

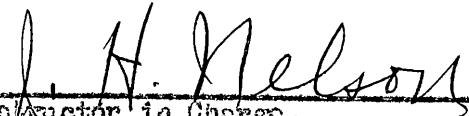
HARRIET MARTINEAU: HER LIFE AND WORKS.


by

Beulah Helen Stewart,
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Approved by:


Instructor in Charge.


Chairman of Department.

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CONTENTS

Chapter.	Page.
I. Life - - - - -	1 - 10
II. Tastes and Personality - - - - -	11 - 16
III. Miss Martineau as a Writer - - - - -	17 - 23
IV. Fiction - - - - -	24 - 36
V. Other Works Aspiring to the Literary - - -	37 - 47
VI. Historical Works - - - - -	48 - 52
VII. Philosophical Works - - - - -	53 - 57
VIII. Sociological Works - - - - -	58 - 62
IX. Books of Travel - - - - -	63 - 69
X. Miscellaneous Works - - - - -	70 - 74
XI. Criticism on Harriet Martineau - - - - -	75 - 78
Bibliography - - - - -	79 - 94

PREFACE.

This study of Harriet Martineau is far from complete because of the difficulty in finding both her own works and those about her. The material which I have been able to examine has received careful study, and from this I have made my estimate of her work.

I wish to express my gratitude and thanks to Dr. J. H. Nelson, Associate Professor of English in the University of Kansas, for his kindness and patience in aiding me in this study, and to Miss Hattie Osborn, librarian of Baker University, Baldwin, Kansas, for her help in obtaining material. I am also indebted to the officials of the Library of the University of Kansas, the Chicago Public Library, the Library of Northwestern University, the Library of the University of Chicago, the Library of the University of California, St. Louis Public Library, Harvard College Library, the Yale University Library, the New York Public Library, and the Library of Cornell University.

CHAPTER I.

LIFE.

Harriet Martineau was born at Norwich, County Norfolk, June 12, 1802, the sixth of a family of eight children. Her father was of Huguenot descent and very firm in his conviction that children should be reared so that they would "be seen but not heard"; her mother was an Englishwoman who did not believe in praising or petting children. So unfortunate was she in her parentage that Thackeray expressed a regret that "Harriet Martineau had not shown better judgment in choosing her parents". She grew into a shy child, shy to a distressing degree; she was afraid of everything, persons as well as things. She declares that the first person of whom she was not afraid was her Aunt Kentish, whom she did not know until she was fifteen years old.

The atmosphere of the Martineau home was industrious, intellectual, and austere. Harriet's formal education was somewhat desultory; but it is a noteworthy fact that it was so far as it went a "boy's education". She resolutely set herself to acquire knowledge, and she did. When she was twenty she spoke three languages and read in four. She knew history, astronomy, physical science, and so much mathematics that it crowded her teacher to keep one lesson in advance of her. Besides she could sew and cook and keep house. Yet all this knowledge was gathered by hard labor and toil. "By taking thought she had added cubits to her stature."

Harriet was a sickly child who very early in life was deprived of the sense of smell and taste. When about twelve years of age she

showed signs of deafness, and by the time she was twenty this affliction was confirmed. At the age of fifteen her state of health and nerves led to a prolonged visit to her father's sister, Mrs. Kentish, who kept a school at Bristol. Here Harriet grew happier, for she was among amiable and talented people. Her family had always professed Unitarian views, and at Bristol she fell under the influence of the Unitarian minister, Dr. Lant Carpenter, from whose instruction she says she derived "an abominable spiritual rigidity and a truly respectable force of conscience strangely mingled together."

The years between 1819 and 1830 she spent largely at Norwich. In 1821 she wrote her first essay, which was published anonymously in the Monthly Repository, the Unitarian organ. On finding her to be the author of this essay her oldest brother called her "dear" for the first time in her life, which unwonted kindness touched the sensitive girl very much.

For her deafness Miss Martineau found some consolation in falling in love. About the time the disease was pronounced incurable she met Mr. _____ Worthington¹, a friend of her brother James, whom she soon learned to love. Inspired by this new emotion in her life she began to write, for herself and her lover, Devotional Exercises (1823), which she later published for the benefit of other young people. Mr. Worthington would not declare his love as long as he believed Harriet to be an heiress, but when her father's business failed in 1825, he

1. I have been unable to find any record of Mr. Worthington's given name.

he took courage, proposed, and the couple became engaged. A year later Mr. Martineau died, leaving his wife and daughters a bare maintenance. About this time, too, Mr. Worthington became seriously ill, and Harriet naturally wished to go to him. However, her domineering mother, thinking this somewhat improper and hoping to save as much as possible from their little allowance, forbade her daughter to make this visit, so the unhappy and almost demented lover died without seeing his betrothed.

In 1827 Miss Martineau wrote her first talos on the machinery riots at Manchester.

The next year her father's mill, in which the reduced fortune of the Martineau family was invested, failed completely, forcing Harriet to earn her own living. To her this seeming misfortune was in reality a relief, for it left her free to take up authorship in earnest and for the first time in her life to write openly.

She began her career as a wage earner by writing reviews for the Monthly Repository, for which Mr. William J. Fox, editor of the magazine, paid her £15 a year. These reviews were followed by the stories later collected as Traditions of Palestine (1830), one of her favorite works.

For a year Miss Martineau worked faithfully for the Repository, but, having been offered work at proof reading and other literary drudgework in London, she decided to go there and try her fortune. As usual her mother interfered, and although Harriet was at this time twenty-seven years old, so accustomed was she to obeying, that she submitted to her mother's demand to come home and maintain herself by

fancy work. However, she refused to be maintained by fancy work and immediately upon her return to Norwich began work on three prize essays, intended to recommend the principles of Unitarianism to Roman Catholics, Jews, and Mussulmans. She won the three prizes, the money received enabling her to go to Dublin to visit her brother James and his wife. While there she planned the scheme for a series of articles which were to illustrate problems of political economy and were later known as Illustrations of Political Economy (1832-34). The year 1831 found Miss Martineau seeking a publisher for this work. After many failures, she accepted humiliating and disadvantageous terms from Charles Fox, to whom she was introduced by his brother, editor of the Repository. The sale of the first of this series was immediate and enormous, the demand increased with each number, and from that time her literary success was certain.

In June, 1832, finding it necessary to be near her publisher in order to do her work satisfactorily, Miss Martineau took lodgings in Conduit Street, London. In September, 1833, she moved into a small house in Fludger Street, where she lived with her mother and aunt until 1839. During these busy years she associated with the most brilliant and best known people of her generation.

Among her London acquaintances were Hallam, Milman, Malthus, Moncton Milnes, Sidney Smith, Bulwer and Carlyle. London society tried its best to "lionize" Miss Martineau, who met its advances with extreme rebuffs and refused to be spoiled. At the end of her first season in London, Sydney Smith pronounced her to be safe from the clutches

of society, for she had "kept her own laugh, her own manner, and her own voice".

Till 1834 Miss Martineau continued to be occupied with her Political Economy Series and with a supplementary series, Illustrations of Taxation. A series of tales dealing with the poor laws, Poor Laws and Paupers, came out the same year.

Greatly needing rest after the strenuous work of the preceding years, yet most of all needing to get away from her home where her mother, jealous of her daughter's popularity and brilliant friends, made life decidedly uncomfortable for her, she determined upon a trip to America. This journey was very happy and successful until her open adhesion to the Abolitionist party, then small and very unpopular, gave great offence, which was deepened by the publication of Society in America (1837) and the Retrospect of Western Travel (1838). An article in the Westminster Review, Martyr Age of the United States (1839), introduced English readers to the struggle of the Abolitionist party. This article is read today and is still considered good.

Miss Martineau for a time turned her attention to fiction and wrote Deerbrook (1839), a very readable novel but somewhat lacking in story and character sketching. To this same period belong a few little handbooks forming parts of Guides to Service. The convincing tone of the Maid of all Work led to a widespread belief, which she regarded with some complacency, that she had once been a maid of all work herself.

While on a tour of the continent in 1839, Miss Martineau's

health broke down, forcing her to return to London and later to retire to Tynemouth, where she remained, an invalid, until 1844. But her illness did not cause idleness, for she continued to write for two years. The first year of her illness she wrote The Hour and the Man (1840), a novel which surpasses Deerbrook in every particular. This was followed by the Playfellow (1841), a series of tales for children. Later she wrote the autobiographical sketch Life in the Sickroom (1844).

During the last two years of her illness, Miss Martineau was able to write almost nothing, and, having invested all her savings in a deferred annuity, she became distressingly poor. For the second time in her life, Lord Melbourne offered her a pension, which she again refused, because she did not believe in pensions and did not wish to feel under obligation to any administration. In order that she might not suffer, her many admirers and friends raised a relief fund of £1400, which she accepted because of the spirit which prompted the gift.

By 1844 Miss Martineau despaired of ever regaining her health, until she was persuaded by her friends, among them Bulwer, to try mesmerism, and in six months she was cured. So startling was this recovery and so much was it talked about that the doctors began by disbelieving the cure, and ended by disbelieving the malady. At this time, through some correspondence on mesmeric cures, she became acquainted with Mr. H. G. Atkinson, who really became her oracle, though he was never her equal, and she seized upon his guidance with surprising credulity.

Her health restored, and for the first time in her life abso-

lutely relieved of the care of her mother, who had gone to live with relatives in Birmingham, Miss Martineau decided to visit the beautiful Lake country, which she grew to love so much that she decided to make her home there; the result of this decision was that she built the "Knoll" at Ambleside, where she lived happily until her death.

Once more Miss Martineau went upon her travels, when in 1846 with a party of congenial friends she made a tour of Egypt, Palestine and Syria. On her return she published Eastern Life, Past and Present (1847), in which she made clear that she no longer possessed a theology but believed in the doctrine of philosophical atheism.

She continued to expound this doctrine when she edited a volume of letters, Letters on the Law and Development of Man's Nature (1851), which took the form of a correspondence between herself and Mr. Atkinson, she asking questions and he answering them. A storm of protest followed the publication of this book which was the instrument of estrangement between herself and her brother James. Miss Martineau answered this storm by saying that it dissolved all false relationships and strengthened all true. She cared nothing for the opinions of those who had been helpful friends to her, for to her it was a great deliverance to accept a teaching which enabled her to lose her life in the life of the world.

