

Part II American Connections, Invalidism (1834-1843)

Chapter 9 Harriet Martineau Discovers America (1834)

Martineau's voyage across the Atlantic was to take forty-two days; at Liverpool just a "day or two before" they sailed, she met her companion, Louisa Jeffery. A tribute to Louisa's equanimity and good sense was that for the next year of travel by ship, boat, train, carriage, cart, horseback and on foot the two women remained on cordial terms. Both were resourceful, staying in boarding houses, hotels, inns and rural homes often as guests of friendly Americans. In her autobiography, Martineau called Louisa "clever . . . conscientious . . . able and amiable" with faculties that were "observant, vigilant and retentive." Surely no qualities could better have suited the travel companion of a deaf female Unitarian celebrity! William Henry Furness of Philadelphia termed Louisa "not very prepossessing" in appearance but "very good nevertheless." In later years Louisa repeatedly offered to act as Martineau's companion and nurse, their friendship weathering Martineau's declaration of agnosticism. Even Louisa's marriage in the 1840s met with Martineau's approval.¹

Hurrying north with Ellen in the first week of August, Martineau had stopped briefly in Birmingham to see Robert and Jane. When she asked their children what they wanted from America, all politely demurred except seven-year-old Maria. Full of childish originality, Maria announced she would like a humming-bird's nest (twenty-one years later, Maria became her aunt's loyal companion and amanuensis).

The two sisters next stopped in Derbyshire to see Unitarian family friends, the Baches, and by 3 August they had reached Liverpool. Next day along with James and Helen, they watched the "warping out" of the packet-ship *United States* (similar trimly built American sailing vessels plied the oceans, beating all others). On the wharf, Martineau met one of her numerous London friends, circuit judge Sir James Parker.

On Friday 8 August, the *United States* was announced as ready to depart. Martineau and Louisa left for the dock at half past ten only to learn that the ship would not sail that day owing to unfavorable winds. Getting their luggage taken on board early, however, they had a taste of life at sea. Amidst the confusion of water-casks and chests, "the captain [was] fidgeting about . . . giving his orders in a voice rather less placid than ordinary," and Martineau *heard* him without her trumpet. (The second of two books on America Martineau produced when she returned to England, *Retrospect of Western Travel*, opens with passengers waiting to board and several Americans "looking very melancholy").

Martineau, however, was not sorry to spend another night in the home "nearest and dearest" except her own. Next morning, she wrote letters and looked into the toy cupboards and shelves of James's children Russell and Isabella (aged four and two). In the afternoon, they strolled through the Zoological Gardens, and Martineau worried that James would not get his sermon written if she stayed longer. Meanwhile her "books and work were all on board" and worst of all her "seadress [an old black silk] would not serve for a Sunday in Liverpool." Luckily on that day the captain sent to say he had engaged a steamboat to tow the ship out to sea, and

by eleven a friend's carriage was waiting at James's door. Loaded with "bouquets of flowers and baskets of grapes" as well as refreshments "welcome at sea," the travelers were carried away.

Once on board Martineau stood "by a window of the roundhouse," while to the "hissing and puffing" of the steamer and the singing of the sailors, she threw a last rose to her family and watched until "three cheers were exchanged between the crew and the shore and the passengers strained their eyes no more." Even the ebullient Ellen on the pier had been impressed by her elder sister's send-off.²

In *Retrospect*, Martineau offered practical advice to female ocean travellers: ladies should wear "gloves constantly" to escape "the damp clammy feel of everything" and resign themselves to wearing "clothes which are too bad to be spoiled." The lack of storage space in the cabins could be remedied by "a tight, orderly putting away of everything; for which there is plenty of time." To combat the effects of tedium, hard beds, disturbing noises and sunburn, Martineau added homely measures that depended on one's state of mind.

"By the 23d of August," she narrated, the ship was "only about one hundred- and twenty-miles N.W. of the Azores," and passengers' spirits "began to flag." Then unexpectedly a "black line advancing over the water from the horizon" announced a storm in the offing, while at sunset "the sea [was] rising, the wind moaning and whistling strangely." Recounting the experience in *Retrospect*, Martineau seemed thrilled at the Faustian defiance of nature by the captain and crew and at her own daring. Having fallen from her berth in the middle of the night, she moved to the ladies' cabin to sleep, but then "put my clothes on, swathed myself in one cloak, and carried up another wherewith to lash myself to something on deck." There she encountered waves like "huge wandering mountains," the sky "narrowed to a mere slip overhead," leaden waters that "seemed to measure a thousand miles" and winds that made "the most swelling and mourning music I ever listened to." It was "the only new scene I had ever beheld that I had totally and unsuspectingly failed to imagine." Indeed, the experience was a suitable beginning for touring the wonders of America.³

Under the command of Capt. Nathan Holdrege, the *United States* carried twenty-three cabin passengers as well as the men, women and children crowded in steerage. Martineau's above-deck companions--mostly English, Americans and Scots--included "a Scotch major, whose peculiarities made him the butt of the young men," a timorous Prussian physician, Dr. Julius, and Rev. Charles Brooks and his wife, Cecilia (the Brooks were to invite Martineau to Plymouth, Massachusetts, for "Forefathers' Day" the following year).

