the borough returns had already been decided prior to receipt of the news from France. And Michael Brock in The Great Reform Act (1973), agrees with the Gash interpretation.[54] In the light of these differing opinions, Martineau's contemporary estimate is therefore of more than passing interest. Martineau sketched the events which preceded the French Revolution of 1830. She wrote of the interest with which the English had witnessed the repressive policies of Polignac, and she described the eventual overthrow of the Bourbon regime, just days before English politicians took to the hustings as but the final scene in the long drama. The effect of these preliminaries to the French Revolution upon the English electorate were immeasurable, and perhaps Gash overlooked them. Certainly Martineau gave the impression that, however, wrongly, the English had for some time popularly identified Wellington with Prince Polignac; and it may have been this fact rather than the coup d'etat itself which caused the reaction against the Tory ministry at the polls.[55] Martineau never claimed that the French

Revolution itself had a direct influence on the British election of the same year, but she believed that it did accelerate the subsequent demand for change. Nevertheless, Necessarian that she was, she believed that change was inevitable and that Parliamentary Reform would have occurred without "the awakening of any new sympathy with foreign people."[56] Even a conservative reaction against the continental revolutions could not, she was sure, have stemmed the tide of reform.[57] And those "who were in any degree on the liberal side in politics," spoke to each other, she said "in high exhilaration, of the bearing of these French events upon their own political affairs . . . and . . . saw that now was the time to secure that Reform of Parliament which was a necessary condition of all other political reforms."[58]

The influence on Britain of events in France did not, Martineau believed, begin and end with the Members of the House of Commons. In 1831, she noted, the French had abolished their peerage. This fact, she said, was not lost on the Lords when, faced with the threat of a creation of peers, they eventually passed the Reform Act.[59] The Lords' dilemma and the Lords' decision proved, said Martineau, that:

> In as far as the House of Peers was now proved to be destined henceforward (as the Royal function had for some time been) to exist only by consent of the people at large, it might truly be said that the Constitution was destroyed and the Prime Minister [Lord Grey] who had conducted the process could not be insensible, even in the moment of his triumph, to the seriousness and antiquarian melancholy of the fact. . . .[60]

The observation was perceptive especially as the Radicals' later attempts to achieve legislative reform of the House of Lords were frustrated. But the Lords, as Gash informs us in <u>Reaction and Reconstruction in English Politics 1832-1852</u> (1965),[61] saw the wisdom in compromise. And the

important constitutional significance of this docility did not escape Martineau:

> It is a fact not to be denied, that, as the Kingly power had before descended to a seat lower than that of parliament, the House of Peers now took rank in the government below the Commons. It will ever stand in history that the House of Commons became the true governing power in Great Britain in 1832 and that from that date the other powers existed, not by their own strength, but by a general agreement founded on considerations as well as broad utility, as of decorum and ancient affection.[62]

As far as the extension of democracy was concerned, Martineau viewed the Reform Act as little more than a step in the right direction: the middle class had gained less than their fair proportionate share of representation by Reform, and the artisan class remained without a voice in the halls of government.[63] Martineau had always been a champion of the artisan class; it was to them, the educable industrious class of workmen, that she addressed most of her writings; and it was in them that her hopes for democracy rested. On account of the needless fears of the upper classes, the workers had been largely ignored by the Reform Act. But, observed Martineau:

> . . . the strongest Conservative power of a country like ours resides in the holders of the smallest properties. However much the nobleman may be attached to his broad lands, and his mansions and parks, and the middle-class manufacturer or professional man to the station and provision he has secured for his family, this attachment is weak, this stake is small, in comparison with those of the artisan who tastes the first sweets of property in their full relish. He is the man to contend to the last gasp for the institutions of his country, and for the law and order which secure to him what he values so dearly. The commonest complaint of all made by the restless and discontented spirits of any time is that their former comrades become "spoiled" from the moment they rise into possession of any ease, property, or social advantage; and they do truly thus become "spoiled" for any revolutionary or disorderly purpose.[64]

The Reform Act ignored the vast majority of Britons: the artisans and operatives. And Jews, she noted, also derived little satisfaction from

the events of 1832. She made no brief for the 'agnostic' or the atheist--probably because she was aware of Charles Knight's prejudices on this score--but for the Jew, not included within the scope of the Test and Corporation Acts repeal of 1828, she professed a great sympathy.[65] Perhaps, however, she implied all conscientious objection when she said, "It is strange to think that . . . the hypocrite and lax holder of opinion find entrance without difficulty to the national councils, while the conscientious Jew, one of a body of singularly loyal and orderly subjects, is excluded on account of a difference of belief."[66]

On behalf of her own unrepresented sex Martineau remained silent. Her feelings on the subject were well-known and unequivocal--Robert Browning, for example described the introduction of women to Parliament as a suggestion "after Miss Martineau's heart."[67] But the question of the enfranchisement of women was not raised in 1832, and because it received no attention at the time, it could not in all historical conscience have been included in the History. Nevertheless, the question was never far from Martineau's consciousness. It was the one aspect of James Mill's democratic theory with which she emphatically disagreed. Women, she had written in Society in America could not be represented by their fathers or their husbands--"no person's interests can be, or can be ascertained to be, identical with those of another person."[68] She considered the fact that she herself had no vote at elections though she was a tax-payer and a responsible citizen, "an absurdity, seeing that I have for a long course of years influenced public affairs to an extent not professed or attempted by many men."[69] But these ideas found no echo in the History. The ideal of female enfranchisement was embraced by only

a few isolated eccentrics like Harriet Martineau. The subject was not raised in 1832, and even a decade later Chartist women fought for the enfranchisement of their husbands and their brothers without a thought of making similar claims for themselves. The concept of women's political rights was an idea whose time had not yet arrived.

Martineau had always shared James Mill's opinion of political party and the years which followed the Reform Act did little to alter her opinion of the party system. She had striven to remain free from association with the Whigs by refusing their offers of a pension. She had resented the proprietorial attitude of the Radicals of the S.D.U.K. And, when in the United States, her attitude towards party had been reinforced by the a-political William Lloyd Garrison.[70] After the Reform Act of 1832, the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 and the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835 the alliance between Whigs and Radicals had seemingly dissolved--instead of continuing to operate on principles, they had each become entrenched in their own political camps. The word 'reform' had become mere cant, Martineau observed, and the Whigs had taken up as conservative a stance as that which their predessors in government had held: the attitude of the Whigs towards the liberal policies they had espoused during the long years of their exile from office, had altered after their assumption to power.[71] The Whigs became as intransigent in office as the Tories had been. And Martineau considered Lord Melbourne to be "out of his place as the head of a Reforming Administration, from his inability to originate, and his indisposition to guide." The "assumed indolence" of this aristocratic eighteenth-century gentleman did not sit well with a daughter of the manufacturing class.[72]

But the Radicals in Parliament also disappointed Martineau. They had, she noted, been unable to merge their differences and could neither "regenerate nor supersede the Whigs, nor keep out the Conservatives."[73] There was at this time a general sense of disillustionment in the Radical camp, and Martineau probably arrived at the conclusions she did through her continued association with the Philosophic Radicals. Molesworth, for example, told Harriet Grote in 1836 that the Radicals were losing their hold on the nation because they lacked unity, and because the Whigs, now secure in their position of authority, no longer felt the same need for Radical support as before. George Grote described the frustration of having to attend Parliament in order to sustain "Whig <u>Conservatism</u> against Tory <u>Conservatism</u>." And there was a growing conviction among the Radicals that the Whigs were clinging to power for the sake of office.[74]

By the time of the 1841 election Martineau had come to believe that all hope of the Whig ministry was extinct; that the discontent and unrest among the labouring classes was so deep that "nothing could avert a revolution sooner or later;" and that until the workers could be politically educated, she thought it "desirable to have the strongest government that can be had; the government <u>wh</u>. commands most of the support of the nation. This, events have clearly shown to be a tory Government, which is respected above the Whig, not so much, perhaps, on account of its principles, as on account of its efficiency in business." Martineau made a note of these impressions of the 1841 political scene in an undated manuscript which was not intended for publication. In it she expressed the view that, "Peel . . . is now full as liberal as the Whigs were when they came in, and more so than the three tories of their company,

Melbourne, Palmerston and Glenelg." She accurately predicted that the strong Tories would separate from Peel "and form an angry and helpless, but rather mischievous party." She anticipated with some optimism a regrouping of politicians "on a fresh set of principles," and looked upon the period as a "troublous passage to better times."[75]

In spite of her confidence in Peel as an administrator, Martineau's faith rested in principles rather than in men.[76] In Life in The Sick-Room she wrote of "the present operation of old liberalizing causes so strong as to be irresistible; men of all parties - or, at least, reasonable men of all parties - so carried along by the current of events . . . [that] glorious as would be the advent of a great political hero at any time, we could never better get on without one, because never before were principles so clearly and strongly compelling their own adoption, and working out their own results. They are now the masters and not the servants of Statesmen. . . ."[77] In the History she consistently perceived the period according to this Necessarian concept. Instead of condemning Peel for inconsistency, as his colleague Disraeli had done, she praised him for having the integrity to discard worn-out opinions and for being able to accept the principle of reform.[78] It was this trait in Peel; a national desire to oust the tenacious Whigs from office; and the fact that the Conservatives had been "more attentive to registration" which accounted, in her opinion, for Peel's return to Parliament with a majority of seventy-six, after the election of 1841.[79]

By 1846 Martineau's friends could with justice describe her as "a sort of Peelite."[80] Peel appeared to her to be "a statesman precisely adapted to his age; - to serve his country and his time."[81] Her

appreciation was, doubtless, not a little influenced by the fact that in accommodating to the times, Peel adopted those anti-protectionist principles which Martineau and the Political Economists held dear.[82] The Corn Laws symbolized this protection; they were the central issue of the times and their repeal was the climax of a quarter of a century of agitation. The question of protection was pivotal in the History, and Martineau perceived it as such, when she reissued the work in its expanded American edition of 1864. Writing for an American readership not only in the throes of civil war but also of a prolonged tariff debate, she re-emphasized the importance of the evolution of free trade in Great Britain:

> The manufacture and trade which grew up under the social system of the Middle Ages assumed a protective system as a matter of course, - as it actually was then. After infinite suffering from the operation of that system in England, in creating class interests and tyrannies, in degrading the working classes, pinching the middle class, endangering the safety of the higher, dividing nations which ought to have been friendly, and fostering lawlessness and brutality in one half of the poor, and pauperism and subservience in the other, - after having apparently exhausted all resources of the land, manufacture and trade, and gaining no way in rendering the bulk of the nation intelligent, comfortable, and independent, the country through a few of its wisest men turned to free trade. From that hour it has been clear that the old nation is safe. . . . Something may be learned of the consequences within the period of this History. It will be seen that a new vigor was infused into the whole life of society from the hour when the Protectionist system was relaxed, with or without reciprocity abroad.[83]

Martineau ascribed the prosperity of the 1860s to free trade in general and to the repeal of the Corn Laws in particular. The prosperity, however, was temporary and the initial apparent effect of repeal was misleading. It has been pointed out that repeal of the Corn Laws did not materially alter the pattern of English corn production in the first

twenty years after repeal. The English farmer continued to be his nation's chief provender and there was no marked difference in the scale of corn importation.[84] In fact, it was not until the 1870s when large scale cheap American corn hit the British market and disastrously affected the agricultural sector of British society, that the full effect of Corn Law repeal was felt. In the initial years, however, it seemed as if Adam Smith's identity of interests principle had been proved and that Ricardo's theory, that the interests of the landlord were antithetical to those of the rest of Society, had been disproved: it appeared that the end of protection had benefited society without adversely affecting the landlord. To Martineau mid-century prosperity vindicated the theory that there was a "unity of interests between the agricultural and the manufacturing populations."[85] It seemed also to cast doubt on the pessimistic predictions of Thomas Malthus:

> The repeal of the corn-laws [she said in the Autobiography], with the consequent improvement in agriculture, and the prodigious increase of emigration have extinguished all present apprehension and talk of "surplus population" - that great difficulty of forty or fifty years ago. And it should be remembered, as far as I am concerned in the controversy, that I advocated in my [Illustrations of Political Economy] series a free trade in corn, and exhibited the certainty of agricultural improvement, as a consequence; and urged a carefully conducted emigration; and, above all, education without limit. It was my business [she wrote, abdicating her original convictions in rather cowardly fashion], in illustrating Political Economy, to exemplify Malthus's doctrine among the rest. It was that doctrine "pure and simple," as it came from his virtuous and benevolent mind, that I presented. . . .[86]

The repeal of the Corn Laws did not greatly alter the complexion of the English corn market but they had an effect on British trade in general: they opened the floodgates of free trade. The process had already been accelerated in 1842 when Peel began the simplification of the tariff

system; in 1849 the last of the old Navigation Laws was repealed; and by the 1860s Peel's successors on the Treasure Bench had initiated free trade reciprocity with other countries. It was the relaxation of the old protective system in conjunction with many other factors, however, which accounted for the prosperity of the middle decades of the century. British industrial productivity grew while at the same time overseas industrialization of other lands enlarged the market for British goods. There were, in the late 1840s, rich discoveries of gold in Australia and the United States which acted as a stimulus to international trade. There were increased British investments abroad. There was a rapid construction of railways, a fiercely competitive construction of steamships, and a resultant decrease in the freight rates.[87] But these factors are more apparent in retrospect than they were to Harriet Martineau and her contemporaries. To those who had fought the Corn Laws since their introduction in 1815, and since Ricardo's initial attack on them as the cause of England's economic miseries, the repeal of the obnoxious legislation came as the climax to a hard-won campaign. Martineau's contribution to the repeal agitation was not insignificant. She had clamored against the Corn Laws in two of the Illustrations, For Each and All and Sowers not Reapers, and in the 1832 Monthly Repository article, "A Summer's Dialogue between an Englishman and a Pole."[88] She had joined the efforts of the Anti-Corn Law League after its formation in 1838. In 1845 she had written Dawn Island: a Tale--which was less an Anti-Corn Law polemic than an illustration of free trade in general--in order to raise money for the Anti-Corn Law League bazaar.[90] In the same year she had written Forest and Game Law Tales at the request of John Bright--the repeal of the game

laws being of important if subsidiary interest to the Leaguers who considered it a wanton waste that arable acres, which should have been under the plough, were preserved for the blood-sports of the idle rich.[91] In her own private capacity she reconciled personal differences which had separated Peel and Richard Cobden. And in the History she praised both the Minister and the Leaguer for their parts in the removal of the restrictive legislation which she had regarded as pernicious for so long.[92]

Peel's biographer, Norman Gash, believes that "Peel's conversion to free trade in corn was a matter of conviction rather than an act of concession."[93] Martineau would have agreed. She believed that it had been principle rather than expediency which had persuaded Peel. Peel himself did not consider his adoption of the principles of free trade as a contradiction of Conservative ideals, nor did he see any other of his actions in the light of a betrayal:

> I cannot charge myself [Martineau quoted Peel] or my colleagues with having been unfaithful to the trust committed to us. . . . If I look to the prerogative of the Crown - if I look to the position of the Church - if I look to the influence of the aristocracy - I cannot charge myself with having taken any course inconsistent with Conservative principles. . . .[94]

But to Young England and the other protectionists in the party, Peel's action was the culmination of a treachery which had had its beginnings in the Tamworth Manifesto of 1835. The Tamworth manifesto, Disraeli had said:

> . . . was an attempt to construct a party without principles; its basis therefore was necessarily Latitudinarianism; and its inevitable consequence has been Political Infidelity. . . . There was indeed a considerable shouting about what they called Conservative principles; but the awkward question naturally arose, what will you conserve? The prerogatives of the Crown,

> provided they are not exercised; the independence of the House of Lords, provided it is not asserted; the Ecclesiastical estate, provided it is regulated by a commission of laymen. Everything, in short, that is established, as long as it is a phrase and not a fact.[95]

Peel passed the Corn Law amendment with the help of the Whigs and the Radicals but Disraeli had led two-thirds of Peel's party in opposition, and in opposing his leader had temporarily destroyed the Tory Party with him.

Disraeli and his small elitist Young England party in Parliament were associated with all that laissez-fairism opposed. Young England was predicated upon what Martineau considered the "impracticable notion of restoring old conditions of protection and dependence, when the one essential thing that is now necessary for the working classes to understand is, that (food and labour being released from legal restriction) their condition is in their own hands."

> The idea of the Young England party, in regard to the condition of the people, was that all would be well if the ancient relation between the rich and the poor could be restored - if the rich could, as formerly, take charge of the poor with a protecting benevolence, and the poor depend upon the rich in a spirit of trust and obedience. . . . This was amiable and well-intended; but it did not avail in the face of the stern truth that the great natural laws of society have dissolved the old relations between the endowed and the working classes. . . . The theory of society now is that the labouring classes are as independent as any others; that their labour is their own disposable property. . . .[96]

Martineau had no doubt that the days of feudal paternalism, the days of "rural innocence," were past and that they would "give place to something better, no doubt, when the troubled stage of transition is passed."[97] This had been her conviction when she wrote the Illustrations; it remained her creed when she wrote the History. She was as

sternly opposed to factory legislation, for example, as she had ever been, and she still insisted that the worker had the right to trade in the only commodity he possessed: his labor. But nevertheless, the Harriet Martineau of the *History* had mellowed. She was no longer quite as dogmatic as in the past. She was prepared to make important allowances:

> . . . there were men of opposite extremes in politics, who contended that it was the duty of the government to regulate the interests of the poor, and determine the circumstance of their lives by law. Some high Conservatives contended for this on the ground of the supposed parental character of government. . . . With these high Conservatives were joined those members of the Commons who verged most towards democracy - who claimed a special protection for the poor from government because the poor were unrepresented in the legislature. . . . while men of intermediate parties advocated the poor man's cause in a directly opposite manner; by contending that his labour is his only property; and that to interfere with it - to restrict its sale by law - is to infringe fatally on the poor man's rights. - The truth was (and it is the truth still) *there is much to be said on both sides*. . . . *It is impossible to admit that, under a representative system it is the proper business of government to regulate the private interests of any class whatever*. *It is impossible, under the far higher constitution of humanity, to refuse attention to the case of the depressed, ignorant, and suffering, of our people*. *The only course seems to be to admit that, as we have not been true to our representative system (being at this day far from having carried it out), we cannot be harshly true to its theory*. *Having permitted a special misery and need to grow up, we must meet it with a special solace and aid* . . . [although] *nothing must be done to impair any one's right* . . . *under a constitution which presumes every man's condition and interests to be in his own hands* [my italics].[98]

Martineau never satisfactorilly resolved this dilemma. In fact, she managed to almost by-pass it by compartmentalizing societal problems into those which were the legitimate concern of government, and those which she continued to emphatically insist were not.

Martineau remained opposed to the principle of factory regulation. She had little respect for Lord Ashley's efforts on behalf of the

operatives and treated him in the History without pretending to objectivity. She conceded his good intentions and his humanity but thought him to be misled and uninformed. His benevolent efforts, she believed, should have been devoted to the agricultural laborers on his ancestral estates rather than to operatives who were "the class which was actually the most enlightened, and best able to take care of itself, of any working-class in England."[99] Her claim was not entirely unjustified. Even Eric Hobsbawm has been prepared to concede that the factory worker in the nineteenth century was relatively well off compared with the domestic and rural members of his class.[100] But Martineau's argument was not drawn from the purest of motives. Her intention was rather to invalidate Ashley's effort than to draw attention to the plight of the field-hand. She regarded Ashley as a meddlesome Tory-philanthropist who protected corn, restricted trade and then sought to deprive "hungry people of their only wealth - their labour."[101] It was a formula which she was never tired of repeating, but even here she was prepared to make exceptions.

Martineau did not deny the value of Ashley's actions in 1842 on behalf of the women and children who had been exploited in the mines. She was genuinely shocked by the details exposed by Ashley's Commission of Inquiry, and conceded that in such extreme cases it was better to ban female and child labour and to impose a burden on the parishes than to permit the perpetuation of the deplorable conditions which existed in the collieries.[102] In the following year she still opposed efforts to limit the hours of female and child factory labor, but here too she was

prepared to make important exceptions. She had always insisted that the education of the people was a government obligation,

> . . . the voluntary principle is inapplicable to education because it is precisely those who need education most that are least capable of demanding it, desiring it, and even conceiving it.[103]

In 1843 she supported Graham's Factory Bill because of its educational provisions, and she roundly condemned the narrow sectarian motives of the Dissenters who successfully opposed it.[104] Martineau did not support the Church's claim to control the nation's public schooling--she thought "clergy of all denominations least aware of what education should be." But she thought it infinitely better for "these multitudes to be Puseyites than heathens."[105] And she used the pages of the History to castigate the Dissenters who selfishly "removed thousands of children beyond the reach of education, and thus consigned them to risks and injury immeasurably more fatal than any kind or degree of religious error could possibly have been."[106]

Martineau was able to rationalize all the exceptions she made to laissez-faire. But the inconsistency which her dilemma pointed up was the inconsistency and the dilemma of the age. Her sometimes erratic deviations from the principle of laissez-faire exemplify the ambiguities of an era poised between the need for administrative initiative and the desire for individual freedom. W. L. Burn has described the period as "an age of equipoise:" a period in which there were "far more sources of authority than are always recollected, [in which] . . . none of the assumptions of laissez-faire was immune from challenge or wholly safe from violation. . . ."[107] George Kitson Clark depicts most of the nineteenth century as a time when Laissez-faire and collectivism ran

"concurrently like prison sentences."[108] And David Roberts perceives the era of laissez-faire as one in which the foundations of the welfare state were laid.[109] Even the nineteenth-century Utilitarians were faced with the dilemma that the principles of laissez-faire and good government were not logically compatible. For Bentham, James Mill and Edwin Chadwick the benefits of efficient administration superseded considerations of individual liberty. The Corn Laws as G. M. Young reminds us, were repealed in 1846 but the Ten Hours' Act was passed in the very next year. Carlyle was not far from the truth when he said that "the principle of Let-alone is no longer possible in England these days."[110]

Nevertheless, in spite of increasing governmental responsibilities, the Victorians continued to pay extravagant lip-service to laissez-faire, self-help, and the work ethic. Martineau believed implicitly in these dogmas: the right of the individual to control his life and his livelihood were sacred concepts to her. Yet she was not blinded to the realities. She denounced those who claimed that every man had the opportunity to achieve independence and honor:

> What? - every man? - he whose early years are spent in opening and shutting a door in a coal pit; who does not know his own name, and never heard of God? - or any one of thousands of hand-loom weavers, who swallow opium on Saturday nights, to deaden the pains of hunger on Sundays? - or the Dorsetshire labourer, whose only prospect is that his eight shillings a week may be reduced to seven, and the seven to six, but never that his wages may rise?[111]

She had a deep well of sympathy for the less fortunate members of society and some of the contradictions in her philosophy can be accounted for by this fact. While reason dictated the principles of natural law and laissez-faire, conscience addressed itself to the stark reality of the

Condition of England Question. Her reason informed her that present charities and present ameliorations were but delays to overall recovery which perpetuated an outworn system and prevented the development of a new one. However, while denouncing charities in principle, her own private letters to wealthy friends were often pleas on behalf of one or other needy case. And publicly she could always find a reason to justify the exception: the women and children in mines, the starving needlewoman thrown out of work by the invention of the sewing machine in the 1850s, and in the 1860s the Lancastrian operatives who lost their jobs on account of the cotton famine. It is doubtful that she ever faced her own ambivalence, to have done so would have meant admitting a basic flaw in her philosophy. It would have meant admitting that laissez-faire and the greatest happiness of the greatest number were fundamentally incompatible ideals. Her dilemma was the dilemma of the age.

Martineau realized that what she called "the real battle of the Reformation" was yet to be won, that the reforms and changes wrought thus far in the century were mere preliminaries as long as the abiding problem of poverty remained.[112] Throughout the History there ran a dark stain countervailing the optimism, and denying the recital of the century's progress. Even the amendment of the Old Poor Law--that "gangrene in the very vitals of society"--and the repeal of the Corn Laws seemingly failed to resolve the obsessive problem. For the masses, in spite of industrial advancement and reform, the mills of progress had ground exceeding slow--if at all. Despite England's rapid development as a manufacturing nation, and periodic prosperity notwithstanding, the condition of the working class appeared as distressing when Martineau wrote in 1848

as it had been in the dark days that followed the Napoleonic Wars. In spite of the fact that some workers had improved their positions, there had been an overall decline in the value of real wages between 1824 and 1840.[113] Britain's prosperity had been cyclical and there had been an exceptionally severe depression between 1836 and 1842. A combination of bad harvests and industrial over-production had created a critical trade imbalance; had caused a decline in employment opportunities; had increased the cost of bread; and had multiplied the corresponding destitution and the extent of popular protest.[114] There had been an improvement in the economy in 1842 and a simultaneous lull in worker activism. But hard upon the heels of this respite had come the disastrous crop failures of 1845, 1846 and 1847, the Continental revolutions of 1848, and the Chartist protests of 1848.

For Martineau who began writing the <u>History</u> in the year of the best organized of the Chartist protests it was difficult to assess either the nature of the movement or the direction which it would take. She was not to know then that Chartism's largest protest was to be its final one. And she did not pretend to properly understand the phenomenon or to be able to fully explain it:

> And what were these stirrings? What was it all about? The difficulty of understanding and telling the story is from its comprehending so vast a variety of things and persons. Those who have not looked into Chartism think that it means one thing - a revolution. Some who talk as if they assumed to understand it, explain that Chartism is of two kinds - Physical Force Chartism, and Moral Force Chartism - as if this were not merely two ways of pursuing an object yet undescribed! Those who look deeper - who go out upon the moors by torchlight, who talk with a suffering brother under the hedge, or beside the loom, who listen to the groups outside the Union workhouse, or in the public-house among the Durham coal-pits, will long feel bewildered as to what Chartism is, and will conclude at last that it is another name for popular discontent - a comprehensive general term under which are included all protests against social suffering.[115]

Writing more than a century later, Asa Briggs came to a similar conclusion:

> Chartism [he wrote] was a snowball movement which gathered together local grievances and sought to give them common expression in a nation-wide agitation.[116]

Martineau believed the underlying cause of Chartism to have been economic. It was, she said, "the state of crops"--a series of poor harvests--together with the oppressive Corn Laws which caused worker despair in the first years of Chartism.[117] But the workers, she believed, had failed to understand the wisdom of the Anti-Corn Law protests. They had opposed the efforts of the League and had actually joined the "rabid and ranting" Tory agitation for factory legislation and against the New Poor Law.[118] Although she pretended not to differentiate between Moral and Physical Force Chartism, her political preferences made such a classification inevitable. The Physical Force Chartists, whom she condemned, were associated with the Tory Democrats. The Moral Force wing of Chartism, of which she approved, had strong ties with the Radical Reformers. The leader of Moral Force Chartism, William Lovett, was an artisan of precisely the type that Martineau most admired. A self-educated man, he was connected with the British Association for Promoting Co-operative Knowledge founded in 1829. He was a member of the London Working Man's Association which was founded in 1836. And it was he together with other members of the LWMA and with Francis Place, John Roebuck and the Parliamentary Radicals who drew up the five point Charter in 1838. It was the Charter which turned what had begun as an economic problem into a political one: a question of non-representation. "A vast proportion of the people," said Martineau, "- the very part of the nation whose representation

was most important to the welfare of the state - were not represented at all." She emphasized the point quoting from Carlyle's "Chartism" and reiterating his condemnation of a representative body which had failed to represent "'that great dumb toiling class which cannot speak.'"[119]

But the moderate Chartists, she thought, "deserved better than to be connected in name and reputation with the Chartism of the Stephenses and Oastlers, and the torch-bearers who fired factories."[120] In spite of her support for popular movements and her appreciation of the sufferings which engendered them, Martineau would not tolerate violence. She shared an abhorrence of demagoguery with the other Radicals who from James Mill on down believed in peaceful protest and pacific change. The Radicals believed in the essence of revolution because they wanted to alter the existing society, but their methods were those of the educator and the reformer, and not of the violent revolutionary.[121]

In 1848, at the height of the Chartist protests, Martineau was invited by Charles Knight to contribute to a proposed new working-class journal, The Voice of the People. But Martineau did not participate in a venture which she felt sure would fail because it was being set up by Whig officials to lecture the working class "in a jejune, coaxing, dull, religious-tract sort of tone," and because the Whigs intended to employ as writers "friends of their own, who knew about as much of the working-classes of England as those of Turkey."[122] She denied that anyone could speak for the working class but themselves, yet she had surprisingly little sympathy for the working-class press. Even while deploring the four-penny stamp as an "iniquity restraining the intercourse of minds in society," in the Illustrations of Taxation tale, Scholars of Arneside,

she had condemned the "revolutionary" tone of the illegal press. Its assumption of a threatening, demagogic, uncontrollable aspect made her feel insecure. While she welcomed repeal of the stamp in 1836, she did not object to the retention of a one-penny tax. In the History she explained that the remaining duty on newspapers had made the risk of illegality too great at the price and had driven unstamped newspapers--"a vast quantity of trash"--out of the market.[123] She failed to appreciate the political importance of the War of the Unstamped, and did not recognize the connection between the leadership in the early struggle and that of the Chartist leadership a few years later.

The Chartist movement puzzled and disturbed even the most sympathetic of nineteenth-century commentators. John Stuart Mill disagreed with the points of the Charter, they had in essence already been adopted in the United States, he said, but the American society as a whole was little the better for that: "the whole of one sex is devoted to dollar-hunting and the whole of the other to breeding dollar-hunters."[124] Charles Bray in The Philosophy of Necessity had seen in the failure of the Chartist movement, proof that, "Whatever may be the opinion with respect to the desirableness of placing political power in the hands of the majority, it cannot be doubted, that in the hands of a majority such as our working classes in their present condition constitute, it would tend more to their injury than benefit."[125] Carlyle had never put his faith in political solutions. He sought the answer to the national problem not in the loud voices of the multitude but in the wise council of the few; not in the old, sham feudal aristocracy which had governed England in the past but in a real leadership of a "Real Aristocracy."[126]

Disraeli, on the other hand, continued to see members of the old aristocracy as the natural leaders of the people, and no more agreed to democratic demands than had Carlyle, the irascible Sans Coulotte, or John Stuart Mill, the doubting scion of Benthamite Utilitarianism.[127] Martineau, on the other hand, approved the aims if not always the methods of the unrepresented who had sought through the Charter to acquire a voice in the nation's council. When she wrote the final chapter on the Chartist protests in her 1864 American edition of the History, however, Chartism had died without having achieved its aims. She did not seek to analyze its failure, and her original sympathy for its democratic goals had by then somewhat altered. Events abroad, and particularly in France where Louis Napoleon had usurped a throne in spite of democracy, had proved that universal suffrage was "no security for liberty." She had become reconciled to the idea of gradualism. "The proposal now," she wrote, "is of an expansion of the suffrages, gradual, and in some fair proportion to the improving intelligence of the people."[128]

The protests and the destituion of the working people punctuated the pages of the History. So too did the persistent question of Ireland. Ireland was not a problem which could be neatly pigeon-holed into a separate compartment like India, or Canada, or foreign affirs. Ireland gnawed at the very vitals of English political, social and economic life. And Martineau, recognizing its importance, devoted much of the History to a consideration of the subject. She had first confronted the problem in Ireland, one of the best of the Illustrations of Political Economy.[129] She had recognized, even then that Ireland's problem was chiefly agrarian

and had seen the Irish peasants as the victims of selfish land policies, of misgovernment, of over-population and of the Church to which they did not belong but by which they were taxed. She had placed the blame for Irish unrest where she felt it belonged, on the economic condition of the country:

> When do prosperous men plot [she asked], or contented men threaten, or those who are secure perjure themselves, or the well-governed think of treachery? Who believes that conspiracy was born in our schools instead of our cold hearths, or that violence is natural to any hands but those from which their occupation and their subsistence are wrenched together?[130]

Martineau had first visited Ireland in 1831 when James and Helen Martineau were living there. She became even more sensitive to the Irish problem during her visit to the United States where expatriate Irish had made her keenly aware of their bitterness toward England.[131] In 1844 she had written to Milnes saying,

> If I had the glorious misfortune to be responsible for Irish destinies now, I believe I shd. first go faithfully through this landlord and tenant matter, and stand or fall by the remedial measures to be founded upon it. I wd. recognize the Papl Govt., help to educate the catholic clergy, exchange Judges occasionally, abolish the viceroyalty, largely modify the Poor Law, or exchange it for another system, and set about internal improvements. . . .[132]

But she conceded the improbability of anyone successfully undoing "the wrongs and woes of centuries, and the unreasonableness of a nation."

In the History she traced the effect of Ireland on English politics and the effect of English policies on Ireland. She realized that the question of Irish representation had triggered Catholic emancipation, and that effecting Catholic emancipation had eroded the Government's traditional Tory support and opened the floodgates of Reform. The political importance of Ireland was enormous: almost every ministry, from Lord

Grey in 1834 to Robert Peel in 1846, had resigned because of the Irish question. Martineau blamed the "abstraction called the Church" for taxing without educating an ignorant and impoverished people.[133] She blamed a recalcitrant prejudiced majority in Parliament for refusing to recognize that the church of Ireland was the Church of Rome. She cited the litany of the debates over appropriations, disestablishment, and Maynooth. But though she appreciated the intricacies of the political and religious issues she still maintained that the real problem in Ireland was economic, and that this had all the while been ignored.

In 1839 O'Connell had asked Martineau to tour Ireland and to write about its problems.[134] But it was in that year that she fell ill, and it was not until 1852 that she was able to comply. By then O'Connell was dead and the Famine had stalked the land. Martineau never completely trusted O'Connell. She had admired his role in Catholic emancipation, but he was, she thought, too much the demagogue. She did not support the repeal of union agitation which had followed Catholic emancipation. Although she admitted England's culpability in the Irish tragedy, she nevertheless saw in England the poverty-ridden land's only chance for survival. Calling O'Connell alternately "the Liberator" and "the Agitator"--depending on whether she was writing about Catholic emancipation or repeal--Martineau accused him of focussing Ireland's attention on the ephemeral question of independence rather than of attempting to solve the more practical and vital problems of the country: land tenure, evictions, taxation, and overpopulation.[135] In an agricultural nation where most of the people had no security of tenure, where the soil was worn out, where half the eight million inhabitants depended solely upon the

potato, where the land was unimproved and overpopulated, remedy lay in land reclamation, in emigration, in the education of the people, and not in the irrelevant--she thought--question of union with England. "Mr. O'Connell never meant that Ireland should be tranquilized; and . . . if he had wished for tranqulization ever so earnestly, he could not have effected it. A sudden change in the law could not make a permanent change in the temper of the nation; - even of a nation which knew how to reverence law."[136] To ferment distrust for the law in such a nation was to provoke violence and this she believed O'Connell had set out to do. The immediate effects of Catholic emancipation had therefore not been peace but a continued evasion of the law and a continued political protest.