She now possessed inward peace but was not so conspicuous a figure in the literary world as she had been. This, however, did not trouble her; she was satisfied to find herself in full employment upon useful, remunerative work, and it was at this period that she produced

the most permanently valuable of her writings. She contributed numerous articles to Household Words and the Daily News; she wrote Forest and Game Law Tales (1845), Household Education (1849), The History of the Peace (1849), and her famous study and paraphrase of Comte's Positive Philosophy (1853).

For sometime Miss Martineau's health had been poor, and an unusually bad attack caused her, in 1855, to go to London to consult a specialist, who told her she could not live long because of an enlarged heart. Returning to Ambleside, she immediately set to work upon her Autobiography, which was hastily written in a few months for fear that death might overtake her in her task. However, the specialist was wrong, for the Autobiography lay waiting in the office of the publisher for twenty-one years while its author continued to live and work.

Miss Martineau possessed many odd habits and traits of character which became accentuated in her last years. One very unusual thing was her declaration that she was too old to be called "Miss"; she assumed the title of "Mrs." and had her cards printed "Mrs. Harriet Martineau".

Miss Martineau's last years were gladdened by the loving and tender care of her niece, Maria, whose death, in 1864, was a severe blow to her. Maria's sister, Jane, now became Miss Martineau's companion and cared for her until her death.

Miss Martineau was always busy; she contributed one thousand, six hundred forty-two articles to the Daily News alone between 1852 and

1866, bringing an income of about £380 a year. Her journalism seems to have been one of her greatest pleasures.

The republication of the Biographical Sketches (1869) in the Daily News was a real event in Miss Martineau's life, for it showed her that her writing was still in demand and that she could still earn her own way. Her last literary effort was a remonstrance against an act of Parliament in 1869 having reference to certain police powers over women in various large towns, known as An Appeal to the Women of England.

Early in June, 1876, Miss Martineau had an attack of bronchitis which responded readily to treatment and was soon cured, but which left her in such a weakened condition that she died quietly, June 27th, only a few days after her seventy-fourth birthday.

Miss Martineau was a modernist in many particulars. She was a pioneer in writing for women's rights; she was a member of the Woman's Suffrage Society; she smoked the "Chibouque"; and she earned her own way by writing at a time when women rarely did this.

She was a good and noble woman, sincere in all her transactions and devoted to truth; she was generous, charitable, sympathetic and tolerant, but although sincere in her purposes she was often mistaken. Her judgment was often defective; she often wrote in a tone of contempt where contempt was not deserved; and she was decidedly stubborn. Never was she known to give up if she thought she was right.

No appreciable amount of scientific knowledge has been diffused by her writings, nor are they valuable as books of entertainment, for they speak only of a by-gone age. She was a "popularizer" of the ad-

vanced thinking of her day, and her work was of great value to her generation, although little of it has survived as a permanent scientific or literary possession.

Hubbard gives a very fine estimate of Miss Martineau's work when he says: "Her work was not classic, for it was written for the times. That her influence for good on the thought of the times was wide and far-reaching all thoughtful men agree. And he who influences the thought of his times, influences all the times that follow. He has made his impress on eternity."¹

1. Hubbard, Elbert: Little Journeys to the Homes of Famous Women, p. 105.

CHAPTER II.

TASTES AND PERSONALITY.

Harriet Martineau was passionately fond of books and of reading. Her reading for pleasure in childhood and early womanhood, however, had mostly to be done by snatches, for she was obliged to sit all morning sewing, but a book usually lay in her lap ready for use at any moment of leisure. Then, too, one member of the family often read aloud while the others sewed, a practice which brought great pleasure to Harriet. She really liked to sew and was proud of her tiny, dainty stitches, but she felt the long hours spent in sewing each day wasted. The matter did not end with waste of time alone; health, strength, and nerve force -- in a word, power -- was squandered upon sewing. When she was older and ordering her own affairs she felt that her greatest pleasure and luxury were the hours spent in reading books of her own choice.

In childhood and early youth religion was her chief source of happiness. She loved God and was never afraid of him, for she was convinced that he was the only being who cared for her. She had an instinctive veneration for ministers, and a craving for notice from them. At the age of three or four she used to preach to whoever would listen, "Never ky for trifles. Dooty first and pleasure afterwards." But as her mind broadened and she traveled and studied the religions of other countries, she drifted from Unitarianism into mere theism, then into pantheism, and finally into atheism. Her travels brought her to

believe "that men have ever constructed the image of a Ruler of the Universe out of their minds; that all successive ideas about the Supreme Power have been originated from within and modified by the surrounding circumstances, and that all theologies, therefore, are baseless productions of the human imagination and have no essential connection with those great religious ideas and emotions by which men are constrained to live nobly, to do justly, and to love what they see to be the true and the right."¹

When still very young Miss Martineau sang and played quite well except in the presence of her music master, of whom she was so terribly afraid that she was actually glad when she was told of his untimely death. If the child was left alone she would entertain herself for hours by singing and playing her accompaniments. When her deafness became confirmed she reluctantly decided to give up music, for she did not wish to offend by singing out of tune, and she could not hear her own voice. Nor could she enjoy the music of others with any degree of satisfaction, which was one of the pleasures most difficult to renounce. However, she spoke little of this, for she was determined never to let her deafness become her master and she did not let it change her temperament nor cut off her joy in the beauty of the world.

Miss Martineau was really greatly handicapped in life, because of the five senses only two -- touch and sight -- were perfect in her; but she made the best of what she had and became a keen vis-

1. Mrs. F. Fenwick Miller: Harriet Martineau, p. 201.

ual observer. Few people saw so much in a short walk in the woods, the village or the city. She loved nature and delighted in writing descriptions of it. She was unusually attracted by the stars at night, by the sea, the grass, the mountains, the plains, and the desert. The account of her first sight of a tree after months of confinement at Plymouth is almost pathetic. I can remember none of her books which does not have some lovely picture of nature more or less minutely described. Her observation was not confined to nature alone for she learned to read the faces of the people with whom she came in contact and when unable to hear some conversation she often learned a great deal of what was being said by watching the expression of the faces around her.

Miss Martineau loved long walks and outdoor exercise, as many of her books show. Her Complete Guide to the English Lakes was written at the request of a neighbor and displays her keen sense of humor so seldom shown in her writings; but it shows more than this, for it exhibits a complete and sympathetic knowledge of every nook and corner of the Lake country which could be gained only by long rambles over the ground which she describes. She describes excursions on foot in Society in America, Retrospect of Western Travel, and Eastern Life.

She showed a decided taste for the adventurous. Coming to America four years before the first steam boat crossed the Atlantic, she was on the ocean for forty-two days, but she apparently enjoyed the inconveniences and hardships of the trip. She toured our country by stage and river boat; she explored the farthest recess of Mammoth

Cave, and inspected the cave back of Niagara Falls, an unheard-of feat for a woman. In Egypt she examined the Great Pyramid, visited harems, and rode a camel over part of the desert, all with much enjoyment.

All women are accused of liking to talk, and it seems that Miss Martineau was no exception. Perhaps she talked to avoid the embarrassment of listening, but it is doubtless true that she talked too much, although Hawthorne says: "She is the most continual talker I ever heard. It is really like the babbling of a brook, and very lively and sensible too; and all the while she talks she moves the bowl of her ear trumpet from one auditor to another, so that it becomes quite an organ of intelligence and sympathy between her and yourself."¹

Miss Martineau had the heart of a mother, loving children to a marked degree and insisting on having her neighbors' children near her up to her last illness. In Life in the Sickroom she speaks at length on the delights of children's calls on an invalid. Her children's stories are among the best of her writings, and Household Education shows her unusual sympathy with children and young people. She was ever doing some deed of kindness for children, for example, she was knitting a blanket for a neighbor's baby when stricken with the illness which caused her death.

This kind woman loved all people and especially the poor, to whom she was always a friend and counsellor. Her poorer neighbors

1. Famous Types of Womanhood: Bolton, p. 169

loved her dearly, for she did much to relieve their suffering and want. She gave them lectures on gardening, sanitation, and living in general, which were later published as Health, Husbandry and Handicraft. She was the champion of the slaves, as her accounts in Society in America and Retrospect of Western Travel show.

"She longed for the well being of her kind; and so unaffectedly and honestly that men who came under her influence were stimulated and encouraged by her to share and avow similar high aims. Withal those who lived with her loved her; she was a kind mistress, a good friend, and tender to little children; she was truly helpful to the poor at her gates, and her life was spotlessly pure."¹

1. Mrs. F. Fenwick Miller: Harriet Martineau, p. 304.

CHAPTER III.

MISS MARTINEAU AS A WRITER.

A more versatile writer than Miss Martineau can scarcely be found, for her writings cover almost every phase of human existence. She wrote on education, history, politics, morals, manners, sociology, philosophy; she wrote prayers, hymns, religious reflections, addresses, essays, reviews, novels, tales, biographical sketches, books of travel and tourists guides. Indeed, it would be difficult to find a social, moral, historical, sociological, or political subject which she did not touch in some way in her works. She was a writer for and of her generation, which she knew thoroughly and of which she wrote well. Elbert Hubbard says, "Harriet Martineau entered into life in its fullest sense, and no phase of existence escaped her keen and penetrating investigation. From writing books, giving minute directions to housemaids, to lengthy advise to prime ministers, her work never lagged. She was widely read, beloved, respected, feared, and well hated."¹

Miss Martineau wrote not only on a variety of subjects but with amazing rapidity and definiteness of purpose. She tells us of her method of composition in the Autobiography:

"I found that it would not do to copy what I wrote and here (at the outset of this novel)² I

1. Elbert Hubbard: Little Journeys to the Homes of Famous Women, p. 103.
2. Miss Martineau stopped work on this novel, which she does not name, because it was so dull, and later burned it.

discontinued the practice forever, -- thus saving an immense amount of time which I humbly think is wasted by other authors. The prevalent doctrine about revision and copying, and especially Miss Edgeworth's account of her method of writing, -- scribbling first, then submitting her manuscript to her father, and copying and altering many times over till, (if I remember right) no one paragraph of her "Leonora" stood at last as it did at first, -- made me suppose copying and alteration to be indispensable. But I immediately found that there was no use in copying if I did not alter; and that, if ever I did alter, I had to change back again; and I, once for all, committed myself to a single copy. I believe the only writings I ever copied were Devotional Exercises, and my first tale: -- a trumpery story called Christmas Day. It seemed to me that distinctness and precision must be lost if alterations were made in a different state of mind from that which suggested the first utterance; and I was delighted when, long afterwards, I met with Cobbett's advice; -- to know first what you want to say, and then say it in the first words that occur to you. The excellence of Cobbett's style, and the manifest falling off of Miss Edge-

worth's after her father's death (so frankly avowed by herself) were strong confirmations of my own experience. I have since, more than once, weakly fallen into mannerism, -- now metaphysically elliptical, now poetically amplified, and even, in one instance, bordering on the Carlylish; but through all this folly, as well as since having a style of my own, -- (that is, finding expression by words as easy as breathing air) -- I have always used the same method of writing. I have always made sure of what I meant to say, and then written it down without care or anxiety, -- glancing at it again only to see if any words were omitted or repeated, and not altering a single phrase in a whole work. I mention this because I think I perceive that great mischief arises from the notion that botching in the second place will compensate for carelessness in the first. I think I perceive that confusion of thought, and cloudiness or affectation in style are produced or aggravated by faulty prepossessions in regard to the method of writing for the press. The mere saving of time and labour in my own case may be regarded as no inconsiderable addition to my term of life.