Heading south from Liverpool, on Sunday evening they had been still in sight of Holyhead in Wales; on Monday "the wind . . . freshened" and passengers suffered from seasickness. Martineau quickly gained her sea legs so that by Tuesday she could sit on the rail to chat with the captain. Prudently, she had equipped herself with "a black silk cap, well wadded, . . . which no lady should go to sea without [and] a large warm cloak," plus the second one to wrap around her feet. While she watched "the dashing and boiling of the dark green waves," Capt. Holdrege pointed out the first of "the monsters of the deep," tumbling about "joyously by itself in the stormy sea," perhaps reminding her of herself!

On their first Wednesday at sea, Martineau presented each of her fellow cabin passengers with a flower from her bouquet--the kind of spontaneous gesture that would make her welcome wherever she traveled. A satisfying routine soon ensued, with a "brisk morning's

walk upon deck” followed by the writing up of journals by gentlemen and netting, making table-mats, reading and chatting by ladies. Martineau loved gazing “down quite into the deep,” delighting in dolphins, porpoises and Portuguese men-of-war. Passing ships became of interest. On one occasion the captain “electrified [passengers] by the vehemence of his directions to the helmsmen and . . . crew.” A rival packet-ship had been spotted, and they were “in for a race, which lasted three days.” Leisurely dinners were followed by tea and “whist and chess parties.” Martineau continued to love sitting “alone in the stern” watching the lights of the ship and “the boundless sea, roofed with its complete arch.”

At the start of the voyage she had set herself a writing chore. Probably for her friend Ker (full of ideas for the SDUK), she agreed to write a chapter on morals and manners for a series on how to observe the natural world. In essence, she was laying out the parameters of an original sociological methodology. Completed in 1838, the monograph stressed objectivity on the part of the observer and representativeness of the data. Abiding by her guidelines, she kept records of her impressions of places, people and the “norms, values, and social patterns of American society.”⁴

To pass the time on board, she also enjoyed “woolwork” on an ottoman cover. Towards the end of the six weeks’ voyage bored male passengers amused themselves by opening the ship’s mailbag to read out outlandish addresses on some letters, they held a lottery on the date of arrival and ladies began brushing and refurbishing their dress. Finally, on 19 September at five in the morning, Martineau hurried on deck to see “a long line of the New Jersey coast, with distinguishable trees and white houses.” After a pilot boat bringing newspapers came to meet them, Capt. Holdrege had a long consultation with the pilot. He then asked one of the ladies about Martineau’s position on slavery (as the author of *Demerara*): recent riots in New York against abolitionists made him fear for her safety. The New York *Mirror*, one of the newspapers, featured a story by the pushy journalist Nathaniel P. Willis who had foisted useless letters of recommendation on her and now (to her surprise) claimed her as an intimate friend.⁵

Martineau’s small party of friends waited on board until after dinner, while the hills of New Jersey, Long Island and Staten Island were “growing purple in the cloudy sunset.” Then a small steamer took them to the quarantine station where they waited another hour. Finally, at “eight o’clock in the evening,” they touched at the Battery wharf, jumped on shore and were soon rattling over the stones of Broadway to their lodgings at number 65. Martineau had seen the hand-painted “panorama” of New York City shown in the rotunda in Leicester Square, London, and the plainness and narrowness of Broadway disappointed her. In addition to the *Mirror*, other New York newspapers announced Martineau’s arrival. Within ten minutes of stepping inside her lodging three gentlemen presented themselves. At a late tea, her attention was fixed by the handsome Gen. John Henry Mason of Detroit staying at the boarding house with his family and whose son was later to be her host.⁶

Like Dickens, Martineau was surprised by the absence of tester, bed-curtains and toilet articles in her room. Next morning, she was further surprised at the sight of a young lady in black silk, with her hair neatly dressed . . . mopping the steps of one house, and a similar young lady . . . dusting the parlour of another. In spite of oddities, the republican myth was evidently true.