The vital question in Ireland, she believed, was not union with England, but poverty. Pauperism was a chronic problem in Ireland. And in the 1830s the question of extending the New Poor Law to Ireland was raised in Parliament. In considering the question Martineau achieved a degree of objectivity. Her own uncertainty about the merits of extending the New Poor Law to Ireland reflected an uncertainty in the ranks of the Political Economists. Some believed that removing the burden of charity from the Catholic Church and the Irish people would free these resources for more productive purposes. But Martineau tended to agree with those who doubted that the English system would work across the Irish Sea. She was aware of the fact in Ireland the proportion of paupers was twice that of England and that the proportionate pauper maintenance fund was only a third. She appreciated the problems of an agrarian, high unemployment society in which demographic and seasonal factors made some form of

relief necessary. She realized that in a land where there was little alternative to peasant cultivation the New Poor Law would be impractical. However, in 1838 the Irish Poor Law Bill had been carried, and the machinery of the English Poor Law was put into effect: unions and workhouses were established, and outdoor relief was curtailed. Martineau did not believe that these measures would successfully solve what was an underlying social and demographic problem. Effectual renovation, she said, was not, in fact possible, "till a higher power than lies in human hands had cleared the way in a manner which it makes the stoutest heart tremble merely to contemplate. It is because this has happened - because the wide sweep of misery has left it clear that the maladies of Ireland are social, and not political."[137]

Martineau was sufficiently Malthusian to have seen in the Famine something besides human tragedy. She had always stressed overpopulation as Ireland's chief problem, and when the economic condition of the Irish improved in the 1850s she was able to say,

> . . . in Ireland . . . we are obtaining "by the hand of God" the very conditions we have been longing for for a century.[138]

It was not that she was devoid of compassion, she described the horror of the Famine and of the dysentery which came as its aftermath with humanity when she wrote of it in the History from the Commencement of the XIXth Century and in the Daily News. But she saw in the decimation of the land and in the wave of emigration which followed it an opportunity for resolving at last the problem of over-population which was at the base of Ireland's trouble. Ireland was not yet prosperous, she conceded, its people were still poor and ill-fed, but with a smaller population,

attempts to improve the land and agricultural practices, and a diversification of its economy by the introduction of manufactories, conditions were improving and "the growth of comfort and welfare was such as to rebuke the old prevalent despair of Ireland."[139] She foresaw a happy conclusion to the Irish story, and completely ignored the emotional factors which centuries of subserviency were bringing to the surface. She discounted entirely the claims of the Irish nationalists, and described them as "a small and passionate deluded faction" which aimed to reject Ireland's one means of recovery, her alliance with England.

The author of the Illustrations of Political Economy is only occasionally recognizable in the History. Much of the dogmatism and the pedantry evident in the earlier work had given way to doubt, and much of the irrepressible optimism had been tempered by time and disappointment. Martineau had lost her certitude. She no longer felt sure that she knew the prescription for the greatest happiness but she still believed in the principle:

> "The greatest happiness of the greatest number" is not now talked of as the profession of a school: but the idea is in the mind of politicians and shapes their aims. The truest welfare of the largest classes has been the plea for much of our legislation; and especially for the whole grand achievement of free trade. No statesman would now dream of conducting the government on any other avowed principle than consulting the welfare of the greatest number in preference to that of any smaller class.[140]

She was still a laissez-fairist but she had come to realize, as G. M. Young put it "that there was a whole world of things where the individual simply could not help himself at all."[141] Perhaps the most significant passage in this regard is in the History from the Commencement:

> Marked advances were made in kindly legislation, meeting with no other opposition than grew out of a wholesome dread of interfering with private arrangements and personal morality by Act of Parliament. No free Legislature in the world has yet ascertained - much less observed - the proper functions and limits of State action and control; and, in England, there is no point of political philosophy on which further enlightenment and agreement are more urgently required at this hour.[142]

She had always supported government control of education and public health. When the railways became an ominous new source of concentrated power she favored a large measure of legislative control there too.[143] And, in spite of her original opposition to the Ashleys and the Fieldens in earlier years, she was, by the time she wrote the concluding portion of the History for her American publishers, willing to concede the benefits of the Ten-Hours Act, and of the limitations set on the labor of women and children. She had not completely lost faith in the basic humanity of the employer or in the principle of worker independence but as always she was able to rationalize her change of opinion. Workers, and especially women and children, she felt, "had to be protected, not so much from the hardness of the employers, as from the rapacity of husbands and fathers, and the tyranny of fellow-workmen [in the unions]."[144] Martineau's opposition to factory legislation had been too long and too consistently maintained for her to make an about face without offering new and compelling reasons.

Martineau still believed in educating the people rather than legislating for them but she had learnt to accept legislation, at least as an interim measure, until the condition of society made such legislation no longer necessary.[145] She still believed in the inevitability of revolutionary political change, but she was not certain what forms these new

governmental structures would take, and she was not sure how much they should govern. She regarded socialism and communism as symptoms of societal problems and not as solutions for them. Her opposition to Owenite paternalism had yielded by mid-century to a pragmatic acceptance of "the devices of domestic socialism" which "supplied the necessaries and comforts of life, on a principle independent of alms-giving, to those who could enjoy them only by means of the economy of Association."[146] She confided privately that "we in England cannot now stop short of 'a modified communism.'"[147] But she did not try to predict the forms which the society of the future would take, and she remained moderately optimistic that this society would be a happier one than any which had preceded it:

> The material for working out a better state is before us [she wrote in conclusion]; . . . We have science brightening around us, which may teach us to increase infinitely our supply of food. We have labourers everywhere who are as capable as any men above them of domestic solicitude, and who will not be more reckless about a provision for their families than gentlemen are, when once the natural affections of the citizen-parent are allowed free scope. We have now (by the recent repeal of the remnant of the Navigation laws) complete liberty of commerce. We have now the best heads and hearts occupied about this great question of the Rights of Labour, with impressive warnings presented to us from abroad, that it cannot be neglected under a lighter penalty than ruin to all. Is it possible that the solution should not be found? This solution may probably be the central fact of the next period of British history; and then, better than now, it may be seen that in preparation for it lies the chief interest of the preceding Thirty Years' Peace.[148]

The History of England During the Thirty Years' Peace is as valuable for its comments on Martineau as for its commentary on her era. The style is occasionally brilliant, the essential historical facts are sound, and Martineau's contemporaneity has, perhaps, even more significance today than it had in her own time. The History of England During the Thirty Years' Peace ought not to be the neglected work it is. It

should be considered a valuable resource for the modern historian of nineteenth-century Britain, and it should also be recognized as a work of intrinsic merit. It is not simply a dated historical narrative which has been superceded by more recent and more sophisticated scholarship. Martineau's observations were astute, her research was careful, and her opinions and even her prejudices were informed and are informative. The _History_ has stood the test of time and can still be read with interest and profit a hundred years after its conception.

FOOTNOTES

[1]The History of England during the Thirty Years' Peace 1816-1846, 2 vols.)London: Charles Knight, 1849-1850).

[2]Athenaeum, no. 1118 (March 31, 1849), 317-139; no. 1119 (April 7, 1849), 353; no. 1163 (Feb. 9, 1850), 149-151; no. 1164 (Feb. 16, 1850), 177-179; see also the Boston Transcript quoted by the publishers of the American edition of the History.

[3]Harriet Martineau to Henry Crabb Robinson, June 8, 1848, DW Lib.

[4]Elie Halévy, A History of the English People in the Nineteenth-century, 6 vols (vols. I-IV, 1923-1948, second revised edition, London: Ernest Benn, 1949-1951), IV, 256.

[5]George M. Young, Portrait of an Age (1936, New York: Oxford University Press, 1964).

[6]John Clive, Macaulay: The Shaping of the Historian (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1973), pp. 64, 78, 128 ff.; eds. John Clive and Thomas Pinney , Thomas Babington Macaulay: Selected Writings (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972), Eric Stokes, The English Utilitarians in India (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959).

[7]Autobiography, I, 348-349.

[8]Biographical Sketches, pp. 103, 104, 107, 111; Autobiography, III, 344.

[9]History, II, 707.

[10]Life in the Sick-Room, pp. 79-80; and see Harriet Martineau to Henry Crabb Robinson, Nov. 27, 1843, DW Lib.

[11]History, II, 715-716.

[12]"Autobiographic Memoir," DN, June 29, 1876.

[13]History, I, iii-iv; Preface to History from the Commencement of the XIXth Century to the Crimean War, 4 vols. (Philadelphia: Porter and Coates, 1864) I, 1-2; Harriet Martineau to Milnes, June 4, 1848, Trinity Coll.; Harriet Martineau to Henry Crabb Robinson, June 8, 1848, DW Lib.; Autobiography, II, 301, 318; III, 334, 336, 468.

[14]Harriet Martineau to Henry Crabb Robinson, July 6, 1850, DW Lib.; Haight, George Eliot and John Chapman, p. 151.

[15]Introduction to the History of the Peace: from 1800 to 1815 (London: Charles Knight, 1851).

[16]History from the Commencement, I, 8-9.

[17]British Quarterly Review, XI (Feb. and May, 1850), 355-371.

[18]History, II, 700; and see Eric Hobsbawm, Industry and Empire (New York: Pantheon, 1968), pp. 40 ff., 51 ff. After 1815 more than half of British exports were in cotton manufactured goods.

[19]History, I, 345; "Results of the Census of 1851," WR, 120 (Apr. 1854), 171-189.

[20]Halévy, History, II, 188-189.

[21]Joseph Hamburger, Intellectuals in Politics, pp. 33, 43, 48; and James Mill and the Art of Revolution, pp. 3-5; also see R. S. Neale, Class and Ideology in the Nineteenth-Century (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972), pp. 22-23 in which Neale confounds middle class reformers (particularly James Mill) with the middle class. The modest reforms of the Grey administration satisfied the narrow aims of the majority of the latter but they did not satisfy the broader aims of the former.

[22]See Chapter III, and note History from the Commencement, I, 27, on early nineteenth-century middle-class political grievances.

[23]History, I, 286, 292.

[24]Ibid., I, 317-318.

[25]Ibid., I, 327.

[26]Ibid., I, 277-278.

[27]Benjamin Disraeli, Coningsby (1844, London: John Lane, 1905), p. 93.

[28]History, I, 432-433.

[29]Ibid., I, 426-427.

[30]William R. Brock, Lord Liverpool and Liberal Toryism 1820-1827 (1941, London: F. Cass, 1967).

[31]History, I, 428-430.

[32]Harriet Martineau to William Tait, July 16 [1837], Univ. Coll.

[33]History, II, 458-459.

[34]Harriet Martineau to the Rev. William Ware, July 14, 1837, Boston P. Lib. MS. Eng. 244 (1-16).

[35]Autobiography, II, 127.

[36]History, II, 398-401.

[37]Ibid., I, 321, 538, 554; and see also The Peasant and The Prince (1841) in The Playfellow (London: George Routledge and Sons, 1895), pp. 557, 571, 580, 660.

[38]Quoted in Mineka, The Dissidence of Dissent, pp. 356-357; and see Harriet Martineau to James Martineau, Nov. 23, 1831; June 6, 1832, Transcript Letters, M. Coll; Autobiography, III, 82.

[39]Hamburger, Intellectuals in Politics, pp. 53 ff.

[40]Carlyle, Past and Present (1843, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1898), p. 219.

[41]Matthew Arnold to Harriet Martineau, July 7, 1864, BU Lib. 20; Cultive and Anarchy Chapter III in Charles F. Harrold and William D. Templeman, English Prose of the Victorian Era (1938, New York: Oxford University Press, 1954), p. 1177.

[42]John Stuart Mill, "Bentham" p. 44 and "Coleridge" pp. 96 ff., 102, et passim in ed. Marshall Cohen, The Philosophy of John Stuart Mill (New York: Random House, 1961).

[43]John Stuart Mill, On Liberty (1859), ed. Currin V. Shields, (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1956), pp. 6-7.

[44]History, II, 239-240.

[45]Society in America, I, 12-13.

[46]Harriet Martineau to Milnes, June 22 [?1842], Trinity Coll.

[47]History, II, 20-21, 153.

[48]Ibid., II, 152.

[49]Ibid., II, 25, 30.

[50]Hamburger, James Mill and the Art of Revolution, pp. 23, 152, 267.

[51]History, II, 25 ff., 32.

[52]Ibid., II, 33.

[53]Halévy, History, III, 3 ff.

[54] Norman Gash, "English Reform and French Revolution in the election of 1830," in eds. Richard Pares and A. J. P. Taylor, Essays Presented to Sir Lewis Namier (London: Macmillan; New York: St. Martin's Press, 1956); Michael Brock, The Great Reform Act (London: Hutchinson University Library, 1973).

[55] History, I, 542-543.

[56] Ibid., I, 549-551.

[57] Michael Brock in The Great Reform Act, pp. 109-110 says that the over-throw of the autocratic regimes in France and elsewhere failed to inspire a conservative reaction, either in England or on the continent.

[58] History, II, 4-6.

[59] Ibid., II, 168-9.

[60] Ibid., II, 68.

[61] Norman Gash, Reaction and Reconstruction in English Politics 1832-1852 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965).

[62] History, II, 256-7.

[63] Ibid., II, 70.

[64] Ibid., II, 28.

[65] The repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts was accompanied by a Parliamentary decision that all MPs take an oath "on the faith of a true Christian." This had the unintentional effect of barring Jews from Parliamentary membership although it had been intended mainly to prevent subversion of the Church by the Dissenters.

[66] History, I, 546-547.

[67] Kintner, Letters of Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett Barrett, II, 826, Robert Browning to Elizabeth Barrett, June 30, 1846.

[68] Society in America, I, 202.

[69] Autobiography, I, 402.

[70] Ibid., III, 88-89.

[71] History, II, 78.

[72] Ibid., II, 146, 223-224, 415, 420, 437; and see Autobiography, I, 260, 263-265, 336-337, 340-341; Harriet Martineau to James Martineau, March 6, 1838, Transcript Letters, M. Coll.

[73] History, II, 351.

[74] Harriet Grote, The Philosophic Radicals of 1832 (1866, New York: Burt Franklin, 1970), pp. 25, 33, 41, Molesworth to Harriet Grote, Oct. 15, 1836, George Grote to John Austin, Feb., 1838; and see Donald Southgate, The Passing of the Whigs 1832-1886 (London: Macmillan, 1962), pp. 69-70.

[75] Undated MS. BU Lib. 1406.

[76] Norman Gash, Sir Robert Peel: The Life of Sir Robert Peel after 1830 (London: Longman, 1972), p. 528. Gash gives examples of Peel's near-mania for administrative efficiency.

[77] Life in the Sick-Room, pp. 74-75.

[78] History, II, 207-208 in which she discussed the 1835 Tamworth Manifesto but without relating its significance to the rest of the Tory Party. Disraeli in Coningsby, ed. cit., p. 135 described Peel's Tamworth Manifesto as "an attempt to construct a party without principles."

[79] History, II, 472-473; and see Robert Blake, The Conservative Party (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1970), pp. 44-49; and Southgate, The Passing of the Whigs, pp. 120-123.

[80] Henry Crabb Robinson to Thomas Robinson, Jan. 2, 1846, DW Lib.

[81] History, I, 491-492.

[82] Ibid., II, 516-518, 667-668, 683; and see Gash, The Life of Sir Robert Peel after 1830; Robert Stewart, The Politics of Protection: Lord Derby and the Protectionist Party 1841-1852 (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1971); J. B. Conacher, The Peelites and the Party System (Newton Abbott: David and Charles, 1972); Wilbur Devereux Jones and Arvel B. Erickson, The Peelites 1846-1857 (Columbus, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1972).

[83] History from the Commencement, I, 4-7; and see the National Anti-Slavery Standard, June 1, 1861 in which Martineau wrote of the "blessed effects" of free trade and of the increased general prosperity.

[84] Betty Kemp, "Reflections on the Repeal of the Corn Laws," Victorian Studies, 5, (March, 1962) 189-204.

[85] History, II, 518-519.

[86] Autobiography, I, 210.

[87] S. G. Checkland, The Rise of Industrial Society in England 1815-1885 (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1964), pp. 37-40; Robin M. Reeve, The Industrial Revolution 1750-1850 (London: London University Press, 1971), pp. 162-163.

[88]See Chapter III, pp. 99 ff.

[89]History, II, 73, 150, 414-416, 606 ff., 667 ff., 685-686; Harriet Martineau to Milnes, June 12 [?1844], Trinity Coll.

[90]Dawn Island: a Tale (Manchester, Gadsby, 1845).

[91]Forest and Game Law Tales 3 vols. (London: Edward Moxon, 1845); Autobiography, II, 257-258; History, I, 508-510, 558; II, 616-617; Harriet Martineau to John Bright, Aug. 7, 1845, Oct. 11, 1845 B. Museum Add MS. 43389/1 and /4

[92]Autobiography, II, 260-262; Harriet Martineau to Peel, Feb. 22, 1846; Peel to Harriet Martineau, Feb. 23, 1846, B. Museum 40585/287 and /291; Gash, The Life of Peel after 1830, pp. 576-577.

[93]Gash, The Life of Sir Robert Peel after 1830, pp. 531 ff.

[94]History, II, 684.

[95]Coningsby ed. cit., 135-136; and see Robert Blake, Disraeli (London: Spottiswoode, 1966), pp. 197 ff.

[96]History, II, 519-520.

[97]Illustrations of Political Economy, Moral of Many Fables, p. 24.

[98]History, II, 551-552.

[99]Ibid., II, 553.

[100]Eric J. Hobsbawn, Labouring Men (New York: Basic Books, 1964).

[101]Harriet Martineau to Milnes, Apr. 21 [?1844], Trinity Coll.

[102]History, II, 555.

[103]Ibid., II, 557-9; and see II, 90-91, 408.

[104]Henry Crabb Robinson to Thomas Robinson, Dec. 4, 1843, DW Lib.; History, II, 556-558.

[105]Harriet Martineau to Milnes, Dec. 22 [?1843], May, 1843, Trinity Coll.

[106]History, II, 556.

[107]W. L. Burn, The Age of Equipoise (1964, New York: Norton, 1965), p. 304.

[108]George S. R. Kitson Clark, An Expanding Society: Britain 1830-1900 (London and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1967), p. 163.

[109]David Roberts, Victorian Origins of the British Welfare State (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1960); and see Arthur J. Taylor Laissez-Faire and State Intervention in Nineteenth-Century Britain (London: Macmillan, 1972).

[110]Thomas Carlyle, "Chartism" (1839) in English and Other Critical Essays (1915 rpt. London: Everyman, 1967), pp. 174, 198.

[111]History, II, 31.

[112]Harriet Martineau to Henry Crabb Robinson, July 20, 1843, DW Lib.

[113]Harold Perkin, The Origins of Modern English Society 1780-188 (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969), pp. 134 ff., 137.

[114]S. G. Checkland, The Rise of Industrial Society in England 1815-1885, pp. 18-20, 35-37.

[115]History, II, 262-263.

[116]Asa Briggs ed., Chartist Studies (London: Macmillan, 1959), p. 2; and see also R. G. Gammage, History of the Chartist Movement (1854, rev. 1894, rpt. New York: Kelley, 1969); J. T. Ward, Popular Movements c. 1830-1850 (London: Macmillan, 1970); G. D. H. Cole, Chartist Portraits (1941, New York: Macmillan, 1965); Mark Hovell, The Chartist Movement (1918, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1965); William Lovett, Life and Struggles (1876, London: MacGibbon and Kee, 1967); William Lovett and John Collins, Chartism: A New Organization of the People (1840, Leicester, Leicester University Press, 1969).

[117]History, II, 405 ff.

[118]Ibid., II, 413-414, 264, 521-525.

[119]Ibid., II, 263.

[120]Ibid., II, 409-411.

[121]Hamburger, James Mill and the Art of Revolution, p. 20; Life in The Sick-Room, p. 73; Harriet Martineau to Helen Martineau, June 12 [?1848], M. Coll; History, II, 180, 457, 688-689; Autobiography, III, 241.

[122]Autobiography, II, 298-299.

[123]History, II, 327.

[124]Quoted in Leslie Stephen, The English Utilitarians, 3 vols. (1900, London: University of London Press, 1950), III, 323.

[125]Bray, The Philosophy of Necessity, I, 341.

[126]Carlyle "Chartism," passim.

[127]Benjamin Disraeli, Sybil: or The Two Nations (1845, London: Oxford University Press, 1970).

[128]History from the Commencement, IV, 571-6.

[129]And see Illustrations of Political Economy, Moral of Many Fables, p. 75.

[130]Illustrations of Political Economy, Ireland, p. 126.

[131]Retrospect of Western Travel, I, 157.

[132]Harriet Martineau to Milnes, Nov. 21 [?1844], Trinity Coll.

[133]History, II, 106, 229, 232-3; and see J. C. Beckett, The Making of Modern Ireland 1603-1923 (London: Faber and Faber, 1966).

[134]Autobiography, II, 311-313. In 1847 Count Porro of Milan, and in 1848 Crown Prince Oscar of Sweden made similar requests, see Autobiography, II, 310-311, 314-6.

[135]History, II, 7 ff., 158, 292, 569-575.

[136]Ibid., I, 504-505.

[137]Ibid., II, 315, 316, 576 ff.

[138]Harriet Martineau to Frederick Knight Hunt, Apr. 28 [?1853], BU Lib., 523.

[139]History from the Commencement, IV, 547 ff., 552-553, 576.

[140]History, II, 715.

[141]G. M. Young, Portrait of an Age, ed. cit., p. 52 et passim.

[142]History from the Commencement, IV, 577.

[143]History, II, 629-630.

[144]History from the Commencement, IV, 577.

[145]Autobiography, II, 447 ff.

[146] History, II, 444, 561.

[147] Autobiography, II, 453, Letter to a friend, Oct. 1, 1849.

[148] History, II, 716; and see History from the Commencement, IV, 622, which ends with the identical paragraph only the word 'forty' being substituted for 'thirty.'

CHAPTER VII

A FREE ROVER ON THE BROAD, BRIGHT BREEZY COMMON OF THE UNIVERSE[1]

In the middle decades of the nineteenth century religious orthodoxy came under the combined attack of science and Higher Criticism. Victorian dogmatism, as Walter Houghton noted in The Victorian Frame of Mind, was often less insistence based on certitude than an overriding wish to believe. In support of this contention Houghton quoted Harriet Martineau's admission that, in the 1840s, she was "unconsciously trying to gain strength of conviction by vigour of assertion."[2] But Martineau's admission was made only after she had found a new certitude and not at the time she was struggling to retain the old one. The need to express certitude was characteristic of an age of uncertainty, and in Martineau it was probably accentuated by the insecurities she had experienced in childhood and by the vulnerabilities of deafness. She leapt, as it were, from one certitude to the next, seemingly without pause. She did not apparently suffer the crisis of conscience which plagued so many of her contemporaries, and it was only in retrospect that she was willing to confess her religious doubts, and her own willing self-delusion. "I now feel pretty certain," she wrote in the Autobiography, "that I was not, even then, dealing truly with my own mind."[3]

Martineau's interpretation in the Autobiography of her own early religious views was of course colored by her later renunciation of those views. Her actual severance from Unitarianism did not come until the publication of Eastern Life Present and Past in 1848. But she claimed that she had ended her official connection with the Unitarian body and

had become only a "nominal Christian," lingering in "those regions of metaphysical fog in which most deserters from Unitarianism abide for the rest of their time," as early as 1831 and the completion of the three Prize Essays:

> I had already ceased to be an Unitarian in the technical sense. I was now one in the dreamy way of metaphysical accommodation, and on the ground of dissent from every other form of Christianity: the time was approaching when, if I called myself so at all, it was only in the free-thinking sense.[4]

The perspective and the phraseology in the Autobiography were those of Martineau the Positivist, who, perhaps, dismissed her Unitarianism of the seventeen-year period from 1831 to 1848 a little to readily. For to outward appearances at least, the Harriet Martineau of that time had remained a Unitarian. She attended chapel, she enjoyed reading the gospels, and she was honored by her co-religionists--especially in the United States--for her contributions to Unitarian literature: the anonymous Devotional Exercises (1823) was reprinted under her name several times; Traditions of Palestine (1830) went into its third edition in 1843; she was widely known for her articles and reviews in the Monthly Repository which were republished in America in the Miscellanies (1836); and she had been acclaimed by the entire sect for the Prize Essays.[5]

Martineau made no major contributions to religious literature after 1832, but the tone of her writing in Life in the Sick-Room and especially in the Playfellow series was that of conventional piety.[6] By the 1840s she had surrendered most of the appurtenances of Christianity but she still retained her basic faith. She still believed in God, revelation, and the after-life.

> She is sutained by a very strong religious faith [wrote Henry Crabb Robinson]. I know of no orthodox sufferer who seems to be more intensely convinced of the truth of ordinary doctrines . . . than Miss M: is of her scheme of religious hope as developed by Priestley and Channing.[7]

Faith had been Harriet Martineau's earliest refuge and her chief support in the frightening days of her lonely childhood. In young adulthood she had believed that "Faith, however blind, and religious hope, however vague, afford a sufficient support to the mind under any affliction."[8] Her achievement of independence had lessened her need to believe, but she had clung to the remnants of her faith, and in Life in the Sick Room, written in 1843 when she thought herself to be dying, she still spoke of a dependence on God, "the Maker of our frame and the Ordainer of our lot."[9] Even after her conversion from faith, Martineau conceded that the sentiments she had expressed in the sick-room essays had truly reflected her state of mind at that time:

> I can only now say that I am ashamed, considering my years and experience of suffering, that my state of mind was so crude, if not morbid, as I now see it to have been. . . . The fact is, as I now see, that I was lingering in the metaphysical stage of mind, because I was not perfectly emancipated from the debris of the theological. The day of final release was drawing nigh . . . but I had not yet ascertained my own position. I had quitted the old untenable point of view, and had not yet found the one on which I was soon to take my stand. And, while attesting to the truth of the book on the whole, - its truth as a reflexion of my mind at that date, - I still can hardly reconcile with sincerity the religious remains that are found in it.[10]

She was to describe the period of her Tynemouth confinement as one of "transition from religious inconsistency and irrationality to free-thinking."[11] And it was, perhaps, inconsistency rather than witting hypocrisy which accounted for the seemingly calculated piety of the Playfellow stories. Nevertheless, it is a little difficult to avoid the

suspicion that in the Playfellow stories, much more than in Life in the Sick Room, Harriet Martineau was less than honest. Her fictional children appear to have been not the offspring of her Hartleyan philosophy but rather of her need to write in a genre which the anxious parents of young readers would find acceptable. The piety of her children was therefore not a Wordsworthian "natural piety" nurtured by experience, but the formal piety bred by an orthodox faith in stern pews and dismal chapels. In The Crofton Boys and Settlers at Home, for example, she went so far as to write conventionally about children at prayer, although as a Necessarian she had long since been persuaded of the irrationality of prayer: of the pointlessness of beseeching God for an intervention which in Necessarian terms was impossible of achievement.[12]

At the very time she was writing the Playfellow series, Harriet Martineau admitted to her brother James a conviction of "the predominance of unreality in the orthodox Christianity."[13] But perhaps too much should not be read into this admission, for her Unitarianism had never been "orthodox Christianity," and the ideological rift which was to separate her from her brother and others of the Unitarian faith, had not yet become evident. Those who knew her in the thirties and forties saw, as Maria Weston Chapman did, "no discordance between herself and our Unitarians generally on the subject of a First Cause other than the approximation to the Orthodox world occasioned by her Necessarianism."[14]

Mrs. Chapman, however, underestimated the divisiveness of Necessarianism. Most Unitarians were not Necessarian and in fact feared the mechanistic tendencies of the Necessarian philosophy. In the nineteenth century, Unitarians were divided into three groups: the more

conservative Unitarians relied almost wholly on the scriptures for their inspiration; the Necessarians looked to Priestley and the inevitability of natural law; and, particularly after the third decade of the century, there came to be those Unitarians who rejected both fundamentalism and materialism, and took their philosophy instead from the German Romantics who perceived religion as an "individual experience of God." To the Romantics religion was a "divine consciousness" unrelated either to the scriptures or to the philosophy of the Enlightenment.[15] It was therefore unassailable either by Higher Criticism or science, and its adherents did not feel threatened by the pursuit of knowledge: the fallibility of the Bible could not undermine their belief, and the discoveries of science only served to increase their wonder of God. The Necessarianism in their midst, however, _did_ present a challenge: it was impersonal; it was reductionist, and it opposed the spiritualism which lay at the very heart of Romantic faith.

Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729-81) was a transitional figure who transcended rationalism to become the first of the notable German Romantics. The earliest translation of his _Education of the Human Race_ was published by Henry Crabb Robinson in the _Monthly Repository_ of 1806.[16] At that time there had been few in England with an interest in the German philosophers and Robinson's articles had gone largely unremarked. By 1830, however, German theory had begun to penetrate the intellectual fabric of English society, and it was in that year that Harriet Martineau, with her unerring sense of timing, published four essays popularizing Lessing's religious theory for the lay readers of the _Monthly Repository_.[17] Initially Lessing's appeal for Harriet Martineau and other

Unitarians was his emphasis on the humanity of Christ. But ultimately the most influential aspect of Lessing's philosophy was his interpretation of the ultimate religion as a personal belief, a personal experience, and a personal revelation: " . . . the fact of revelation which speaks directly and with certainty to us ourselves, to our hearts. It is something, that is, which is capable of being felt and experienced."[18] It was this element in Lessing which, especially through his disciple Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), influenced English religious thought in the nineteenth-century.

It was the German interpretation of religion as a personal conviction and a personal morality which inspired that practical expression of faith which Carlyle called the "Everlasting Yea."[19] It was a philosophy which motivated Martineau, and which through Carlyle inspired, among others, a whole generation of Christian Socialists. Carlyle represented in English philosophy the ethical element in German thought which Matthew Arnold described as "morality touched with emotion."[20] But it was largely through Coleridge rather than Carlyle that the emotive aspect of German Romanticism influenced English religious theory. Coleridge's rejection of Unitarianism and Necessarianism was inspired by the German call to the individual Reason and the creative mind.[21] He came to see Necessarianism as the antithesis of faith. It led, he said, inevitably to unbelief because it abstracted and depersonalized God, and because it was predicated upon the passiveness of the mind:

> If the mind be not passive [wrote Coleridge in 1801], if it be indeed made in God's image, and that too in the sublimest sense - the Image of the Creator - there is ground for suspicion, that any system built on the passiveness of the mind must be false, as a system.[22]

Coleridge's rejection of materialism for spiritualism, his abandonment of Necessity, his endorsement of free will, his emphasis on individual Reason, and his emergence from what he called his "religious Twilight," had echoes on both sides of the Atlantic.[23] In the United States the Unitarian divine, William Ellery Channing believed that "our ultimate reliance is and must be on our own reason."[24] He individualized the religious experience, freed it from its scriptural moorings and laid the foundations of American Transcendentalism. Because he relied on personal faith, Channing was not to be intimidated by Biblical Criticism or by the discoveries of contemporary science. He told De Tocqueville that Christianity had "nothing to fear from the most searching examination by reason."[25] But he was a vigorous opponent of Priestleyan necessity. He feared its cold depersonalized logic. In Harriet Martineau's view, Channing saw in its materialism a threat to the spiritual element in religion.[26]

In England it was primarily through the medium of Coleridge that the ideas of the German Romantics percolated. As Arthur Stanley once said, "How different the fortunes of the Church of England might have been if Newman had been able to read German."[27] Nevertheless, by way of Coleridge the germ of the Romantic philosophy was transplanted. In the Church of England Frederick Denison Maurice and the Arnolds nourished the cult of individual religion and personal obligation. And in the Unitarian Church James Martineau became the high priest of German philosophical theory. James Martineau, like Coleridge, came to abandon Necessarianism--if not Unitarianism. By 1839 he had renounced Hartleyan ethics and had aligned himself with Channing and the proponents of free will and the

individual reason. He now rejected the conception of man as the effectual object of inevitable natural laws, and came instead to believe in man as the measure of all things. It was James who had first introduced his sister to the logic of Necessity, but his doubts had been growing over a long period of years. In a Monthly Repository essay, "On the Life, Character, and Works of Dr. Priestley," written in 1833, James had intimated his growing detachment from the Necessarian school.[28] He now sought instead "a more living spirit breathed into the outward forms of religion." And he looked to "emancipated Germany" for an escape from the sterility of his dessicated faith:

> There if anywhere, will be exhibited that truly sublime state of mind, faith, - absolute faith, - in truth: and the great problem will be solved, how to combine the freest intellect with the loftiest devotion; - and while inquiring always, to love and worship still.[29]

In 1842 James severed his final links with Necessarian theory. He now admitted that the supernatural had "power over the natural element in man," and he affirmed the efficacy of prayer.[30] In 1848 and 1849 he went on a study tour to Germany. And, in "The Restoration of Belief," published in the Westminster Review in 1852, the year after his sister's renunciation of theism in the Letters on the Laws of Man's Nature and Development, he declared:

> Religion, in its ultimate essence, is a sentiment of Reverence for a Higher than ourselves. . . . Reverence can attach itself exclusively to a person; it cannot direct itself on what is impersonal. . . . All the sentiments characterisitic of religion presuppose a Personal Object, and assert their power only where manhood is the type of Godhead.[31]

The brother and sister who had shared a religious faith in their young adulthood, who had been inspired Unitarians and dedicated

Necessarians, had now travelled to the opposite extremes of their philosophy. Religious and intellectual sympathy had provided their strongest bond, but religion had ultimately become the means to their irreconcilable separation. Their difference of conscience became bitterly and irreversibly personal.[32] James had found himself unable to pursue the Necessarian path to its mechanistic conclusions. He saw that it was leading him away from theism, so he turned back and found refuge in the personal religion of German Romantic philosophy. His sister on the other hand, followed Necessarianism to its empirical and practical end. She had lingered for a time in the "metaphysical fog," but in the end she rejected the philosophy of Lessing and Kant, and ultimately even the last remnants of her orthodoxy: revelation, the after-life, and an anthropomorphic Deity.[33]

Harriet Martineau's belief in revelation and the resurrection were necessary to her philosophy as a Christian, but her acceptance of these doctrines had always been hedged about by so many illogical contradictions (see Chapter II) that it is not difficult to see how she eventually came to reject them. Her belief in God, however, had seemingly been based on the firm foundation of her personal conviction. Her God was a Necessarian God constrained by the laws of nature, rather than the omniscient Deity of Judaic and Christian tradition, but He was implicitly "an object of faith rather than of knowledge."[34] She perceived God in personal, Romantic terms; He was impregnable; He could not be challenged by Higher Criticism--for the Scriptures were not the literal word of God--and He could not be threatened by science--for she saw science as the complement of faith:

> Place man on this globe with a perfect frame [she wrote in 1832], and full of unperverted intelligence - what will he wish to learn? He will seek to know how he came there; and this discovered, for what purpose, and under what law. His most direct path to the first aim of his inquiries may be physical research; but he is not satisfied with it, till it leads him to the point he seeks. He may reach his theology by means of physical inquiry; but it is theology which is his aim. . . . He explores the past and the actual state of nature, and especially of man, and his inquiries again lead him back to the Fount of Being. . . . He studies for the sake of Him who made all; or, in other words, he enriches his theology with the treasures of physical science [my italics].[35]

She placed her faith in God as a divine agent and at that time utterly rejected the concepts of atomism, materialism and atheism.[36] Her God was the personified God of Christianity, the First Cause, the Creator. And her belief in him as all of these things temporarily outlasted her belief in organized religion, and her belief in Christianity itself.