____ Some modifications of this doctrine there must

of course be in accordance with the strength or weakness of the natural faculty of expression by language; but I speak as strongly as I have just done because I have no reason to believe that the natural aptitude was particularly strong in myself. I believe that such facility as I have enjoyed has been mainly owing to my unconscious preparatory discipline; and especially in the practice of translation from various languages as above related. And, again, after seeing the manuscripts or proof-sheets of many of the chief authors of my own time, I am qualified to say that the marked mannerisms of their day are precisely those whose manuscripts show most erasures, and their proof-sheets most alterations."¹

This hurried manner of writing, together with the fact that Miss Martineau never revised, is responsible for many of her characteristics in writing. Frequent errors in grammar and diction are found in her works. She says, "When we should have been going home, it was a tremendous spring storm; wind, thunder and lightning and rain in floods."² and again, "In order to shoemaking, there must be tanning."³

1. Autobiography, p. 93-94.
2. Society in America, Vol. I, p. 266.
3. Society in America, Vol. II, p. 229.

Her haste in writing no doubt accounts for her prolixity, perhaps the most serious defect in Miss Martineau's writing and that which has struck the death blow to the life of her work. I cannot recall a single essay, tale, novel, history, or work of any type which would not have gained and gained considerably by being shorter. Society in America is prolonged to three volumes, when one volume written with an eye to conciseness would have told the same facts; so it is with Deerbrook, Illustrations of Political Economy, Retrospect of Western Travel, Eastern Life, and practically everything which Miss Martineau has written. She dwells too long on the description of a dress, a face, a scene, or a dinner; she prolongs dialogue almost to the point of distraction; and she piles detail upon detail until the reader is utterly worn out.

Miss Martineau's rambling manner may be accounted for by the fact that she did not revise. She progresses rapidly from one subject to another, from one place to another, from one person to another, never pausing to think back over what she has written, with the natural result that the reader becomes lost in the mass of words and ideas. In Society in America one is rushed from prison to the asylum for lunatics, and quickly on to the asylum for the blind without any of the really interesting facts sinking into his consciousness.¹

But yet Miss Martineau wrote with simplicity and directness. Her style is always clear and vigorous, without a trace of effort;

1. Society in America, Vol. III, Chap. IV, p. 179.

and it never lapses into the fault of fine or ambitious writing. She never seems to doubt herself or her opinions, and she expresses them without fear. In the preface to Letters on the Development and Laws of Man's Nature she says: "it is no part of our business to calculate or conjecture the reception that our correspondence is likely to meet with. The one of us has earned, and the other has received, some knowledge, and both of us have thence come to entertain views which we value; and the first duty belonging to the privilege is to impart what we believe to be true." In the Fortnightly Review Mr. G. A. Simcox says of Miss Martineau: "From the first her writings have two great merits: if she has a doctrine to set forth it is clearly conceived, and if she has a scene or character to present it is clearly imagined."¹ This is perhaps best illustrated in the Political Economy Series and in the Play-fellow.

All of Miss Martineau's articles are didactic in nature; teaching seems to be her chief delight, and she does this rather skillfully by using some live, contemporary subject of political or sociological interest to illustrate her point. Illustrations of Political Economy, Illustrations of Taxation, the Poor-Law Tales, British Rule in India, Health, Husbandry and Handicraft, and her article in favor of the American Abolitionists are all of this type. Mrs. Miller says: "What she was ever seeking to do was to find out how men should live from what men and their surroundings are. She must be recognized as

1. Fortnightly Review: New Series, April 1, 1877, Vol. 27, p. 516.

one of the first thinkers to uniformly (sic. . .) consider practical morals as derived from reasoned science."¹

The faults of Miss Martineau's work overshadow the true worth, or her writings certainly would have outlived her generation. But "she has been able to discuss events which may almost be called contemporary as calmly as if she were examining a remote period of antiquity. She has written the history of a rather undignified reign with a dignity that raises even the strifes of forgotten and exploded parties into philosophic importance. She exhibits warm sympathy for all that is noble, honorable, or exalted -- and a thorough disdain of every paltry contrivance devised to serve a temporary purpose, or gain an unworthy end. The principles which she enunciates are based on eternal truths, and evolved with a logical precision that admits rethorical ornament without becoming obscure or confused. There are few living authors who may be so implicitly trusted with the task of writing contemporary history as Miss Martineau. She has spared no pains in investigating truth, and allowed no fears to prevent her from stating it."²

1. Mrs. F. Fenwick Miller: Harriet Martineau, p. 87.
2. Mrs. F. Fenwick Miller: Harriet Martineau, p. 205.

CHAPTER IV.

FICTION.

Among Harriet Martineau's books the most important for this study are her works of fiction. She wrote two rather inferior novels and innumerable tales which form the best part of her purely literary work.

When she began writing her first novel, Deerbrook (1839), her health was poor, which may be partly responsible for the failure of the book. There were two other reasons for this failure, however. First, Miss Martineau felt herself bound to supposed fact in the plot of her story. She heard of two sisters who were in love with the same man and wished to use this as the basis of her plot. A friend of her family was forced to propose to and marry a girl whom he did not love, and this fact also she wished to use in her plot. When later she learned that neither of these incidents was true it was too late to alter the plot of Deerbrook. Secondly, she tried to imitate Jane Austen, whose influence is seen in every chapter, but Miss Martineau had none of the easy flow, the pleasant humor, or the light playful irony of her model.

The story in Deerbrook is very deficient, the plot is highly improbable, and the characters are but feeble puppets. Mrs. Miller says of the book: "I believe I may just say that it is the weakest of Harriet Martineau's writings. It is, indeed, far superior in all respects to nine hundred out of every thousand novels published. But she is not judged by averages. A far higher standard of literary art

is that to which we expect Harriet Martineau's writings to conform."¹

Deerbrook is a novel of an English country village with its gossip, its rivalry, its sham. Hester and Margaret Ibbotson go from Birmingham to Deerbrook to visit their uncle. Mr. Hope, the village surgeon, falls in love with Margaret; but, being told that Hester loves him, while Margaret is in love with Philip Enderby, Hope decides to propose to Hester. He is accepted and is thus married to the sister whom he does not love. The confidence which the village people had always had in their surgeon is lost but later is restored by means of an epidemic. In the meantime, Enderby's sister tells him Margaret once loved Hope and Enderby immediately breaks his engagement to Margaret; this sister finally confesses that she has exaggerated and invented stories about Margaret. The story ends, and "they all live happily ever after".

The heroines of the story, Hester and Margaret, are on the whole tiresome and uninteresting. Hester is sensitive, jealous, and sheds a prodigious quantity of tears over nothing, while Margaret displays on occasion an astonishing temper.

As far as real goodness is concerned, the character of Maria Young is perhaps the best drawn and least far-fetched, but even her idealized goodness, self-denial, and utter unselfishness in every act wear on the reader and try his patience.

Mr. Enderby is perhaps the most forceful character in the

1. Mrs. F. Fenwick Miller: Harriet Martineau, p. 147.

book. He is more lifelike, more human, and more sensible than the others. In his quiet, effective manner he undoes the gossip and insinuations of his heartless sister, thereby unraveling the plot and bringing the story to a happy ending.

All of the characters could be improved by being made to talk and say what they have to say in fewer words. They are, for the most part, unreal, uninteresting, and dull in their conversation and hopelessly tiresome in their actions.

If the characters of Deerbrook are deficient, however, the descriptive scenes are distinctive. One vivid scene is well worth remembering:

"Every one was silent enough now; most hiding their faces that they might not see what happened next. Half way between the river and the smoking church, in the farthest part of the opposite meadow, was a fine spreading oak, under which, as might just be seen, a flock of sheep were huddled together for shelter. Another fiery dart shot down from the dark canopy upon the crown of this oak. The tree quivered and fell asunder, its fragments lying in a circle. There was a rush forth of such of the sheep as escaped, and a rattle of thunder which would have overpowered ordinary voices, but in the midst of which a scream was heard from the

first boat."¹

The book is quite readable and not uninteresting, but it bears the stamp of its author's greatest fault -- volubility. The story is so long that the reader is tempted to skip lengthy descriptive passages and much tiresome dialogue. It is one of the books which give a rational person a mild sort of pleasure once, but which one would hardly look forward to reading again. "Feeble and untrue as are the plot and characters in this 'poor novel' (as Carlyle without injustice called it), yet many scenes are well written, the details are truly colored, and every page is illuminated with thought of so high an order and language so brilliant, so flowing, so felicitous, that one forgives, for the sake of merits such as these, the failure of the fiction to be true or interesting."²

Miss Martineau herself criticises Deerbrook with some severity:

"'Deerbrook' had a larger circulation than novels usually obtain; two large editions having been long exhausted, and the work being still in constant demand. ___ I was rather amused at the turn criticism took among people of the same class as my personages, -- the class which I chose because it was my own, and the one that I understood best.