On the street after breakfast, Martineau was startled by fire engines running “along the side-pavement, stopping for nobody,” while everyone including streetcar men and boys selling

matches seemed sprucely dressed. In the New York summer heat, she longed for a muslin dress from her trunk, still not delivered from customs. By evening, after “members of Congress, candidates for state offices, fellow-passengers and their friends” had called on her, Martineau was still worried about a dress for church next day. Happily, a fellow lady boarder offered the loan of a bonnet and gown, and on Sunday morning she and Louisa attended the Chambers Street Unitarian church expecting to hear a sermon by Dr. Henry Ware, whose pamphlet Martineau had reviewed in the December 1831 *Repository*. In Ware’s place William Henry Furness, a “professional brother from Philadelphia,” spoke “in a voice which I have certainly never heard equalled for music and volume,” Martineau recorded. During the service, New York lawyer Robert Sedgwick spotted Martineau “by the singular ear-trumpet with which she was drinking in Mr. Furness’ sermon.” Furness himself seemed thrilled to meet her, stepping down from the pulpit afterwards to invite her to come to stay with him and his wife in Philadelphia.

Through Gen. Mason, Martineau then met Lewis Cass, Pres. Andrew Jackson’s secretary of war--“a shrewd, hard-looking man, the very concentration of American caution.” Another caller was Albert Gallatin, the respected statesman originally from Geneva. His political career as a “wizard of finance” had begun in the Pennsylvania assembly in the 1790s. He served in Congress, as Secretary of the Treasury under Jefferson and Madison, as a peace commissioner sent to Ghent after the war of 1812 and finally as American minister at Paris in 1823. To Martineau’s satisfaction, he explained the current quarrel about the Bank of the United States, the “three great divisions of United States--the north, south, and west,” the principles of letting land, the German agricultural populations and other matters peculiar to the new nation. Furnished “with new powers of observation,” she promptly recorded what Gallatin said, “lest its novelty and abundance should deceive my memory.” *Society in America*, Martineau’s ambitious three-volume sociological study, originated in similar interviews over the following two years.⁷

Escorted by Robert Sedgwick, Martineau and Louisa called on James King at “High Wood, two miles beyond Hoboken” in New Jersey. On the way Martineau admired the frame cottages “with their thatched verandahs,” the dark sloops moored on the river and a glass factory “flaming among the woods.” Violent acts had taken place in the area, however, and she “was shown on the way the spot where Hamilton received his death-wound from Colonel Burr.” When she and Louisa travelled by train on 25 September to the “beautifully wooded” Snake Hill, she noted local farming practices, gathered facts on American workers at the cotton factories in Paterson [sic], and observed a maid not wearing a cap. At the falls of Passaic River, they viewed fireworks and heard about a woman’s falling from the rocks. All such sights, opinions and stories found their way into Martineau’s journal. Meanwhile, she was meeting literary celebrities like Washington Irving.

At Robert Sedgwick’s home Martineau saw a portrait of his novelist sister, Catharine (sometimes spelled Catherine), and deemed her expression “thoughtful and sweet.” Almost thirteen years older than Martineau, Catharine Maria Sedgwick published stories of humble domestic life: *The Linwoods; or “Sixty Years Since” in America* (1835) was to make her the most popular woman writer in the United States. Sedgwick spent much of the year at Stockbridge, Massachusetts, surrounded by her extended family. Her “sweet” expression, however, belied the wit and sarcasm with which she later commented on Martineau.⁸

In the first weeks of her tour Martineau delighted in everything she saw, invitations pouring in as she explored the country. At the hotel at West Point she received an invitation from the distinguished Dr. David Hosack, Hamilton's attendant at his duel with Burr. One of the first to use a stethoscope in America, Hosack also advocated vaccination and opposed the practice of bleeding. Invited to stay with him at Hyde Park, Martineau admired his library, his paintings, his scientific equipment and his gardens.

On steamboat journeys up the Hudson, Martineau shunned the ladies "in the close cabin among the crying babies" to sit on deck and gaze at the scenery. One morning at West Point, she was accosted by a cadet who told her about his "academical life." After touring the campus, she commented wistfully on facilities like the library for young *male* students. With other ladies, she witnessed an artillery drill. Natural wonders continued to leave impressions that colored her writings: from the hotel piazza she watched a spectacular thunderstorm while "the gallant cadets and their pretty partners" danced in the ballroom. On one return journey to New York, Martineau met Edward Livingstone, former secretary of state and American minister in France where he had negotiated claims stemming from the Napoleonic Wars. At the capital, Albany, she met Gov. William Leonard Marcy, friend of Van Buren and an anti-abolitionist.⁹

At the beginning of "High Road Travelling" in *Retrospect*, Martineau explained the range of details in her journal. Owing to the rapid advance of civilization in America, it seemed desirable to record "things precisely in their present state" as a basis for comparison "some few years hence." Her first longer "land travelling" was to be a three- or four-week journey to Niagara Falls, when she and Louisa would join a party of shipboard friends made up of four women and four men.