Martineau's anti-clericalism was her first step along the steep path of disillusionment. At the time she wrote the prize essays Martineau had seen a need for organized religion. Unitarianism and its propagation had then been her cause. But after the essays she had turned away from doctrinal arguments and had sought individual communion. She was reading Lessing and Kant and her most Romantic views found expression in some of her Monthly Repository essays of this time: "Sabbath Musings" in 1831 was a paean to the devotions of the solitary--"where is there a rest, where a home, but in communion - private communion - with the Father of the spirit?"[37] Because she herself no longer felt the need for church or chapel, she began to see them as symbolizing the corruption of faith. In the Illustrations of Political Economy she directed her anti-clericalism against the Church of England. In Society in America she dissected the administration, the practices and the spirit of religion among all the

creeds in the United States and found them wanting.[38] In How to Observe Morals and Manners (1838), she saw the clergy as anachronistic:

> As the studies of clergy lie in the past, as the days of their strongest influence are behind, and as the religious feelings of men have hitherto reposed on the antique, and are but beginning to point towards the future, it is natural, it is unavoidable, that the clergy should retard rather than aid the progress of society.[39]

She had begun to interpret faith as something which went beyond doctrine and even beyond worship:

> Religion is, in its widest sense, "the tendency of human nature to the Infinite" [she wrote in Society in America]; and its principle is manifested in the pursuit of perfection in any direction whatever. It is in this widest sense that some speculative atheists have been religious men; religious in their efforts after self-perfection; though unable to personify their conception of the Infinite. In a somewhat narrower sense, religion is the relation which the highest human sentiments bear towards an infinitely perfect Being [my italics].[40]

Harriet Martineau was moving gradually towards a renunciation of Christianity while at the same time, her brother James was taking a different road. In the year 1848 they each arrived. He went to Germany and affirmed his beliefs. She published Eastern Life Present and Past and crossed the threshold of unbelief.[41]

On the morning of November 20, 1846 Harriet Martineau had her first glimpse of the sandy white coast of North Africa. She and a party of friends, Mr. and Mrs. Richard V. Yates and Joseph C. Ewart all of Liverpool, were at the start of an eight month journey which was to take them to Egypt, Palestine, Syria, and Lebanon.[42] The tour inspired one of the most interesting and undeservedly neglected of all Harriet Martineau's major works. Eastern Life was an important milestone in Harriet Martineau's religious development, and it is primarily this aspect of the

three-volume work which will occupy us here. Eastern Life made few if any important contributions to religious philosophy. The religious theories expressed therein were neither novel nor well-executed. The conclusions were tentative. The Biblical Criticism was unscholarly and fragmentary. And Martineau was too poorly prepared to succeed at the larger task of comparative religion. But although its contribution to the history of religious doubt may have been minor, except as it related to Martineau herself, Eastern Life was a triumph of a different kind: as a book of nineteenth-century travel it was superb, and even Martineau's harshest critics were unstinting in their praise of her descriptive talents.[43]

As a portrait of the eastern Mediterranean lands and of Victorian tourism on the eve of imperialism, Eastern Life is probably without peer. It is impossible to conjure up in a brief paragraph the details which Martineau brought so vibrantly to life in its pages. She succeeded, as one reviewer said, in recreating, "in the minds of others the pictures which have been impressed upon her own." Her vivid images had a tactile quality. Her observant eye missed nothing either of the beauties or the harsh realities of the Middle Eastern lands and their people. She was as sensitive to the poetic magic of deserted Petra as she was to the trivial details of an Arab encampment. She listened to the "melancholy music" of the water-wheel turned by a blind-folded ox. She described the "infinity of birds" at sunset, and the "din" of the market place at noon. She saw the dirt, the flies, and the blindness but was mournfully aware that she had seen "more emaciated, and stunted, and depressed men, women and children in a single walk in England, than I observed from end to end

of the land of Egypt."[44] She was awed by the "incommunicable" splendor of the statues of Rameses at Thebes so that "nothing even in nature affected me so unspeakably."[45] She was utterly devastated by a visit to an Egyptian harem where the women did nothing all day but gorge themselves on sweetmeats, drink endless cups of coffee, and smoke intemperately. Her feminism was affronted by the indignity to womanhood which these pampered and mindless creatures represented. They were "the most injured human beings I have ever seen - the most studiously depressed and corrupted women whose condition I have witnessed."[46] But she was pleased by the natural grace of the peasants. She remarked on the lively impudence of the Arab traders. She was unimpressed by the grandiose public works erected by the Egyptian ruler Mohammed Ali at the expense of an impovished people.[47] And she was deeply shocked by the intolerance persisting between Moslem, Jew and Christian in the Holy Land.[48]

Martineau and her party began their tour in the winter, the favorite season for the numerous European and American visitors to the eastern Mediterranean. In Egypt the temperatures were never too extreme, rarely going above the seventies by day or dropping below forty at night. Christmas, with their Arab cook dutifully serving turkey and plum pudding, was like an English July day. But from March until June, when they crossed the Sinai to Palestine and Syria, the heat and the Khamsin wind combined to make the conditions barely tolerable. She suffered from what the Victorians called the "face-ache" when it was very hot and dry. And she submitted to mesmeric treatment after particularly long and exhausting days on the road. Nevertheless, for one so recently an invalid, she survived the rigors of travel and the primitive conditions of desert

encampments remarkably well. She rode on horse-back and by donkey. She climbed to the top of the pyramids. She sat smoking a chibouque--and developed a lifelong taste for tobacco as a result--on the deck of a Nile steamer.[49] And she travelled for endless days by camel-caravan. Her journey took her up the Nile by steamer to Thebes, Nubia, the monuments of Abu-Simbel, and as far south as Wadee Halfa--where the boat almost capsized--and Karnak--where she carved her name on a rock: her abhorrence of vandalism did not apparently extend to rocks, but she chided the tourists who wrote on monuments or stole artifacts from the sites of ancient tombs or temples, these she felt, with typical English arrogance, belonged more properly in the British Museum as they were "national property!"[50] On the return journey to Cairo she explored the antiquities of the Nile Valley and it was then that she began to contemplate religion:

> What new and unthought of knowledge comes to one in the presence of that past wh. one has read and thought about all one's life [she wrote to Milnes from Gebel el Elredeh]! It is knowledge not only of those old and wonderful people, but, through them, of the whole race. . . . How exceedingly limited and mistaken now appear our ordinary notions of the origen [sic], worth and tendency of our theological ideas. . . . I rode, day by day, through the glorious sterile valley which leads one among the population of the dead, feeling the same ideas and emotions must have been in the minds of those before whose eyes, as before mine, lay the same contrasting scenery of life and death. I do not care for, or therefore believe in, future reward and punishment as they, in their age unavoidably did: but though the interest in the unseen state has a different ground, it cannot be of essentially the same character and strength.[51]

From Cairo the travellers followed the path the Hebrews had taken across the Sinai. They went to Jerusalem and the cities of the New Testament, to Damascus, and finally to Lebanon from which they sailed in June 1847.

Eastern Life conjured up the timeless atmosphere of the Biblical lands; it informed the would-be tourist; it satisfied a growing Victorian interest in exotic places: there were "few more delightful books of travel," wrote John Morley.[52] But Eastern Life was intended as more than a book of travel: its author conceived it as a vehicle for her own religious migration. Amid the relics of ancient Egyptian beliefs, in the birthplace of "the old family of faiths," Harriet Martineau began to see Christianity within the context of all religion. She began to see it as a transitional development in religious evolution, and as something less than the ultimate truth; or the ultimate faith.

Martineau's spiritual metamorphosis had its beginnings in the vacuum of the Egyptian desert, but the germ of her conversion was rooted in the fertile soil of nineteenth-century theological dispute. Victorian unbelief had been nourished--in spite of the Romantic influence--by Higher Criticism and scientific discovery. The inspiration for Higher Criticism came mainly from Germany, but in England too several books had been written which challenged fundamentalist beliefs. Charles Hennell had written An Inquiry Concerning the Origin of Christianity in 1838. Charles Bray had depersonalized God according to the inevitable logic of Necessarianism in The Philosophy of Necessity (1845). In 1846, the year of Martineau's departure for Egypt, Mary Ann Evans had translated David Friedrich Strauss's Leben Jesu (1835-1836) which historically analyzed the events of the Bible.[53] The question of Victorian Higher Criticism is too extensive for an adequate examination here, and it is unclear whether Martineau had access to all the literature in the field. She was probably familiar with the work of the Unitarian Charles Hennell. She had

read Strauss. She had no great opinion of Francis W. Newman's Phases of Faith or Passages from the History of my Creed (1850) although she thought it "noble in its integrity." She considered William Rathbone Greg's simple affirmation of the Unitarian faith, The Creed of Christendom (1850) "a mere splash in the water - all settling quietly without result"--these last two were in any case published after Eastern Life.[54] Martineau was fairly knowledgable about general scientific theory. She was personally acquainted with Charles Lyell and was doubtless familiar with his seminal work, The Principles of Geology (1830-1833). She may have read Robert Chambers's anonymous work The Vestiges of Creation (1844). And like most well-read Victorians she was probably familiar with the theories of evolution which were current even before the 1859 publication of On the Origin of Species which she greeted with great enthusiasm.[55]

In spite of being well-informed, Harriet Martineau journalist was far more assured than was Harriet Martineau religious thinker and she executed the philosophical aspects of Eastern Life far less successfully than she did the descriptive. She was in fact attempting a task which was too large for her. Her scholarship was inadequate and her method of hasty composition too incautious to comprehensively trace the evolution of Christianity and Mohammedanism from Egyptian and Judaic origins.[56]

The ideology of religious evolution is usually associated with Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831). He developed a world view of the unfolding 'Spirit' of faith. He traced this 'Spirit' from the primitive magic of the natural religions to its culmination in the revelations of Christianity which he called the "Absolute Religion."[57] There is no

evidence to suggest that Harriet Martineau had read Hegel, and she was not yet familiar with the historical perspectives of Auguste Comte, but we know she was familiar with the work of Lessing who fathered the idea of mankind's progress towards a revealed religion and a divinely ordained society. In her 1830 Monthly Repository article "Lessing's Hundred Thoughts" she had mentioned analogies between the nations and sects of the eastern Mediterranean, and in The Faith as manifested through Israel, the prize essay which was addressed to the Jews, she had stressed the relationship between Judaism and Christianity.

Martineau's historical interpretation of Christianity did not lead her to Hegelian conclusions. Her world view of religion did not lead her to an affirmation of Christianity, but rather to its negation. She came to believe that the ultimate truth and the ultimate wisdom lay not in any present creed but in mankind's future destiny. She concluded Eastern Life on a curiously Comtean note:

> The world and human life are, as yet, obviously very young. Human existence is, as yet, truly infantine. . . . It can hardly be but that, in its advance to its maturity, new departments of strength will be developed, and the reflective and substantiating powers which characterise the Western Mind be brought into union with the Perceptive, Imaginative and Aspiring Faculty of the East, so as to originate a new order of knowledge and wisdom.[58]

Her new perspective on Christianity grew out of a respect for all faiths, and for the faith of the ancient Egyptians in particular. "The more he [the traveller] traces downwards the history and philosophy of religious worship, the more astonished he will be to find to what extent this early theology originated later systems of belief and adoration."[59] The ideas which Judaism and Christianity reverenced had, she believed,

had their birth in the valley of the Nile long before Moses, and long before the Biblical Creation.

> Here they were, nearly two thousand years before the birth of Abraham, worshipping One Supreme God. . . . They recognised his moral government. . . . The highest objects set before these people were purity of life and rectitude of conduct. Their highest aspirations were directed to the glory and favour of God in this life, and acceptance by him hereafter. Their conceptions of death were that it was a passage to an eternal existence.[60]

Even those aspects of the Christian faith which Harriet Martineau as a Unitarian had never held, had had their origins, she believed, in Egyptian legend.

> . . . it has been a great misfortune to the average Christian world for many ages, that the allegories of Egypt, - the old images of miraculous birth, and the annunciation of it from heaven, should have been laid hold of . . . till at last . . . it came to be taken, with other mythic stories, for historical truth, and is to this day profanely and literally held by multitudes who should have been trained to a truer reverence.[61]

Martineau interpreted Christ's gospel to mean a recognition of God, an adherence to his moral government, a belief in the brotherhood of the human race, and the establishment of God's kingdom on earth. But Christianity had become encumbered with that which Christ himself had never contemplated. It had become encrusted with that which was "incompatible with the whole spirit of his gospel; - encumbered with a priesthood and ritual of its own, and adulterated with more or fewer of the superstitions of all the nations who ministered to the Hebrew mind:"[62]

> The old Egyptian faith deteriorated into worshipping animals; the Jewish into the Pharisaic superstitions and oppressions rebuked throughout the Gospels; and what Christianity has become, among the widest class of its professors, let the temples and congregations of the Greek and Latin churches show.[63]

Christianity in short had become corrupted by the accumulated myths, fables, and superstitions which now passed for essential doctrines.[64]

The priesthood had deprived the religion of its vitality, and idolatry and bibliolatry had distorted the meaning of the faith and had substituted the symbol and the letter for the spirit: "Mistaking Records of the origin of Judaism and Christianity for the messages themselves."[65]

Martineau used the methods of Higher Criticism to prove the fallibility of the Hebrew and Christian records. She anticipated the arithmetical calculations of John Colenso, the Bishop of Natal, by some fifteen years--casting doubt on the numbers and years of the Biblical record.[66] She noted the disparity between Scriptural and historical accounts of Exodus. And she used the recent discoveries of archeologists and geologists to discredit Genesis:[67]

> For our first glimpse into ancient Egyptian life we must go back upon the track of Time far further than we have been accustomed to suppose that track to extend. People who had believed all their lives that the globe and Man were created together were startled when the new science of geology revealed to them the great fact that Man is a comparatively new creation on the earth, whose oceans and swamps and jungles were aforetime inhabited by monsters never seen by human eye but in their fossil remains. People who enter Egypt with the belief that the human race has existed only six thousand years, and that at that date, the world was uninhabited by men, except within a small circuit in Asia, must undergo a somewhat similar revolution of ideas. . . . The differences between the dates given by legendary records and by modern research (with the help of contemporary history) are very great: but the one agrees as little as the other with the popular notion that the human race is only six thousand years old.[68]

In Eastern Life Martineau was groping for an elusive answer. She was not yet ready to reject Christianity for she had not yet found her new certitude. But her religion was becoming an interpretation of universal moralities which were not uniquely Christian.[69] Her philosophy was not completely evolved; her methods and her purposes were unsystematically executed and her conclusions were only tentative. She used the

tools of Higher Criticism and science but her technique was not thorough. Eastern Life added little to the arsenal of the Biblical Critics, and little that was original to the 'world view' of Christianity. It was primarily one woman's struggle with the awesome revelation that, beside the relics of the ancient Egyptian culture and holding many of the same verities, Christianity could claim no special divine appointment: its very foundations were being undermined by geological revaluations of the earth's age, and its spirit had been corrupted by the forms and ceremonies which had for centuries replaced its essence.

Even if Martineau's philosophy was incomplete and inconclusive, her meaning was clear, and John Murray, to whom she offered the manuscript, refused to publish "a work of infidel tendency, having the obvious aim of deprecating the authority and invalidating the veracity of the Bible." Martineau was furious. She called Murray presumptuous, immature, and censorious, and she offered the rejected manuscript to Edward Moxon instead.[70]

The reaction of the reading public to Eastern Life was predictable.

> I am aware [Martineau told Crabb Robinson] that very many persons, - and some who agree with me throughout - forbid the book in their families; and that it is the policy of the orthodox to stifle it by silence: but I have heard already quite enough of its effects, - cheering and enlightening the minds of the free - to make me amply satisfied that my labour is not lost.[71]

But even the hitherto loyal Henry Crabb Robinson confided in his Diary:

> It is not in a book of travels that Christianity is to be attacked - and it is an attack on Christianity to imply that all miracles are untrue - that Moses derived all his philosophy from Egypt etc. These things may all be true, and no one is to blame for making them the subject of investigation, but it may be objected that these should not be smuggled into a book of travels.[72]

The critics echoed Robinson's objections. "I should have liked it better," wrote the reviewer in Fraser's Magazine, "if all that Socinian trash had been extracted, to form a tit-bit for such as delight in the monstrous crudities of the dim-sighted infidel."[73] The British Quarterly Review was noticably piqued by "Miss Martineau's new and improved edition of the book of Exodus, and of the history of Moses:"

> Why Miss Martineau should call herself a Christian at all we cannot see, for, according to her account of the matter, what Christ taught was nothing new. The doctrines which she attributes to him are actually nothing but a reproduction of what she states had already been taught by the Essenes. . . . We can only express our regret, that Miss Martineau should so utterly have mistaken the department best suited to the exercise of her abilities . . . if she had confined herself to the proper object of a book of travels and not ventured beyond the sphere of her own knowledge and experience, she might have produced a work second to none of its class and value.[74]

Martineau's venture into the quagmire of nineteenth-century theological dispute seemed brazen to her critics but she had been nervous about making her new-found convictions public, she anticipated the popular reaction to her ideas, and when she started to write Eastern Life, she confided to Henry Atkinson:

> I am pretty confident that I am right in seeing the progression of ideas through thousands of years, - a progression advanced by every new form of faith (of the four great forms) - every one of these faiths being beset by the same corruptions. But I do not know of anyone who has regarded the matter thus: and it is an awful thing to stand alone in; - for a half-learned person at least. . . . I could not if I tried, communicate to any one the feeling that I have that the theological belief of almost every body in the civilized world is baseless. The very statement between you and me looks startling in its presumption. And if I could, I dare not, till I have more assurance than I have now that my faith is enough for my own self-government and support. I know, as well as I ever knew any thing, that for support I really need nothing else than a steady desire to learn the truth and abide by it . . . but it will require a long process of proof before I can be sure that these convictions will avail me, under pressure instead of those by which I have lived all my life.[75]

Martineau felt very isolated in her new state of unbelief. Her world had always been a Christian world. She had felt secure even in her Dissent for she had been supported by a consensus of other Dissenters. All her friends were believers; all that is but Henry George Atkinson, and it was he who was to provide a bridge across the chasm of doubt.

Harriet Martineau had first met Atkinson in 1845. He was a mesmerist, and she had just been cured by mesmerism.[76] He was somewhat younger than she, a man with exquisite manners, an attractive appearance, and a large enough private income to be a dilletante philosopher.[77] Their correspondence began shortly thereafter when she coquettishly asked him if he would write to "a lady who would promise not to fall in love with [him]."[78] The promise was kept, and the correspondence sustained--in spite of the almost total illegibility of Atkinson's writing--to the very end of Harriet Martineau's life.

Harriet Martineau had an inordinately high opinion of Henry Atkinson's rather modest intellectual attainments. And as none of his contemporaries had an exalted opinion of his capabilities, it has led some to suspect that Harriet Martineau may have been influenced by a greater fondness than she was ever willing to admit. However, there is no evidence to suggest that she was ever in love with Atkinson, and it is safe to conclude only that she was moved by respect for his learning. Atkinson had studied mesmerism and phrenology; Martineau was coming to these subjects as a pupil willing to be taught, and she deferred to Atkinson as an expert. In an age when science was in its infancy it was not easy to challenge a pretension to knowledge. Atkinson was an amateur scientific theorist like Herbert Spencer but without Spencer's breadth of

mind and intellect, and when one recalls the almost exaggerated esteem in which his contemporaries held Spencer, then perhaps Martineau's admiration for Atkinson becomes understandable.[79]

It was out of her correspondence with Atkinson that the idea for their joint Letters on the Laws of Man's Nature and Development was born.[80] The Letters, published in 1851, was an epistolary dialogue about the nature of man and the universe. Its format was similar to that which Mrs. Marcet had employed in her Political Economy Conversations: Harriet Martineau posed questions in her letters and Atkinson provided the long, sententious, and often uninformed answers. He frequently lapsed into contradiction, and he carelessly used the phraseology of the religion he claimed to disbelieve. Martineau more than once corrected his lapses but she was in no position to correct his scientific pronouncements or his claims for mesmerism and phrenology. His answers pleased her for in them she found a new philosophy to replace the old.

Martineau's Egyptian experience had dissolved her remaining links with Christianity. The basis for her new faith was science. And if her transition from Christianity was smooth, if she seemingly did not suffer the severe crisis of conscience which characterized other Victorian conversions, then it was because she never relaxed her hold on the principles of Necessarianism. Necessarianism not only made her ultimate conversion inevitable but it provided the foundations of her new faith. Empiricism was implicit in her new creed: scientific laws were to replace the metaphysical theories of the past.[81] She wanted to understand man and his universe as natural rather than divine phenomena, and

the Letters was less an attack on God and Christianity than a search for comprehension.

In his pursuit of truth Atkinson actually never went much farther than Locke had done when he proclaimed that all knowledge was the result of experience:

> We know nothing [Atkinson told Martineau] fundamental of nature, nor can we conceive any thing of the nature of the primary cause. We know not, nor can we know, what things really are, but only what they appear to us.[82]

Theirs was to be not a subjective search for causes but rather an objective examination of known phenomena. As humanity could only know and understand that which was the product of its own experience, science rather than theology became the inquirer's primary tool, and "Lyell a better authority than Moses." There was no need to identify the First Cause which man in his arrogance had created in his own image:

> What a new sense of reverence awakens in us [Martineau wrote] when, dismissing the image of a creator bringing the universe out of nothing, we clearly perceive that the very conception of origin is too great for us, and that deeper and deeper down in the abysses of time, farther and farther away in the vistas of the ages, all was still what we see now, - a system of ever-working forces, producing forms, uniform in certain lines and largely various in the whole, and all under the operation of immutable Law![83]

The old Necessarian logic was being distilled into a different container. The old Necessarian God became another name for law:

> Pray tell me, too, whether, in this last letter, you do not, in speaking of God, use merely another name for law? We know nothing beyond law do we? And when you speak of God as the origin of all things, what is it that you mean? Do we know anything of origin? - that it is possible? Is it conceivable to you that there was ever Nothing? and that Something came of it? I know how we get out of our depth in speaking of these things; but I should like to be aware where, exactly, you think our knowledge stops.[84]

It was, perhaps, a measure of Martineau's respect for Atkinson that she should have expected an answer to a question of such magnitude, and she was probably satisfied with the partial answer she received in reply:

> . . . I do not say, therefore, there is no God; but that it is extravagant and irreverent to imagine that cause a Person. All we know is phenomena: and that the fundamental cause is wholly beyond our conception. . . . A "Cause of causes" is an unfathomable mystery. . . . [all development is] a result of the properties of matter, and the inherent cause or principle which is the basis of matter. If to have this conception of things is to be an Atheist, then I am an Atheist.[85]

Actually the Letters went no farther than Hume had gone in his refusal to acknowledge anything beyond the human experience, and it went only a step farther in its refusal to acknowledge God than Joseph Priestley had gone in his affirmation of God.[86] "All that we can pretend to know of God is his infinite wisdom, power, and goodness," Priestley had said, ". . . of the nature and existence of this primary cause . . . we cannot have any conception."[87]

If "Man can know no more than he has perceived," and all knowledge was acquired by way of the perceptive faculties, then a study of human understanding became essential to a comprehension of 'the laws of man's nature and development.'[88] It was the mind, and more specifically the brain which primarily claimed Atkinson's attention. And here too there were links to the Necessarian school. Hartley had pioneered sensationism, and Priestley and his willing disciple Harriet Martineau while never agreeing with Hartley's theory of vibrations had accepted the theory of pain and pleasure. But in the Letters Atkinson and Martineau went farther than Hartley had done; they looked not to the associationist school but to phrenology:

> It is astonishing to me [wrote Martineau] that I could admit without question his [Hartley's] supposition that Man has two primary powers which are enough to account for every thing: the capacity for pleasure and pain, and the principle of association.[89]

Where Hartley had generalized all sensation into pleasure and pain, the phrenologists tried to particularize all sensation. Phrenology assumed that all behavior was influenced directly by the physiological structure of the brain. It cast aside the theory of the divine origin of humanity by eliminating the spiritual attributes which philosophers had for centuries associated with the mind.[90] And for this reason Sir William Hamilton called phrenology "implicit atheism."

The founder of the phrenological school was Franz Joseph Gall (1758-1828). Gall and his disciples originated cerebral research in an age when the functions of the brain were not yet understood. They were scientists who in dissecting the brain sought to localize the seat of the different perceptions. They thought that they had identified thirty-seven (or thirty-five) separate faculties, each responsible for a different function of the mind. Each faculty was located in a separate part of the brain, and the contour of the skull could therefore indicate the extent of the development of each faculty--it was this aspect of phrenology which attracted the fortune-telling element. Serious phrenologists, however, were interested not in predicting personalities but in understanding the physical structure of the brain and in diagnosing the problems of the mind. Phrenology was associated with the _tabula rasa_ theory; it held that the faculties could be _developed_; and it placed a great deal of emphasis on environmental and educational factors. Phrenologists therefore treated mental disorders as the products of external or

learning conditions. They thought of the mind as a function of the brain and therefore of the body, and believed that it could be kept healthy by the proper nourishment and exercise.[91] It was the materialism of this interpretation which antagonized the pious, but for Martineau it had a logical appeal, she took to heart the phrenological health program, and she willed her brain to phrenological research.[92]

Martineau had been modestly interested in phrenology before she knew Atkinson, but Atkinson was a student of the subject. He had no doubt that Gall had "proved" and identified each part of the brain responsible for each different faculty. Modern physiology would agree with the general thesis that specific areas of the brain are responsible for specific functions; with the phrenologists' general classification of the brain into the cerebrum and the cerebellum, and into sensory nerves and motor nerves. But the phrenologists' claim that they had identified the seat of each function was based upon a highly dubious scientific methodology. Atkinson claimed to have discovered the locations of several faculties by his own experimentation. His method was to notice which portion of the skull an individual touched when one of his or her faculties was excited--particularly during mesmerism. Or to rub certain portions of the skull of a sleeper and so stimulate certain muscular or mental responses.[93] Harriet Martineau did not doubt the authenticity of her mentor's discoveries. She was not in a position to disagree with Atkinson's pretensions to scientific knowledge, and she never ventured to contradict his claims for phrenology, mesmerism and even clairvoyance as the ultimate means of investigating 'man's nature and development.' Martineau was one of a

small but significant group of Victorian intellectuals who believed in the scientific origins and promises of phrenology.

The Letters is not intrinsically important. It does not deserve a special place in the hierarchy of Victorian literature or philosophy. It is long-winded, often illogical, and sometimes even arrant nonsense. But it is significant for what it tells us about the growth of skepticism in nineteenth-century English society, and particularly for what it tells us, and what it told her contemporaries, about Martineau. It made her conversion from theism explicit. And it raised a roar of execration; a reception which she had anticipated. "We had rather that you publish the book than any other," she had told Edward Moxon, "but shall not urge it upon you. . . . It is . . . daring to the last degree; and the public wh. certainly is ready for such works, may not be your public."[94] Moxon agreed. He turned down the manuscript, and it was eventually issued by John Chapman, the publisher of the Westminster Review.

Letters, threatening belief as it did, was an attack on the bastion of Victorian certitude, and the outrage which met its publication was tinged with fear:

> Such a book as this is a strange echo of . . . forebodings [wrote James Anthony Froude in Fraser's Magazine]. We may turn away from it, affect a horror of it, slight it, laugh at it; but it is a symptom of a state of things, it is the first flame of a smouldering feeling now first gaining air, and neither its writers, nor we, nor any one, well know how large material of combustion there may be lying about ready to kindle.[95]

Some grudgingly acknowledged the courage of the authors of the offending work:

> [Harriet Martineau] has at last dreamed, or sophisticated her way to plain, avowed, ostentatious Atheism. . . . [But] we willingly concede to Miss Martineau that her moral intrepidity

> never shone more conspicuously than now, when she has to our apprehension ignored the foundation of all morality (Weekly Dispatch).[96]

In The Leader, George Lewes described Letters as, perhaps, one of the "most prominent" of recent books. He applauded the courage of the authors. He conconceded that "there are many noble and interesting passages. Whatever the conclusions, they have been the result of honest, independent thinking." He regreted that the authors had ideologically parted company with him. And he pointed out the irrationality of their mesmeric claims.[97] George Eliot was privately less charitable than was Lewes. She admitted to Charles Bray that she thought the book "the boldest I have seen in the English language," but she considered it to be "studiously offensive."[98] There were other more public, and less discreet epithets. It was variously called, "an overwhelming deluge of verbiage," "intolerable rubbish," and "daring blasphemy."[99] But the most stinging attack of all, and the most wounding was that published by the Prospective Review and written by Harriet's brother James.[100]

James attacked the hapless, "incompetent and vacillating," "hierophant of the new Atheism," Atkinson without mercy. And although he was correct to point out Atkinson's contradictions and inconsistencies, James was too blinded by his own prejudices and opinions to be objective. His own philosophical pronouncements were sometimes questionable, and his too literal interpretations were often unsound. He chose, for example, to perceive time and space not as phenomena because "they are not objects accessible to us by perception."[101] He refused to accept a materialistic conception of mind, a denial of free will, or an empiricism which reduced all knowledge to experience. His own religious belief and the

inductive science which was Atkinson's article of faith could find no meeting ground. "So far as Science has effected the 'exorcism of spirit' from nature, has science produced, we believe only delusion," wrote James:

> . . . to reconcile science and theism . . . the inquirer must evidently pass out beyond the canons of induction into a higher philosophy, which limits the pretensions of physical investigation, and restores authority to the original instincts of causation. He rights himself, not by shutting himself up more closely than before in his habits of thinking as a chemist, astronomer, or physiologist, but by freeing himself from these at the upper end, and looking down upon them as only provisional assumptions. In effecting this emancipation, he finds that he has emerged again into the region of his earliest faith: and he looks forth once more . . . through the childlike eye to which nature and life are astir and breathe with the hidden thought of God.[102]

The authors of the Letters denied all that James had come to believe: they denied that the First Cause was God; they denied freedom of will; and they assumed that the ultimate truth lay not "within us," but with external actions. But although James may have been profoundly disturbed by the extent of his sister's unbelief, and personally "mortified" by her "exceptional submission to an inferior mind,"[103] his decision to write a deliberately supercilious and harshly critical review of her publication is difficult to understand. He claimed that the task had naturally fallen to him as one of the editors of the Prospective Review, but according to his biographer, Drummond, the other editors recalled the occasion on which the allotment of the review was discussed, somewhat differently. If James had been reluctant to write the review, the other editors would not have urged it upon him, and the decision to do so was certainly his own.[104] In fact, in 1853, he offered to write a review for the Westminster of Harriet's Comte translation, but was turned down "as

the editor was of the opinion that the work would be criticised by Dr. Martineau in a thoroughly hostile spirit."[105]

The fact that James, his later protestations to the contrary, had voluntarily written a review which he knew would deeply hurt Harriet, tells us a great deal about James's attitude towards his famous sister, and about the deterioration of their relationship. His action was more than tactless. And the ideological differences separating him from Harriet do not sufficiently account for his motivation. By entitling his article "Mesmeric Atheism," James not only accused the authors of the Letters of that atheism which they so strenuously--if semantically--denied, but he recalled his earlier quarrel with Harriet over her mesmeric cure. Although he directed his criticism principally at Atkinson, Harriet had taken responsibility for the publication, and she felt that James had taken "advantage of his safe position as my brother to slander and insult Mr. Atkinson." She always claimed not to mind literary criticism, but she minded it very much, and coming from James it was especially hurtful. However, she could not admit, as an author, either to a literary or personal offense, and so she spoke somewhat ambiguously of "moral reprobation." Because it was not a "literary quarrel," it could not be resolved by literary rebuttal, "People do not answer reviews; and especially where the circulation is so insignificant as that of the 'Prospective,'" she told her sister-in-law, Helen, slightingly. And although Helen Martineau pleaded for a reconciliation, Harriet and James never saw or spoke to each other again.[106] She shut him out of her life as completely as she had shut out the painful memory of John Worthington so many years earlier. It was her way of protecting herself. In her

Autobiography she barely acknowledged James's review, and gave no details of their quarrel.[107] But she was unable to completely effac^ the bitterness of her resentment, and it surfaced from time to time in her conversations and in correspondence with her closest friends.[108]

Some of her oldest friendships were affected by the Letters. Julia Smith and Elizabeth Reid, two of her closest female companions were deeply offended by the publication.[109] Philip and particularly Mary Carpenter, the children of her old mentor, the Rev. Lant Carpenter, were severe in their criticism.[110] Charles Knight refused to publish a book she was to have written "because he knows no one would have purchased." Edward Moxon expected to lose on the second edition of Eastern Life.[111] Her Lake District neighbors at first dissociated themselves from the author of the pernicious work; Mrs. Arnold for a time broke off acquaintance with her, and Edward Quillinan confided to Henry Crabb Robinson:

> I have not met her [Harriet Martineau] since my return home; and it will be an embarrassing meeting when I do see her; for, after her publication of such a book, I cannot cordially enjoy her society, much as I valued it on many accounts before. If I were a bachelor or had no daughters, it might not be so difficult to keep up such neighbourly intercourse as I have been accustomed to with her: and even as matters stand, it is not that I have the least fear for me and mine; for I never heard her say anything that was offensive; but I should not like my daughters subjected to the censures that would be sure to follow them if we kept up intimacy after her announcement of such opinions as that book contains.[113]

Henry Crabb Robinson confided to his Diary: "I am not sorry that my intimacy with Miss M: has of late so much declined. I shall make no sacrifice if I break with her entirely."[114] Robinson's visits to the Lakes had become less frequent since the death of his friend William Wordsworth the previous year, but he kept in touch with his other

acquaintances in the District and it was through his correspondence with them that we know not only of Harriet Martineau's social ostracism when the Letters was first published, but of her reinstatement not long thereafter.