1. Deerbrook, p. 399-400.

2. Mrs. F. Fenwick Miller, Harriet Martineau, p. 150.

It was droll to hear the daughters of dissenting ministers and manufacturers expressing disgust that the heroine came from Birmingham, and that the hero was a surgeon. Youths and maidens in those days looked for lords and ladies in every page of a new novel. My own judgment of Deerbrook was for some years more favourable than it is now. The work was faithful in principle and sentiment to the then state of my mind; and that satisfied me for a time. I should now require more of myself, if I were to attempt a novel, -- (which I should not do, if I were sure of living another quarter of a century.) I should require more simplicity, and a far more objective character, -- not of delineation but of scheme. The laborious portions of meditation, obtruded at intervals, are wholly objectionable in my eyes. Neither morally nor artistically can they be justified. I know the book to have been true to the state of thought and feeling I was then in, which I now regard as imperfect and very far from lofty:-- I believe it to have been useful, not only in overcoming a prejudice against the use of middle-class life in fiction, but in a more special application to the discipline of temper; and therefore I am glad

I wrote it; but I do not think it would be fair to judge me from it, any later than the time in which it was written."¹

Miss Martineau's second novel, The Hour and the Man (1841), is historical in theme, having for its hero the highly idealized character of Toussaint L'Ouverture, the leader of the revolution and the president of the black Republic of Hayti. As a mere novel, it is vastly superior to Deerbrook. The book does not err so much in length as does the first novel, the characters are better drawn, the descriptions more vigorous, and the sentiment more elevated; in fact, it is superior to Deerbrook in every particular.

The book was written as a contribution to the cause of anti-slavery and designed to show the capacity and high moral character which had been displayed by a negro of the blackest shade when in possession of power. The negro, Toussaint, is the principal character of the story, but there are other fine characters supporting him. We forget that this man is a negro and a former slave, and find ourselves placing him on a level with the bravest generals of history, and while doing so recognizing his great spiritual power. Miss Martineau makes Toussaint a man of remarkable intellectual powers. Even his sudden changes from one cause to another seem rational when we have heard his reasons for changing. His motto of "No Retaliation" is consist-

1. Autobiography, p. 414-415.

ently found throughout the book. At times he seems rather egotistical, but withal is so earnest in his purpose, so true and honest, that this is soon forgotten. Toussaint ever gives God the glory of his success and does not cease to praise his Maker even when death is upon him, as is shown in the following soliloquy, a splendid example of his nobility of sentiment:

"Be it so! if my name can excite any to devotedness, or give to any the pleasure of being grateful. If my name live, the goodness of those who name it will be its life; for my true self will not be in it. No one will no more know the real Toussaint. The weakness that was in me when I felt most strong, the reluctance when I appeared most ready, the acts of sin from which I was saved by accident alone, the divine constraint of circumstances to which my best deeds were owing, --- these things are between me and my God. If my name and my life are to be of use, I thank God that they exist; but this outward existence of them is nothing between Him and me. To me henceforward they no more belong than the name of Epaminondas, or the life of Tell. Man stands naked on the brink of the grave, his name stripped from him, and his deeds laid down as the property of the society he leaves behind. Let the name and deeds I now leave behind

be a pride to generations yet to come -- a more innocent pride than they have sometimes, alas, been to me. I have done with them."¹

The Hour and the Man was better received by the critics than Deerbrook. Lord Jeffery said of it: "The book is really not only beautiful and touching, but noble; and I do not know when I have been more charmed, whether by very sweet and eloquent writing and glowing description, or by elevated as well as tender sentiment The book is calculated to make its readers better, and does great honor to the heart as well as the talent and fancy of the author."²

Even the morose and ungracious Carlyle, writing to Emerson of this book, is obliged to say: 'It is beautiful as a child's heart; and in so shrewd a brain!' while Florence Nightingale declares that she 'can scarcely refrain from thinking of it as the greatest of historical romances.'³

Most prominent among Miss Martineau's works of fiction are her tales, which constitute the most readable of her writings for the present day. In the early part of 1841 she began a series of tales for children which were published under the general title of The

1. The Hour and the Man, p. 369.
2. Mrs. F. Fenwick Miller: Harriet Martineau, p. 158.
3. Mrs. F. Fenwick Miller: Harriet Martineau, p. 159.

Playfellow. These are still among her best known and most popular works; they are extremely simple, quite vivid and interesting, and are really excellent stories for children. The reader of these admirable tales can scarcely imagine that they were written by an invalid in almost constant suffering.

The first of this series is Settlers at Home.¹ This story was followed by The Prince and the Peasant, an account of the French Revolution told in simple language easily understood by a child and giving a great deal of history under the guise of fiction. It reveals the character and feelings of the peasant class of people as contrasted with the life and feelings of the great aristocratic class. This little tale has lived and is read today.²

Feats on the Fiord, the third of the series, is another simple, interesting and imaginative story, in which the author painted such vivid, realistic pictures of the Fiords of Norway that people paid her the compliment of asking her when she had visited that country and forced her to confess that she had never been there. The story itself is not gripping, yet it is far from being dull, and it holds the attention. One merit, which is no doubt greatly responsible

1. I have been unable to read this tale and to find criticism upon it; also the following work of fiction by Miss Martineau I have been unable to examine:

The Billow and the Rock (1846).

Dawn Island (1845).

Five Years of Youth; or Sense and Sentiment (1831).

Ireland (1832).

The Settlers at Home (1841).

2. After three attempts, I finally succeeded in drawing this book from the Kansas City Library.

for the popularity of this book, is that it may be read at one sitting.

The descriptions, as in Miss Martineau's other works of fiction, form the best part of The Feats on the Fiord. These are very effective and colorful, as the following example shows:

"It is difficult to say whether these fiords are the most beautiful in summer or in winter. In summer they glitter with golden sunshine, and purple and green shadows from the mountain and forest lie on them; and these may be more lovely than the faint light of the winter noons of those latitudes, and the snowy pictures of frozen peaks which show themselves on the surface; but before the day is half over out come the stars, -- the glorious stars which shine like nothing else we have ever seen. There, the planets cast a faint shadow, as the young moon does with us; and these planets, and the constellations of the sky, as they silently glide from peak to peak of these rocky passes, are imaged on the waters so clearly that the fisherman, as he unmoors his boat for his evening task, feels as if he were about to shoot forth his vessel into another heaven, and cleave his way among the stars."¹

1. Feats on the Fiords, p. 1.

By the time Miss Martineau had finished the last story of this series, The Crofton Boys, she was very ill, and believed that she should never write another book, yet it is an animated, realistic picture of English school life with its pleasures and annoyances. The book is notable for its simplicity and directness. One slight blemish, perhaps, is that the conversation of the boys hardly sounds like the talk of young people -- it is too mature, too precise. The story is that of Hugh Procter, who became a cripple through an accident, but who, despite his handicap, achieved his heart's desire.

Another series of tales, published in three volumes, and written to meet a contemporary need and not with an artistic aim, is Forest and Game-Law Tales (1845), which show how mischievous the game laws were in their operation upon society at large, but more particularly upon the fortunes of individual farmers, and upon the laborers who were led into poaching. Miss Martineau thought that there could be no true understanding of the game-law system of her time without a review of its origin in the past.

This review she gives us in the first volume of the series, which is composed of four stories exemplifying the forest laws from the time of King Canute to the first session of the Long Parliament, Merhdin, The Manor and the Eyrie, Abbey Lore, and The Staunch and their Work. Of these, Merhdin is undoubtedly the best. It is well written, holds the interest, and contains a splendid character sketch of King Canute.

In volume two are The Bishop's Flock and the Bishop's Herd and Heathendom in Christendom, the latter being the better and more

interesting story. The essential facts of the story are true, for in the preface of the book Miss Martineau says: "In Heathendom in Christendom I have given, with scarcely any alteration but of names, the narrative of a murder which took place thirty years ago, as contained in the published report of the memorable trial for that murder, in April, 1816."

Volume three contains but one story, Gentle and Simple, the account of a simpleminded, ignorant youth who at first poached unintentionally and who, because of this offence, is led into poaching for a living by an organized poaching club. The story is dull, contains nothing outstanding, and is much too long.

The chapters of Traditions of Palestine were first published serially in the Monthly Repository in 1829-1830 but were collected into one volume in the spring of 1830. Miss Martineau says of this book: "Except that first story (The Hope of the Hebrews), the whole volume was written in a fortnight. By this little volume was my name first made known in literature. I still love the memory of the time when it was written, though there was little other encouragement than my own pleasure in writing, and the literary discipline which I continued to enjoy under Mr. Fox's editorship."¹ Yet this book does not show haste, and so charmingly connected are the separate tales that they appear as one story, which is an account of the life of Christ and the destruction of Jerusalem. The descriptive passages of this

1. Autobiography, Vol. I, p. 111.

story are especially fine, and the characters of Paltiel and Sadoc are particularly well drawn.

It is easily detected from reading the novels and tales of Miss Martineau that she was not essentially a writer of fiction, for, as a whole, they are not artistic; they were not written for mere entertainment, but are stories of a decided didactic nature -- each having some definite lesson to teach. Her true sphere was sociology, and her favorite type of writing was journalism, which no doubt largely explains why so few people know her name.¹

1. Of all the people who have asked me the title of my thesis only two, both teachers of English in Baker University, had heard the name of Harriet Martineau, and one of these admitted that she was merely a name to him.

CHAPTER V.

OTHER WORKS ASPIRING TO THE LITERARY.

Besides her novels and tales Harriet Martineau wrote other works which aspire to the literary. To most readers her Autobiography (1857) is perhaps the most interesting of her books; her many excellent essays form the greater part of her work and occupied her throughout her career; her poetry, however, deserves little mention, as it is without a doubt the poorest of her literary attempts.

An autobiography could hardly have been written under more unfavorable circumstances than was Miss Martineau's. The two large volumes were hastily scrawled in a few months after her visit to London, in 1855, to consult a specialist who told her she was suffering from an enlarged heart and consequently could not live any great length of time. The manuscript was sent to the printer as it was produced, the sheets of the first edition were printed; then the work was stereotyped, and the sheets and plates were packed away in the printer's office, insured, and held ready for immediate publication after the author's death.¹

The whole work is interesting and remarkable, as Miss Martineau's life was interesting and remarkable, but it shows the effects of hasty composition, for there is little in the book to

1. It is interesting to note that Miss Martineau did not die for twenty-one years after she finished her Autobiography.

relieve the cold facts and very little of the brighter, happier incidents of her life. She was anxious to tell us the things she wished us to know, and, fearing that death might overtake her in her task, she spent no time on embellishment.

Miss Martineau wrote her Autobiography partly because she knew she could write about her life better than anyone else, but principally because she thought it a duty to withhold her letters from publication, and she thought this book the best substitute for relating the personal things of her life.

The best part of the book is the pictures she gives of people in London society. Macaulay, Landseer, Darwin, Joanna Baille, Carlyle, Coleridge, the Brownings, Miss Edgeworth, Wordsworth, and many others are distinctly described. Of these descriptive sketches Mr. F. W. Higginson says, "Among all the innumerable pictures of London literary society, Miss Martineau's series of portraits will stand unrivalled."¹

"No one who knew her considers that she did herself justice in the Autobiography. It is hard and censorious; it displays vanity, both in its depreciation of her own work, and in its recital of the petty slights and insults which had been offered her from time to time; it is aggressive, as though replying to enemies rather than appealing to friends; and no one of either the finer or softer qualities of her nature is at all adequately indicated. It is, in short, the least

1. Mrs. F. Fenwick Miller: Harriet Martineau, p. 232.

worthy of her true self of all the writings of her life."¹

The Memoirs by Mrs. Maria Weston Chapman, published as a part of the Autobiography, are decidedly dull, for their author was not qualified for the work for which Miss Martineau asked her to do and for which she paid £200. If we had no other record of the last twenty years of Harriet Martineau's life than Mrs. Chapman's Memoirs we should know very little of this interesting period, for from this work we learn nothing we should really like to know.

Among Miss Martineau's most creditable works are her essays, the majority of which have been collected into book form. How to Observe; Morals and Manners (1838) is a collection of essays, as are Life in the Sickroom (1844), and Health Husbandry and Handicraft (1861). Most of the articles in the first volume of Miscellanies (1836) are essays.

The three prize essays, The Faith as Unfolded by Many Prophets (1832), Essential Faith of the Universal Church (1832), and Providence as Manifested through Israel (1832), are the works which made Miss Martineau think she could write. Of these she says: "From that hour (of their publication) I have never had any other anxiety about employment than what to choose, nor any real care about money." The last of these essays, which is the best, was intended to recommend the principles of Unitarianism to Jews; among other things it contains a short history of early Judaism and the history of Christ and of John

1. Mrs. F. Fenwick Miller: Harriet Martineau, p. 253-254.

the Baptist. Although its length prevented its accomplishing any great good, yet it bears little or no signs of being written by a young or inexperienced writer.

How to Observe: Morals and Manners (1838) belongs to the early period of Miss Martineau's work, having been published the next year after Society in America. The book is a series of hints for travelers and students, calling their attention to the points necessary for inquiry or observation in the different branches of geology, natural history, agriculture, the fine arts, general statistics, and social manners. It is far too long, very dull, and altogether uninteresting.

Life in the Sick Room or Essays by an Invalid (1844) also belongs to the early period of Miss Martineau's life, when she still had a theology which claimed absolute faith in God. The essays form a record of the author's life as an invalid during the years she spent at Tynemouth. It reveals her high thoughts and feelings in spite of apparently hopeless suffering. The book also contains much wise counsel for those who have the care of invalids.

Miss Martineau's love of truth and independence of mind are strikingly shown in this volume. "Everything", says she, "but truth becomes loathed in a sickroom. The restless can repose on nothing but this; the sharpened intellectual appetite can be satisfied with nothing less substantial; the susceptible spiritual taste can be gratified with nothing less genuine, noble and fair."¹ And further she adds, "I need

1. Life in the Sick Room, P. 26.

not say this plan of solitude in pain supposes sufficient and kindly attendance; but for a permanence, (though I know it to be otherwise in short illness,) there is no attendance to be compared with that of a servant."¹

Incidentally, it is in this truly interesting work, from which one learns so much about Harriet Martineau herself, that she makes known her wishes concerning her correspondence. "Having made the discovery of the preservation of my letters for the purposes of publication hereafter", she wrote, "I have ascertained my own legal rights, and acted upon them. I have adopted legal precautions against the publication of my private letters; -- I have made it a condition of my confidential correspondence that my letters shall not be preserved; and I have been indulged by my friends, generally, with an acquiescence in my request that my entire correspondence, except as relates to business, shall be destroyed."²

Here also Miss Martineau expresses her early faith in immortality, which is in direct contrast to that given in the latter pages of the Autobiography and The Letters on the Laws of Man's Nature and Development. "I know of no case of anyone who before believed, or took for granted, a future life, who began to disbelieve or doubt through sickness. . . . I believe it to be owing to the natural and unconquerable belief in our immortality, that suicide is not more common

1. Life in the Sick Room, p. 34.
2. Life in the Sick Room, p. 96-97.

than it is among sufferers. Neither should we be wondered at if we speak with a confidence which some cannot share, of meeting these our friends, and communing with them, when we ourselves depart. We have no power to doubt of this, if we believe at all that we shall live hereafter."¹

Health, Husbandry, and Handicraft (1861) belongs to the later period of Miss Martineau's career, to that period which has been called the journalistic period. The book was excellent for its time and served its purpose well. The first division of the volume, relating to health, appeared in the form of a series of essays on matters of sanitary concern and takes up such subjects as the causes of infant mortality, health of school children, proper food, dress, and household sanitation. In this division also appears her comparatively well known Maid of all Work, which is so realistic that people thought the author must have been at some time a maid of all work herself. There is nothing unusual in the style or the language, however, nothing to make this essay particularly literary. The division on Husbandry contains the interesting account of Our Farm of Two Acres, in which the author relates her experiment in farming on a small plot of ground. This essay was very helpful to her poor neighbors, who liked Miss Martineau because of her sincere desire to be of assistance to them. This division also contains the ridiculous and unbelievable account of how Miss Martineau cured her cow, Ainslee, by mesmerism. Perhaps the most in-

1. Life in the Sickroom, pp. 106, 108, 123.

teresting essays in the division on Handicraft is Time and the Hour, a detailed account of watchmaking as practiced in England.

In the first volume of Miscellanies (1836), which belongs to the earliest period of the author's career but which was not collected until 1860, are Philosophical Essays, Essays on the Art of Thinking, Sabbath Musings, and Moral Essays, all of which are more or less tedious. The Letter to the Deaf is perhaps the least irksome, for it reveals Miss Martineau's thoughts on her own deafness and expresses her desire to help other deaf persons and to save them from some of her own mistakes. The style of these essays is very ordinary, a weakness which results in their being little read.

Miss Martineau's so called Reviews, which occupy the second volume of Miscellanies, are nothing more or less than original essays suggested by the subject of a new book. Most of these are thoughtful, written on philosophical subjects, and in a calm style, well suited to logical and argumentative essays. One review, showing much thought, is on Godwin's Thoughts on Man, His Nature, Productions, and Discoveries.¹ Another of interest to a present day reader reviews Richard Whately's The Errors of Romanism Traced to Their Origin in Human Nature and is called Romanism and Episcopacy.²

Miss Martineau was no exception to the rule that most young authors write or try to write poetry. In the latter part of her life

1. Miscellanies, Vol. 2, p. 118.

2. Miscellanies, Vol. 2, p. 132.

she never attempted verse and always considered her poetry very ordinary, which estimate is quite correct. Her poetry is not good poetry; the thought expressed is usually good, but the lines contain little or no music, and much of the verse is not far above jingle, as the following extract from Desire of Divine Wisdom shows:

"When Samuel heard in still midnight,
A voice amid God's presence bright,
He rose, and said, on bended knee,
'Speak, Lord! thy servant heareth thee."¹

Among the best of the poems is The Three Ages of the Soul:

"There is a time, --- and childhood is the hour, ---
To hear the surges break among the caves;
To hail with mirth and sport their awful roar,
And hear no deeper music in the waves.
There is a time to rove the lawn, the field, ---
Chasing the hind, to thread the forest glade,
And cull no beauty but the flowers they yield,
Nor find more deep refreshment than their shade.

"Then is the time to gaze upon the sky,
When the moon reigns, and sapphire hosts advance,
And feel no influence wafted from on high,
See nought mysterious in their radiant dance.
Then is the time to ask where they can be,

1. Miscellanies, Vol. I, p. 343.

Whom death withdrew as side by side we trod;
And since no tongue can tell, no eye can see,
To turn and sport upon their burial sod.

"There is a time, -- and now the hour is come, --
Where life breathes out from all these hues and forms;
When winds and streams sing of the spirit's home,
And ocean chants her welcome midst his storms.
Then nature woe the ear, directs the eye,
Breathes out her essence o'er the sentient soul;
Fathoms the depths for her, and scales the sky,
And speeds her ardent flight from pole to pole.

'Life now, -- no mean creation of a day,
Held without thought and in the present bound, --
Looking before and after, holds its way,
Treading serene its bright, eternal round.
Now Death, familiar grown, eye hovers near,
To shadow forth the spirits fairest dreams;
To tend young hopes, to quell the low-born fear,
And chase, with light divine, earth's fitful gleams.

"The time shall be, -- O come the promised hour! --
When all these outward forms shall melt away,
Seas shall be dry, and stars shall shine no more,

Hushed every sound, and quenched each living ray.
Yet, treasured as the life, they cannot die. --
Part of herself, eternal as the soul,
Hesperus shall still lead forth his hosts on high.
Still earth be gay, and ocean gleam and roll.

"O come the hour when the expanded mind, --
Here fed by nature with immortal food, --
Within itself the universe shall find,
Survey its treasures and pronounce them good!
O! haste the hour when to the deathless fire
On the eternal altar, souls shall come,
Linked in one joy; -- and while its flames aspire
Still throng around and feel its light their home!"¹

Other rather good poems are The Last Tree of the Forest, Ode to Religious Liberty, The Forsaken Nest, The Flower of the Desert, and The Breath of Life.²

All of Miss Martineau's poetry breathes forth a religious fervor quite in keeping with her religious ideas and beliefs; most of it has very pertinent and realistic suggestions of nature and outdoor life; and all is written with the earnest purpose of teaching a lesson, which their author might have expressed much better in prose.

1. Miscellanies, Vol. I, p. 350.
2. Miscellanies, Vol. I, p. 521-552.

Miss Martineau really counted these works just discussed as some of her most literary writings, and well may they all be classed as works aspiring to the literary. At the time when they were written they were read with interest and considered good, but today the Auto-biography is the only one which excites the attention and curiosity of the reader, and this to only a mild degree.

CHAPTER VI.
HISTORICAL WORKS.

Miss Martineau was one of the interesting historians of her time, and her books of history were widely read. Although today they are rarely used, yet they contain much of value and a great deal of intense interest to the real student of history. Mrs. Miller writes of Miss Martineau as an historical writer: "Miss Martineau has been able to discuss events which may almost be called contemporary as calmly as if she were examining a remote period of antiquity. She has written the history of a rather undignified reign with a dignity that raises even the strife of forgotten and exploded parties into philosophic importance. She exhibits warm sympathies for all that is noble, honorable, or exalted -- and a thorough disdain of every paltry contrivance devised to serve a temporary purpose, or gain an unworthy end. The principles which she enunciates are based on eternal truths, and evolved with a logical precision that admits rhetorical ornament without becoming obscure or confused. There are few living authors who may be so implicitly trusted with the task of writing contemporary history as Miss Martineau. She has spared no pains in investigating the truth, and allowed no fears to prevent her from stating it."¹

Her first effort in history was History of the Thirty Year's

1. Mrs. F. Fenwick Miller: Harriet Martineau, p. 204.

Peace (1849-50) which is a bulky work covering four large volumes.