> I hear [Sara Coleridge told Crabb Robinson in February, 1852] that Miss Martineau is as as well received now as ever in the Lake society. Her bad doctrine seems merged in her every day deeds of kindness, which the people have before their eyes and ears - while the book is out of sight.[115]

Some of Harriet Martineau's friendships were undisturbed by theological differences of opinion. William Lloyd Garrison told her:

> I know what you have dared to be brave, what you have suffered, by the frank avowal of what a hireling priesthood and a corrupt church have branded atheistical sentiments. Though my belief in immortality is without peradventure, I desire to tell you that your skepticism, in lack of evidence, on that point, has never altered my confidence in the goodness of your heart and the nobleness of your character. . . . I respect and admire conscientious dissent and doubt. . . . Heresy is the only thing that will redeem mankind.[116]

Sara Hennell disagreed with Martineau's conclusions but acquiesced "in cases like your own where a station has been reached which can be maintained with moral dignity."[117] Henry William Wiberforce, son of the abolitionist and a convert to Catholicism just a year before the appearance of the Letters, told Martineau, "I cannot but honour a person who has never hesitated to defend and avow any thing known or believed to be truth."[118] The Reverend Robert Perceval Graves with whom she carried on a long correspondence dating from 1848 to 1867, described his continued regard for her in spite of the pain their differences gave him, and his hopes for her "moral reconciliation with our Divine Creator."[119] Dr. Samuel Brown described her as "my beautiful enemy in theory, my noble friend in life."[120] And Florence Nightingale who corresponded with

Martineau from the 1850s, regarded her as having "the truest and deepest religious feeling I have ever known . . . contradictory as it may seem." And when Harriet Martineau died, Nightingale chose to disregard her friend's unorthodoxy: "She is gone to our Lord and her Lord," she wrote, "She is in another room of our Father's house. . . . I do not grudge her to God."[121]

Martineau was, wrote John Chapman, "A perfect zealot in her new faith."[122] She was acquiring a new certitude and was seemingly undaunted by the disapproval of those who clung to the dogmas of outworn beliefs.

> Within a few days, it seems that indications have appeared of the tide turning [she told the secularist George Jacob Holyoake]. At least those who are willing to allow us liberty of thought and speech, are now, at last asserting our rights. On their account and for the sake of the principle, we are glad. For ourselves, - the truth is, - we don't care.[123]

Martineau's bravura may have been as much an indication of her need to believe as it was of her belief. She may have been "unconsciously trying to gain strength of conviction by vigour of assertion." It was necessary to believe in something; to find a replacement for the theological interpretation of the universe.

The needs of Martineau and Atkinson were similar to those of other Victorians groping for a comprehension of their world and their species. Their aims were similar to those of Charles Bray who had also travelled the Necessarian road away from orthodoxy, and who also sought a new affirmation of faith and a new understanding. The object of his _Philosphy of Necessity_ (1841) was, Bray said:

> . . . to inquire into the nature of the constitution of man; to ascertain his place in creation, the object and aim of his existence, and the boundaries of his mind . . . to analyse the present constitution of society; to trace the cause of numerous of its evils; to suggest a remedy. . . .[124]

Like Atkinson, Bray was an empiricist who looked to Francis Bacon as the source of his inspiration:

> Man, the servant and interpreter of Nature, can only understand and act in proportion as he observes or contemplates the order of Nature; more he can neither know nor do.[125]

The mind, the brain and phrenology were as central to Bray's philosophy as they were to Atkinson's.[126] For the world, said Bray, "is created in our own minds by the action of the faculties of Perception."[127] But where Atkinson was satisfied to stop with the individual human-being, Bray extended his inquiry to an examination of the individual in society. His quest led him to a rejection of individualism, and he concluded that it was not in the competition of individuals--not in laissez-faire--but by their co-operation--in socialism--that a new society ought to be created.[128]

Herbert Spencer, whose Social Statics was published in 1850, was another unbeliever who sought to construct his own philosophy of man. He erected a framework into which all aspects of life from the inorganic to the organic would fit. He thought of society as a biological organism which progressed inevitably towards perfection. He equated evolution with progress because he believed in the 'survival of the fittest.' He made it his purpose to study social structures in order to prove that all societies passed through the same basic stages in their evolution. He tried to systematize knowledge developing an evolutionary hierarchy of the sciences from basic physics to biology, psychology, and finally sociology. He had a synthetic, 'holistic' view of life: a grand scheme which has been largely discredited today.[129]

Although he claimed not to be a positivist, Spencer's philosophy paralleled that of Auguste Comte. There were important differences separating their philosophies, but Comte's basic aim, like Spencer's was to systematize all of science in order to study man in society. The greater aim of both men was sociology but Comte's conceptions, his methods and his final conclusions were significantly different from Spencer's. Where Spencer's ends were scientific, Comte's were political. For Spencer worked towards an understanding of society as an organism, and Comte worked towards the creation of the ultimate polity.

Auguste Comte was born in Montpelier in 1798. At the age of seventeen he entered the Ecole Polytechnique where he came under the influence of Saint-Simon. It is not our purpose here to enter into the debate as to whether or how much the teacher influenced the pupil, or if the reverse was actually true. Both men shared the same basic philosophy. Both believed that the old order of society had passed and that a new scientific-industrial elite would replace the old theocracy. Both men believed that societies passed through three basic stages of development: the theological--which evolved from fetishism to polytheism and monotheism--, the metaphysical--in which men sought for causes--, and the positive--which was based on empirical fact or law.

In the early 1830s Gustave D'Eichthal came to England as a 'missionary' for Saint-Simonism. He was acquainted with William Johnson Fox, and as early as 1831 Harriet Martineau was writing enthusiastically about Saint-Simonism to her brother James.[130] John Stuart Mill, who at that time was moving in some of the same intellectual circles as Martineau, was similarly impressed. He became familiar with the writings of the

Saint-Simonians, and had read one of Comte's early Saint-Simonian essays "Traite de Politique Positive." It was in this essay that the theory of the three stages was first elaborated, and this doctrine, Mill said later in his Autobiography, "harmonized well with my existing notions." He was, at this time, philosophically in tune with the 'old clothes' philosophy of Thomas Carlyle, and was happy to find in the Saint-Simonian hypothesis "a clearer conception than ever before of the peculiarities of an era of transition in opinion:"

> I looked forward, through the present age of loud disputes but generally weak convictions, to a future which shall unite the best qualities of the critical with the best qualities of the organic periods. . . . [When the convictions would be] so firmly grounded in reason and in the true exigencies of life that they shall not, like all former and present creeds, religious, ethical, and political, require to be periodically thrown off and replaced by others.[131]

Comte was then an obscure pupil of Saint-Simone's, but in 1826 he dissociated himself from his old master. Between 1830 and 1842 he published the six volumes of his own Positive Philosophy, a work which was not reviewed in England until 1838.[132] John Stuart Mill did not become familiar with the Cours de Philosophie Positive until 1841, and he acknowledged that his System of Logic, published in 1843 owed Comte a considerable debt. In the Logic his aim, like Comte's, had been to "raise all knowledge to the level of sciences based on, and codified according to, that which was observable." He had gone beyond his Coleridgean period to a renewal of empiricism, and he was conscious of returning to his Benthamite roots.[133] Mill and Comte corresponded from 1841. At that time the final volume of Comte's Positive Philosophy had not yet been published and there was little to indicate the direction Comte's philosophy would eventually take in Système de Politique Positive

published between 1851 and 1854. Although Mill and Comte were separated by major differences in their ultimate conclusions, in the early 1840s Mill deferred reverentially to Comte's opinions, and it was largely through Mill that Comte was introduced to England. But there were other notable English commentators on the philosophy of Comte. George Henry Lewes published a Biographical History of Philosophy in 1845 and 1846 in which he outlined Comtean theory. Later there was to be John Morley in the Encyclopedia Britannica; Herbert Spencer, inspired mainly by the desire to proclaim the independence of his own philosophy; the scientist Thomas Henry Huxley; Comte's chief English disciple Frederic Harrison; and in 1865 John Stuart Mill's final estimate in Auguste Comte and Positivism.[134]

Harriet Martineau's knowledge of Comte had been largely second-hand, she had read Lewes's account of Comte's work, and Émile Littre's French summary, but she herself did not begin to read the Positive Philosophy until after the publication of the Letters in 1851. She sensed the growing interest in Comte and conceived the idea of translating and condensing his six-volume work.[135] John Chapman agreed to publish her translation. Comte concurred in the enterprise and was generously included as a recipient of its profits. Henry Atkinson and Marian (Mary Ann) Evans were made trustees of the project to insure its completion in the event of Martineau's death. And on June 1, 1852 Harriet Martineau embarked upon "the greatest literary engagement of my life."[136]

In the preface to the first edition, Harriet Martineau explained that her aim in translating and abridging Comte was to bring his philosophy "before the minds of many who would be deterred from the study of it

by its bulk."[137] In its original form the six-volume work of Comte was difficult to read. It had been composed as a series of lectures delivered orally over a long period of time and as a result was often repetitive; even Frederic Harrison admitted that it made "very irksome reading to any but a patient student."[138] Martineau believed that in popularizing Comte she would help to provide a "rallying point" for the "scattered speculations" of those who had become alienated from traditional religion. She did not agree with all aspects of Comte's philosophy and she stated her dissent without elaboration in the preface, but she chose not to make the translation a forum for her own criticisms, and one is therefor left to draw one's own conclusions about those areas of Comtean philosphy with which Martineau disagreed.[139]

Comte was not interested in first causes. The chief aim of Positive Philosophy was to establish sociology as a science based on historical and empirical criteria: to study those past, present and future phenomena of society which constituted "a vast social unit."[140] The secondary aim of Positive Philosophy was to review all the sciences "in order to show that they are not radically separate, but all branches from the same truth." Comte attempted to formulate a law of continuous human development and to integrate all of natural philosophy into this evolutionary concept. He thought that the sum of human knowledge formed a complete scientific hierarchy which he divided into the inorganic sciences: astronomy, physics and chemistry, and the organic sciences: biology (or physiology) and finally "the most complex of all" that of "humanity in a state of association." He called this ultimate science social physics or sociology.[141] Comte therefore did not stop with the study of 'man' as

Martineau and Atkinson had done in the Letters, but went on to contemplate 'man' in society.[142] His social theories were postulated in the sixth book of Positive Philosophy which he called "Social Physics." The first five books contained a summary of existing scientific knowledge and are of less interest here. But "Social Physics" which aimed to understand and reorganize society was the ultimate aim of positivism; it was related to Comte's later work; and it bears closer examination.

Comte noted that there were two basic elements in society: order and progress. Order, or social statics, was the constitution of society: its structure; its social groupings. Progress, or social dynamics, was society in a state of change: its evolution through the theological and metaphysical stages towards the positive state. The ideas of order and progress had been paradoxical in classical times. The platonic whole was perfect not perfectible: it was static and absolute and denied the possibility of progress. Comte on the other hand believed that order and progress could be compatible ideals in the positive state because "no progress can be accomplished if it does not tend to the consolidation of order."[143] The old feudal, Catholic society of Western Europe in its theological stage was an ordered political world. In its metaphysical stage, its revolutionary period, order and progress co-existed, the society retaining some of its old elements of order while admitting the anarchic ideas of progress.[144] The anarchy of the metaphysical polity was an essential stage in the development of the positive state. "The metaphysical spirit was necessary to direct the formation of the critical and anti-theological doctrine . . . to overthrow the great ancient system."[145]

The dogmas of the metaphysical period through which Europe was then passing were: individual reason, liberty of conscience, equality, sovereignty of the people, and nationalism. Although essential to the break-up of the old theological static system, these dogmas were an obstacle to the consolidation of progress, and when the disintegration of the old society was complete, they would be replaced by a new unifying concept.[146] Comte's rejection of the arguments of liberalism was antithetical to all but the Necessarian element in Harriet Martineau's philosphy: "True liberty," Comte said, "is nothing else than a rational submission to the preponderance of the laws of nature, in release from all _arbitrary_ personal dictation."[147] Martineau conceded that free inquiry _had_ been "erected into a dogma," and that "so used, it is but a negation. Protestantism, in its proper sense, will go down; and our fight must be for Positivity."[148] This concession was related to her old belief in Necessity, which now in its Positivist form meant that all inquiry was of Necessity confined because of the limitations of empirical fact and natural law. But Comte also rejected that liberty which was associated with _laissez-faire_. He considered _laissez-faire_ to be a dangerous philosophy which if carried to its limits would be anarchic in the extreme.[149] _Laissez-faire_, he said, had sanctioned "the spirit of individualism and the state of no-government."[150] He did not believe in leaving the direction of the new industrial state to the negative influences of a metaphysical theory, nor did he believe in leaving the government of a society to "the incapable multitude."

> . . . the great social rules which should become customary cannot be abandoned to the blind and arbitrary decision of an incompetent public without losing all their efficacy. The requisite

> convergence of the best minds cannot be obtained without the voluntary renunciation, on the part of most of them, of their sovereign right of free inquiry, which they will doubtless be willing to abdicate, as soon as they have found organs worthy to exercise appropriately their vain provisional supremacy.[151]

Comte brought into question all the tenets of the democratic individualist philosophy which Martineau had always held. His antilibertarianism contradicted Martineau's political philosophy and it is regretable that she did not annotate her translation or at least fully document elsewhere her objections to those areas of Comte's work with which she disagreed.

John Stuart Mill, for all his qualifications about democracy, did provide in Auguste Comte and Positivism a critique of Comte's views on liberal doctrine. Mill was as suspicious of Comte's tyranny of the minority as he was of the tyranny of the democratic majority. Comte's view of reconstructed society was Catholic and monarchical rather than Protestant and egalitarian.[152] He admired the authoritarian structure, the spiritual leadership, and the unity which Catholicism had given Europe in the theological age.[153] He wanted the leaders of the new Positive state to reassume the spiritual and intellectual leadership which he believed had lapsed during the revolutionary metaphysical period.[154] The new leaders would be neither theologians as in the theological period, nor lawyers as in the metaphysical period, but those trained in the Positive philosophy of the sciences and able to contemplate the more complex problems of social science.[155] The corporate intellectual-spiritual leadership of the Positive state would be separate from the temporal authority as it had been in old Catholic Europe. Comte proposed to lodge the temporal authority in the hands of the industrialists, while the

scientist-leaders of the new state would be responsible only for the education and the moral welfare of the people. All citizens would be trained in the Positive sciences but they would occupy in the society only those positions for which they were best suited. They would have no share in the government.[156]

In Auguste Comte and Positivism (1865) Mill admitted a sympathy for an elitist philosophy which would place leadership in the hands of those best equipped to execute it.[157] But he feared that such a philosophy was liable to perversion. He feared that if the intellectual leadership were placed in the hands of an organized body such as the one Comte envisioned, it would "involve nothing less than a spiritual despotism," which could not be nullified for even though the power of the state was divided between spiritual and temporal bodies, their powers were so separated that they did not provide a check upon each other. Mill foresaw the dangers of ideological tyranny:

> But that all education should be in the hands of a centralized authority, whether composed of clergy or of philosophers, and be consequently all framed on the same model, and directed to the perpetuation of the same type, is a state of things which instead of becoming more acceptable, will assuredly be more repugnant to mankind, with every step of their progress in the unfettered exercise of their highest faculties.[158]

Although he was aware of the shortcomings of the liberal philosophy, and appreciated that laissez-faire, equality, and sovereignty of the people were concepts which demanded large qualifications, Mill nevertheless appreciated the basic values of these doctrines. He did not believe that they should or even could be carried to the anarchic extremes of which Comte accused them:

> The general result of M. Comte's criticism on the revolutionary philosophy, is that he deems it not only incapable of aiding the necessary reorganization of society, but a serious impediment there to, by setting up, on all the great interests of mankind, the mere negation of authority, direction, or organization, as the most perfect state, and the solution of all problems: the extreme point of this aberration being reached by Rousseau and his followers, when they extolled the savage state, as an ideal from which civilization was only a degeneracy, more or less marked and complete.[159]

All the elements of Comte's later philosophy were present in the <u>Cours de Philosophie Positive</u>, but in his first great work Comte did not, he said, presume to impose his own concept for the reconstruction of Europe upon the society. He believed that intellectual and moral conversion would precede political change. Like Hegel he believed that a concept whose time had come must already be in the hearts and minds of the people: "political operations, temporal or spiritual, can have no social efficacy but in as far as they are in accordance with the corresponding tendencies of the human mind:"[160]

> . . . the regeneration of social doctrine must, by its very action, raise up from the midst of anarchy a new spiritual authority, which after having disciplined the human intellect and reconstructed morals, will peaceably become, throughout Western Europe, the basis of the final system of society.[161]

In his final multi-volume work the <u>Système de Politique Positive</u> published between 1851 and 1854, Comte ignored his own earlier caveats. He thought he had arrived at the truth. He created an elaborate intellectual oligarchy to replace the old theological one, and he himself, in Mill's words, was "transfigured as the High Priest of the Religion of Humanity."[162] As Nietzsche put it, "that <u>most intelligent</u> of Jesuits, Auguste Comte, . . . wished to lead his compatriots back to Rome by the circuitous route of science."[163] In its final form Positivism did not

merely supersede religion, it replaced it as a religion itself with its own priestly hierarchy. It was a secular religion which owed its devotions to Humanity, but it came garbed in the ritual robes of the theistical religion which it purported to displace.

Martineau considered Comte's final treatise an aberration.[164] She could never have agreed to a doctrine built upon the scaffold of eccelsiastical authority. She had rejected sacerdotal dominion long before she rejected theism and she would never have submitted to the kind of pontifical dictatorship which Comte envisioned. Martineau was too much of a republican to submit to a dictatorship of any kind. For example in volume two of her History, which was completed in 1850 before she had read Comte's Positive Philosophy, she said of Saint-Simonianism's similar political solution:

> While it was supposed that the rulers would be persons of virtue and genius, the proposed organization offered a scheme of a hierarchy which might easily, and would probably, become an intolerable despotism - a locked frame-work, in which individual freedom might become impossible.[165]

Mill was actually slower to reject this aspect of Comtean philosophy. When he wrote "Coleridge" in 1840 he found himself to be "entirely at one" with Coleridge's similar conception of a clerisy. He believed in "the principle of an endowed class, for the cultivation of learning, and for diffusing its results among the community."[166] He did not, even in 1865, entirely reject Comte's concept of converting his philosophy into a religion.[167] But he became disturbed by the "ludicrous," ritual aspects of Comte's positivist faith, as well as by his dangerously dictatorial tone. "As his thoughts grew more extravagant," Mill wrote, "his

self-confidence grew more outrageous. The height it ultimately attained must be seen in his writings, to be believed."[168]

Mill recognized humanity's need for religion and for this reason did not condemn Positivism as a faith but rather as a ritualistic conception. Harriet Martineau very well illustrated the need to believe, and her new faith in the principles of Positivism replaced her old discarded theistical creed. She explained exactly what Positive faith meant to her in an 1856 letter to Maria Weston Chapman:

> By positive philosophy I mean not any particular scheme by any one author, but the philosophy of fact, as arising from the earliest true science . . . positive philosophy is at the opposite pole to scepticism . . . it issues in the most affirmative (not dogmatical) faith in the world, and excludes unbelief as absolutely as mathematical principles do; . . . there is no "darkness" in it, but all clear light, up to the well-defined line which separates knowledge from ignorance; . . . positive philosophy is, in short, the brightest, clearest, strongest, and only irrefragable state of conviction that the human mind has ever attained. . . . Scepticism is doubt; and the positive philosopher is in a position of direct antagonism to it. . . . While the disciples of dogma are living in a magic cavern painted with wonderful shows, . . . the positive philosophers have emerged upon the broad airy, sunny common of nature, with firm ground underfoot and unfathomable light overhead.[169]

Martineau seized hold of the main elements in Comte's philosophy: that humankind should seek to understand only the phenomena of the knowable, and that the West should be liberated from anachronistic theologians and anarchic metaphysicians "in order to constitute, as much as possible, a true sociocracy [sociocratie], which ought wisely to make all human forces contribute to the common regeneration."[170] She agreed, as she always had, with the concept of universal education, she concurred in and had anticipated in Eastern Life, the attempt to define the evolution of Christian civilization. But there were aspects of Comte's philosophy

which she could not have found congenial: Comte dismissed some of her deepest and longest held convictions.

Besides her republicanism and her democratic idealism, Martineau was a political economist, and Comte not only denounced political democracy but he also opposed industrial democracy. He thought that the multitude would be as incapable in the management of their own affairs as he perceived them to be in the management of affairs of state, and he had no faith in the humanity of the individual employer:

> . . . hostility has arisen between the interests of employers and employed . . . [and] I cannot but attribute this severance of the head and hands much more to the political incapacity, the social indifference, and especially the blind selfishness of the employers than to the unreasonable demands of the employed.[171]

Martineau made modest concessions on this question, for example, her admission that in the case of children and women in certain occupations there should be factory legislation, but she did not alter her unswerving opposition to the principle of state intervention in private transactions. Even after translating Comte she retained her belief in industrial laissez-faire, and in 1855, under the sponsorship of the National Society of Factory Occupiers, she wrote The Factory Controversy; A Warning against Meddling Legislation which unequivocally opposed the government superintendence of industry.[172]

There was another, more serious discrepancy between Martineau's deeply-held convictions and the philosophy of Auguste Comte. Comte's authoritarianism affronted Martineau's republicanism, and his denial of laissez-faire struck at the roots of her political and economic creeds, but his denial of equality was an attack on an even more basic conviction. Comte's denial of equality was not merely an admission that there

were individual intellectual and environmental differences which made some superior to others, his anti-egalitarianism extended to race and sex; he intimated that the white race was superior to the others, and he firmly believed that females were inferior to males.

> Why is Europe the scene, and why is the white race the agent, of the highest civilization? This question must have often excited the curiosity of philosophers and statesmen; yet it must remain premature, and incapable of settlement by any ingenuity, till the fundamental laws of social development are ascertained by the abstract research, No doubt, we are beginning to see, in the organization of the whites, and especially in their cerebral constitution, some positive germ of superiority; though even on this naturalists are not agreed: and again, we observe certain physical, chemical, and biological conditions which must have contributed to render European countries peculiarly fit to be the scene of high civilization: but if a trained philosophical mind were to collect and arrange all the material for a judgment that we possess, its insufficiency would be immediately apparent. It is not that the material is scanty or imperfect. The deficiency is of a sociological theory which may reveal the scope and bearing of every view. . . .[173]

Comte was less equivocal about the inferiority of the female. He was convinced of the natural and practical subordination of women:

> . . . biological analysis presents the female sex, in the human species especially, as constitutionally in a state of perpetual infancy, in comparison with the other; and therefore more remote, in all important aspects, from the ideal type of the race. Sociology will prove that the equality of the sexes, of which so much is said, is incompatible with all social existence, by showing that each sex has special and permanent functions which it must fulfil in the natural economy of the human family.[174]

Comte based his belief in male superiority on sociological observations of existing male dominance and upon his conclusions as a phrenologist. As a sociologist he believed that marriage was the most stable unit in society and that male dominion within the family would maintain family stability. He naturally viewed divorce with alarm, as he did any attempt to alter the traditional family hierarchy. He considered the seclusion of women--not as Martineau had in Egypt with shame and humiliation--to be

"a token of homage, and of their assignment to a position more conformable to their true nature."[175] He believed in the chivalric code.

Although Gall and Bentham held the tabula rasa hypothesis in common, there was one important difference in their theories: Bentham held that all minds were equal until impressed by educational and environmental factors; Gall held that all the functions of the human mind were organically constituted and that though faculties could be developed by the learning process, anatomical differences limited the extent of that development in each individual case. As a phrenologist, Comte thought that the smaller female brain offered indisputable proof of woman's inferiority. Mill attacked this aspect of Comte's anti-feminist argument consistently and vigorously. In the 1840s, before his disillustionment and while still under the spell of Comtean thought, Mill had already told the author of Positivism that he opposed this element in his philosophy. The question was the first upon which the two men disagreed, and it was instrumental in their ultimate divergence.[176] But, although Mill objected to the phrenological refutation of his feminist convictions, it is not clear that Martineau ever really came to grips with this question. Like Mill she believed implicitly in sexual equality, but unlike Mill she valued phrenology as a science.

Martineau was able to tailor her philosophy so that she could hold on to certain of her old beliefs at the same time as she accepted her new ones. In her Autobiography, written the year after her translation of Comte, she accused the Unitarians of "taking any liberties they please with the revelation they profess to receive," and if the trait was Unitarian then it died hard in Harriet Martineau.[177] It was almost as if

she was able to listen or not, to the voices of reason as she did to the voices of life through her ear-trumpet. She had an uncanny knack of being able to close her mind to the most insistent logic, and if she had ever permitted herself to carry all her arguments to their inevitable conclusions then she would have been forced to admit the contradictions in her philosophy. But Martineau did not permit her conflicting opinions to disturb each other, and her contradictions and discrepancies notwithstanding, she was, paradoxically enough, basically consistent in her philosophy. Her Positivism was at heart nothing more than Necessarianism altered to conform to a new secular faith. She still rested as she had in the past on "laws which cannot be broken by human will."[178] And the main difference between her new philosophy and her old was that she could now distinguish between the knowable and the unknowable. These aspects of Comtean thought were the foundation of her new creed, and the details of Positivism did not either alter her faith in the new philosophy or affect her old liberal convictions. Although less dogmatic than she had been twenty years earlier, Martineau was still fundamentally a daughter of Adam Smith.

Whatever her feelings about those aspects of Comte which she could not accept, nor conscientiously ignore, Martineau forebore to comment on them in the translation. As George Lewes said in his review of her work:

> Comte's views are there without suppression of important considerations, with only such omissions as the very fact of abridgment implies. Indeed, in the whole range of philosophy, we know of no such successful abridgment.[179]

Spencer, Lewes and Huxley all thought Martineau's translation and abridgment were "admirable."[180] Frederic Harrison had some reservations about

the omissions but acknowledged the value of her work, and quoted George Grote's comment, "Not only is it extremely well done, but it could not be better done."[181] Comte was so delighted with her condensation that he authorized a French translation of Martineau's version of his work. And when a new edition of her translation was published in 1875 the Daily News noted that since her translation "the study of Comte's writings has been greatly extended."[182] But John Stuart Mill was conspicuously silent. When Chapman asked him to do the review for the Westminster Mill refused. He had by this time changed his favorable view of Comte and felt a great desire "to atone for the overpraise" he had given him, but at the same time he and Harriet Taylor could not forgive Harriet Martineau for her gossip about their early friendship in those far off London days. Harriet Mill feared a review would have to make a flattering reference to Martineau and Mill confessed, "I don't like to have anything to do with the name or with any publication of H. Martineau's."[183]

But the Mills notwithstanding, Martineau had reason to be very satisfied with the results of her arduous effort. Apart from the success of the translation itself, she had acquired a new faith--"a faith . . . not an infidelity."[184] And for Martineau, as for the era itself, faith was imperative. For this reason she had clung to the conventional pieties almost to the threshold of her conversion. Like someone swinging from branch to precarious branch she did not let go until she had securely transferred her grasp. She did not surrender her old certitudes until she firmly held her new ones. She had arrived; she was secure in her new conviction; and surrounded by the disparaging unconverted she felt

herself to be "standing on a bit of firm ground, with a whole environment of hollowness; and nobody wants a helping hand to get upon the rock."[185]

FOOTNOTES

[1]Autobiography, I, 116.

[2]Walter Houghton, The Victorian Frame of Mind, ed. cit., p. 156.

[3]Autobiography, II, 186-187.

[4]Ibid., I, 36, 40, 156-158.

[5]Ibid., III, 201, in her Diary, Oct. 25, 1837, she admitted "thirsting" for the gospel.

[6]She contributed to the Unitarian journal, The Christian Teacher in the 1830s. See Autobiography, III, 201 and Mineka, The Dissidence of Dissent, p. 246.

[7]Henry Crabb Robinson to Thomas Robinson, July 7, 1842, DW Lib.

[8]"Essays on the Art of Thinking," Miscellanies, I, 119-120 [MR, 3 (1829), 521-526; 599-606; 707-712; 745-757; 817-822].

[9]Life in the Sick-Room, pp. 117, 125, 156-157.

[10]Autobiography, II, 172-173.

[11]Ibid., II, 182.

[12]The Crofton Boys (1842), pp. 33, 49; The Settlers at Home (1841), pp. 395-396 in The Playfellow, ed. cit.

[13]Harriet Martineau to James Martineau, Jan. 17, 1842, Transcript Letters, M. Coll.

[14]Autobiography, III, 141-142.

[15]John Herman Randall Jr., "Romantic Reinterpretations of Religion," Studies in Romanticism, II, 4 (1963), pp. 189-212.

[16]Monthly Repository, first series, 1 (1806), 412-420; 467-473. See Mineka, Dissidence of Dissent, pp. 116, 212, 242, 245; Garnett, Fox, p. 80.

[17]"Lessing's Hundred Thoughts," Miscellanies, II, 337-338 [MR, 4 (1830), 300-306; 367-373; 453-458; 511-517.

[18]Karl Barth, Protestant Theology in the Nineteenth Century (1946, first English transl. 1972, Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1977), pp. 255-256 quoted from Theological Writings.

[19]Carlyle's emphatic "Yea," on the personal level, at least, appeared to his critics to have been a whistle in the dark. Martineau said of him, "The more I see of him, the more persuaded I am that the comfort he wants is some one fixed belief, - some one dry, firm spot for the sole of his foot. . . . Carlyle, with all his sound doctrine about faith, seems to me to be forever tossing in Chaos." (Harriet Martineau to Milnes, Dec. 4 [?1844], Trinity Coll.) In Twilight of the Gods Nietsche was to make a similar observation. Carlyle was, he said, "ever tormented by the desire of finding some kind of strong faith, and by his inability to do so. . . . To yearn for a strong faith is not the proof of a strong faith, but rather the reverse. . . . At bottom, Carlyle is an English atheist who makes it a point of honour not to be one." (Friedrich Wilhelm Nietsche, Complete Works, 18 vols.)tr. Anthony M. Ludovici, ed. Oscar Levy (1909-1911, rpt. New York: Russell and Russell, 1964), XVI, 70.

[20]John Herman Randall Jr., op. cit., p. 195.

[21]Basil Willey, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, p. 86; and see Solomon Francis Gingerich, From Necessity to Transcendentalism in Coleridge (pamphlet, n.p., n.d.), pp. 23-24.

[22]Willey, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, quoted p. 88; and see Chapter one, p. 15.

[23]James D. Boulger, Coleridge as Religious Thinker (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961), pp. 15, 18, 72 ff.

[24]Henry Steele Commager, Theodore Parker (1936, Boston: Beacon Press, 1967), quoted p. 62.

[25]Alexis De Tocqueville, Journey to America, tr. George Lawrence, ed. J. P. Mayer (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1960), pp. 63-64.

[26]Retrospect of Western Travel, II, 126.

[27]M. A. Crowther, Church Embattled: Religious Controversey in Mid-Victorian England (Hamden, Ct.: Archon Books, 1970), quoted p. 56.

[28]Monthly Repository, 7 (1833), 19-30; 84-88; 231-241.

[29]Drummond, James Martineau, quoted I, 92 from The Rationale of Religious Enquiry (1836); and see Bernard M. G. Reardon, From Coleridge to Gore: A Century of Religious Thought in Britain (1961, London: Longman, 1971), p. 312-313.

[30]Drummond, James Martineau, I, 169.

[31]Ibid., quoted I, 240-241.

[32]Ibid., I, 222; Garnett, Fox, p. 92.

[33]Elizabeth [Mrs. John] Farrar, Recollections of Seventy Years (Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1866), pp. 261-262 recalling that Harriet Martineau had lectured on the philosophy of Kant to her fellow passengers en route from New York to England in 1836.

[34]"Essays on the Art of Thinking," Miscellanies, I, 67.

[35]"Theology, Politics, and Literature," Miscellanies, I, 195 [MR, 6 (1832), 73-79].

[36]"Crombie's Natural Theology," Miscellanies, II, 236-268 [MR, 4 (1830), 145-154; 223-230].

[37]"Sabbath Musings," Miscellanies, I, 132 [MR, 5 (1831), 73-77; 235-239; 369-373; 601-607; 684-690; 763-770].

[38]Society in America, III, 224-296; and see also Letters on the Laws of Man's Nature and Development, p. 252.

[39]How to Observe Morals and Manners, p. 81; and see also pp. 60-67, 79-83.

[40]Society in America, III, 224-225; and see Deerbrook, I, 85 in which religion, reason and philosophy are all identified as 'faith.'

[41]Eastern Life Present and Past, 3 vols. (London: Moxon, 1848).

[42]Ibid., preface, I, v; Autobiography, II, 270-271.

[43]See for example British Quarterly Review, 8 (Nov., 1848) p. 436.

[44]Eastern Life, I, 9-10.

[45]Ibid., I, 82-84.

[46]Ibid., II, 155 ff.; Martineau's friend Milnes had gone to Egypt in 1843 and had written favorably about the harem in Palm Leaves (1844); see also "The Rights of Women," Quarterly Review, 75 (Dec., 1844), 94-125 [A. W. Kinglake: Wellesley Index].

[47]Eastern Life, II, 170 ff.

[48]Ibid., III, 120-121.

[49]Weston Papers (notes), Boston P. Lib. MS. A. 9. 2. V. 5/111.

[50]Eastern Life, II, 39, 81.

[51]Harriet Martineau to Milnes, Jan. 31, 1847, Trinity Coll.

[52]John Morley, Critical Miscellanies, III, 199.

[53]John W. Bicknell, "The Unbelievers," in David J. De Laura, Victorian Prose a Guide to Research (New York: The Modern Languages Association of America, 1973), pp. 469-527. It is a bibliographic chapter outlining selectively the most important Victorian literature on the subject of unbelief. See also Reardon, From Coleridge to Gore, pp. 252 ff.; Clande Welch, Protestant Thought in the Nineteenth-Century, Vol. I, 1799-1870 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971); Basil Nilley, Nineteenth-Century Studies, ed. cit., pp. 204-236.

[54]Harriet Martineau to Henry Crabb Robinson, July 6, 1850 DW Lib.; Harriet Martineau to Milnes, April 2, [1855], Trinity Coll.

[55]John C. Green, The Death of Adam (Iowa State University Press, 1959), p. 246; Harriet Martineau to John Jacob Holyoake [?1859], B. Mus., Add. MS. 42726/26; and see Autobiography, I, 355.

[56]She referred to Herodotus, Plutarch, Josephus and to Sir John Gardner Wilkinson (1797-1875), Modern Egypt and Thebes; and Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians; Samuel Sharpe (1799-1881), History of Egypt; Bartholemew Eliot George Warburton, The Crescent and the Cross (1844); and she told Atkinson that she was reading Arnold Heeren (1760-1842), Autobiography, II, 282.

[57]Karl Barth, Protestant Theology, p. 256; Claude Welch, Protestant Thought, pp. 96 ff; Bruce Mazlish, The Riddle of History: The Great Speculators from Vico to Freud (1966, Birmingham Ala.: Minerva Press, 1968) pp. 136-137.

[58]Eastern Life, III, 332.

[59]Ibid., I, 201.

[60]Ibid., II, 85-86; and see I, 247-248, 310, 331, 336.

[61]Ibid., III, 233.

[62]Ibid., III, 265-6.

[63]Ibid., II, 60-61.

[64]Ibid., III, 151, 262-263.

[65]Ibid., III, 69-70. She believed that the strength of Mohammedanism lay in its lack of a priesthood, III, 294-295.

[66]Ibid., I, 161 n.; II, 241.

[67]Ibid., II, 84-85.

[68]Ibid., I, 150.

[69] Ibid., III, 100-102, 227-230.