"The History of the Peace was one of the literary projects of Mr. Charles Knight. It was based on the idea that, to many persons, particularly young persons entering upon the world, there was no period of English history at once so important, and about which it was so difficult to obtain information, as the immediately past age. The First Book, excepting the portion on the Spanish American Colonies, was Mr. Knight's composition. Being unable to complete the work with his own pen, he transferred it to Miss Harriet Martineau, whom he justly conceived to be well fitted for the task by her knowledge of political and social science, and her extensive acquaintance amongst the public men of her era. The result, it is scarcely necessary to say, fully justified Mr. Knight's expectations, for certainly no such luminous memoir of the Thirty Years' Peace is likely to be written by any contemporary.....

"In 1858 Miss Martineau gave the work a final revision. She then made a number of corrections, and substituted the Eighth Chapter of the First Book for the portion on the South American Colonies

above referred to."¹

This work, covering the years between 1816 and 1841, is an astonishing example of rapid industry, as it was completed in twelve months. One of the best told incidents is the account of the commercial crisis of 1825-26,² about which Miss Martineau was so able to write from personal experience. The account of Lord Durham's Canadian Government and his secret help from Mr. Charles Fuller is much like a story, and perhaps the least tiresome portion of the entire work.³ The fall of Sir Robert Peel⁴ is very ably described, but Mrs. Miller suggests that the failure to mention Disraeli in connection with this makes the work obviously incomplete. Volume four deals entirely with the repeal of the Corn Laws, which were one of Miss Martineau's pet aversions.

After completing The History of the Thirty Years' Peace Miss Martineau industriously undertook to supplement it by histories of England during the fifteen years preceding and the five years following, thus making a complete history of the half century. Because of poor health she was never able to complete the history for the years 1845-50, but her Introduction to the History of the Thirty Years' Peace (1851), or Martineau's History of England (1800-1815), as it was later called, was well known. This is a very detailed account of the fifteen years which it spans, but in many places it reads more like a novel than Deerbrook. The report of the Irish Rebellion, July 23, 1802, is

1. History of the Peace, Vol. I, Preliminary Notice.
2. History of the Peace, Vol. I, Bk. II, Chap. VII.
3. History of the Peace, Vol. III, Bk. V, Chap. XII.
4. History of the Peace, Vol. III, Bk. V, Chap. XIII.

especially interesting, vivid, and alive.¹ To us of the twentieth century so accustomed to skillful surgeons and their marvelous operations the following quotation sounds very odd and is sure to attract the attention: "All agreed that the Duke of Portland ought to be the man; but his health, though improved by a severe surgical experiment, was not thought equal to such a charge."²

British Rule in India (1857) is an historical sketch about which Miss Martineau says in the Preface of the book: "The aim of the work, and the treatment of its subject, are as humble as can well be. I simply wish to put in the way of others a convenience, which I should often have been glad of myself, for obtaining a general notion of what our Indian empire is, how we came by it, and what has gone forward in it since it first became connected with England." The material given covers the time between 1595 and 1856 and is a detailed description of India and its people, the relation of the British to the Indians, and the causes of their quarrels. The book, as a whole, can certainly lay no claim to the interesting, for it is very dull, but sifted through the dry facts an occasional vivid passage may be found.

Miss Martineau's histories have not lived for the same reason that her other works have not, -- they are long, too detailed, and deal so entirely with contemporary affairs that they cannot hold the attention of a twentieth century reader.³

1. Introduction to the Peace, p. 65-70.

2. History of the Peace, p. 208.

3. I have been unable to examine the following historical works:

- Corporate Traditions and National Rights (1857).
Endowed Schools of Ireland (1859).
England and Her Soldiers (1859).
Half a Century of the British Empire from 1800-50 (1851). (Discontinued).
A History of England from the Commencement of the 19th Century to the
Crimean War (1864).
A History of the American Compromises (1856).
The Hampdens (1880).
The Manifest Destiny of the American Union (1857).
The Martyr Age of the United States (1839)

CHAPTER VII.

PHILOSOPHICAL WORKS.

Miss Martineau was a curious phenomenon as a thinker, as her philosophical works show; she thought as few men thought and as no other woman dared to think at that time. "The common notion of Harriet Martineau has little appealing charm. She is thought of, by most of those who think of her at all, as strong, severe, angular, imperious, erratic in thought, and dogmatic in the expression of thought; as a woman of gifts, whose varied intellectual and spiritual life insisted on thrusting its least lovely phases on public view. Nothing that she wrote will live. She has not won her way, and she has failed to win it, not only, and perhaps, not mainly, because of the ephemeral philosophies to which, under unfortunate conditions, she always perversely lent herself, but also because of a certain repellent hardness, a failure in constructive imagination and sympathetic truth, which seem to argue her, after all, something less than a woman."¹ Miss Martineau's works naturally express some philosophy of life, and it is interesting to note the changes which her philosophy undergoes, but her only true philosophical books are Comte's Positive Philosophy and Letters on the Laws of Man's Nature and Development.

Miss Martineau wrote Letters on the Laws of Man's Nature and Development (1851) in conjunction with Henry George Atkinson, to whom

1. Miss Martineau and the Carlyles: Francis Brown. Atlantic Monthly, 106 : 581 - 7 S '10.

she was strongly attracted and who influenced her thinking to a marked degree. The form of the book is that of a correspondence between Miss Martineau, who asks the questions, and Mr. Atkinson, who gives the answers. It expounds the doctrine of philosophical atheism and is full of records of cures by mesmerism and the use of clairvoyance. Miss Martineau says of her mesmerizing power: "How many a sufferer have I seen relieved of one ailment or another, and daily recovering flesh and colour and animation at the expense of a pain in my hand, or wrist, or elbow, or shoulder and a nervous exhaustion which a cold bath, or an hour in the sunshine would repair."¹ Her account of the curing of an idiot² does not sound reasonable or plausible to a practical mind. Mr. Atkinson was not well known, and it was only by virtue of having Harriet Martineau's name attached to them that the Letters received attention.

The questions asked by Miss Martineau in this book disclose her train of thought and the vast difference in her religious conceptions from those expressed in Devotional Exercises and Life in the Sick-room. Here she writes with much force: "There is no theory of a God, of an author of Nature, of an origin of the universe which is not utterly repugnant to my faculties, which is not (to my feelings) so irreverent as to make me blush, so misleading as to make me mourn."³ And again later in the book: "Whoever and whatever Jesus might be (of

1. Letters on the Laws of Man's Nature and Development, p. 67.
2. Letters on the Laws of Man's Nature and Development, p. 69-72.
3. Letters on the Laws of Man's Nature and Development, p. 217.

which I think we know little or nothing), the traditions which settled on his head are easily derivable from the physiological and theological peculiarities of the race, its locality and period of time."¹ The ideas as expressed in this work, and as accepted by Miss Martineau, were those by which she lived the rest of her life.

Any real value which the Letters had or might have had as a contribution to science and philosophy is lost sight of in its disorder of arrangement.

Miss Martineau's translation and condensation of Auguste Comte's Positive Philosophy (1853) is an intelligent and able performance. Its style is easy and rapid, although it is not altogether free from the defect of haste. In order to appreciate this magnificent work one would necessarily have to be a careful student of philosophy, but the book stands among her most meritorious and useful works, and many authorities think it her greatest achievement. In Little Journeys to the Homes of Famous Women, Elbert Hubbard has paid high tribute to this book. "Opinions may differ as to what constitutes Harriet Martineau's best work, but my view is that her translation and condensation of Auguste Comte's six volumes into two will live when all her other work is forgotten. Comte's own writings were filled with repetitions and rhetorical floundering. He was more of a philosopher than a writer. He had an idea too big for him to express, but he expressed it right bravely. Miss Martineau, trained writer and

1. Letters on the Laws of Man's Nature and Development, p. 222.

thinker, did not translate verbally; she caught the idea, and translated the thought rather than the language. And so it has come about that her work has been translated literally back into French and is accepted as a text book of Positivism, while the original books of the philosopher are merely collected by museums and bibliophiles as curiosities."¹

In the preface of the work Miss Martineau gives the following interesting reason for attempting the task of this translation: "It seems to me unfair, through fear or indolence, to use the benefits conferred on us by M. Comte without acknowledgment. M. Comte's work, in its original form, does no justice to its importance, even in France; and much less in England. . . . My strongest inducement to this enterprise was my deep conviction of our need of this book in my own country, in a form which renders it accessible to the largest number of intelligent readers. The supreme dread of everyone who cares for the good of nation or race is that men should be adrift for want of anchorage for their convictions. I have endeavored to bring M. Comte and his English readers face to face, with as little drawback as possible from inter-
gention. . . . My object was to convey the meaning of the original in the clearest way I could Where I have erred it is from want of ability, for I have taken all the pains I could." The purpose which Miss Martineau wished to achieve she accomplished admirably.

Both works discussed reveal the thought in the mind of the writer, although neither can be called absolutely her own; the one written in conjunction with a man practically unknown has died, while

1. P. 106-7.

the one, written with the clear-sighted philosophy of a man like
Comte back of it, has lived and will continue to do so.

CHAPTER VIII.
SOCIOLOGICAL WORKS.

Harriet Martineau seems more natural and more at ease in her sociological works than any other. Some of these are tales, as Illustrations of Political Economy and Illustrations of Taxation, and others are in the form of essays on sociological conditions, as illustrated in Household Education. As a whole these works are perhaps the most worthy of consideration, for, especially in the tales, Miss Martineau seems to have reached the height of her style in clearness and in realistic pictures.