[70] John Murray to Harriet Martineau, Feb. 25, Feb. 29, 1848, BU Lib. 1187, 1190; Harriet Martineau to John Murray, March 3 [1848], BU Lib., 1191; Harriet Martineau to Edward Moxon, March 1, 1848, BU Lib., 1143; Harriet Martineau to Ralph Waldo Emerson, April 5 [1848], Harvard, b MS AM 1280; and see Autobiography, II, 294-295.

[71] Harriet Martineau to Edward Moxon, June 1 [1848], Bodleian, MS. Eng. Lett. d2 135; Harriet Martineau to Henry Crabb Robinson, June 8, 1848, DW Lib.

[72] Henry Crabb Robinson Diary, Nov. 22, 1848, DW Lib.

[73] "Fuss in a Book-Club; as related by a copy of Miss Martineau's 'Eastern Life,'" Frasers, 38 (Dec. 1848), 628-634 [author unidentified: Wellesley Index].

[74] British Quarterly Review, 8 (Nov. 1848), 471-472.

[75] Autobiography, II, 282-284, Harriet Martineau to Henry George Atkinson, Nov. 7, 1847.

[76] Mesmerism was based on a materialist philosophy and although there is no evident connection the near coincidence of Martineau's mesmeric cure and her rejection of Christianity should not go unnoticed. See Henry Crabb Robinson to Mrs. Wordsworth, Sept. 5, 1845, DW Lib.: "In H:M: it would seems [sic] as if Mesmerism had driven Unitarianism out of the field. And it is quite certain that if she ever suffer martyrdom it will be for her physiological not her theological beliefs."

[77] Harriet Martineau to Philip Carpenter, [3 March, 1856] M. Coll.

[78] Henry George Atkinson to Maria Martineau, June 22, 1855 BU Lib. 25; Autobiography, II, 213.

[79] Harriet Martineau to Philip Carpenter [March, 1856], M. Coll.; Autobiography, II, 213, 215, 335.

[80] Letters on the Laws of Man's Nature and Development (1851, American edition, Boston: Josiah P. Mendum, 1851).

[81] Ibid., p. 1.

[82] Ibid., pp. 7, 15, 149, 174, 176-177, 245; Autobiography, II, 334.

[83] Ibid., pp. 7, 222-223, 225.

[84] Ibid., p. 168.

[85] Ibid., p. 246.

[86]Martineau refused to admit to atheism. See her letters to Patrick Brontë, Nov. 5, Nov. 13, 1857, BU Lib. 89, 90; and see Autobiography, II, 370.

[87]Anne Holt, A Life of Joseph Priestley (1931, Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1970), quoted p. 116.

[88]Letters on the Laws and Nature of Man's Development, p. 145.

[89]Ibid., pp. 121-122, 130.

[90]Ibid., p. 6.

[91]John D. Davies, Phrenology Fad and Science A Nineteenth-Century Crusade (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955); "Outlines of Phrenology by George Combe," Quarterly Review, 57 (Sept., 1836), 169-182 [G. Poulett Scrope: Wellesley Index].

[92]Harriet Martineau to James Martineau, March 2, 1833, Transcript Letters, M. Coll.; Autobiography, I, 392 ff.; Society in America, III, 174-175.

[93]Letters on the Laws of Man's Nature and Development, pp. 35, 41, 198.

[94]Harriet Martineau to Edward Moxon, Nov. 6 [1850], Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge; see Autobiography, II, 329 ff., 351.

[95]"Materialism. - Miss Martineau and Mr. Atkinson," Fraser's, 43 (April, 1851), 418-434. Froude rejected orthodoxy in Nemesis of Faith (1849).

[96]Weekly Dispatch [n.d.] from a clipping in the Holyoake Papers, B. Mus., Add. MS. 42726/33

[97]The Leader (Feb. 22, 1851), 178; (March 8, 1851), 227; and see The Leader (March 15, 1851), 256; letter signed "No disciple of Miss Martineau."

[98]Haight, George Eliot Letters, I, 364, George Eliot to Charles Bray [Oct. 4, 1851]; Henry Crabb Robinson Diary, Feb. 8, 1851, DW Lib.

[99]The Atlas [1851], Holyoake Papers, B. Mus., Add. MS. 42726/34; John Stevenson Bushnan, Miss Martineau and her Master (Pamphlet, London: John Churchill, 1851).

[100]"Mesmeric Atheism," Prospective Review, 7 (May, 1851), 224-262.

[101]Ibid., 236.

[102]Ibid., 256, 257.

[103]James Martineau, "Biographical Memoranda," pp. 38, 39, M. Coll.; and see Drummond, James Martineau, II, 321 ff., James Martineau to Francis W. Newman, May 14, 1852.

[104]Drummond, James Martineau, I, 222 ff.

[105]Ibid., II, 347-348 n. In 1851, James praised an article on Niebuhr in the Westminster Review. He attributed it to Francis Newman but it was actually written by his sister, see Haight, George Eliot Letters, II, 46, George Eliot to John Chapman, 24-25 July, 1852.

[106]Harriet Martineau to Helen Martineau, July 1, July 14 [1851], BU Lib., 631, 632; and see Helen Martineau to Harriet Martineau, BU Lib., 634, 635, 636 [n.d.].

[107]Autobiography, II, 355; and see II, 217 ff., 354; III, 280; "Autobiographic Memoir," DN, June 29, 1876.

[108]See for example Harriet Martineau to George Jacob Holyoake, [1857], and March 17, 1857, B. Mus., Add. MS. 42726/19, /23.

[109]Henry Crabb Robinson, Diary, Feb. 14, March 1, March 28, 1851; John Chapman to Harriet Martineau, Jan. 6, 1856, BU Lib., 199.

[110]Henry Crabb Robinson, Diary, March 11, 1851; Harriet Martineau to Philip Carpenter, Jan. 1, Jan. 9, Jan. 11, 1856, M. Coll.

[111]Henry Crabb Robinson to Thomas Robinson, March 15, 1851, DW Lib.

[112]Henry Crabb Robinson, Diary, April 2, 1851. The break in her friendship with Mrs. Arnold was brief and when Mrs. Arnold died in 1873, Martineau described her as a "dear kind friend," and "comrade," Harriet Martineau to Milnes, Oct. 13, 1873, Trinity Coll. This is her last extant letter to Milnes.

[113]Edward Quillinan to Henry Crabb Robinson, March 14, April 28, 1851.

[114]Henry Crabb Robinson, Diary, March 4, March 9, 1851; and see the Rev. Thomas Sadler to Harriet Martineau, March 6, 1869, BU Lib., 782; Henry Crabb Robinson to Thomas Robinson, Sept. 22, 1851, DW Lib.

[115]Sara [Mrs. Hartley] Coleridge to Henry Crabb Robinson, Feb. 4, 1852, DW Lib.

[116]William Lloyd Garrison to Harriet Martineau, Dec. 4, 1855, BU Lib., 349.

[117]Sara Hennell to Harriet Martineau, April 13, June 24, 1860, BU Lib. 428, 429.

[118]Henry William Wilberforce to Harriet Martineau, Oct. 3, 1864, BU Lib., 1017.

[119]The Rev. Robert Perceval Graves to Harriet Martineau, Jan. 11, 1853, BU Lib., Add. 12.

[120]Autobiography, III, 275.

[121]Ibid., quoted III, 475-476.

[122]Haight, George Eliot and John Chapman, p. 189, Chapman Diary, July 4, 1851.

[123]Harriet Martineau to George Jacob Holyoake, Oct. 6 [1851], B. Mus., Add. MS. 42726/1.

[124]Charles Bray, The Philosophy of Necessity, I, iii.

[125]Ibid., I, 1.

[126]Ibid., I, 31-33.

[127]Ibid., I, 99.

[128]Ibid., II, 490.

[129]The general failure of Spencer's philosophy should not be allowed to obscure the fact that elements of his methodology are still used by sociologists today. See particularly, J. D. Y. Peel, Herbert Spencer the Evolution of a Sociologist (London: Heinemann, 1971); Jay Rumney, Herbert Spencer's Sociology (1965, New York: Atherton, 1966).

[130]Harriet Martineau to James Martineau, March 24, 1831, Transcript Letters, M. Coll.

[131]John Stuart Mill, Autobiography, ed. cit., pp. 126-127.

[132]Edinburgh Review, 67 (July, 1838), 271-30 [Sir David Brewster: Wellesley Index].

[133]Iris Mueller, John Stuart Mill and French Thought (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1956), pp. 92-133; and for Mill's Saint-Simonianism see pp. 48-91.

[134]Thomas Huxley favorably reviewed Martineau's Comte translation in Westminster Review, 42 (July, 1854), 92-103; and see also Lewes's favorable review in The Leader, (Dec. 3, 1853) 1171-1172.

[135]Autobiography, II, 371 ff.

[136]Haight, George Eliot and John Chapman, 55-56, 199-200, 205, 206, 214, 215; Harriet Martineau to George Jacob Holyoake, Oct. 6 [1851]; Apr. 9, Nov. 4, [1853], B. Mus., Add. MS. 42726/1, /9, /11.

[137]The Positive Philosophy of Auguste Comte, tr. Harriet Martineau 2 vols. (London: John Chapman, 1853), edition used: intro. Frederick Harrison, 3 vols. (1896, London: G. Bell and Sons, 1965).

[138]Ibid., I, xvii.

[139]Ibid., I, xxiii, xxiv, xxvi.

[140]Ibid., I, 3-4; II, 240-241; III, 402; and see Leszek Kolakowski, The Alienation of Reason (1966) tr. Norbert Gutterman (1968, New York: Anchor Books, 1969).

[141]Positive Philosophy, I, 8, 9; II, 137, 183-184.

[142]Comte, like Atkinson, believed in and relied upon the "anatomical science" of phrenology. Positive Philosophy, II, 113-117, 122, 136.

[143]Ibid., II, 140-141.

[144]Ibid., II, 141-145.

[145]Ibid., II, 150.

[146]Ibid., II, 152.

[147]Ibid., II, 188.

[148]Harriet Martineau to Frederick Knight Hunt, [n.d.], BU Lib., 519.

[149]Positive Philosophy, II, 206-207.

[150]Ibid., III, 196, 272.

[151]Ibid., II, 170.

[152]Ibid., III, 277.

[153]Ibid., III, 133.

[154]Ibid., II, 173; III, 311-315.

[155]Ibid., II, 168, 179, 187.

[156]Ibid., III, 319, 328, 332-334.

[157]John Stuart Mill, Auguste Comte and Positivism (1865, Ann Arbor, Mich.: University of Michigan Press, 1961), pp. 74-76.

[158]Ibid., pp. 98-99.

[159]Ibid., pp. 74-80.

[160]Positive Philosophy, II, 238.

[161]Ibid., III, 312.

[162]Mill, Comte, p. 125.

[163]Nietzsche, Twilight of the Idols, in Works, XVI, 62.

[164]Autobiography, III, 312.

[165]History, II, 141; How to Observe Morals and Manners, pp. 158 ff. in which she stated her objection to "Blind, ignorant [which latter did not apply to Comte's proposed populace] obedience to any ruling power which the subjects had no hand in constituting."

[166]John Stuart Mill, "Coleridge" ed. cit., pp. 94 ff., 99.

[167]Mueller, John Stuart Mill and French Thought, pp. 131 ff.; Mill, Comte, p. 137.

[168]Mill, Comte, pp. 5, 130; Packe, Mill, p. 280; and for Comte's later philosophy see Kolakowski, The Alienation of Reason, ed. cit., pp. 62 f.; Willey, Nineteenth-Century Studies, 194 ff.; Auguste Comte, A General View of Positivism, tr. J. H. Bridges (1851 ed., New York: Robert Speller and Sons, 1957), pp. 364 ff.; Bruce Mazlish, The Riddle of History, pp. 188 ff.

[169]Autobiography, III, 323-330, Harriet Martineau to Mrs. Chapman, May 10, 1856.

[170]Bruce Mazlish, The Riddle of History, quoted p. 212, from Catéchisme Positiviste.

[171]Positive Philosophy, III, 298.

[172]The Factory Controversy: A Warning against Meddling Legislation, (Manchester: National Association of Factory Occupiers, 1855).

[173]Positive Philosophy, III, 5.

[174]Ibid., II, 284-285.

[175]Ibid., II, 171 ff., 281 ff.; III, 60 ff.

[176]Mueller, John Stuart Mill and French Thought, pp. 113 ff.; Packe, John Stuart Mill, pp. 276-277; Mill, Comte, pp. 63-67.

[177]Autobiography, I, 37.

[178]Ibid., I, 110.

[179]The Leader (Dec. 3, 1853), 1171-1172.

[180]Haight, George Eliot Letters, II, 127, 140, George Eliot to Sara Hennell, Nov. 25, 1853; George Eliot to Charles Bray, Feb. 6, 1854.

[181]Frederic Harrison in the Introduction to Positive Philosophy, I, xvii, xiii; and see Autobiography, III, 310-312.

[182]Daily News, Aug. 19, 1875.

[183]Hayek, John Stuart Mill, pp. 188, 189; Packe, John Stuart Mill, p. 310.

[184]Autobiography, II, 288-292.

[185]Harriet Martineau to George Jacob Holyoake, May 17 [?1854], B. Mus., Add. MS. 42726/13.

CHAPTER VIII

"A GENTLEMAN OF THE PRESS"

After 1844 Harriet Martineau enjoyed a decade of unprecedented good health. But in 1854 she began to experience respiratory difficulties, occasional spells of dizziness and "odd sensations at the heart." She consulted two London physicians and came away from the consultation convinced that her heart was failing and that her illness was mortal. She returned to Ambleside in the invalid carriage of the North Western Railway, and for a second time Harriet Martineau prepared for death.[1] One of her physicians, Dr. Thomas Watson, later recalled that although he had sought to reassure her, she had remained "under the impression that her heart was incurably diseased, and that she had not long to live. . . . She plainly distrusted, or rather she disbelieved my reassurances, looking upon them, I fancy, as well-meant and amiable attempts to soothe and tranquillise a doomed patient."[2]

In addition to noting her other symptoms, Dr. Watson recorded the presence of a large pear-shaped abdominal tumor which reached as high as the epigastrium--the area over the stomach. This was undoubtedly the same tumor which had caused her earlier illness. It had shifted position, and its shift had given Martineau ten untroubled years. But now, grown to a great size--it measured twelve inches in diameter at her death--, it was causing pressure on the diaphragm and had begun affecting not only the abdominal organs but also the action of the heart and lungs.[3] Except confidentially to John Chapman, Harriet Martineau did not generally acknowledge the presence of the tumor. "It is _certainly not_," she told Chapman with emphasis, "of the same nature as the Tynemouth

disease."[4] Harriet Martineau could not admit even to herself that her mesmeric cure had been a delusion. She had doggedly and publicly insisted then on the efficacy of her cure, and with her customary obstinacy, she refused now to lose face. She would not for an instant entertain the idea of giving the skeptics, and especially James, the opportunity to say "I told you so!"[5] She continued to profess a belief in mesmerism, but in connection with her last illness there was little mention of it, and she sought relief once more in opiates.[6]

The prospect of death did not in the least daunt Harriet Martineau. She told George Jacob Holyoake:

> I really can't care about what lies behind my own curtain (while entirely conceiving that there is nothing) while the world is in such a state as I see it in, - with so much to be done. . . . This hourly increasing indifference about one's own share is much more than a compensation for any natural regrets about leaving one [sic] blessings; but those regrets are surprisingly less trying than I could have supposed possible.[7]

As a Positivist Martineau no longer believed in the after-life.[8] And personally she had no regrets about her own death:

> I feel very, very old, through the varied experience that I have had; and I am so thoroughly content with my share of life and its blessings that I feel I have had enough, and am very easy about going, whenever the moment may come.[9]

Martineau did not fear death because she felt fulfilled; and suffered neither a personal nor a professional sense of inadequacy.[10] She faced the prospect of her own end with resignation; and she calmly went about the business of dying. She made her will. She considerately inquired about her burial-place lest her heretical beliefs cause her family any untoward awkwardness.[11] And then she began the task of recording her life for posterity.

Martineau had made two earlier attempts at autobiography--one in 1831 and another at Tynemouth--but her apparently imminent death, her remarkable career, and the destruction of her correspondence in 1843, now made the task seem imperative. She also felt the need to explain her religious conversion, and she told George Jacob Holyoake that: "The most important part [of the Autobiography was] the true account of my conscious transition from the Xn faith to my present philosophy."[12] It was, therefore, almost as much with an apologia in mind as with a desire to leave an account of her history that Martineau wrote what she thought would be her final work.[13] But except in so far as her emotional dependency on religious faith had diminished with age and assurance, Martineau's religious conversion was intellectual rather than emotional. Her Autobiography although revealing, especially about her childhood--it was easier to describe the fears and failings she had outgrown than it was to comtemplate those she still possessed--was more concerned with the life of the intellect and with the author's development as a writer and a celebrity than it was with the growth of the psyche. It was less a confessional than a memoir, and less an analysis than a narrative. Her dearest friendships were not described in detail, and her most intimate thoughts and feelings were seldom revealed.[14] When the Autobiography was completed, she permitted John Chapman, Richard Monckton Milnes and Henry Atkinson to read it in manuscript, and she asked Maria Weston Chapman to write a concluding volume.[15] She then had the first two volumes privately printed so that they would be issued unaltered after her death. And then, with her nieces and her faithful maids in attendance, Harriet Martineau prepared to spend her remaining days in retirement.

It took more than twenty long, increasingly painful and debilitating years for Harriet Martineau to die. But in spite of her progressive incapacity, she continued, until about 1866, to write. For Harriet Martineau retirement did not mean idleness. She revised old works for republication. She updated her History for its American edition. And she devoted herself extensively to her journalism. Just before her last illness her journal articles had primarily appeared in Household Words and in the Westminster Review. When her work on the Comte translation had necessitated a temporary suspension of her contributions to Household Words, Charles Dickens, the editor, had expressed regrets reminscent of her early association with Fox and the Monthly Repository: "I require a good deal," wrote Dickens, "to counterbalance your total abstinence from Household Words for so long a time."[16] Her articles in Household Words were mainly factual observations describing Britains' industries and crafts. Her essays of opinion were published mainly in the Westminster Review. She had made contributions to the Westminster ever since her return from America, but her connection with the Westminster intensified after 1851 when John Chapman became the proprietor and editor. Chapman was a friend, a confidante and an ally: it was he who had published her controversial Letters on the Laws of Man's Nature and Development, as well as her Comte translation. She went to the theatre and to the opera with him. And at his home in the Strand she met the contemporary avant garde. Thomas Huxley, Herbert Spencer, Marian Evans, George Lewes, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Francis Newman, Barbara Leigh Smith and Bessie Raynor Parkes were all his guests at one time or another.[17]

When the Westminster faltered financially in 1854 Harriet Martineau offered to assume a five hundred pound mortgage. "I have long felt grateful to you for your aims and aids in behalf of free thought and speech," she told Chapman.[18] Martineau's gesture was magnanimous and was deeply appreciated by the beleagured publisher.[19] But her motive may not have been one of unmixed altruism. James Martineau was one of Chapman's creditors. He did not like Chapman's philosophical bias and hoped to use Chapman's financial straits to wrest the journal from his control and secure it as "an organ of a serious and free theology." When his sister learnt that James was planning to undermine Chapman's control of the Westminster she sent the publisher the full amount of his debt to her brother and with George Grote and some of Chapman's other supporters undertook to keep the Westminster out of the hands of Chapman's enemies. James's chagrin when the journal fell, in his words, "into the hands of a Comtist coterie," doubtless gave his sister a good deal of secret satisfaction.[20]

Martineau tried to bolster the circulation of the Westminster by writing reviews of it in the Daily News. And she continued to supply the Westminster with articles after the onset of her illness. Her connection with the journal survived Chapman's refusal in 1855 to publish her article "The Factory Controversy; A Warning against Meddling Legislation."[21] But it did not outlive her discovery in 1858 that at the very time Chapman was assuring her of the Westminster's solvency he was secretly taking out a second mortgage. Martineau's outrage when she found out about Chapman's duplicity was immense. She not only felt

betrayed herself, but felt guilty of having misled those whom she had persuaded to join in underwriting the journal.[22]

Her friendship with Chapman, and with it her connection with the Westminster came very abruptly to an end.[23] Three years earlier she had similarly dissolved her ties with Household Words. She had for some time objected to Dickens's demeaning views on women. She accused him of ignoring the fact that "nineteen-twentieths of the women of England earn their bread," and of thinking that woman's only function was "to dress well and look pretty, as an adornment to the homes of men." She objected, furthermore, to Dickens's views on political economy, and it was his endorsement of factory legislation which later inspired her to write the vituperative "The Factory Controversy." The final breaking point however came over what she considered to be Dickens's anti-papist attitude. In 1855 she told the assistant editor of Household Words, William Henry Wills, that as an "advocate of religious liberty" and a "lover of fair play" she could no longer write for an anti-catholic publication.[24] Instead she began sending articles to Once a Week, to the Leader and from 1859 to the American Anti-Slavery Standard.[25] Her most important journal articles, however, began appearing, after 1859, in the Edinburgh Review. In spite of an association in the 1830s with the Edinburgh Reviewers Brougham, Empson, Jeffreys, and Sidney Smith, Martineau had not contributed to the then chief organ of whiggery. By mid-century when whiggism was being transformed into liberalism she probably no longer had as great a conscientious objection. The editor Henry Reeve, was, furthermore, a cousin, and she quite happily transferred her loyalty from Chapman to Reeve, and her articles from the Westminster to the Edinburgh.[26]

Martineau's chief literary commitment after 1852 was not, however, to the journals but to the press. In that year, she became a leader-writer on the London Daily News. Her association with the News became an earnest commitment and at the onset of her illness she told Maria Weston Chapman that she hoped "to work to the last in the Daily News."[27] The News was a liberal daily begun under the editorial direction of Charles Dickens in 1846. After seventeen issues Dickens was succeeded as editor by his friend, and later biographer, John Forster. Frederick Knight Hunt became editor in 1851 and it was he who made Harriet Martineau "a gentleman of the press."[28] She considered the Daily News to be "the next paper to the Times in circulation, and high above it in character."[29] She soon developed the same easy friendly relationship with Hunt and his successors as that which she had enjoyed with Chapman before 1858. Her letters to Hunt, like her letters to Chapman, were charming, insouciant and fondly impertinent. Hunt's premature death in 1854--leaving Martineau and the rest of his staff at the Daily News "in a state of suspense and orphanhood,"--came as an immense personal blow.[30]

Beginning with an occasional leader in 1852, Harriet Martineau eventually, over a fourteen year period, contributed more than sixteen hundred leaders, letters and obituaries to the Daily News.[31] "Doing pretty well for a dying person," she was writing, at her peak, as many as four, five and even six leaders a week.[32] Illness did not diminish her lively interest in the world, nor her sense of duty, and her articles were pertinent and crisply written if inclined to be polemical.[33] She felt herself to be too far from London and the center of events to write "hot and hot news," but it took only two days from the time she received the mails

for her rapidly dispatched articles to appear in print.[34] She nevertheless was dissatisfied with both the cost and the speed of the postal service and she badgered Rowland Hill to improve it.[35] Her subjects ranged over a wide field of foreign and domestic affairs. She gave her opinion on political, social and economic conditions. She wrote about war in Crimea and about imperial policy in Ireland, India and the colonies. She expressed her continued concern for education at all levels of society. She argued for public health, political, legal and prison reform. And she used the pages of the Daily News, as well as those of the Edinburgh Review, to vent her opinion on the rights of women. Some of these themes were new because circumstances made them so, but many were old abiding interests, and in the journalism of her later years, Martineau, as it were, summed up the opinions of a life-time. It is possible in this chapter to select only some of the questions which preoccupied Martineau in her final years. These will be: The Crimean war; India and the Mutiny of 1857; Abolition and Civil War in America; Some questions concerning the working-class; and the position of women. For the sake of clarity this chapter will be sub-divided according to these topics and it will, therefore differ in format from the chapters which have preceded it.

I. The Crimean War

Harriet Martineau was born during the Napoleonic era and her earliest memories were of a nation at war. Perhaps her abhorrence of war had its origins in those early recollections. In 1823, when her writing

career was just beginning, she told James that she was thinking of writing a "condemnation even of defensive war."[36] Later her pacific inclinations were reinforced by political economy arguments which favored peaceful world trade and opposed the disruptiveness of international conflict. In America her Garrisonian connection similarly stressed the qualities of peace. In the first volume of the History written in 1849 she described war as a season when social principles were in abeyance and when "the great natural laws of society are obscured and temporarily lost."[37] There was, she said but a single benefit to be derived from war:

> It is the one only quality which makes war endurable, that it supplies a national idea at the time for the people's heart and mind to work up to; and it is the great curse of war - a heavier curse than its bloodshed, burnings, and cost of woe and wealth - that it engrosses a nation with an idea lower than it might have and ought to have. . . .[38]

The 'national idea' which caused Martineau to abandon pacifism in the 1850s was the principle of democratic representative government. Ever since the Congress of Vienna the fate of Europe had been balanced between the promise of democracy and the menace of despotism. For Harriet Martineau the archetypal symbol of despotism was Russia. And she feared the threat of Russian tyranny more than she feared war itself. She had acquired a first-hand knowledge of Russian despotism from the Polish refugees she had met and aided in the 1830s, and at that time she had so angered the Czar by her denunciation of Russian despotism in the Illustrations of Political Economy tale The Charmed Sea that he had ordered every copy destroyed and Harriet Martineau was forbidden the right to enter his empire. In 1838 Martineau met that arch-Russophobe, David Urquart, and she may well have been further influenced by his "ferocious discontent."[40] By 1849 she clearly believed that the 'war'

between Russian despotism and western self-government had already begun.[41] In the History she warned that "it would be a treachery to the cause of Freedom to forget that from Russia will proceed, sooner or later, the most perilous attacks she has yet to sustain."[42] In the Daily News of November 1852 she reiterated the warning.[43] And in the following year when Russia's threatening gestures became explicit, she told her Daily News readers that there ought to be no accommodation between the democracies of the west--however flawed and incomplete--and the autocracy of the east. "There can be no possible amalgamation between the two systems - no truce between the two principles:"

> We wish most hearily for peace: but it must be that peace, as heroic as war, which will not sacrifice good faith or social duty to its own preservation.[44]

In her own mind there was clearly no question of compromise. And when the war of opinion ended and the battle began in earnest with the Russian attack on Turkey in October 1853, she believed that it was Britain's duty to act. Russian tyranny had to be confined within its own boundaries not so much in defense of Turkey as in defense of liberty.[45]

Martineau was not motivated by an imperialist desire to see an extension of British influence, but by a genuine fear of Russian oppression.[46] Her Russo-phobia was symptomatic of that which swept England at the time of Crimea, and her relentless leaders on the subject undoubtedly contributed to the general hysteria. She was sharply at odds with those of her erstwhile colleagues who joined the Peace Party. Both Cobden and Bright remained true to the principles of the free trade philosophy and denounced the war. But Martineau, abandoning pacifism, believed that the

cause of liberty was at stake. "We have to do what is morally right at all cost."[47]

Although she was more idealistic than chauvinistic, Martineau's pronouncements, for one so recently pacific, were surprisingly warlike: she embraced her new cause with as much enthusiasm, and belligerence, as she did all her causes. When Britain's participation in the war was still uncertain she upbraided Lord Aberdeen for being "the wetblanket which is turning the national fire into smoke."[48] A few weeks later when Britain finally committed herself to the conflict she urged, " . . . we have now a military and political reputation to uphold, which is, and must be, second to no other."[49] Martineau appeared confident that with their "added knowledge, expanded sympathies, purified politics and morals, and confirmed industrial habits," the British would overthrow the tyrant.[50]

> _I_ rejoice in the war, more than ever [she confided to Milnes]. My History (Vol. II p. 517) shows that I, for one, anticipated just the present chaos: and I think that the good principle of the war, and the noble temper of our people in it are just the finest force we could have to carry us through to a regenerate state.[51]

But for all her enthusiasm, Martineau remained pragmatic. She had been a critic of the government for many years and even her patriotism could not erase her lack of confidence in an administration still almost wholly aristocratic in its composition. She was afraid that for all the courage of the English soldier and for all the righteousness of his cause he might be "baulked and disgusted by folly in Downing-street."[52] She was quite aware of the fact that four decades of peace may have dulled the British sword:

> . . . it is nearly forty years since we were at war [and] we cannot at all tell how able we are to fight. We mean, of

> course, that the doubt is as to the ability of our officers, and not the strength and courage, physical and moral, of our soldiers and sailors. . . . warfare, after so long a peace, must be an anxious experiment. . . .[53]

It was not long before her fears were justified. Inadequately equipped, poorly led and unprepared, the British army was soon reeling, and Martineau, appalled by the hardships inflicted on the British soldiers and by the tragic neglect of the sick and wounded, was quick to blame the mismanagement at home: "Our soldiers have gone out against the tyrant with citizen ideas in their minds, and citizen feelings in their hearts; and therefore do we owe them citizen treatment."[54] But except for the valiant efforts of Florence Nightingale, the injured and fever-ridden casualties of the war had been callously neglected.[55] The armies in the field, led by an aristocratic officer corps, had suffered needlessly on account of the incompetence of their commanders. "Our aristocracy have received their rebuke in their proved incapacity to manage our army," she proclaimed.

The aristocratic system which she had for so long opposed had become one of the chief casualties of the war: ". . . the results of our political tendencies have told disastrously on our organization and our management."[56] And if the war failed to strike a blow for liberty and against despotism in eastern Europe then at least Martineau could draw solace from the fact that it had struck a blow for liberty and against aristocracy at home.[57]

The war had been a chastening experience, and its chief object, in Martineau's view, had not been achieved. At war's end Russia had been merely contained and liberty was still in jeopardy. She did not

recommend a military solution again even in defense of freedom, and when in 1859 the Italian battle of liberation against Austria began, she did not suggest British intervention. She haled "the inevitable struggle" between democracy and autocracy; she praised the "honest, intrepid, devoted Garibaldi;" and she applauded the "fine spirit" of the Italians, but she did not suggest that British troops be committed in support of the struggle.[58] She suspected that Louis Napoleon's intervention on the Italian side was motivated by his imperial ambitions, and although her intense personal dislike of the "French usurper" made her a less than impartial observer, the perfidy at Villa Franca seemed to bear out her suspicions and to justify her conviction that British neutrality had been wise.[59] The lesson of Crimea was not easily forgotten, and Martineau's brief flirtation with 'jingoism' was over.

II. India and the Mutiny of 1857

At the start of the Crimean campaign Martineau had warned:

> . . . we must take care . . . that no diplomatist or military leader in our service shall be permitted to harbour the idea of our planting ourselves down, on any pretence whatever, in any country abroad, for other purposes than preparation for finishing the business that sent us there.[60]

Martineau had seen Crimea as an ideological and not as an acquisitive war.[61] Her attitude towards empire had always been that of the ripe-fruit school.

> . . . the time is come for aiding our dependecies to establish themselves as communities . . . independent in those particulars in which each is the best judge of its own interests.[62]

She had been influenced by the Durhamites Buller and Wakefield--in spite of her moral disapproval of the latter--to think of England's colonial empire in terms of consolidation and improvement rather than in terms of aggrandisement and expansion.[63] She criticized deliberate imperialist aggressions such as the Opium War, and generally opposed territorial conquests unless they were the only alternatives to war.[64]

> . . . future generations are subjected by those who first establish a footing by force in a barbaric quarter of the globe [she wrote in the History]. Such men little know what they do - to what an interminable series of future wars they pledge their country; what an embarrassment of territory, and burden of responsibility, and crowds of quarrelsome and irrational neighbours, they bring upon her; and how they implicate her in the obligation to superintend half a continent - or perhaps half the globe, till civilization shall have so spread and penetrated as that the nations can take care of themselves, and co-operate with each other.[65]

Martineau believed that Britain should concentrate on administering efficiently those territories which she already possessed. She recognized--forty years before Joseph Chamberlain and New Imperialism--the essential importance of the underrated, poorly staffed and impermanently officered Colonial Ministry. She appreciated the complexity of Britain's empire and she pointed out the folly of placing such a vital and complex department under the leadership of a political appointee who had to consult a map in order to discover where Her Majesty's territories lay.[66]

As a ripe-fruit theorist, Martineau believed that all Britain's dependencies should eventually achieve independence. A personal friend of the Lambtons, she had been intimately concerned with Lord Durham's Canadian ordeal in 1838.[67] And it is surely no coincidence that in How to Observe Morals and Manners written in that year, she should have said:

> The moral progression of a people can scarcely begin till they are independent. Their morals are overruled by the mother country; by the government and legislation she imposes; by the rulers she sends out; by the nature of the advantages she grants and the tribute she requires; by the population she pours in from home, and by her own example. Accordingly, the colonies of a powerful country exhibit an exaggeration of the national faults, with only infant virtues of their own, which wait for freedom to grow to maturity.[68]

But the Whig Government had failed to appreciate Durham's point of view initially, and continued to ignore "the desire of our colonies for participation in the best privileges of the British Constitution."[69]

With this attitude towards empire it was not at all surprising that Martineau should have been a severe critic of Britain's India policy. Her opposition to the exploitation of native populations extended back to the Illustrations of Political Economy tale Cinnamon and Pearls and forward to Governor Eyre of Jamaica's ". . . flogging, hanging and shooting of nonresisting victims without trial [which] can never be reconciled with the professed principles and practice of English govt."[70] She did not entirely object to the British presence in India for like most of her contemporaries she feared that chaos might ensue if Britain withdrew. But even so, she perceived that new conflicts had been permitted to multiply upon the graves of old feuds, and that Britain had not brought peace. Expenditures on war, she noted, were forty-two times greater than were the expenditures on public works. Indigenous law, custom and community organization had been undermined. Indians were playing a diminishing rather than an increasing role in the government of their own land. And instead of the growth of native industry, the old arts and manufactures of India had been allowed to fall into decay.[71]

At the time of the mutiny of 1857 India was still under the administrative control of the East India Company. The Company had lost its trading monopoly in 1833 and had come under increased government review, but it was still responsible for the revenue, administration and defense of the sub-continent. Company attitudes and policies in India are not easily summarized. Each of the three presidencies was governed independently; the Company had a different relationship with each of the principalities; and each pro-consul brought his own idiosyncracies and his own prejudices to the job. There were, however, two recognizable and powerful influences on the Indian administrators: the influence of Evangelicalism sought to Christianize and Anglicize; and the influence of Utilitarianism represented by James Mill at India House, sought to centralize and codify. James Mill believed that India should be ruled by authoritarian fiat and not by means of representative institutions. He believed the Indian social structure and culture to be inferior and he wanted to improve them by reforming and codifying the laws, simplifying the tax structure and centralizing the government. The Evangelicals wanted to convert India to the Christian religion, the European civilization and the English language. The effect of both Evangelicalism and Utilitarianism was to discredit Indian custom, and to impose the legal, religious and moral mores of an alien culture upon the inhabitants of a vast and diversified land.[72] Although this policy did not ultimately achieve its goal, it nevertheless succeeded in undermining the indigenous political structures, land tenure and tax systems, and, until an ethnic revival at the end of the nineteenth century, even to some extent the indigenous culture.

When the mutiny occurred, Martineau with her unerring sense of timing was ready to cater to the public's aroused attention. She published The History of British Rule in India in 1857, and Suggestions towards the Future Government of India in 1858.[73] In these two volumes and in the Daily News she explained the history of British India and gave her opinion of its administration.

Martineau accepted the fact of the British presence in India but she believed that India should be governed according to Indian ideas, with the assistance of the Indians themselves, and with the aim of developing India for the Indian. It was an attitude consistent with the political economy ideas of the Illustrations and compatible with her whole attitude towards native society. As How to Observe Morals and Manners and Eastern Life all too emphatically showed, Martineau had too much respect for native culture to favor a policy of Anglicization. She was also too much the democrat to approve of the government of India by an authoritarian and alien administration whether it issued from the Company's offices on Leadenhall Street or from Whitehall.[74] Martineau perceived the impossibility of trying to convert India to Christianity; she noted the immense difficulty of Anglicization; she appreciated the folly of undermining the traditional systems of land tenure, tax collection and peasant economy; and she was distressed by the blatant bias against appointing Indians to administrative positions.[75] Martineau had the sensitivity to realize that clumsy British attempts to tamper with inheritance, succession, ancestral worship, and even such practices as infanticide and the suttee were cursed by those "whom they have unconsciously doomed to excommunication here and perfidy hereafter." She concluded that instead of drawing

closer together over the years, the Briton and the Indian had drawn further apart. As a Comtean she realized the futility of the British attempt to alter a part of a society before the whole of it had undergone a metamorphosis; and she appareciated that reforms thus superimposed would "make eternal enemies of the subject peoples, or break their hearts."[76]

Because of Britain's maladministration, Martineau believed that the mutiny should have been predictable, and she denounced the vindictiveness with which British opinion attacked "a hundred millions of our fellow-subjects in the East." She told her Daily News readers that far from blaming the Indians, Britain should have anticipated the atrocities of 1857 for "where is cruelty to be expected if not among a depressed people?" Vengeance was not the answer:

> We cannot innocently proceed to settle the future destiny of the people of Hindostan while under the influence of such sweeping denunciations of them, and while so ignorantly astonished at their vices.[77]

> We must do nothing in a temper of mere wrath at an outbreak of spirit which we have not understood; and we must omit nothing in the way of retribution and future control which is enjoined by the strict justice that alone binds people to us.[78]

Although Martineau was a severe critic of British policy in India she nevertheless saw the British presence in India as a duty. She regarded the mutineers as "a helpless multitude" which had been victimized as much by the incitement of the old Moslem hierarchy as by the ignorance of British officials. She was convinced that without the protection of Britain that multitude would be more than ever oppressed by their former native rulers.[79] For all its faults, British administration brought a degree of justice and order which would be lost if India were

abandoned to the cruel and callous control of the native aristocracy. She hoped that lessons would be drawn from the mutiny and that a greater understanding of India would develop. In fact, however, the subsequent government of the sub-continent remained authoritarian; the Indian played a diminishing rather than an increasing role in it; and instead of the development of a greater sympathy for the Indian culture, the converse actually became true. The Company was dissolved and in its place Parliament became the arbiter of Indian affairs. To Martineau this appeared to be a regression rather than an improvement. The Company at least had had years of experience and a knowledge of the Indian character, and ironically, Martineau, the old critic of the East India Company, became its champion in its waning days.[80] Thereafter she continued to plead for a greater degree of comprehension and sympathy as well as for the participation of the Indian in his own administration, and for the Indianization of the civil service:

> . . . a good government is not at liberty to refuse the advantages of the traditional association of the most cultivated class of natives. . . . The upper class natives have pride of tradition and they should be allowed to use this pride to stimulate future generations instead of ignoring and disaffecting them.[81]

But her advice, unfortunately, went unheard and the lines between the conqueror and the conquered were as rigidly drawn as ever.

III. Abolition and Civil War in America

i

On the other side of the world battle-lines of a different kind were being drawn, and in the crucial decade which saw the extinction of

slavery in America, Harriet Martineau's was one of the most influential voices in the English press. "It was Harriet Martineau alone," said William Edward Forster at the conflict's end, "who was keeping English public opinion about America on the right side through the press."[82] Harriet Martineau had been battling slavery for a quarter of a century, and she saw it as an imperative duty to keep her English readers abreast of developments across the Atlantic. "I think the state of the world keeps me alive, - especially the American part of it. There is so much work to be done!"[83] At the onset of her final illness she had not thought to see the resolution of the slavery issue, and in sadness she wrote what she expected would be her last letter to William Lloyd Garrison:

> Twenty years ago, I considered the Abolition question in your country the most important concern of the century; and my sense of its importance has deepened with every passing year. . . . If your countrymen permit your republic to decline into dark despotism for the sake of its one despotic institution, they will have perpetuated the most desperate crime, and created the most intolerable woe, ever wrought by an association of human beings.[84]

But Harriet Martineau was not to remain mute in the final struggle for abolition. As a long-time student and astute observer of American affairs, she had been informing the public for many years and she continued to do so. She kept her Daily News readers up to date with political and constitutional developments in the United States. And she explained for them the significance of the territorial struggle between the free and the slave states. Slavery, she realized, had always been protected by a Congressional balance in favor of the South.[85] Southern representation in Washington was, she said, "out of all proportion to the

population." And in order to keep up their proportional preponderance, the South was "driven to territorial aggression and encroachment on the Constitution."[86] She watched free states and slave states battle to extend their influence as the nation expanded westwards, and she indignantly observed that the free states too easily permitted "all this ravage."

> With the numbers, the industry, the wealth in their own hands, why have they allowed the slave-power to over-ride all other interests, and determine the entire policy of the United States for so long a course of years? . . . the South poor and half-peopled . . . has overborne all the rest. It has impressed a retrograde character on the whole policy and government of the nation . . . and jeopardized free institutions all over the world.[87]

The Missouri Compromise of 1820 had sought to contain slavery in the South but in the 1850s Martineau witnessed the erosion of even this partial measure. She noted the passage of the Fugitive Slave Bill and the Compromises of 1850 which traded concessions between the free and the slave states. She deplored the Nebraska Act of 1854 which allowed the possibility of slavery north of the Mason-Dixon line, and therefore into an area which should have been protected against slavery by reason of the Missouri Compromise.[88] She recognized as the portent of a great crisis the Dred Scott decision of 1857 which in effect legalized slavery throughout the federal territory by making a slave a bondsman in perpetuity even if he resided in a free state.[89]

For Martineau the slave question was the axis about which American destiny turned:

> Every public movement in the United States is, and long has been, determined by the immediate condition of the slavery question; and that question supplies the whole group of tests by which the

> political conduct of every public man will necessarily be tried till the controversy is extinguished in one way or another.[90]

Along with the other Garrisonians she believed that the South was being permitted to impose its will on the rest of the country in this matter because of "an Idolatry of Union."[91] The North had bartered its own morality as well as the freedom of the slave in order to preserve that union. At the time of her American visit the Abolitionists were beginning to talk of dissolution, and because Northern liberty and Southern slavery seemed to her to be incompatible, Martineau joined the anti-union chorus. She did not believe that a Northern secession would be an abandonment of the slave for she was certain that once on their own the Southern slave-owning minority would be unable to prevail, and she predicted a "servile war" which would end the institution of slavery for ever.[92] When the Fugitive Slave Law and the Dred Scott decision brought state and federal law into collision, and threatened the rights of the free states, it seemed to Martineau that either dissolution or revolution was unavoidable, and she welcomed the formation of Disunion Associations in the north-eastern states.[93] It seemed to her that recent legislative compromises had sullied the essence of the American constitution:

> . . . the old Constitution, laden with new corruptions, cannot serve and sustain the Republic. We believe that if a radical reconstitution is not immediately agreed upon, there must be a dissolution of the Union.[94]

The American Civil War was fought to preserve the very union which Martineau and the Abolitionists disparaged, yet Martineau applauded the start of the conflict because she perceived that the slave question was the real issue, and she saw the war between the states as an opportunity to end slavery and to rewrite the constitution without compromise or

evasion.[95] In spite of her Crimean stance Martineau was still opposed to war in principle and she had been appalled rather than inspired by John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry in 1859.[96] Nevertheless she acknowledged the inevitability of war and when it occurred she became an unequivocal champion of the North.[97] She was certain that the North with its greater man-power, its more sophisticated financial structure and the superior morality of its people would triumph, and that the long-sought after emancipation was at last at hand:[98]

> I did not expect to see the Americans cease to be a slave-holding <u>nation</u> [she told Milnes in 1862]. . . . My quarter of a century's work is over. . . . There is a good deal to be done still in America; but as a State institution slavery must soon go out.[99]

The Garrisonian wing of the Abolitionist movement was a-political, yet Martineau had nurtured great hopes that a Lincoln administration would at last emancipate the slaves. She had viewed the prospect of a Republican victory in the election of 1860 as an omen of change:

> . . . the struggle has come at last, after being long foreseen as inevitable - the struggle to overthrow or to maintain slavery as a national institution in a democratic republic.[100]

But the new President initially disappointed the hopes of the Abolitionists. In order to propitiate the large unionist faction in the north he at first tried to compromise and conciliate. He did not immediately proclaim the freedom of the slaves, and he even--anathema to the Garrisonians who had so ardently and long opposed the Colonization Society--suggested a "monstrous" scheme for colonizing newly freed blacks. When emancipation for the slaves eventually came in 1863, it seemed to Martineau that the President had dragged his feet too long.[101]

When Lincoln finally acted to liberate the slaves in the territories already captured from the Confederacy--about a quarter of the total

number of slaves in the country--he did so without legislating their proper protection. The Garrisonians had always opposed the appurtenances of gradualism because they believed in the equality of the races and in the capacity of the blacks to adjust to freedom. They had always demanded immediate and unconditional emancipation and had not asked for any protective legislation. They were, therefore, appalled to learn of the exploitation of the newly liberated slaves by rapacious Northern masters, and they were quick to blame the President for his failure to safeguard the rights of those who were now forced to endure "a slavery on free soil harder than that they had run away from on the plantation."[102]

ii

For Martineau and Britain the American Civil War brought up many questions besides those of slavery. And although Martineau never permitted the side issues to detract--either in her mind or in her writing--from the essential matter of abolition, yet she did not neglect to review them with a candor which sometimes brought her into opposition with the very states she was supporting in the conflict. By 1860 Britain had become, in essence a free trade nation. The British were antagonized by the tariff system imposed by the Northern states, and Martineau, a long-time anti-protectionist, was deeply critical of this system. She opposed it in principle and she opposed it also because she feared that it would drive the British as a nation into the arms of the free-trading, cotton-producing South. Although Martineau's desire for free trade was never permitted to obscure her desire to abolish the institution of slavery, her opposition to Northern trading policies nevertheless drew an angry

response from some of the readers of the Anti-Slavery Standard and she was forced to defend her principles. "It is not true," she protested," that I think a Protectionist policy worse than slavery."[103]

There were some in England who were, however, so antagonized by Northern trading restrictions, so dependent on southern cotton and so offended by the north in the Trent affair that it looked for a time as if Britain might rally to the support of the South. Even Martineau was upset by the boarding of a neutral British vessel at sea, and she chided the North about the Trent's violated sovereignty. "Your government has outraged your best friend. . . . Retraction is the only alternative to war."[104] Nevertheless, in the pages of the Daily News, she sought rather to placate ruffled British pride than to add to its indignation.[105] She nervously watched the growth of a sentiment favoring the South, and did what she could to keep the slave question to the forefront and to minimize the impact of the North's abrasive actions. Martineau blamed the Times, which she called the voice of the "old planter interest," for encouraging a pro-Southern sympathy. She told Milnes that "If a war bwtween us and the United States were possible (which I am confident it is not) it wd be a duty and a necessity to remember and publish how far the Times is answerable for it."[106] The Times spoke for many in England who not only feared the impact of the war on British commerce but who--until emancipation in 1863 made slavery an explicit issue in the campaign--thought that the war was being fought to frustrate the South's right to self-determination.

There was always a danger that Britain might be tempted to run the Northern blackade and that this would sustain the South, risk British

involvement in the hostilities, prolong the war, and thwart the prospects of emancipation.

> It is of serious consequence to us [Martineau admitted in the Daily News] that our trade is injured, and that our chief manufacture is paralyzed for the time; but it is of graver consequence still that civilization should not be set back by the establishement in this century of a retrograde . . . society in place of the free and progressive republic.[107]

The Cotton-famine which stopped the factories of Lancashire and caused the destitution of thousands of mill-workers was to Martineau especially poignant as it must have seemed so needless. She had for years been pointing out the danger of Britain's dependence on Southern cotton. Not only did she think it immoral to purchase a slave-grown product, but she thought that a decreased demand for Southern cotton would also decrease the need for slave labor.[108] She in any case saw the dangers of depending on Southern cotton alone:

> England is far too dependent on America for her cotton [she wrote in 1852]. There is too much risk in relying on any one country . . . when the country . . . has been at war with us more than once, and might possibly some day be so again. . . . When we add the consideration that cotton in the United States is raised by slave labour, and that the only certainty about slave labour is that it will sooner or later become free, it is evident that we cannot too soon set about providing ourselves with cotton-fields in various parts of the world, and especially, if possible, within our own dominions.[109]

Martineau's suggestion was far-sighted, but it had gone unheeded. During the American Civil War, therefore, British commerce suffered, and the Lancashire factory-workers, especially, paid a bitter price.

For all their suffering the Lancashire operatives did not rebel, and to observers this seemed to be evidence of their willingness to endure privation rather than rise in support of the cotton-producing but slave-owning South. John Bright and other political reformers, including

Martineau, used this example of loyal and responsible working-class behavior to argue in favor of extending the franchise. However, Mary Ellison in Support for Secession: Lancashire and the American Civil War (1972)[110] has challenged this theory. The Free Traders, she says, created a deliberate myth and knowingly misrepresented what was a large actual support for the South, especially in Lancashire's more depressed areas. Primarily using journalistic evidence, Ellison shows that a substantial pro-Southern sentiment existed in Lancashire, but her evidence notwithstanding, the facts remain unchanged: the workers did not rise in rebellion or attempt in any way to coerce the British government to intervene on the side of the South, or to end the blockade.

If the workers' support for emancipation was a deliberately created myth then Martineau's role in helping to create and perpetuate that myth in the pages of the Daily News becomes difficult to explain. As a Free Trader herself she would not have been Bright's unwitting tool. Yet there is no evidence that she was his co-conspirator if indeed a conspiracy ever existed. Her letters give no indication that she was aware of a plot to delude Parliament into extending the franchise, and her basic honesty and journalistic integrity would in any case have rebelled against such duplicity. Furthermore, she would not have supported the drive to relieve Lancastrian distress if she had suspected that the objects of her charity were Southern sympathizers. Her intimate connection with the Free Traders precludes the possibility that Martineau was a victim of the so-called deliberate misconception. Her behavior indicates that she truly believed in the loyalty and emancipationist sympathies of the cotton operatives.

In any case, for Martineau the chief issue was emancipation and throughout the American conflict she kept this question foremost and tried to prevent the British from being distracted by what she considered side-issues. She lived to see the end of the internecine war; to grieve over the assassination of President Lincoln; and to witness the disasters of reconstruction.[111] But her task as an Abolitionist was at last ended, and there was hope that finally the promise of the American constitution would be fulfilled: the promise which in Society in America she had thought a mockery, that "all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among them are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

IV. Come Questions Concerning the Working-Class

i

Harriet Martineau helped to organize relief for the unemployed Lancashire workers during the cotton famine. She advised relief committees on the provision of clothing and the installation of soup-kitchens; she told them how they could facilitate the movement of labor from the stricken areas by providing accommodation in those places where work was available; and she even suggested the apportionment of temporary plots to the unemployed although she was still "unable to countenance permanent schemes of spade husbandry, workhouse farms, &c."[112] Because she was convinced of their loyalty to the Abolitionist cause Harriet Martineau became an unlikely advocate of charity. She considered the "suffering operatives" to be a "national charge," and unaware of the irony of her

accusation, she chided the Manchester Chamber of Commerce for their "pedantry in political economy" when they argued against the government procurement of cotton abroad for the depressed industry because they feared that it would "paralyse private enterprise!"[113] Martineau, as we have seen, was able to pick and chose the exceptions to her general principles.

Martineau still urged the self-help philosophy:

> . . . every man must owe his true welfare to himself [she wrote in 1857, a year of unemployment and depression] . . . he cannot cast his burden upon others without suffering something worse than poverty; and . . . all dependence on Government for any of the essentials of private life is a delusion as enslaving to the spirit of man as disappointing to his hope. As for the present suffering of the unemployed, everybody is grieved at it; but, if the men themselves could not manage to escape it, nobody could help them to do so.[114]

She still opposed the disbursement of charity as she had in the Illustrations. She still believed that relief would create more want than it cured, and that it would encourage improvidence, and discourage frugality and hard work.[115] She was too much the advocate of the New Poor Law to countenance outright relief even while appreciating the distress of the unemployed. During the temporary slump of 1857 she had recommended that kitchens be set up for the sale--not the free donation--of cheap food, and that the unemployed be put to work on such public projects as would have lasting value: road-building, public parks and gardens, and sanitary drainage. Using an argument which is still heard in many quarters today, she said that by providing work instead of charity, society would spare "the honest pride of good working men . . . [and] would keep off the encroachment of the idle and the debased."[116] But even her limited encouragement of government-sponsored work-projects and soup-kitchens

made a major exception to the *laissez-faire* rule. And although the events of the American Civil War did not alter her basic belief that charity created a dependence on alms more reprehensible than the neglect of misery, she nevertheless, as a result of the Lancashire experience began, in the 1860s, to become less dogmatic. She admitted that the individual might not always be able to master his or her circumstances, and she urged that society owed it to posterity to "investigate the causes of an apparently boundless pauperism."[117]

Without substantially altering her *laissez-fairist* position, Martineau became less rigid, and some of the old short-sighted optimism receded before the realities, but she did not, like John Stuart Mill, come to think of the doctrine of *laissez-faire* as metaphysical, destructive or negativist. In spite of her Comtean philosophy, she still believed in the basic premise that the elimination of old abuses and the proper enlightenment of the people would naturally regenerate the society. She retained a faith in the individual, and in the individual's right and ability to forge his or her own destiny without the interference of the city or the state, but the number of exceptions which she made to this rule increased as time went on.

ii

In principle Martineau remained opposed to the government regulation of industry because she believed that it threatened the individual's right to labor. "If there is a right more sacred and indisputable than any other . . . it is a man's disposal of his own industry."[118] But Martineau's opposition to labor regulation was more than a little

influenced by her prejudice in favor of the employer, and even in this, she was less than consistent. Her sympathy for the employer of the manufacturing class did not extend to the farming or the colliery owning aristocracy. Indeed, she recommended the standardization of agricultural wages; and she drew attention to the inadequacy of safety precautions in the mines, and suggested national arbitration.[119] But when legislation was proposed for the regulation of safety in factories, Martineau preferred to believe that it was designed less to protect the workers than to harass the employers. She became the ready champion of the factory owners, and it was in their defense that she wrote "The Factory Controversy; A Warning against Meddlesome Legislation"--the article which John Chapman refused to publish in the Westminster Review.[120] Martineau tended, as John Chapman warned her, "to speak of masters as a band of enlightened well wishers."[121] And because of her faith in the ultimate fair-mindedness and benevolence of middle-class employers, she continued, in principle, to oppose factory legislation, except, for instance, in such cases as Graham's 1843 Factory Bill, where the education of factory children was involved.

Before mid-century no significant attempt had been made to legislate for male operatives. The countless factory bills which had been introduced to Parliament were intended for the regulation of child and female employment. The Ten Hours Act of 1847 was limited to the labor of women and children in the textile industry, and although there was later some extension of the Act to other industries, by and large, most industries were unregulated and where the law did apply it was systematically evaded. Long hours and appallingly dangerous and unhealthy conditions

were the rule rather than the exception, and as the evidence of the Parliamentary Commissioners began to build up--especially between 1860 and 1863--the conscience of Parliament and the nation was stirred to enlarge the scope of the Factory Act. This evidence clearly had a sobering effect on Martineau, and it is no coincidence that in 1860, the erstwhile opponent of factory legislation at last admitted the fallibility of human nature, and conceded that perhaps all employers were not indeed "a band of enlightened well wishers." She still clung to the principle of *laissez-faire* and insisted that "men ought to be able to guard their own commodity of labour," but she was at last regretfully forced to admit that in the nineteenth-century world of industrial relations *laissez-faire* could not but be inequitable:

> . . . we must consider ourselves as under a kind of disgrace in our own eyes and those of others - as, in fact unfit to be trusted in those relations of industrial compact which should need no interference of law . . . if we were wise and strong enough to live in accordance with the highest principles of government - we should not need, nor endure, the interference of penal law in the relation between the buyers and sellers of labour. . . . It ought not to be an office of law to protect the operative from being overworked, deprived of sleep, and of time for meals, and of education; but it was worse to see operatives oppressed, as they too often were before the protection of the law was provided for them. . . . *We have to extend this protection beyond its present range* [my italics].[122]

She urged that the provisions of the Ten Hours Act be extended to cover those female and child laborers in the hitherto unregulated industries, and she insisted that '*Principles*' not be permitted to intervene! True to character, Martineau's embracement of a conviction led her to champion it, and she became an ardent advocate of factory reform in those industries where child-labor was still unprotected: it was thirty years since she had opposed the efforts of Lord Shaftesbury, insisting then that

"legislation cannot interfere effectually between parents and children in the present state of the labour-market."[123]

Martineau still contended that workers and their employers should peacefully negotiate their contracts and come to a mutual understanding of their problems and grievances.[124] She based this contention upon Adam Smith's identity of interests principle, and it was on this premise that she continued her opposition to strike action. Sounding very much like the Harriet Martineau of the Illustrations, she told her Daily News readers that:

> The workman has a perfect right to put his own price on his labour, but experience shows that trying to get a higher price by a wholesale strike is seldom productive of anything but loss to both workman and employer.[125]

She continued to preach the wage-fund theory to prove the folly of those workers who believed that "the wages fund is inexhaustible." And she noted that it was in any case usually "the least distressed of the working classes who have struck, for the obvious reason that they alone have resources to begin upon. . . ."[126] Despite paying lip-service to the workers' right to combine and although applauding agricultural labour combinations and approving consumer co-operatives she still regarded industrial unions with suspicion.[127] Martineau pleaded the main nineteenth-century middle-class argument against unions--that they tyrannized and intimidated the operatives--but it was chiefly her sympathy for the manufacturing class, her fear of the disruption of the economy, and her earnest belief in the identity of interests principle which inspired her opposition.[128] She really had very little understanding of employer-employee relations in the impersonal world of large industry. Her

information about unions came mainly from the masters and not from the union members, and her insistence on individual contract was based on her knowledge of the industry as it existed in the "multitude of garrets and small shops" of places like her brother Robert's Birmingham. There, as her nephew Robert F. Martineau informed her, the workers were called "workmen" and not "hands" as in Manchester.[129] In the smaller industries where owner and worker collaborated in close liaison they could far more easily understand each other's viewpoint and could much more readily compromise than could their counterparts in the large factories. Martineau failed to appreciate that unionization and strike action were the only means of persuasion available to thousands of operatives in the major industries. She did not realize the ambiguity which her support for compact and self-help, on the one hand, and her opposition to unions and strikes, on the other, posed.

iii

Martineau believed that the hope of the working class lay in the prospect of their enlightenment. Because she placed her faith in the individual's right and ability to control his or her own destiny and because of her Hartlean-Benthamite-Comtean belief in the educational process. she remained a life-long champion of national education. Unlike Adam Smith and the stricter _laissez-fairists_ she believed that, except at the upper levels of society where individuals were better able to provide for themselves, education should be the responsibility of the state: for "those most needing education, are most hopelessly out of the way of it, under the voluntary system."[130] In 1832 she had called for national education in two _Monthly Repository_ articles, "National Education" and "Prison Discipline."[231]

> . . . the moral and religious education of the people is an object too vast in its importance to the well-being of the State, to be left to the voluntary exertions of benevolent individuals and charitable associations. An Education Act, framed on broad and liberal principles, and securing the concurrence of all sects and parties, would be one of the greatest blessings which the legislature could confer.[132]

In the Illustrations of Political Economy tale The Three Ages she considered national education to be the government's most important object and suggested that it be the chief item on its budget. In How to Observe Morals and Manners she said that a society could not be called free unless it could boast of popular education:

> The universality of education is inseparably connected with a lofty idea of liberty; and until the idea is realized in a constantly-expanding system of national education, the education of the less privileged will be distinguishable from the education of the privileged.[133]

Her hopes for public education were still unrealized when she began to write her Daily News leaders, and she used her position as an editorialist to call once again for education, "the birthright of every child born into a civilised society."[134]

In the Daily News Martineau covered the educational spectrum from the schooling of upper class children to the neglect suffered by their poorer counterparts. She described the "operation of the snobbish spirit which is too often the vice and disgrace of English society in our time," in the prestigious public schools--originally intended for "humbler scholars," but become the preserves of the aristocracy and the wealthier members of the middle-class.[135] She privately chided Matthew Arnold for his elitist attitude towards class and education in his report as Inspector of Schools. She publicly mourned the inadequacy of middle-class education especially that of middle-class girls.[136] She criticized the poorly administered Charitable

Trusts which frittered away 'millions' while "tens of thousands of the youth of the nation are growing up in brutal ignorance, through the neglect of the State."[137] She expressed her disappointment in the Ragged Schools--she did not like the discriminating name--because they catered to a "somewhat higher class" than those for which they were intended, and left those most helplessly in need of education still in "the outer darkness of irredeemable ignorance."[138] Most of all she continued to call the churches to account for their neglect of education and for the sectarian rivalry which had frustrated national education for more than half a century since the formation of the National, and the British and Foreign Societies.[139]

Martineau was concerned about curricula and especially about the differentiation between the subjects taught at different levels of society. "Our division of classes, our spirit of caste, is quite broad enough, without being extended into the kingdom of knowledge," she said.[140] She wanted students to learn modern languages in addition to or instead of the traditional classical ones. She made a special plea for the teaching of history, ". . . how we came by our liberties, civil and religious, and how we propose to preserve them." And she believed that all classes should become acquainted with "the implements and employments of everyday life." The upper classes should learn to respect the manual arts and the working classes should learn to master them.[141]

iv

In her Introduction to the History of the Thirty Years' Peace Martineau had observed that a society ought to be judged by the condition of its laboring class. She was painfully aware that in England the vast majority

of that class lived in abject poverty and ignorance, under the most appalling physical conditions, and without representation in the councils of state.[142] Government remained primarily in the hands of an aristocracy which during Crimea had proved its incapacity and, in Martineau's opinion, its moral as well as its functional incompetence.[143] She believed that it had needed the "rude shock of war" to show the country how inefficiently it was being run and she hoped that out of this negative experience reform would come.[144]

> . . . perplexed by our confusions, depressed by executive folly and corruption, and almost hopeless of our getting out of the slough, wiser people are fuller of hope than they have been for many a day. Exposure of evils is a necessary preliminary to reform. It is by our system giving way in its weak parts that we ascertain its strong ones. . . . All the weaknesses of the war . . . lie at the door of Government; while all the success in the field and recent reforms at home are due to the free spirit and action of the popular element for which our constitution affords scope.[145]

Although it paid the largest share of the taxes and had the greatest interest in the social welfare, the bulk of the population was still unrepresented.[146] Members of the ruling minority feared the revolutionary consequences which an extension of the franchise seemed to imply, but it was a fear which Martineau did not share. With a perspicacity which anticipated Walter Bagehot, she pointed out that:

> We are the nation in the world which need least fear that an enlargement of the electoral body will result in the spread of democratic opinion among us. The truth is, we are the most aristocratic people in Christendom, in our inmost feelings and prejudices; and there is no more prospect of our becoming perilously democratic than there was a century or two centuries ago. No doubt there is some good in our conservative tendencies. They preclude the danger of too sudden changes, and give time for education to keep up with the expansion of popular power. . . . There is mischief, and even danger, in setting up an alarm about the extension of the suffrage, when the impediments to our welfare lie in a directly opposite quarter. . . .

The democratic spirit, she continued, was totally wanting in the lower class:

> . . . The whole process is founded on the worship of station, wealth and authority prevalent in the class which is least independent in its political action. Every fresh admission to the franchise is an addition of force to the conservative sentiment of the country. . . . [And] turns out a reinforcement of the principles and old elements of the polity under which we live. . . . The admiration and reverence are quite strong enough to preserve the constitution.[147]

She rebuked the Times for saying that the "multitude" was "virtually represented" by its "rulers and paymasters." And she demanded that all "intelligent" men be given a share in political action.[148] The demeanor of the Lancashire cotton operatives in the 1860s further bolstered her argument. Instead of riot and disorder the unemployed mill-workers were, she believed, by their "quiet patience . . . winning for themselves that political position in their country which it will never be long possible to withold from intelligence and desert proved as theirs is now."[149]

V. The Position of Women

i

Although Martineau was an advocate of franchise reform, and although she believed that the franchise should be extended to women, yet she did not confuse the two issues. Because she knew that the latter would jeopardize the former she preferred to keep the questions separate. Barbara Leigh Smith Bodichon who visited Lucretia Mott in America in the 1850s, told her hostess that in England the advocates of women's rights "only wait to claim the suffrage because it would be useless to try for it now."[150] And thus it

was that on the one hand Martineau asked for the extension of the suffrage to those "intelligent and educated men [my italics] who happen to live elsewhere than in ten-pound houses."[151] On the other hand she claimed that:

> Certain powers as well as rights of citizenship reside in every woman in civilised society; and in proportion to her use of those powers and her exercise of her corresponding duties are her privileges likely to be enlarged, and her wrongs or restrictions redressed.[152]

Martineau believed that the franchise belonged as rightfully to women as it did to men but she did not see the franchise as a panacea. The main difficulties facing English womanhood as she perceived them were educational and economic discrimination, marital subjection, and the duplicity of the social, legal and sexual double standard. She herself had managed to overcome the handicap of her sex educationally and professionally, and undoubtedly her own experience helped to convince her that equality of education and economic opportunity would enable women to achieve social and legal equality and that they would thereby naturally acquire political representation as well. "It seemed to me," she wrote in her Autobiography, "from the earliest time when I could think on the subject of Women's Rights and condition, that the first requisite to advancement is the self-reliance which results from self-discipline. Women who would improve the condition and chances of their sex must, I am certain be . . . rational and dispassionate, with the devotedness of benevolence, and not merely of personal love."[153]

It was a testament to the radicalism of the Martineau household that the young Harriet had grown up with an admiration of Mary Wollstonecraft. But although she owned a "disposition" to honor Wollstonecraft as she did "all promoters of the welfare and improvement of Woman," she did not think those women acceptable advocates of woman's cause who argued out of their

own personal frustrations. It was Martineau's ardent conviction that the advancement of her sex would best be served by those whose pleas were rational rather than emotional, and whose lives exemplified woman's right to equality:

> Nobody can be further than I am from being satisfied with the condition of my own sex, under the law and custom of my own country; but I decline all fellowship and co-operation with women of genius or otherwise favourable position, who injure the cause by their personal tendencies. . . . The best friends of that cause are women who are morally as well as intellectually competent to the most serious business of life, and who must be clearly seen to speak from conviction of the truth, and not from personal unhappiness. The best friends of the cause are the happy wives and the busy, cheerful, satisfied single women, who have no injuries of their own to avenge, and no painful vacuity or mortification to relieve. The best advocates are yet to come, - in the persons of women who are obtaining access to real social business, - the female physicians and other professors in America, the women of business and the female artists of France; and the hospital administrators, the nurses, the educators, and substantially successful authors of our own country. . . . Women, like men, can obtain whatever they show themselves fit for. Let them be educated, - let their powers be cultivated to the extent for which the means are already provided, and all that is wanted or ought to be desired will follow of course. Whatever a woman proves herself able to do, society will be thankful to see her do, - just as if she were a man. . . . The time has not come which certainly will come, when women who are practically concerned in political life will have a voice in making the laws which they have to obey. . . . I have no vote at elections, though I am a tax-paying housekeeper and responsible citizen; and I regard the disability as an absurdity, seeing that I have for a long course of years influenced public affairs to an extent not professed or attempted by many men. But I do not see that I could do much good by personal complaints, which always have some suspicion of reality in them. I think the better way is for us all to learn and to try to the utmost what we can do, and thus to win for ourselves the consideration which alone can secure us rational treatment.[154]

Martineau's argument against "the Wollstonecraft order" was inspired less by prudery than by concern for woman's cause; she felt that the Victorian woman had a sufficiently uphill race to run without adding to it the handicap of moral disapprobation; and she believed that those advocates of woman's rights who inspired such disapprobation were more a hindrance than

an asset to the cause. She did not understand passion herself and had little sympathy for those who allowed it to rule, or overrule their lives.