The Illustrations of Political Economy (1832-34) is the achievement which made Miss Martineau famous. These tales were read and talked about everywhere because they met definite contemporary needs, and it is for this reason that they hold little or interest for the present day reader. Mrs. Miller says of them: "While statesmen, politicians, thinkers, and students were praising the clearness and appreciating the power of the work as political economy, the general public eagerly bought and read the books, both for their bearing on the legislative questions of the day and for their vividness and interest as stories. And indeed they richly deserve to be read as fiction."¹ The thirty-four articles are narrative in form, and much simple dialogue is employed. The author's plan was to embody every shade of human character; to lay her scenes in different parts of the

1. Mrs. Florence F. Miller: Harriet Martineau, p. 113.

world, with topography and surroundings appropriate to each story; and to represent accurately the governments and social states of the various places. Her aim in writing the series was "to deduce from abstract science, rules for daily life."¹

The characters of the stories are the strongest point of the series, that is until they begin to talk political economy. They always seem like real people; they are clearly individualized and consistently portrayed, for they speak, think, and act in accordance with their natures. The sterner virtues in Cousin Marshall, in Lady F---, in Ella of Gravelock, and in Mary Kay are clearly and attractively depicted, as are the milder and more attractive ones illustrated in the patience of Christian Vandermut, the unconscious devotion to duty of Nicholas, the love of Hester Morrison and in the proud patriotism of the Polish exiles.

The story of Berkley the Banker tells how Miss Martineau's father failed in business and is interesting when read with this in mind.

French Wines and Politics is a tale of the period of the French Revolution, and shows how the fortunes of certain wine merchants near Bordeaux, and of the head of the Paris house in connection, were affected by the course of that great "social convulsion". The story shows plainly Miss Martineau's constant sympathy with democracy, her hatred of oppression and tyranny, and her aversion to class government. The French

1. Mrs. Florence F. Miller: Harriet Martineau, p. 104.

King, Louis Phillipe, objected very much to this story and refused to allow its author to set foot on French soil.

The Charmed Sea is a melancholy story founded upon the terrible facts of the lives of the exiled Poles in Eastern Siberia who were forced to work in the silver mines. Had the tale been written in the service of the Poles it could not have been more moving. So afraid of it was the Tzar of Russia that he ordered all copies of the tale in Russia to be destroyed.

Sowers not Reapers is an anti-Corn-Law story. The Loom and the Luggar deals with free trade, and Demerara with slavery.

The only adverse criticism of The Political Economy series which appeared in the contemporary press was from the Quarterly Review. The reviewer objected impartially to every one of the twelve stories which had then appeared. In speaking of this Mrs. Miller says: "Every circumstance which could arouse prejudice against the series was taken advantage of, from party political feeling and religious bigotry, down to the weakness of fluid philanthropy, and 'the prudery and timidity of the middle class of England'. The principal ground of attack was the story which dealt with Malthusianism, Weal and Woe in Grave-lock. . . . All that could be painful to her as a woman, and injurious to her as a writer, was said, or attempted to be conveyed, in this article."¹ But criticism did not embitter Miss Martineau; it

1. Mrs. Florence F. Miller: Harriet Martineau, p. 123-24.

only made her more courageous, and proved a stimulus to her work. So powerful and so clear was the thought in these studies that it became the chief factor in bringing about very great reforms in England. The articles were powerful in educating public opinion, but as works of art they are plainly and inevitably damaged by having been written to convey definite lessons.

Illustrations of Political Economy was followed immediately by Illustrations of Taxation (1834), which illustrate the unjust, odious, and unprofitable system of taxation in England. It was Miss Martineau's aim to point out the evils of this system in such a way that the public mind would be stimulated into demanding a simple, direct system of taxation. The tales show haste, and Miss Martineau realized this, for in the preface to The Scholars of Arneside she says: "If I had consulted my own convenience, and the value of my little books as literary productions, I should have written less rapidly." The Jerseymen Meeting, which illustrates the evils of taxes on articles of home manufacture, is perhaps the best story of the series. It has a fairly good plot, but the characters are feeble, tiresome, and not true to life.

By far the most admirable of Miss Martineau's sociological writings is Household Education (1849), unquestionably one of her most useful and helpful books, setting forth ideas which are not yet antiquated. It expounds the theory that freedom and rationality, rather than command and obedience, are the most effectual instruments of education. Its wise suggestions to parents for the physical, intellectual,

moral, and social training of their children are of the most practical kind, and are based on the soundest philosophical principles. Many of her own childhood experiences are used by Miss Martineau to illustrate her points. The book discusses the many perplexing problems of discipline, indulgence, temper, and habits with rare intelligence and sympathy. Early in the book the author writes: "I have no ambition to teach, but a strong desire to set members of households consulting together about their course of action towards each other. . . . Every member of the household, -- children servants, apprentices, -- every inmate of the dwelling, must have a share in the family plan, or those who make it are despots and those who are excluded are slaves."¹ Miss Martineau rather scorns the object of American education: "The object of education among a very large proportion of American parents", she says, "is to make politicians; and it certainly is attained."²

Household Education may be read with pleasure and profit by anyone interested in the education of children. An interesting fact about the book, and one which testifies to its popularity, is that an eighth edition was published in Boston sometime between 1849 and 1900.⁵

1. Household Education, p. 10.
2. Household Education, p. 24.
3. I have been unable to examine the following sociological works:
The Factory Controversy (1855).
Poor Laws and Paupers (1833-34).
The Sickness and Health of the People of Bleaburn (1853).
The Tendency of Strikes and Sticks to Produce Low Wages and of Union between Masters and Men to ensure Good Wages (183--?).

CHAPTER IX.

BOOKS OF TRAVEL.

Among Miss Martineau's most interesting works, and those which have lived and which will no doubt continue to live, are her books of travel. It was unusual for a woman of the middle nineteenth century to travel as extensively as did Miss Martineau; therefore it was unusually interesting to her readers to see what she would say of the places she had visited, the people and customs she had observed.

Miss Martineau was thirty-five years of age and known as the ablest woman writer in England when she visited America in 1834. For this reason what she would say about America was considered a matter of immense importance. What she did say took form in Society in America and in Retrospect of Western Travel.

Most of the chapters in Society in America (1837) are essays on legislation, manners, customs, and institutions rather than sketches of society. The book is singular in value for its account of political conditions and social arrangements of the American people, but it has very little in it of the ordinary book of travel, for it contains few reminiscences and is very impersonal. The book is philosophical in nature, and Miss Martineau always thought it should have been called Theory and Practice of Society in America, but she was overruled by the wishes of her publishers. The competition among publishers for

Miss Martineau's American book was in amusing contrast to the utter scorn with which her proposals for her Political Economy had been received.

Some of the most important chapters in Society in America are those entitled Politics, The General Government, Allegiance to Law, Morals of Female Factory Population, Property, Utterance, and Religion.

Perhaps the best known and most useful chapter in the book is Morals of Slavery, which is published as a single essay. In this the author discusses thoroughly the virtues and vices of slavery; among them personal oppression of the negroes, immorality of slave owners, degradation of women, corruption of children by the slaves, and the disregard of human rights. This one essay was enough to make the slave owners despise Miss Martineau.

There are many fine descriptive passages in the book, among which is the following:

"The English traveller finds himself never weary by day of prying into the forest, from beneath its canopy; or, from a distance drinking in its exquisite hues; and his dreams, for months or years, will be of the mossy roots, the black pine, and silvery birch stems, the translucent green shades of the beech, and the slender creeper, climbing like a ladder into the topmost boughs of the dark holly, a hundred feet high. He will dream of

the march of the hours through the forest; the deep blackness of night, broken by the dun forest-fires, and startled by the showers of the sparks, sent abroad by the casual breeze from the burning stems. He will hear again the shrill piping of the whip-poor-will, and the multitudinous din from the occasional swamp. He will dream of the deep silence which precedes the dawn; of the gradual apparition of the haunting trees, coming faintly out of the darkness; of the first level rays, instantaneously piercing the woods to their very heart, and lighting them up into boundless ruddy colonades, garlanded with wavy verdure, and carpeted with glittering wild flowers. Or, he will dream of the clouds of gay butterflies, and gauzy dragon-flies, that hover above the noon-day paths of the forest, or cluster about some graceful shrub, making it appear to bear all the flowers of Eden. Or the golden moon will look down through his dream, making for him islands of light in an ocean of darkness. He may not see the stars but by glimpses; but the winged stars of those regions, -- the gleaming fire-flies, -- radiate from every sleeping bough, and keep his eye in fancy busy in following their

glancing, while his spirit sleeps in the deep charms of the summer night."¹

Incidentally, in Society in America, Miss Martineau relates the story of the Willey family which was destroyed by a landslide in the White Mountains² on which Hawthorne bases his The Ambitious Guest in Twice Told Tales. This sad incident must have impressed her very deeply, for she speaks of it again later in the book.³

The chapter on Utterances contains some interesting and rather amusing criticism of American literature and authors. Of Irving, for example, Miss Martineau says: "Irving's writings have had their need. He has lived in the sunshine of fame for many years, and in the pleasant consciousness that he has been a benefactor to the present generation, by shedding some gentle, benignant, and beguiling influences on many intervals of their rough and busy lives. More than this he has probably not expected; and more than this he does not seem likely to achieve. If any of his works live, it will be his Columbus; and the later of his productions will be the first forgotten."⁴ Cooper is criticized rather severely. "Cooper's novels have a very puny vitality. Some descriptions of scenery, and some insulated adventures, have great merit; but it is not human life that he presents.

1. Society in America, Vol. I, p. 122-123.
2. Society in America, Vol. I, p. 225-226.
3. Society in America, Vol. III, p. 62.
4. Society in America, Vol. III, p. 213-214.

His female characters are far from human; and in his selections of the chances of mortal existence, he usually chooses the remotest. He has a vigour of perception and conception, which might have made him, with study and discipline, a great writer. As it is, he is, I believe, regarded as a much-regretted failure."¹ For Bryant and Bancroft Miss Martineau has nothing but the highest praise.

Miss Martineau was very much afraid to write and have published a book on America, thinking it would ruin her reputation, but it has happened that it is the only one of her works widely read today.

Retrospect of Western Travel is far different, much lighter, more purely descriptive, more personal than the first American book; in fact it is almost gossipy. The most pleasing parts are reminiscences of such eminent Americans as Priestly, Madison, Jefferson, Webster, Clay, Calhoun, Davy Crockett, Judge Story, and Chief Justice Marshall. The chapter on Prisons² is very impressive; the one on Life at Washington³ is perhaps the most interesting in the book. This work was not so well received as Society in America, and today is practically unread except by special students of history and sociology.