Still influenced by the habitual optimism which characterized the laissez-fairist, Martineau placed her faith in that natural law which, given half a chance, would enable women to attain their rightful place in society. To achieve this end, the ancient debris of social and economic prejudice had to be cleared away, and Martineau doggedly set herself to the task of publicizing this need. She was confident that the industrialization and the democratization of England would end sex-role discrimination as it "happily" seemed to be ending "much of the peculiar kind of observance which was the most remarkable feature of the chivalrous age."[155] She dismissed as "a mere waste of words" all argument about male and female inate superiority--not even challenging Comte's thesis.[156] Instead she pleaded that all individuals be allowed to be "as good as they are capable of being."[157]

ii

Both sexual differentiation and individual accomplishment had their beginnings in the learning process, and Martineau had been decrying the one and pleading the other ever since her 1822 Monthly Repository article, "On Female Education." She had begged the divisive and illusive question of whether sexual difference influenced mental capacity even then, and had concentrated instead on the importance of education in determining not only female accomplishment but also the lack thereof. "If the soul be early contracted," she had written, "by too great attention to trifles, if it be taught that ignorance is to be its portion, no later endeavours will be of any avail to ennoble it."[158] It was the same argument which Mary

Wollstonecraft had used in A Vindication of the Rights of Woman in 1792, and yet at mid-century, when Martineau assumed her editorial position, the plea remained unacknowledged. Male educators, like Matthew Arnold, were more inclined to shrug off the question of women's education than to attack it, ". . . the matter," Arnold told Martineau, "is as yet too obscure to me, for me to try and grapple with it."[159]

The question of education in nineteenth-century England was divided along class lines. In the lower strata of society the illiteracy of both sexes was the chief concern of educators. The poor did not have the leisure for anything more sophisticated than the rudiments of knowledge, and there was, in any case, little sex-role discrimination in that element of the population which was forced, irrespective of gender, to work for a bare subsistence from its youngest days. Therefore when Martineau wrote about a secondary-type of education for working-class females she meant adult education and not high schools. She asked for working women's colleges along the lines of the Mechanics Institutes where the object would be "not to afford technical teaching, but rather to enlighten and elevate the whole mind, and thus to raise the students to a higher rank not only of occupation, but of intelligence and character."[160]

Sex-discrimination in education occurred, in England, mainly in that rank of society which could afford to be educated. As J. F. C. Harrison has pointed out in Learning and Living, the women's education movement was inextricably bound with the question of middle class education as a whole, and was synonymous with secondary education.[161] When Martineau wrote about the inequality of girls' education she was therefore addressing herself specifically to the education of girls of her own class. In an unpublished

manuscript written at the time of the School's Inquiry Commission in the early sixties, she was still complaining, as she had been some forty years earlier, that middle-class parents labored under the supposition that "girls must somehow learn to read and write, and to practice [sic] whatever accomplishment may be the fashion of the time." Beyond this general commitment, few were prepared to go. The middle-class, emulating the nobility, were training their daughters to idleness. "Ladies' Seminaries" were a by word "for false pretension, vulgarity and cant;" governesses were generally inadequately taught themselves; and according to the findings of the Schools Commission the number of girls attending Grammar Schools was one tenth that of boys.[162]

Martineau blamed well-to-do parents who sent their sons to the public schools and the Universities but who refused their daughters similar advantages. Queen's College in Harley Street and Ladies' College in Bedford Square had been founded in 1848 and 1849, and Martineau had great hopes of the "new order of superior female teachers - issuing from these colleges to sustain their high credit and open the way to a general elevation of female education."[163] But the majority of middle-class parents did not send their daughters to one or other of these new institutions of female learning, and the number of educators which the two colleges supplied was small. Most girls were still educated by those who were wholly unqualified to teach, and if taught at all were generally given a curriculum which differed dramatically from that of their brothers. Martineau had always pleaded for equality in, as well as of, education. If boys were taught mathematics and the classics to "improve the quality of the mind," then girls ought also to be

so taught. In Household Education Martineau had tried to counter the old argument that education distracted women from their house-wifely chores:

> Men do not attend the less to their professional business, their counting-house or their shop, for having their minds enlarged and enriched, and their faculties strengthened by sound and various knowledge; nor do women on that account neglect the work-basket, the market, the dairy and the kitchen.[164]

Indeed, Martineau never denied that housekeeping was a woman's duty; this aspect of sex-role differentiation was unquestioned then by even the most ardent feminists.[165] Mary Wollstonecraft, in Thoughts on the Education of Daughters (1787), had used an almost identical argument:

> No employment of the mind is a sufficient excuse for neglecting domestic duties, and I cannot conceive that they are incompatible. A woman may fit herself to be the companion and friend of a man of sense, and yet know how to take care of his family.[166]

Martineau realized that in asking for equality of education while at the same time accepting their domestic responsibilities women were facing a problem which could not be easily resolved:

> Boys have two things to divide their days between, - study and play. Girls have three, - study, the domestic arts and play. At boarding-school the domestic training is dropped out of the life altogether: and a home life without any school at all nullifies study. Here is the dilemma.[167]

She did not think that domestic work--in an age when most women still made and mended the clothes of a household, and pickled and preserved and baked--should be sacrificed by the intellectual woman; nor did she want to see girls thrust perforce into lives of narrow domesticity and deprived of the instruction their brothers received. It was a dilemma she was unable to resolve.

iii

Martineau believed that the industrial age was drawing more and more women of all ranks into employment, and she noted that women of the middle-class were particularly ill-prepared to support themselves. Without fully understanding the dynamic changes occurring within the family structure, Martineau perceived the effects on domestic life of the new capitalist society. The concept of the extended, self-sufficient family was breaking-down, and while sons of the middle-class were trained to become breadwinners independent of the family, unmarried daughters, who could no longer rely on the family for a maintenance, were vouchsafed no training at all. Domestic instruction without intellectual studies was therefore not merely a question of mental confinement but also of practical importance.

Martineau appreciated that while the myth of female dependency persisted the reality was slowly changing. She had personally welcomed the opportunity which the impoverishment of her own family in 1829 had given her. But for that financial set-back, she acknowledged, she and her sisters might have:

> . . . lived on in the ordinary provincial method of ladies with small means, sewing, and economizing, and growing narrower every year: whereas being thrown, while it was yet time, on our own resources, we have worked hard and usefully, won friends, reputation and independence, seen the world abundantly, abroad and at home, and, in short, have truly lived instead of vegetated.[168]

In spite of her mother's initial insistence that Harriet augment her meagre income by sewing, she had from the start received encouragement in her writing. "Now dear," her oldest brother Thomas had said when he read her first article, "Female Writers on Practical Divinity," in 1821, "leave it to other women to make shirts and darn stockings; and do you devote yourself to

this."[169] Before need made self-sustenance imperative, Martineau's literary ambitions had therefore received positive reinforcement from her family. But the Martineau family was radical, and its attitude was by no means usual. In 1838, the then Poet Laureate Robert Southey had told Charlotte Brontë, "Literature cannot be the business of a woman's life, and ought not to be. The more she is engaged in her proper duties the less leisure will she have for it, even as an accomplishment and recreation."[170] Even Mrs. Jameson had expostulated in the same vein, "All this business of <u>woman's work</u> seems to me in a strange state and out of joint. They cannot and will not do their own work, and they want to do other people's."[171] "Mrs. Jameson" Henry Crabb Robinson commented in his Diary of May 1838:

> . . . disapproves of Miss Martineau's notion about the sex and their rights - She [Mrs. Jameson] says and it is conclusive - to bear children is the great privilege of women - They must forego that or decline public duties - for the most important part of their life during three quarters of the year they are incapacitated by their condition as wives or duties as mothers from public life, and to be married is the natural condition of women. If they remain single their character is soured and injured.[172]

Florence Nightingale, though admittedly "brutally indifferent to the wrongs or the rights of my sex," opposed the "unnecessary division of men's and women's work."[173] And though Martineau was far from indifferent to "the wrongs and rights" of her sex, she, like Nightingale, opposed job discrimination. She believed that improvement of the social and legal position of women would come only when women's labor was recognized and encouraged, and when members of the sex were no longer regarded as perpetual dependents.[174] She noted the development of a resentment "at the disturbance of our hereditary notions of the dependence and amiable helplessness of women," not only among men, but also among women brought up with "aristocratic

prejudices."[175] The fact was, however, that more and more women were forced by circumstances to earn their own keep. They were paid less than men for "the same kind and degree of work," and they were kept out of certain skilled employments by prejudice and "ancient jealousy." It was time, she said, for the principle of free trade to be applied to the labor market, and for careers to be open to members of the labor force according to ability and regardless of sex:

> But [she warned] if the natural laws of society are not permitted free play among us, we may look for more beating of wives and selling of orphans into perdition; and more sacrifice of women to brutal and degrading employments, precisely in proportion to their exclusion from such as befit their social position and natural abilities.[176]

Martineau peppered the pages of the Daily News with her pleas for governesses, seamstresses, domestic servants, nurses and female doctors--she personally petitioned Parliament in 1870 to admit women into the medical profession on terms of equality.[177] Her pleas for working-class women were as strong as was her support for the working women in her own level of society. Her American tour had taken her to Lowell Massachusetts where she had been impressed by the accommodations provided by the manufacturers for their female operatives. In spite of her anti-paternalism and her laissez-fairest philosophy notwithstanding, she was so depressed by the degrading working and living conditions of women of the working class in her own country, that she strayed far enough from her principles to endorse a concept of legally provided and supervised accommodation for working women, admitting all the while that, "There is much evil in all such interference of law with private arrangements; but, till we have outgrown the necessity, we ought to permit the interference most willingly where it is most wanted."[178] But she still

opposed outright charity even to the destitute, and would admit relief only of the most temporary nature. She saw the role of the Governesses' Benevolent Association and of the Society for Promoting the Employment of Women as one which would help train women; find jobs for them; and encourage them to help themselves. "The only effectual rescue for this multitude of women is in putting the case into their own hands by fitting them for secure and honourable work, and in preparing the way for as many as become qualified."[179]

Martineau's "On Female Industry," in the Edinburgh Review of 1859, was a classic restatement of her views on women in employment.[180] She hammered again at the need to recognize that a majority of Englishwomen either contributed to, or independently provided their own support. Using the figures of the census of 1851, she pointed out that of the six million women of working age in England, two million wholly supported themselves and another three million did work of some kind. The vast majority were underpaid and exploited. They worked mainly in domestic service and in the factories and sweated trades but they were paid less than their male counterparts even when they performed the same tasks and worked the same hours. She wanted to see women paid like men, and included in those professions and crafts--from medicine to watchmaking--which traditionally excluded them. It should be noted, however, that she was inconsistently pleased to see that women were no longer permitted to work the coal-pits!

In spite of the dismal picture which female labor and opportunity presented in nineteenth-century England, Martineau did not permit her optimism to entirely desert her. She believed that industrialization would in the end liberate women; relieve them from the drudgery of having to produce all

their own needs; and enable them to occupy those positions which they were entitled to share with men. For were there not women like Florence Nightingale, Mary Carpenter and Mrs. Somerville--as well as Martineau herself--who had already proved "that the field of action is open to women as well as men?"[181]

iv

Meanwhile, however, it was primarily the working-class and the less endowed middle-class women who had earned the somewhat dubious privilege of supporting themselves. Work was still considered _déclassé_ by most members of the middle- and upper-classes where marriage continued to be the young girl's only avowed vocation. It was solely in relationship to men that most such women continued to see themselves. They were both by law and custom perpetual minors, and as industrialization simplified their housekeeping task, even their role at home became more secondary and undemanding. Some few exceptional men and women like Josephine and George Butler, for example, achieved a marital partnership, but most men and women did not. Wives believed that they owed their husbands obedience and even Queen Victoria humbled herself as a wife.

The nineteenth-century woman's subjection in marriage was reinforced by the law of the land. When they married, women surrendered even their own property to their husbands; they were unable to claim title to their earnings; they could not give evidence against their husbands even in cases of brutality; they were not permitted to petition for divorce or even to defend themselves if their husbands brought suit to divorce them; and once divorced, they lost all--even visiting--rights to their children. Martineau

had long been a vigorous opponent of this legal double standard. She drew attention to the inequities of the law, and over the years commented on its gradual amelioration. In the History she applauded Lord Brougham's efforts on behalf of women in the Infant's Custody Act of 1839--"the first blow struck at the oppression of English legislation in relation to women."[182] And in the Daily News she persistently sniped at divorce law inequities which made divorce impossible for the poor of both sexes, illegal for women in all ranks of society, and which assumed as a matter of course "that the sin of conjugal infidelity is immeasurably greater in the wife than the husband."[183] When Barbara Leigh Smith Bodichon petitioned Parliament in 1856 to alter the marriage law, Martineau was naturally one of the signatories--along with, among other notables, George Eliot, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Jane Welsh Carlyle, Elizabeth Reid and Elizabeth Gaskell.[184] Martineau simultaneously supported the campaign by drawing attention to police-biotter reports of "wife-beating"--a new term, she noted which illustrated "the present prevalence of ill-usage of wives." And by noting "the unprotected condition of women under the law of England, and . . . the liability of women to have their property wasted by their husbands and their earnings appropriated by him. . . ." The Marriage Law Amendment of 1857 went only a little way towards protecting the rights of wives. It replaced the cumbersome legislative divorce procedure and instead established a Divorce Court. In cases of gross abuse, it permitted women the right, not to divorce their husbands, but to seek a legal separation from them. The amendment was only a small step in the right direction, but Martineau was one of the women who made that small step possible, and though pleased, she was far from

complacent about the result: it left "some things to be peremptorily desired," she said.[185]

V

Martineau did not analyze marriage as systematically as Engels was to do in The Origin of the Family (1884), but she arrived at a remarkably similar conclusion about the materialism of bourgeois marriage. As she observed it in her own society, the union between husband and wife was inspired primarily by economic considerations:

> . . . the necessity of thinking of a maintenance before thinking of a wife has led to requiring a certain style of living before taking a wife; and then, alas! to taking a wife for the sake of securing a certain style of living.[186]

She described such loveless, mercenary matches as "legal prostitution."[187] And she appreciated that "if men and women marry those they do not love, they must love those whom they do not marry."[188]

> In a society where pride and ostentation prevail, where rank and wealth are regarded as prime objects of pursuit, marriage comes to be regarded as a means of obtaining these. Wives are selected for their connexions and their fortunes, and the love is placed elsewhere [my italics].[189]

Martineau did not condone marital infidelity but she understood its causes. She appreciated that a double-standard existed which winked at a husband's indiscretions while at the same time it imposed a false chastity on the wife--even within the marriage. But she understood the dangers implicit in the assumption of asceticism: "Wherever artificial restraints are imposed on the passions," she wrote, " . . . there must be licentiousness precisely proportioned to the severity of the restraint:[190]

> . . . though the virtue of chastity cannot be overrated, it has, for low purposes, been made so prominent as to interfere with

> others quite as important: . . . thus a large proportion of the girlhood of England is plunged into sin and shame, and then excluded from justice and mercy.[191]

Because she thought of prostitution as the effect of society's distorted values, Martineau was disinclined either to judge or blame the prostitute. She saw prostitutes as the victims of a system which encouraged the loveless marriage, which insisted on false female chastity in the upper ranks of the society, and which placed women in an inferior position: "If women were not helpless, men would find it far less easy to be vicious," she said, " . . . the inferior condition of women has ever exposed those of them who were not protected by birth and wealth to the profligacy of men."[192] She did not condemn those who chose prostitution over unemployment or exploitation, and she typically did not hesitate to express sentiments unusually liberal and candid in one of her sex, rank and period.

Parliament began considering its first Contagious Diseases Bill in 1864. The Bill was designed to protect men in the armed forces from contracting venereal disease. It proposed that in the garrison towns and ports women who were suspected prostitutes be summarily arrested, detained and examined. They were not permitted legal defense; no proof of prostitution was required; no man was called upon to testify against them; and no appeal was permitted. Martineau immediately grasped the wider implications of the proposed legislation and in the Daily News of July 2, 1864, she fired the first shot in the Contagious Diseases campaign. She realized that the rights of all female citizens were being threatened; that the innocent would be subjected to the same inequities as the 'guilty'; and that no woman would be legally protected under this proposed new law. Doing her duty, as always, Martineau apologized for the awkwardness of the subject, but went

on: "The awkwardness and difficulty, however, are no justification to journalists for permitting the slightest risk of bad legislation which they may preclude by timely warning."[193]

The Bill was passed in spite of Martineau's brave protest and as it applied only to the garrison towns it made but a small stir, and aroused only minor opposition. However, in 1869, legislation was introduced to widen the scope of the Contagious Diseases Act to include the rest of the country, and Martineau was once again in the vanguard of the opposition. Ill-health had forced her retirement from the Daily News three years earlier but Martineau's fidelity to duty would not permit her voice to rest when her conscience was roused. The subject still outraged her modesty. "It was sickening to think of such work," she told Maria Weston Chapman, "but who should do it if not an old woman, dying and in seclusion."[194] On December 28, 1869, she wrote a letter to the Daily News. She complained that in order to safeguard men "from the worst consequences of their own licence," Englishwomen would be forced "to undergo the outrage and heart-break . . . of personal violation under sanction of law and the agency of the police."[195] In a second letter to the Daily News published the next day, she went on in the same vein:

> Up to the date and the passage of these Bills every woman in the country had the same rights as men over her own person. . . . Now it is so no longer. Any woman of whom a policeman swears that he has reason to believe that she is a prostitute is helpless in the hands of the administrators of the new law. She is subject to the extemity of outrage . . . for the protection of the sex which is the cause of the sin.[196]

She did not deny that the disease should be contained, but she feared that the proposed method of containment would endanger personal rights. "We cannot, will not, must not, surrender any of the personal liberty which is our

birthright."[197] In all Martineau wrote three letters; they appeared in the Daily News on December 28, 29, 30, 1869. On the 31st the News published a letter from the Ladies' National Association for the repeal of the Contagious Diseases Acts. It was signed by one hundred and twenty-eight women including, among others, Florence Nightingale, Josephine Butler and Jessie Boucherette: Harriet Martineau's name headed the list.[198] It was Harriet Martineau, Josephine Butler acknowledged in her Reminiscences of a Great Crusade, who 'fired the first round' of the campaign.[199]

In spite of her infirmity Martineau continued to make contributions to the Cause. She presented the Ladies' Association with fancy-work so that they could raise money, "the very lowest method of assisting the movement," but adopted because her "state of health" precluded a more vigorous participation. She wrote addresses for pamphlets and posters when repealers ran in elections in Colchester and North Nottinghamshire. She added her name to petitions. She supported Josephine Butler's National Association for the Promotion of Social Purity which aimed to elevate the morale of the society in general by elevating the morality of its male members.[200] She had by now become almost a legendary symbol of the feminist cause and she was asked to lend her aid to other branches of the feminist struggle. She supported the Woman's Suffrage Society. She encouraged the struggle to enable the qualification of women doctors. She was asked to write an address by the Women's Peace Society in 1873.[201] Her name was placed on the executive committee of the Social Science Congress.[202] And women in the University Extension movement, educators in the colleges, and the new female professionals in journalism acknowledged her influence and kept her abreast of their progress in the field in which she had labored so long.[203]

Meanwhile, the agitation to repeal the Contagious Diseases Acts had proved effective. In the 1871 bye-election at Colchester the Liberals lost their seat. The party was forced to revise its attitude toward the Acts, and Gladstone initiated a Royal Commission to examine the question. When the Commission voted thirteen to six for amendment, the repealers were jubilant, and none more so than Harriet Martineau:

> We never could have dreamed of such a victory. As victory no matter. But what a prospect is opened for the whole sex in Old England! For the stronger and safer sort of woman will be elevated in proportion as the helpless or exposed are protected.[204]

In seeking the protection of their sex, the women of England had acquired a greater national stature. No one was more aware of this than Martineau, and no one had surely done more towards its achievement. "You have done more than anyone else, I really believe," wrote Sir John Richard Robinson, manager of the Daily News, "to defeat the plans of the military."[205] But with her characteristic honesty, Martineau pencilled the margin of Robinson's letter with the single comment "No, Mrs. Butler." As it happened, the Amendment to the Contagious Diseases Acts was not passed before the end of the Parliamentary session and it was subsequently dropped. The last of the Contagious Diseases Acts was not repealed until 1886, fully a decade after Harriet Martineau's death.

VI

In the journalism of the years 1852 to 1866 Harriet Martineau considered a diversity of subjects. She wrote about everything from Post-famine Ireland to the tyranny of the crinoline; she touched the nation's conscience

on matters ranging from prison reform to sanitation and working-class housing; she discussed every aspect of government from foreign affairs to domestic politics.[206] Her main concern was always the welfare of the people. Her influence was chiefly extended in support of the minorities and the oppressed: the poor, the Irish, the colonial natives, the American slaves, the women, and the children. She opposed those things which denied natural liberty: the negation of individual rights, monopolies in the economy, oligarchies in government, authoritarianism in the religious establishment, social prejudice, and sexual inequity. Generally humane and almost always in advance of public opinion, her advice too often fell on stony ground. Nevertheless her influence for good or ill was far from negligible: she stirred the new feminists of the mid-nineteenth century with her views on employment and with her opposition to the Contagious Diseases Acts; she helped keep public opinion on the side of the north in the American Civil War; she fanned the flames of war at the time of Crimea; she insistently drew attention to the inadequacy of national education, and to the plight of the unemployed, the exploited, and the unrepresented. In her way, and according to her lights she played the part of a national conscience.

As far as its commercial policies were concerned, England had become a free trading nation by the 1860s. Most of the old monopolies and restrictions which had been the burden of Martineau's complaint in the Illustrations of Political Economy had been gradually eliminated, and without any significant competitors, the British were now freely buying as cheap and selling as dear as the world market would allow. But on the domestic front the laissez-faire principle had faltered, and even Martineau had finally come to appreciate its limitations. The rigidity of her early

laissez-fairism gave way in the later years to a more pragmatic approach to administrative problems, and in the end she was closer to Chadwick and the Utilitarians than to Adam Smith and the stricter laissez-fairists.[207] Her accommodation was no less than the accommodation of the age. In the world of nineteenth-century industrial England, laissez-faire and its antithesis, socialization, were making corresponding strides. As G. M. Young phrased it, "an individualistic society was unobtrusively schooled in the ways of State control:" the repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846 was followed, as we have noted, by the Factory Act of the following year.[208] The industrialization which spawned the individualist principle also nurtured conditions which necessitated an increased government role. Laissez-faire was based on a faith in the best instincts of the individual; socialization was an acknowledgement that the worst and most selfish instincts usually prevailed.

Martineau did not entirely relinquish the belief that through the free and individual actions of an enlightened citizenry would eventually come the greatest happiness of the greatest number, but she was at last forced to acknowledge that the time had not yet come. She backed away from her opposition to government interference so far as to make the admission that "we in England cannot now stop short of 'a modified communism,'" and she anticipated radical social change which would begin with a "deep modification of the institution of Property."[209] However, despite these sentiments, we should not be misled into believing that she either expected or recommended the establishment of national communism for she did not believe in a despotic levelling of society. "To us it seems to be far more easy to sustain all the despotisms that exist than to establish a new one of this kind."

Her concession was not to Socialism but to socialization and co-operation: "gradually, virtuously, peaceably and safely."[210] She still shied away from socialist and paternalist ideologies and when Robert Owen died in 1858 she described him with far more sympathy than she had earlier, but cautioned that "his method of organization . . . might be turned to excellent purpose by an arbitrary government."[211] She had too long and too inbred a dislike of government as she knew it to entrust it with an over-abundance of power, but she had come to realize that the public welfare could not always be safely consigned to individual hands. Co-operation had to be substituted for the competitive principle, and government supervision for laissez-faire.[212]

Martineau, a former apostle of progress and an individualist idealogue had become disillusioned. She still had hopes of the industrial age but her optimism was now tempered by the realization that it was not the best of all possible worlds. Although she had hoped that it could be so, she was forced at the end of her long literary career to relinquish her utopian expectations and to admit that, "The elder generation among us have [sic] proved to be as short-sighted as other mortals."[213]

FOOTNOTES

[1] Autobiography, I, 2; II, 424, 430, 431; Maria Martineau to Arthur Allen, July 20 [1855], Yale MS. Vault File 15/4.

[2] The British Medical Journal, 2 (July 8, 1876), 64.

[3] Ibid., 2 (July 8, 1876), 64; (April 14, 1877), 449-450; (April 21, 1877), 496; (May 5, 1877), 545.

[4] Harriet Martineau to John Chapman, Sept. 16, 1855, Bodleian, MS. Eng. Lett. d2 186.

[5] Florence Fenwick Miller, Harriet Martineau (London: W. H. Allen, 1884), p. 131, Harriet Martineau to Henry Atkinson, July 6, 1874.

[6] She still professed to believe in mesmerism: Harriet Martineau to Mary Carpenter, April 17, 1866 (copy), Brougham Papers, Univ. Coll.; Garnett, Fox, p. 310.

[7] Harriet Martineau to George Jacob Holyoake, Feb. 15 [?1855], B. Museum, Add. MS. 42726/14. In the same letter she suggested composing a secularist burial service. See also George Jacob Holyoake to Harriet Martineau [n.d.], B. Museum, Add. MS. 42726/15.

[8] Letters on the Laws of Man's Nature and Development, pp. 143, 168, 190; Autobiography, II, 438; III, 454, Harriet Martineau's last letter to Henry Atkinson, May 19, 1876; III, 450, Harriet Martineau to Maria Weston Chapman, Jan. 25, 1876.

[9] Harriet Martineau to Mrs. Frederick Knight Hunt, Feb. 15 [1855], BU Lib.; Autobiography,III, 2-3, Harriet Martineau to Maria Weston Chapman, Jan. 24, 1855.

[10] See for example Erik Erikson, Childhood and Society, ed. cit., pp. 268-269.

[11] Harriet Martineau to Philip Carpenter, Feb. 11 [1855], M. Coll.

[12] Harriet Martineau to George Jacob Holyoake, Feb. 15 [1855], B. Museum, Add. MS. 42726/14. Holyoake suggested that Francis W. Newman would be the best person to complete the Autobiography if Martineau did not live to do so, B. Museum, Add. MS. 42726/14 [n.d.], Harriet Martineau to Philip Carpenter, Jan. 11, 1856, M. Coll.

[13] For an additional comment on the Autobiography see A Note on Sources.

[14] Autobiography, I, 375.

[15]John Chapman to Harriet Martineau, Sept. 27, 1855, BU Lib. 189; Harriet Martineau to John Chapman, Sept. 16, 1855, Bodleian, MS. Eng. Lett. d2 187; Milnes to Harriet Martineau, [1855], BU Lib. 693; Harriet Martineau to Milnes, April 20, Sept. 5, Nov. 21 [1855], Trinity Coll.; Thomas Martineau (Harriet's nephew and executor, the son of Robert) to Milnes, Oct. 12, 1876, Trinity Coll.

[16]Charles Dickens to Harriet Martineau, April 19, 1853, BU Lib. 279.

[17]Haight, George Eliot Letters, I, xliv.

[18]Harriet Martineau to John Chapman, Sept. 16, 1855, Bodleian, MS. Eng. Lett. d2 188.

[19]John Chapman to Harriet Martineau, Sept. 13, 1855, BU Lib. 189; Haight, George Eliot and John Chapman, 75 ff.; Autobiography, II, 425.

[20]Drummond, James Martineau, I, 269; Autobiography, III, 394; Haight, George Eliot and John Chapman, p. 76.

[21]John Chapman to Harriet Martineau, Nov. 6, 1855; Jan. 6, 1856, BU Lib. 193 and 199; Haight, George Eliot Letters, II, 225-226, George Eliot to Sara Hennell, Jan. 18, 1856.

[22]Harriet Martineau to George Grote, Apr. 2, 1858, BU Lib. 385; Samuel Courtauld to George Grote, June 7, 1858 (copy), BU Lib. 392; John Chapman to Harriet Martineau, July 29, 1858; Aug. 8, 1858 (copy) BU Lib. 236 and 204; Maria Martineau to John Chapman, July 31, 1858, BU Lib. 237; Harriet Martineau to John Chapman, June 1, 1858 (copy), July 4, 1858, BU Lib. 222, 230; Harriet Martineau to John Chapman, July 16, 1858, Aug. 6, 1858, Bodleian, MS. Eng. Lett. d2 230, 232, 235; Undated note in Harriet Martineau's hand, BU Lib. 242.

[23]Haight, George Eliot Letters, II, 490, George Eliot to Charles Bray, Oct. 13 [1858].

[24]Autobiography, II, 417-423; Harriet Martineau to W. H. Wills, Sept. 26 [1855], (copy), BU Lib. 1025.

[25]Her correspondence with Samuel Lucas of Once a Week, 1859-1864, BU Lib. 596-610. For her association with the Anti-Slavery Standard see Autobriography, III, 369 ff.

[26]See the Harriet Martineau-Henry Reeve letters, 1858-1863, BU Lib. 725-730; and John Knox Laughton, ed., Memoirs of the Life and Correspondence of Henry Reeve, 2 vols. (London and New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1898), I, 396; II, 87, 107.

[27]Autobiography, III, 3, Harriet Martineau to Maria Weston Chapman, Jan. 24, 1855.

[28]Harriet Martineau to Frederick Knight Hunt, Apr. 28 [?1853], BU Lib. 492.

[29]Harriet Martineau to William Lloyd Garrison, Nov. 1 [?1853], Boston P. Lib. MS. A. 1.2. vol. 21, p. 116; Autobiography, III, 342-343.

[30]Harriet Martineau to Philip Carpenter, Nov. 23 [1854], M. Coll.; Autobiography, II, 429; III, 337 ff., 422 ff.; Harriet Martineau to William Weir (ed. DN 1854-1858), BU Lib. 937-969; Harriet Martineau to Thomas Walker (ed. DN 1858-1866), BU Lib. 926-931; Harriet Martineau to Sir John Richard Robinson (Manager DN 1868-1901), BU Lib. 736-740. Weir described Martineau as " . . . no Miss Martineau, but a benevolent, indefatigable fairy, who knows instinctively what is wanted, and how it should be done." Quoted Autobiography, III, 340. Robinson prepared her DN obituaries for publication in 1869 as Biographical Sketches. Autobiography, III, 425.

[31]Autobiography, III, 343. And see an unpublished list of most of Martineau's articles compiled by R. K. Webb in the Library of Congress, Boston P. Lib., B. Museum Newspaper Lib.

[32]Harriet Martineau to [Philip Carpenter], Sept. 29, 1856, M. Coll.

[33]Testifying to her continued interest in the world: Maria Martineau to Arthur Allen, Dec. 26 [1856], Yale MS. Vault File 15/4; Jane Martineau to Holyoake [misdated 1876], B. Museum 42726/27; Thomas Sadler, ed. Diary Reminiscences and Correspondence of Henry Crabb Robinson, 3 vols. (London: Macmillan, 1869), III, 449, Henry Crabb Robinson to Thomas Robinson, Oct. 1, 1856.

[34]Harriet Martineau to Frederick K. Hunt, June 25 [?1853], BU Lib. 492; Autobiography, II, 405-406.

[35]Harriet Martineau to Rowland Hill [1853], B. Museum, Add. MS. 31978/290, 294, 296.

[36]Harriet Martineau to James Martineau, Oct. 23, 1823, Transcript Letters, M. Coll.

[37]History, I, 317.

[38]Ibid., I, 268.

[39]Autobiography, I, 236-237.

[40]Ibid., I, 414, III, 213.

[41]Ibid., II, 450-452, letter to an American friend, Oct. 1, 1849.

[42]History, II, 368.

[43]DN, Nov. 19, 1852.

[44]DN, June 15, July 13, July 20, 1853.

[45]DN, Oct. 8, 1853; Feb. 24, 1854.

[46]DN, Nov. 27, 1854; Harriet Martineau to Frederick Knight Hunt [?1854], BU Lib. 484; "England's Foreign Policy," WR, n.s. 7 (Jan., 1854); and see John Howes Gleason, The Genesis of Russophobia in Great Britain: A Study of the Interaction of Policy and Opinion (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1950).

[47]DN, Nov. 18, Dec. 27, 1854; Anti-Slavery Standard, June 18, 1859; "The Factory Controversy," p. 5. However, she regreted that Bright and Gibson, "the brave men of the League," had been lost to Manchester as M.Ps on account of their pacifism.

[48]DN, Dec. 19, 1853.

[49]DN, Jan. 28, 1854, letters signed, "One who remembers George the Third."

[50]DN, Oct. 20, 1853; Nov. 30, 1854.

[51]Harriet Martineau to Milnes, July 1 [?1854], Trinity Coll.

[52]DN, Jan. 2, 1854.

[53]DN, Jan. 20, 1854.

[54]DN, Nov. 2, 1854; May 24, 1855.

[55]DN, Dec. 18, 1855; Jan. 22, 1856; "Lord Herbert of Lea," and "The Duke of Newcastle," in Biographical Sketches. For her voluminous correspondence with Florence Nightingale see B. Museum Add. Ms. 45788. And on the subject of army reform see also George Smith to Harriet Martineau, Jan. 18, 1859, BU Lib. 813; Harriet Martineau to George Smith Jan. 19, 1859, BU Lib. 814.

[56]DN, Dec. 6, 1855.

[57]Olive Anderson, A Liberal State at War (London: Macmillan, 1967).

[58]DN, May 6, Dec. 31, 1859; Anti-Slavery Standard, June 18, Dec. 17, 1859.

[59]DN, June 24, 1852; Anti-Slavery Standard, June 25, July 9, Aug. 20, 1859; Autobiography, III, 410-413, Harriet Martineau to Maria Weston Chapman, July 22, 1862; Miller, Harriet Martineau, 201-203, Harriet Martineau to Atkinson, Oct. 18, 1870.

[60]DN, Aug. 3, 1854.

[61]DN, July 29, Aug. 29, Oct. 2, Oct. 7, 1854; April 8, 1856.

[62]DN, Jan. 3, 1853.

[63]She still recommended emigration, see her DN leaders May 10, 15, 21, 31, June 5, 8, 1852, etc. But she did express the fear that the emigration of too many skilled workers might be detrimental to the English economy, June 28, 1853.

[64]British Rule in India; a Historical Sketch (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1857), 321 ff.

[65]History, I, 311.

[66]DN, Jan. 3, 1853; History, I, 371-372.

[67]She remained in close contact with the Lambtons even after the death of Lord Durham in 1840. Members of the family visited her at Ambleside in 1866.

[68]How to Observe Morals and Manners, pp. 179-180.

[69]History, II, 377, 382-390, 661.

[70]"The Year 1865," MS., BU Lib. 1404.

[71]British Rule in India, p. 333; DN, May 12, June 7, 1853.

[72]See Eric Stokes, The English Utilitarians in India (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), pp. 27, 35-36, 57, 63-69, 242, 251-252, 255-256, 298, 320-321.

[73]British Rule in India, ed. cit.; Suggestions Towards the Future Government of India (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1858); and see Harriet Martineau to Holyoake, Dec. 27, 1857, B. Museum, Add. MS. 42726/24.

[74]British Rule in India, pp. 124-135, 173, 178; Autobiography, III, 350-353.

[75]British Rule in India, pp. 124-135, 173-178, 180-183, 287, 296, 297.

[76]Ibid., 337, 338.

[77]DN, Feb. 1, 1858.

[78]DN, Nov. 2, 1857.

[79]DN, Aug. 27, Sept. 12, 1857; British Rule in India, pp. 187, 341.

[80]DN, Feb. 19, Feb. 22, Feb. 26, March 8, March 13, March 26, Dec. 31, 1858; July 30, 1860.

[81] DN, Apr. 19, 1861. And for the Indianization of the India Army officer corps see DN, July 28, 1857.

[82] Miller, Harriet Martineau, quoted p. 100. Martineau commended Forster's understanding of and efforts in behalf of the American question, DN, Nov. 27, 1862. She also paid tribute to the efforts of Thomas Walker, ed. DN, Harriet Martineau to W. L. Garrison, July 7, 1867, Boston P. Lib. MS. A. 1. 2. vol. 35, p. 72A.

[83] Harriet Martineau to [Philip Carpenter], July 7 [?1856], M. Coll.

[84] Harriet Martineau to W. L. Garrison, Feb. 16, 1859 (possibly a copy) M. Coll.; and see her comment in the Anti-Slavery Standard, June 25, 1859 about the incongruity of permitting slavery in a democratic republic.

[85] DN, Oct. 20, 1852.

[86] A History of the American Compromises, rpt. from DN (London: Chapman, 1856), p. 6.

[87] Ibid., pp. 31-32; and see "The United States under the Presidentship of Mr. Buchanan," ER, 112 (Oct., 1860), 278-297, p. 295.

[88] A History of the American Compromises, pp. 26 ff.

[89] DN, June 18, 1857.

[90] "The United States under the Presidentship of Mr. Buchanan," p. 288.

[91] Kraditor, Means and Ends in American Abolitionism, ed. cit., p. 215.