In 1846 Miss Martineau, with a party of congenial friends, sailed up the Nile to the second cataract, studied Thebes and Philae, the Great Pyramid, and visited bazaars, mosques, and harems in Cairo and Damascus. Next they went to Sinai, then completely passed through Palestine and Syria. The result of the travels was Eastern Life, Pres-

1. Society in America, Vol. III, p. 214.

2. Retrospect of Western Travel, Vol. I, p. 199-227.

3. Retrospect of Western Travel, Vol. I, p. 235-273.

ent and Past (1848), but this book is more than a mere travel book, for in it Harriet Martineau first declared she had ceased to have a theology. "Her travels brought her to believe that men have ever constructed the image of a 'Ruler of the Universe' out of their own minds; that all successive ideas about the supreme power have been originated from within, and modified by the surrounding circumstances; and that all theologies, therefore, are baseless productions of the human imagination, and have no essential connection with those great religious ideas and emotions by which men are constrained to live nobly, to do justly, and to love what they see to be the true and the right."¹

This book displays Miss Martineau's keen observation, active thought, vigorous memory, power of deep and sustained study, and mastery of language.

Egypt and Its Faith, which forms the first part of the book, is a descriptive and historical sketch written in the first person. Among other things the author's intense hatred of polygamy is expressed here: "I declare that if we are to look for a hell on earth, it is where polygamy exists; and that, as polygamy runs riot in Egypt, Egypt is in the lowest depths of hell. I always before believed that every arrangement and prevalent practice had some one fair side, some one redeeming quality; and diligently did I look for this fair side in regard to polygamy; but there is none. The longer one studies the subject; and the deeper one penetrates into it, the more is one's mind con-

1. Mrs. Florence F. Miller: Harriet Martineau, p. 202.

founded with the intricacy of its iniquity, and the more does one's heart feel as if it would break."¹

Part two, Sirai and Its Faith, is also historical and descriptive, as is part three, Palestine and Its Faith.

The Athenaeum for March 31, 1849, gives the following about Eastern Life: "Though all her other books should die and be buried utterly under the dust of time, this one will never be entirely lost. It is accurate and as careful in its facts as the driest compendium, while yet its pages glow with eloquence, and are instinct with political wisdom." But the writer in the Athenaeum was wrong, for this book is seldom read today.

In the preface of Letters from Ireland (1853) Miss Martineau says: "My readers will take them for what they are -- a rapid account of impressions received and thoughts excited from day to day in the course of a journey of above twelve hundred miles." These letters were written in 1852 during a visit to Ireland. There is nothing outstanding about them, and they are absolutely uninteresting to a present reader. They contain discussions of various topics -- the manufacture of linen, growing of flax, tenant rights, women, paupers, landlords, priests, voters, rival churches, emigration, and education.

1. Eastern Life, Present and Past, p. 236.

CHAPTER X.

MISCELLANEOUS WORKS.

Miss Martineau's miscellaneous articles and books form no small part of her writing, and some of her best short pieces are to be found in this group.

Devotional Exercises (1832) contains many a noble thought and many a high inspiration expressed in words equally flowing and fervent. A reflection and a prayer are supplied for each morning and evening of the seven days of the week. The nature and tone of this book may best be felt by reading thoughtfully the following prayer:

"O thou, great and glorious being! in whom our life is, and whose are all our ways, thou art from everlasting to everlasting, and shalt never change. From thee I have derived my being, and unto thee therefore, is the tribute of my adoration due.

"Once more I have been preserved during the week, and again am I permitted to look forward to the pleasures of the day of rest. I thank thee, O Lord, for all thy goodness; and especially that I have been blest with the glad tidings of salvation. By them am I enabled to surmount temptation, to endure sorrow with cheerfulness, to taste the delight

of gratitude when in the enjoyment of prosperity and amidst all the changes of life to look forward to a state of uninterrupted happiness. As week after week of my mortal life passeth away, may I become more and more fitted for that eternal existence on which I must soon enter. May I waste none of the hours which thou hast given me to prepare for judgment; may I never forget that thou requirest me to become holy, just and good; not loving the vain things of this vain world, but desiring chiefly to please and glorify thee.

"I know that all who diligently seek thee may find thy support and favor at all times on earth, and may dwell in thy manifest presence in heaven. O Lord! enable me to prepare myself to appear before thee, whether I be taken early or late from my mortal pilgrimage. If but a short time yet remaineth to me, may I purify my heart, and exalt my affections, so that I may not fear to enter on another state of being. If many months and years are allotted me in this life, may I diligently labour, as long as I live, to please thee. May no possession of worldly happiness make me unmindful of thee, the giver of all good; but may I be a worthy instrument of

thy benevolence, in promoting the best interests of mankind.

"I pray for myself and all whom I love, that thou wilt contrive unto us the same gracious protection which hath hitherto guarded us from evil. May we sleep in peace this night, and arise in the morning prepared to spend the holy day so as to nourish and strengthen our heart in all pious and benevolent dispositions. May we ever put our confidence in thee alone, the universal Father; and may thy best blessings be the portion of all thy children of mankind. May the glad tidings of salvation be universally diffused and gratefully received. May thy will at length be done on earth, as it is in heaven; and when this world and the things of it shall have passed away, may the countless millions of beings, who by thy mercy shall have become heirs of eternal life, surround thy throne, praising thee, their Creator, God, and Father forever and ever. Amen!"¹

Miss Martineau's Biographical Sketches is a collection of Memoirs which were written for the Daily News from the author's first

1. Devotional Exercises, p. 96.

connection with that paper in 1852 to 1866. They were republished, for Miss Martineau's benefit, in 1869, by Mr. J. R. Robinson of the Daily News. Most of them were reprinted unchanged. They are classified as Literary, Scientific, Professional, Social, Politicians, and Royal. Perhaps the most interesting under the first class is the sketch of Charlotte Brontë. The very first line, "'Currier Bell' is dead,"¹ captures the attention, and the charming account which follows, holds it. The sketch of Miss Barry is very touching and intimate.²

In order to appreciate these splendid Memoirs one would have to be intimately acquainted with people and affairs in the nineteenth century, but to a reader of our day they seem rather horesome and antiquated.

Morley says: 'Miss Martineau's Biographical Sketches are masterpieces in the style of the vignette. Their conciseness, their clearness in fact, their definiteness in judgment, and above all the rightly graduated impression of the writers own personality in the background, make them perfect in their kind. Here more than anywhere Miss Martineau shows the true quality of the writer, the true mark of literature, the sense of proportion, the modulated sentence, the compact and suggestive phrase. There is happy precision, a pithy brevity,

1. Biographical Sketches, p. 44-51.
2. Biographical Sketches, p. 259-265.

a condensed argumentativeness.¹

1. John Morley: Critical Miscellanies, Vol. III, p.185-211.
* I have been unable to examine the following miscellaneous works:
A Complete Guide to the English Lakes (1855).
The Tourist's Atlas of the Lake District of England (1875).
Guide to Keswick and Its Environs (1857).
Guide to Windermere (1854).
Homes Abroad (1844).
Letters on Mesmerism (1845).
Survey of the Lake District (1860).

CHAPTER XI.

CRITICISM ON HARRIET MARTINEAU.

Miss Martineau's writings must have called forth a great deal of comment and contemporary criticism, but this criticism is very difficult to find. Besides the Memoirs by Mrs. Chapman only one entire book has been devoted to Harriet Martineau; the book written by Mrs. Florence Fenwick Miller.¹ This is a splendid account of Miss Martineau's life and especially valuable because of the careful account of the twenty-one years after the completion of the Autobiography. The book is well written; its style is simple and clear; and Mrs. Miller quotes enough from Miss Martineau to show the reader her style and thought, which makes the book very interesting to the casual reader.

Elbert Hubbard has given us a brief but very fascinating account of Miss Martineau and her home at Ambleside in Little Journeys to the Homes of Famous Women (1877). He describes Mrs. Martineau and her treatment of her daughter, Harriet, in a very vivid manner.

Mrs. Sarah Knowles Bolton tells a great many interesting facts in her chapter on Harriet Martineau in Famous Types of Womanhood (1892). She gives a short review of the Autobiography and brief criticisms of Illustrations of Political Economy, Deerbrook, Dawn

1. Mrs. Florence Fenwick Miller: Harriet Martineau (1887).

Island, Letters on Mesmerism, Eastern Life, Letters on the Laws of Man's Nature and Development, and Biographical Sketches.

John Morley in Critical Miscellanies says in speaking of the Autobiography: "The two volumes of autobiography tell all that we seek to know, and the reader who judges them in an equitable spirit will be ready to allow that, when all is said that can be said, of her hardness, arbitrariness, and insularity, Harriet Martineau is still a singular and worthy figure among the conspicuous personages of a generation that has now almost vanished. Some will wonder how it was that her literary performances acquired so little of permanent value. But behind 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 selfreliance both in opinion 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."¹ This is a very careful and truthful estimate of Miss Martineau.

Among the best critical essays found in magazines are those by James Freeman Clark in the North American Review,² W. R. Greg in

1. Morley, Critical Miscellanies, Vol. III, p. 179.
2. North American Review, 124:435.

the Nineteenth Century,¹ and G. A. Simcox in the Fortnightly Review.²

One of the finest tributes to the memory of Harriet Martineau was paid by the American people who, after her death, raised funds by public subscription for a statue of her, which was made in white marble by Anne Whitney of Boston. It represents Miss Martineau seated, with her hands folded over a manuscript on her knees.

The statue was unveiled in the Old South Church, December 26, 1883, Mary A. Livermore presiding and William Lloyd Garrison, jr., and Wendell Phillips making addresses. It proved to be the last public address of Mr. Phillips, who died six weeks later. The following extracts from his address show Mr. Phillips to have been an admirer of Miss Martineau: "The reason we should endorse this memorial of the city to Miss Martineau is because her service transcends nationality. She was the grandest woman of her day. . . . She has done more for beneficial changes in the English world than any ten men in Great Britain. . . . In an epoch fertile of great genius among women, it may be said of Miss Martineau that she was the peer of the noblest, and that her influence on the progress of the age was more than equal to that of all the others combined. She has the great honor of having always seen truth one generation ahead; and so consistent was she, so keen of insight, that there is no need of going back to explain by circumstances in order to justify the actions of her life. . . ."

1. Nineteenth Century, 2:97.
2. Fortnightly Review, 27:216.

"We place the statue here in Boston because she has made herself American. . . .

"You may speak of the magnanimity and courage of Harriet Martineau; but the first element is her rectitude of purpose, of which was born that true instinct which saw through all things. . . .

"She was always the friend of the poor. Prisoner, slave, worn out by toil in the mill, no matter who the sufferer, there was always one person who could influence Tory and Liberal to listen. . . . She was the greatest American Abolitionist."¹ No better estimate of Miss Martineau than this has been made.

1. Phillips: Speeches, Lectures and Letters, p. 60.

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