[92] A History of the American Compromises, pp. 19-20; Anti-Slavery Standard, June 1, 1861; DN, Jan. 23, Feb. 2, Sept. 18, 1856; Autobiography, III, 245, Harriet Martineau to Mrs. Henry G. Chapman, March 15, 1845.

[93] The 'Manifest Destiny' of the American Union, (WR, July 1857, rpt. New York: American Anti-Slavery Society, 1857), pp. 25, 38, 44-45, 53.

[94] Ibid., p. 64.

[95] DN, May 16, 1861.

[96] DN, Nov. 2, Nov. 9, 1859; Jan. 3, 1860; "The United States under the Presidentship of Mr. Buchanan," p. 292; Autobiography, III, 376.

[97] DN, Jan. 29, Feb. 23, 1861.

[98] Anti-Slavery Standard, June 1, 1861; DN, July 20, Oct. 11, 1861; Autobiography, III, 403.

[99] Harriet Martineau to Milnes, May 9, 1962, Trinity Coll.

[100]DN, May 14, Nov. 22, 1860; March 4, Dec. 31, 1861; "The United States under the Presidentship of Mr. Buchanan," p. 296.

[101]DN, Dec. 21, 1861; Feb. 15, March 1, March 23, March 28, 1862; Anti-Slavery Standard, April 13, 1861; "The Negro Race in America," ER, 119 (Jan., 1864), 102-123, p. 113; Harriet Martineau to W. L. Garrison, Aug. 10, 1864, Boston P. Lib. MS. A. 1. 2. vol. 33, p. 77A.

[102]"The Negro Race in America," pp. 110, 113, 118.

[103]Anti-Slavery Standard, April 13, June 29, Aug. 3, Oct. 5, 1861; Autobiography, III, 386; 406-407, Harriet Martineau to M. W. Chapman, Oct. 31, 1861.

[104]Anti-Slavery Standard, Dec. 28, 1861.

[105]DN, Jan. 14, 1862.

[106]DN, Sept. 18, Sept. 24, 1856; Aug. 30, 1862; Anti-Slavery Standard, Aug. 20, 1859; Harriet Martineau to [Philip Carpenter], Sept. 19, 1856, M. Coll.; Autobiography, III, 410, Harriet Martineau to M. W. Chapman, July 8, 1862; Harriet Martineau to Milnes, Aug. 11, 1862, Trinity Coll.

[107]DN, June 20, 1862.

[108]DN, Aug. 13, 1856; History, II, 96, 446.

[109]DN, Aug. 2, 1852.

[110]Mary Ellison, Support for Secession: Lancashire and the American Civil War (Chicago and London: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1972).

[111]William E. Forster to Harriet Martineau, March 25, 1869, BU Lib. 312.

[112]DN, July 17, 1862; Nov. 11, Nov. 21, 1863.

[113]DN, July 21, 1862.

[114]DN, Jan. 19, 1857.

[115]DN, Jan. 26, Oct. 8, 1861; and see also DN, Nov. 10, Nov. 20, 1852.

[116]DN, Nov. 24, Dec. 1, 1857.

[117]DN, Jan. 5, 1859.

[118]DN, Aug. 3, 1859.

[119]DN, Jan. 20, 1857; Sept. 10, 1859; Feb. 27, 1860.

[120] The Factory Controversy: A Warning against Meddling Legislation (Manchester: National Association of Factory Occupiers, 1855); DN, Feb. 12, 1856; and see her correspondence with Henry Whitworth of Liverpool, Secretary of the Assoc. of Factory Occupiers, BU Lib. 976-1015.

[121] John Chapman to Harriet Martineau, Nov. 10, 1855, BU Lib. 195.

[122] DN, March 15, 1860.

[123] See Chapter III, and cf. DN, Aug. 4, Aug. 11, 1863.

[124] See for example Harriet Martineau to Milnes, July 20 [1844], Trinity Coll.

[125] DN, Oct. 21, 1853; Aug. 20, 1860.

[126] DN, June 16, Nov. 1, 1853.

[127] DN, Feb. 17, March 26, 1853; April 5, Dec. 8, 1864; Jan. 18, 1865.

[128] DN, Nov. 1, 1853; March 17, 1854; Jan. 30, 1857; Sept. 19, Oct. 3, 1859.

[129] Robert F. Martineau to Harriet Martineau, Aug. 7, 1859, BU Lib. 1321. She also received information from Charles Bray, and she read letters to the press by Trade Unionists, and pamphlets by John Plummer, a worker opposed to strikes, BU Lib. 1319-1337. See and compare with Charles Dickens in Hard Times.

[130] DN, Apr. 30, 1853; Jan. 28, Sept. 24, 1861.

[131] "National Education," MR, 6 (1832), 689-694; "Prison Discipline," MR, 6 (1832), 577-586 and Miscellanies, II, 281-296.

[132] "Prison Discipline," Miscellanies, II, 287.

[133] How to Observe Morals and Manners, p. 171.

[134] DN, Apr. 14, Apr. 21, 1857.

[135] DN, June 13, 1854.

[136] Matthew Arnold to Harriet Martineau, Apr. 11, July 24, July 30, 1860; July 7, 1864, BU Lib. 17-20; DN, Oct. 13, Nov. 29, 1856; June 25, Dec. 7, 1864.

[137] DN, May 25, 1853.

[138] DN, March 22, Apr. 7, 1853.

[139] History, II, 250-251, 441-443, 555-556, 595; DN, June 18, 1852; Sept. 9, 1854; Sept. 7, 1864. She believed that Forster's 1870 Education Bill was marred by its concessions to religious interests. Josephine Butler to Harriet Martineau, Dec. 21 [n.y.], BU Lib. 118; W. E. Forster to Harriet Martineau, Feb. 26, 1870, BU Lib. 313; Miller, Harriet Martineau, pp. 207-208, Harriet Martineau to Atkinson, Dec., 1871.

[140] DN, Apr. 14, 21, 1857.

[141] DN, May 5, 1853; Nov. 5, 1855. Martineau further supported adult education by teaching in Ambleside, encouraging Mechanics Institutes, and working with Charles Knight and the S.D.U.K to publish cheaper books.

[142] History from the Commencement, I, 7.

[143] DN, May 28, June 15, 1855.

[144] DN, June 19, 1855.

[145] DN, June 20, 1855.

[146] DN, Aug. 10, 1853; Jan. 14, 1854, letter signed "A Reformer," Apr. 9, 1857.

[147] DN, Dec. 9, 1859; Walter Bagehot noted the element of deference in English society in The English Constitution (1867).

[148] DN, March 17, 25, Apr. 22, 1859.

[149] DN, July 4, 1862. Like almost every other liberal in the country, she had opposed Lord John Russell's abortive Reform Bill of 1860 because of its poor timing. See Harriet Martineau to [Philip Carpenter], June 2 [?1860], M. Coll.; and "The Year 1865," MS. BU Lib. 1404.

[150] Barbara Leigh Smith Bodichon, An American Diary 1857-1858. ed. Joseph W. Reed (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972).

[151] DN, Apr. 9, 1857.

[152] DN, July 17, 1856.

[153] Autobiography, I, 400.

[154] Ibid., I, 400-402.

[155] How to Observe Morals and Manners, p. 152.

[156] See Chapter VII.

[157] DN, Oct. 21, 1856.

[158]"On Female Education," MR, First series 18 (1823), 79.

[159]Matthew Arnold to Harriet Martineau, July 7, 1864, BU Lib. 20.

[160]DN, Feb. 18, 1864.

[161]J. F. C. Harrison, Learning and Living 1790-1960 (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1961), pp. 231 ff.

[162]"Middle Class Education in England. Girls," [1864] Ms. Harvard, MS. CA.

[163]DN, Nov. 23, 1859.

[164]Household Education, 155-156.

[165]Martineau never reglected but rather enjoyed her own domestic accomplishments. See for example Holyoake's comment: " . . . in spite of the vigour and grasp of her [Martineau's] intellect, she is a true woman, and proclaims Home as peculiarly the female sphere of action." B. Museum, Add. MS. 42726/35; Autobiography, III, 289-291, Charlotte to Emily Brontë: "all she [Martineau] does is well done, from the writing of a history down to the quietest feminine occupation;" and Lady Henrietta Maria Stanley of Alderley to Harriet Martineau, Jan. 4, 1872, BU Lib. 864.

[166]Eleanor Flexner, Mary Wollstonecraft: A Biography (New York: Coward, McCann and Geoghegan, Inc., 1972), p. 60.

[167]"Middle Class Education in England. Girls," pp. 31-32.

[168]Autobiography, I, 142. Both Ellen and Rachel became teachers, the former only until her marriage to Alfred Higginson.

[169]Autobiography, I, 120.

[170]M. Phillips and W. S. Tomkinson, English Women in Life and Letters (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1926), quoted p. 350.

[171]Amy Cruse, Victorians and their Reading (Boston: Houghton Miflin, 1935), quoted p. 342.

[172]Henry Crabb Robinson, Diary, May 14, 1838, DW Lib.

[173]Florence Nightingale to Harriet Martineau, Nov. 30, 1858, B. Museum, Add. MS. 45788/1.

[174]Society in America, III, 118, 147.

[175]DN, Dec. 9, 1859.

[176]DN, Feb. 29, Apr. 2, 1856; Nov. 17, 1859.

[177]DN, Aug. 31, 1853; July 5, 1854; Oct. 21, 1856; Jan. 13, 1857; March 25, Nov. 25, 1859; July 9, 1863; Feb. 18, 1864. And see George F. W. Robinson, 3rd Earl de Grey (later Marquess of Ripon), to Harriet Martineau, May 10, 1870, BU Lib. 276.

[178]Autobiography, III, 203, Diary [1837]; DN, Feb. 16, 1856; June 26, 1863; History, I, 568.

[179]DN, Feb. 18, 1864.

[180]"On Female Industry," ER, 109 (Apr., 1859), 151-173.

[181]Ibid.

[182]History, II, 421-425.

[183]DN, March 25, 1853; June 28, 1854.

[184]Garnett, Fox, p. 310.

[185]DN, Feb. 29, March 26, 1856; Dec. 31, 1857; May 28, 1858.

[186]Society in America, III, 127.

[187]Although there is no evidence to prove it, she was probably familiar with William Thompson's feminist writings. It was he who first used the phrase "legal prostitution" when referring to marriage.

[188]Society in America, III, 128.

[189]How to Observe Morals and Manners, p. 147.

[190]Ibid., p. 148.

[191]Household Education, p. 23.

[192]How to Observe Morals and Manners, pp. 146, 154.

[193]DN, July 2, 1864.

[194]Autobiography, III, 438.

[195]DN, Dec. 28, 1869.

[196]DN, Dec. 29, 1869.

[197]DN, Dec. 30, 1869.

[198]DN, Dec. 31, 1869; and see Autobiography, III, 427 ff.

[199]The Butler Papers in the Fawcett Library, London were being catalogued at the time this research was done. Additional letters may be found in this collection. There are other letters in BU Lib. and Boston P. Lib. See also Autobiography, III, 436-437; and A. S. G. Butler, Portrait of Josephine Butler (London: Faber and Faber, 1954), p. 71.

[200]George Warr to Harriet Martineau, March 27, Apr. 1, 1873, BU Lib. 933 and 934.

[201]Harriet Martineau to Mary J. Herford, May 23, 1873 (copy), BU Lib. 426.

[202]Josephine Butler to Harriet Martineau, Dec. 22, 1872, BU Lib. 119.

[203]See for example Anne Jemima Clough to Harriet Martineau, 1852 to 1862, Fawcett Lib.; Lady Henrietta Maria Stanley of Alderley to Harriet Martineau, several letters 1872, BU Lib. 855-866; Emily Faithfull to Harriet Martineau, March 14, 1863, BU Lib. 294; Josephine Kamm, Hope Deferred (London: Methuen, 1965), p. 181.

[204]Autobiography, III, 436.

[205]Sir John Richard Robinson to Harriet Martineau, May 22, 1871, BU Lib. 758.

[206]For her views on the Whig Administration see for example DN, May 31, 1855; Aug. 14, 1856; Aug. 1, 1860; Harriet Martineau to Frederick Knight Hunt [?1852-1854], BU Lib. 494-499; "Lord Palmerston," in Biographical Sketches, pp. 390-391; Harriet Martineau to Florence Nightingale, May 13, 1867, B. Museum Add. MS. 45788/310.

[207]See for example DN, June 18, 1852; Oct. 30, 1854; Oct. 5, 1864.

[208]G. M. Young, Portrait of an Age, ed. cit., p. 47.

[209]Autobiography, I, 232; II, 453, 455.

[210]DN, Sept. 2, 1856.

[211]Biographical Sketches, pp. 273-280.

[212]"Co-operative Societies in 1864," ER, 120 (Oct., 1864), 210-226.

[213]"The Year 1865," MS. BU Lib. 1404.

EPILOG

By 1866 Harriet Martineau had become so ill that she was at last forced to lay down her pen. She ended her fourteen-year connection with the Daily News, and with it her forty-five-year literary career.[1] She lingered for another decade, debilitated by immense suffering, and sinking for longer and longer periods of the day into the hazy relief which the opiates brought. The pain was unremitting, and she disliked the mental incapacity and disorientation which the drugs induced. But she remained cheerful and busy to the end. She retained her concern for the world and was kept informed about it by those interest groups which she had served in the past. She still directed the household. She got up and dressed every day. And she continued to do the fancy-work which had always delighted her. Her correspondence, however, dropped off considerably in the last years; her hand was sometimes less than firm, and she often had to resort to dictation. But old friends, like Julia Smith and Elizabeth Reid, kept a distant and anxious eye on her through mutual acquaintances. She saw only occasional visitors like her neighbors the Arnolds, now become "as intimate as possible."[2] Her nieces, the daughters of Robert, came to live with her and served her with a loving devotion. First Maria, until her death from typhoid in 1864, and then Jane.[3] When Jane's health became frail in 1873 she was moved to a warmer climate and her place was taken by a companion, Miss Goodwin. Harriet's ties with Robert, Rachel and Ellen remained affectionate, but the breach with the Greenhows and with James was never healed.

Her income, now that she was no longer able to earn money by her writing was small, and she was forced to economize. She was receiving

modest sums from some investments, from new editions of her works, and from the publication in 1869 of Biographical Sketches, a reprinting of her Daily News obituaries compiled by the grateful owners of that publication. But she again refused a pension when Prime Minister Gladstone offered one in 1873: "I have a competence; and there would be no excuse for touching the public money."[4]

Unafraid of death as she had been unafraid of life, Harriet Martineau refused to the last to acknowledge or seek comfort in a belief in the hereafter. In June of 1876 she caught bronchitis, and in her weakened condition lapsed into a final coma. She died on June 27, 1876, and was buried in her brother Robert's Birmingham.

Two days after Harriet Martineau's death the Daily News published an obituary which Martineau had--characteristically--written herself:

> Her original power [she said, writing in the third person] was nothing more than was due to earnestness and intellectual clearness within a certain range. With small imaginative and suggestive powers, and therefore nothing approaching to genius, she could see clearly what she did see, and give a clear expression to what she had to say. In short, she could popularise, while she could neither discover nor invent. She could sympathise in other people's views and was too facile in doing so; and she could obtain and keep a firm grasp of her own, and, moreover, she could make them understood. The function of her life was to do this, and, inasfar as it was done diligently and honestly, her life was of use, however far its achievements may have fallen short of expectations less moderate than her own. Her duties and her business were sufficient for the peace and the desires of her mind. She saw the human race, as she believed, advancing under the law of progress; she enjoyed her share of the experience, and had no ambition for a larger endowment, or reluctance or anxiety about leaving the enjoyment of such as she had.[5]

The editor of the Daily News published her obituary apologetically, and insisted that Harriet Martineau's self-estimate was too "strict and

disparaging." But it was a mark of her candor and her lack of self-delusion that she could evaluate her own career so honestly and dispassionately. "There is no education like authorship," she once wrote, "for ascertaining one's knowledge and one's ignorance."[6]

In spite of a dogged confidence in her own convictions Martineau seldom had any illusions about her own capacity. In 1877, reviewing the Autobiography, a friend and fellow Laker, William Rathbone Greg said of her that she was:

> . . . a singularly happy person; and continued to grow happier and happier, illness notwithstanding, till near the end. Her unflinching belief in herself, her singular exemption from the sore torment of doubt or hesitation, helped to make her so. . . . Misgiving seems, indeed, to have been a sensation that was alien to her constitution. . . . She never reconsidered her opinions, or mused over her judgments. They were instantaneous insights, not deliberate or gradual deductions. . . . [Yet] her confidence in her own opinions was not irrational conceit in her own powers; on the contrary, her estimate of these was not at all inordinate, but, as may be seen especially in her last obituary notice of herself in the Daily News, rather below the truth, not to say wide of it.[7]

Even when they disagreed with Harriet Martineau's opinions, her contemporaries never thought of her as either personally or professionally inconsiderable. George Eliot described her as "the only English woman that possesses thoroughly the art of writing," and as "quite one of those great people whom one does not venerate the less for having seen."[8] Matthew Arnold although dissenting strongly from Harriet Martineau's creed could not "but praise a person whose one effort seems to have been to deal perfectly honestly and sincerely with herself."[9] Charlotte Brontë bore a similar testimony:

> Without adopting her theories, I yet find a worth and greatness in herself, and a consistency, benevolence, perseverance in her practice, such as wins the sincerest esteem and affection. She

> is not a person to be judged by her writings alone, but rather by her own deeds and life, than which nothing can be more exemplary and noble.[10]

In The National Reformer, a secularist organ, her friend George Jacob Holyoake paid her tribute too: "No woman more brave, or wise, or untiring in the public service has lived this century:"

> Her glory was that she not only sympathised with progress, she took trouble to advance it, she worked for it by the labour of her genius.[11]

Martineau's dedication to her duty as she saw it was as much a feature of her personality as it was of the Victorian character. Her dedication to progress had its origins in the Dissent and radicalism of her middle-class beginnings. The independence of her temper--born as it was out of the loneliness of her childhood and the isolation of deafness--further inclined her to radical causes. She possessed, as she herself realized, "too facile" a sympathy for the ideas of others: Unitarianism, Necessarianism, laissez-fairism, egalitarianism, abolitionism, feminism, mesmerism, empiricism, Positivism, and 'agnosticism' all impressed themselves on her receptive mind, and once being impressed became articles of faith. W. R. Greg described Harriet Martineau's mind as "wax to receive and marble to retain."[12] And it is true that she embraced her new ideas with a too ready and often unconsidered enthusiasm, and that she held on to them with a too dogged fidelity. Lord Brougham recognized this trait in her as early as 1834, and The Times reminded its readers of the late Chancellor's comment in its own obituary notice:

> I fear [Brougham had said] . . . that it is the character of her mind to adopt extreme opinions upon most subjects, and without much examination.[13]

The haste with which Martineau arrived at her conclusions and rushed them into print backed her into many an untenable corner; marred her composition; and flawed her judgment. But she refused to listen to countervailing arguments, and she yielded her position only when the decision to do so was her own. In conversation she would sometimes put down her trumpet when the discussion began to move in an unwelcome direction.[14] And the gesture was characteristic. She refused to see beyond the limits she had set on her own horizon, or to listen to voices she did not wish to hear. She could shut out the arguments of a Shaftesbury in much the same way as she shut out her brother James or the memory of John Worthington. This trait distorted her perspective and immured her within the confines of her own conviction. Like a kaleidoscope her mind was directed into a myriad facets, but like a kaleidoscope too, her vision was tunnelled, and in spite of her intellectual versatility, her over-all view was correspondingly narrowed. It was her singular deafness to certain facts, and her unwillingness to concede her own fallibility, which accounted in large measure for her dogmatism. Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to suppose that her devotion to principle was unvarying, or that she _never_ yielded her persuasions. Her early fundamentalism gave way to Necessarianism; her Unitarianism surrendered to Positivism; and even her _laissez-fairism_ was eventually subject to substantial qualification. She was, after all, living at a time when principle and practice could not but be at odds; when radical theory and humanitarian sympathy were in conflict; and in a paradoxical age of which she was, in a sense, a paradigm.

Martineau's optimism was as naive as her enthusiasm was precipitous. Utopia seemed possible to the adherents of political economy in the early nineteenth century, and Martineau saw it as her duty to show the way. She had an earnest faith in the virtues of the individual, and in the values of the educative process. The greatest happiness of the greatest number seemed to be achievable if only society could be taught the principles of Utility, and if the debris of ancient privilege could be swept away. It was to this end that she dedicated her life, and although utopia was still an unrealized ideal by the time of her death, it appeared to her contemporaries that her efforts had been crowned with a considerable measure of success. Even The Times, which had so often been the object of her criticism in politics and principle, said of her passing:

> If any lady of the 19th century, in England or abroad, may be allowed to put in a claim for the credit of not having lived in vain, that woman, we honestly believe, was Harriet Martineau.[15]

By the time of her death most of Harriet Martineau's more immediate causes had become facts of British life. Her writings had lost their polemical immediacy, and the purpose which had made them important. They now seemed to be little more than heavy-handed didacticism, and had become literary works of the second rank, already declining into obscurity. It was now only Harriet Martineau's personal reputation, that "generous purpose" and those "large thoughts" which had inspired her work which still drew applause from a new generation of Englishmen. John Morley, speaking for this new generation described Martineau's literary performance as having "acquired . . . little of permanent value," yet:

> . . . behind the books and opinions was a remarkable personality, a sure eye for social realities, a moral courage that never flinched; a strong judgment within its limits; a vigorous self-

> reliance both in opnion and act, which yet did not prevent a habit of the most neutral self-judgment; the commonplace virtues of industry and energy devoted to aims too elevated, and too large and generous to be commonplace; a splendid sincerity, a magnificent love of truth. And that all these fine qualities, which would mostly be described as manly, should exist not in a man but a woman, and in a woman who discharged admirably such feminine duties as fell to her, fills up the measure of our interest in such a character.[16]

Martineau's personal reputation seemed to have outlived her work, and she had apparently become little more than a phenomenon: a woman, who defying the conventions, had achieved a stature seldom reserved for members of her sex.

But the quality which made Martineau seem almost irrelevant by the time of her death was the very quality which had made her important during her life-time and which makes her important today: her contemporaneity is for the modern historian her most enduring feature. Martineau was an astute observer of her own era. She seized upon the vital issues of the day, and with that dispatch and fluency which made her such a considerable journalist, she informed her public. She wrote much as she lived, energetically, simply and as honestly as she knew how: "Yielding a glad obedience from hour to hour."[17] This was her private view of life but she was never so bound by principle or so rigid in conviction that she was unable to extend it to encompass all of society:

> If we attempt to frame moral systems [she had written in the Monthly Repository in 1832], we must make them for present use only. We must provide for their being modified as the condition of society changes, or we shall do more harm than good.[18]

She was fully aware that she lived in an age of transition--a Positivist could not but be thus aware. She had grown to maturity as a person and as a writer in a nascent era, and change had always seemed to her to be

the imperative order of the day. She was one of the radical reformers who had heralded the change, and being without personal ambition, she would have been pleased rather than otherwise to think that her works had become obsolete because their objects had been achieved.[19] Marching ahead of most of her contemporaries, and considered reprehensibly out of line by many of them, she was seldom seriously out of step with the more advanced opinions of her day. She was surely, as John Stuart Mill had said, " . . . a sign of this country and Time."[20] And it is herein that her historical significance rests.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Thomas Walker (ed. DN) to Harriet Martineau, April 26, 1866, BU Lib. 931; Harriet Martineau to the Rev. Robert Graves, July 5, 1866, BU Lib. Add. 29; James Anthony Froude to Harriet Martineau, Oct. 26, 1866, BU Lib. 315, asking her to contribute to Fraser's, an invitation she was forced to decline; Autobiography, III, 424.

[2]Harriet Martineau to Florence Nightingale, June 25, 1860; [1860]; Nov. 2, 1861; May 13, Sept. 6, 1867, B. Mus. Add. MS. 45788/59, /86, /170, /309, /312; Autobiography, III, 444, 451-456, 481 and 418, Harriet Martineau to Maria Weston Chapman, Oct. 21, 1873; British Medical Journal (1876-1877) eds. cit.; and see Maria Martineau to Arthur Allen, July 22 [1855], Dec. 26 [1856], Yale MS. Vault File 15/4; Harriet Martineau to [Philip Carpenter], Dec. 12, 1854; Jan. 7, 1856, June 26, 1865, M. Coll.; Harriet Martineau to George Jacob Holyoake, March 17, 1857, B. Mus. Add. MS. 42726/21; Harriet Martineau to Milnes, May 9, 1862, Trinity Coll.; Julia Smith to [Maria or Jane] Martineau, March 23 [n.d.], BU. Lib. 837.

[3]Martineau made Maria her heir. John Chapman to Harriet Martineau, March 8, 1858, BU Lib. 216.

[4]Harriet Martineau to Florence Nightingale, May 13, Sept. 6, 1867, B. Mus. Add. Ms. 45788/308 and 314; Harriet Martineau to [Philip Carpenter], May 28, 1864, M. Coll.; W. E. Gladstone to James Martineau (copy), June 6, 1873, BU Lib. 356; Harriet Martineau to W. E. Gladstone, June 8, 1873, BU Lib. 358; W. E. Gladstone to Harriet Martineau [June 9, 1873], BU Lib. 359; and see Autobiography III, 445-447.

[5]"An Autobiographic Memoir," DN, June 29, 1876. The obituary was written in 1855, twenty-one years before her death.

[6]Autobiography, III, 197, from her Diary [1838].

[7]W. R. Greg, "Harriet Martineau," Nineteenth Century, 2 (Aug., 1877) 100-102.

[8]Haight, II, 32, George Eliot to Mr. and Mrs. Charles Bray and S. Hennell, June 2, 1852; I, 189, George Eliot to Martha Jackson, Apr. 21, 1845; and see II, 229-230, 258; VI, 354.

[9]Matthew Arnold, Letters 1848-1888, 2 vols, ed. George W. E. Russell (1895, rpt. Grosse Pointe, Mich.: Scholarly Press, 1968), I, 51.

[10]John Morley, Critical Miscellanies, quoted III, 175.

[11]The National Reformer, n.s. 27 (July 9, 1876); and see Holyoake's obituary in The Index, Dec. 28, 1876, 619.

[12]W. R. Greg, "Harriet Martineau," p. 102.

[13]The Times, June 29, 1876.

[14]W. R. Greg, "Harriet Martineau," p. 103.

[15]The Times, June 29, 1876.

[16]John Morley, Critical Miscellanies, III, 176-177.

[17]Deerbrook, I, 278-279; and see Harriet Martineau to Arthur Allen, Nov. 8 [n. y.], Dec. 31 [n. y.], Yale, MS. Vault File 15/4.

[18]"On the Duty of Studying Political Economy," Miscellanies, I, 20 [MR, 6 (1832), 24-34].

[19]". . . of posthumous fame I have not the slightest expectation or desire. To be useful in my day and generation is enough for me." Autobiography, III, 33 from a memo, June 1829, see Chapter II. And Harriet Martineau to Milnes, May 9, 1862, Trinity Coll. She told Milnes that she did not care for fame herself and was frightened and alienated by ambition in others.

[20]John Stuart Mill to Thomas Carlyle, Nov. 22, 1833, Collected Works, XII, 152. See Chapter III.

A NOTE ON SOURCES

Harriet Martineau's Autobiography, written in 1855 but published in 1877 the year after her death is still the single most useful source for a study of her life. It is--with Household Education (1849)--especially so for the early years for which there is no extant correspondence. Like most such works, however, Martineau's Autobiography has serious limitations. She wrote in large part to explain her conversion from religious orthodoxy, and the representation of her early beliefs is distorted by her later attitude. She wrote also because she felt it was a duty incumbent on a famous personage. Her Autobiography was, therefore, written not in the spirit of a self-exploration but rather of a public explanation. She did not dwell on the more personal details of her life: her closest friends were "too near and dear to me to be described in detail." The engagement with Worthington--on the advice of Henry Atkinson--was not dwelt on. And her later relationship with James was discreetly passed over. Furthermore, because the Autobiography was concluded more than two decades before Harriet Martineau's death, it fails to account for the final years. Maria Weston Chapman's Memorials, which make up the concluding volume, only partially supply the deficiency. Mrs. Chapman's Memorials were damned with faint praise when the Autobiography was published in 1877, and they have received short shrift ever since. It is true, as R. K. Webb says, that they are "wretchedly edited and completely eulogistic," but they nevertheless contain much valuable information, and they cannot be ignored. Mrs. Chapman was a friend for forty years and in spite of her partiality, her reminiscences are invaluable. She was also in possession of documents which are no longer available. Unfortunately she

censored her material, and, in compliance with her friend's wishes, destroyed the originals.

Martineau herself was aware of the difficulty of honest self-appraisal and therefore of the limitations of autobiography. In 1830 she made the following observation and it is well to keep it in mind when reading the Autobiography:

> It is painful enough to fix our gaze steadily on any foul stain or festering sore within, which is hidden from every other human eye; it is difficult enough to detect every slight obliquity, and to acknowledge to ourselves the permanence of any deformity which we have long labored to rectify: and how can we summon courage to stand the examination of the public. to invite the careless observation of those who cannot feel with us, or the rigid scrutiny of some who will not spare us? The best parts of ourselves it is yet more difficult to expose, as the most exalted virtues are the most modest, and the most refined parts of the human machine are the most sensitive. ["Dodderidge's Correspondence and Diary," Miscellanies II, 348]

Martineau's friends certainly believed that the Autobiography did her less than justice. It was in her personal correspondence, they felt, that the virtues of her character were most evident. Martineau's letters to such intimate acquaintances as Julia Smith, Mrs. Bellenden Ker, Mrs. Elizabeth Reid and others have not survived, but fortunately not all of Martineau's correspondents obeyed her 1843 injunction to destroy her letters. However, the only extant family letters are those which she wrote to James between August 9, 1819 and August 6, 1843. James condensed and transcribed these into shorthand and, unfortunately. the reader cannot be sure how great a reinterpretation was made in transcription. Scholars are indebted to R. K. Webb who commissioned a long-hand translation of James's short-hand in 1958. The transcript letters together with letters to Helen Martineau and Philip Carpenter are in the Manchester College Library, Oxford. Other important collections of Martineau letters are to be found in the following locations:

The Birmingham University Library has 1417 items in the Martineau Papers and some additional letters. These were presented to the University Library by Sir Wilfrid and John Martineau in 1961, and were catalogued by D. W. Evans in 1969. The Martineau-Henry Crabb Robinson correspondence is in Dr. Williams's Library, London. The Martineau-Richard Monckton Milnes correspondence is to be found in the Trinity College Library, Cambridge. The Brougham and S.D.U.K. collections are in the University College Library, London. The Francis Place, Florence Nightingale, Sir Robert Peel, John Bright, Rowland Hill and George Jacob Holyoake papers are in the British Museum. The Weston Papers are in the Boston Public Library. And additional letters can be found at the Cambridge University Library; the Bodleian, Oxford; the Fawcett Library, London; the Beineke Library, Yale; the Widener Library, Harvard; and there are miscellaneous letters at several other locations both in England and the United States. The correspondence, especially the published correspondence, of Martineau's contemporaries, is also most useful.

The most important of Harriet Martineau's publications have been cited in the text and documented in the footnotes and no useful purpose would be served in reproducing a comprehensive list of her works. A complete bibliography of Harriet Martineau's works has been published by Joseph B. Rivlin, "Harriet Martineau: A Bibliography of her Separately Printed Works." _Bulletin of the New York Public Library_, 50 (1946); 51 (1947). There is a great need for a similar indexing of Harriet Martineau's journal articles. Her _Monthly Repository_ articles, reproduced for the most part in _Miscellanies_ (1836) which has recently been reprinted by AMS Press, have been identified and catalogued by Francis E. Mineka in _The Dissidence of Dissent_:

The Monthly Repository 1806-1838 (1944). There is no available index for the period covering Martineau's contributions to the Westminster Review. The Wellesley Index to Victorian Periodicals is valuable for identifying Martineau's articles in the Edinburgh Review, and for reviews of her work in these and other journals. It should be noted that the American editions of both the Edinburgh and the Westminster were used in this work and that the pagination therefore differs from that in English editions. R. K. Webb has catalogued most of Martineau's Daily News leaders and has made the list available at the Library of Congress, the Boston Public Library and the British Museum Newspaper Library at Colindale. Martineau's Daily News obituaries were republished in Biographical Sketches (1869), and her Irish letters to the Daily News in Letters from Ireland (1852). Her articles to The People's Journal were reprinted in Household Education (1849), her articles to Household Words in Health, Husbandry and Handicraft (1861), and her stories to the Leader in Sketches from Life (1856). There were additional articles and letters in the Penny Magazine, Once a Week and the National Anti-Slavery Standard. Some of her articles were reprinted for example: "The Martyr Age of the United States," originally in the Westminster was republished in Boston in 1839; "Letters on Mesmerism," in the Athenaeum was separately issued by Edward Moxon in 1845; "A History of the American Compromises," in the Daily News was republished by John Chapman in 1856, and "The 'Manifest Destiny' of the American Union," in the Westminster was reprinted by the American Anti-slavery Society in 1857.

There have been several biographies and studies of Martineau. The first, Harriet Martineau (1884) by Mrs. Florence Fenwick Miller is uncritically appreciative but it remains of interest because Mrs. Miller was a

feminist of the eighties and she was inspired by Harriet Martineau's example. It was her characterization of Harriet's mother as a harsh and domineering woman which brought forth James Martineau's rebuttal: "The Early Days of Harriet Martineau," Daily News, Dec. 30, 1884. In 1927 Theodora Bosanquet wrote Harriet Martineau: An Essay in Comprehension which was much more objective than Mrs. Miller's work, but which added little to what the Autobiography could tell readers. The same comment can be more appropriately applied to John C. Neville's, Harriet Martineau (1943). Vera Wheatley's The Life and Work of Harriet Martineau (1957) provides a more detailed account of Martineau's life but it is lacking in insight. The best researched work on Martineau has been R. K. Webb's Harriet Martineau: A Radical Victorian (1960). Webb's scholarship is indisputably sound but his conclusions are debatable and have, unfortunately, been very influential. Later commentators on Martineau like Robert Lee Wolff in Strange Stories and other Explorations in Victorian Fiction (1971), and Vineta Colby in Yesterday's Woman: Domestic Realism in the English Novel (1974) have relied almost exclusively on Webb and have uncritically reproduced his assumptions without checking primary sources. Published dissertations on Martineau include Narola Elizabeth Rivenberg, Harriet Martineau: An Example of Victorian Conflict (1932) which sets out to do more than it accomplishes; and Elizabeth Escher, Harriet Martineaus sozialpolitische Novellen (1925), which attempts, without obvious success, to analyze Martineau's Illustrations of Political Economy. There were some nineteenth-century chapter-length considerations of Martineau: Richard Hengist Horne, A New Spirit of the Age (1844) and John Morley, Critical Miscellanies III (1909). A recent but not

notably successful attempt to analyze Martineau's economic writings has been made by Dorothy Lampen Thomson in Adam Smith's Daughters (1973).

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