Before the journey, Martineau and Louisa were invited to Woodbourne, Catharine Sedgwick's home at Stockbridge. Later Martineau praised the Sedgwicks "with their wives and blooming families" as "an Ornament to their State." She was taken to an agricultural fair at Pittsfield and "made to drink the first out of a prize cup," which made her feel "exquisitely happy," she told her mother, for now she had been "Lafayetted."

At last one morning at six, the travelers departed "from amid a throng of tearful friends." Hastening southwards to Albany, they found a "bustling city . . . rising from the [Hudson River] with its brown stone courthouse and white marble capitol." To cross the river, they took a horse ferry (a cruel device, "as well as clumsy," Martineau protested). At Albany they spotted "two shipmates dancing down the steps" of the Congress Hotel in welcome. It was the 6th of October.

The men of the party comprised "a German [Mr. O.] and a Dutch gentleman [Mr. S.] . . . the Prussian physician [Dr. Julius] and [a] young South Carolinian [Mr. H]" (Victorian propriety constrained Martineau from identifying the two other women). In a spirit of comradeship, the men took on jobs like caring for the luggage, selecting rooms and handling money. Unexpected events could prove amusing. In their private drawing room at Albany, Martineau opened a "handsome piano" to play, and "found it empty of keys!" After dinner, Vice President Martin Van Buren and his son called on her. Though she thought Van Buren friendly and polite, he seemed to "want the frankness and confidence which are essential to good breeding" and showed a "skepticism that marks the lower order of politicians" (ironically, Martineau was to be romantically linked to Van Buren in a lampoon). Next morning before breakfast the party

visited “the Padroon’s house.” Then they “proceeded by railroad to Schnectady” and “at once stepped into a canal boat for Utica.”

Martineau “would never advise ladies to travel by canal,” she declared, owing to heat, noise and “the known vicinity of a compressed crowd, lying [below the deck] packed like herrings in a barrel.” On this occasion, the hogging of the cabin by sixteen Presbyterian clergymen provoked her rancor.

Reaching Utica, the travellers were there “civilly received and accommodated at Bagg’s hotel.” They next hired a “neat, clean stage” for the fourteen miles to Trenton Falls and a dramatic series of cascades. After a walk through the pines, they climbed down “five flights of wooden steps fixed against the steep face of the rock,” Martineau noting the swirling waters, gay butterflies and a brilliant scarlet bird “except for its black wings,” called locally “red robin” (she regretted the loss of its Indian name, Cayoharic).

Next morning before five they left Utica by an “‘exclusive extra’,” the driver having agreed to carry them to Buffalo “for eighty dollars . . . the precise route . . . agreed upon.” On the steps of the hotel, well wishers offered help and information including a letter of introduction for Cincinnati. Soon they encountered their first log cabin, causing Martineau to feel “admitted into the sanctuary of the forest.” At Syracuse, they were surprised by the “size and style of the hotel” (owing partly to the absence of a “window-tax,” Martineau guessed), but the wallpaper in her room made her laugh. A view of the Bay of Naples sported graffiti “balloons” with “American witticisms put into the mouths of Neapolitan fishermen.”

Leaving at dawn without breakfast next day, by Elbridge the party “were too hungry to think of going further without food.” At an unlikely-looking house Martineau was diverted by the droll behavior of the young women’s unselfconsciously pinning up their hair, knitting and gravely answering questions. The family breakfast was over, but the travellers had one of the best of their journey:

a pie-dish full of buttered toast; hot biscuits and coffee; beef-steak, applesauce, hot potatoes, cheese, butter and two large dishes of eggs.

The day brought other surprises including barefoot girls with umbrellas and “a pig-driver in spectacles!”

Next, Martineau’s fellow travelers allowed her a day at Auburn to inspect the state prison being run on the “silent system” admired by British reformers. Having arrived “in the middle of the day,” they strolled about looking at new houses on the outskirts of town and the “beautiful bounding forest.” Approvingly, Martineau noted that Auburn had

6,000 inhabitants, many of them contractors for prison manufactures, namely clocks, combs, cabinet and chair work, weaving, tailoring, shoemaking, machinery, making carpeting, stone-cutting, &c.

Touring the prison next day, she viewed male prisoners “ranged in companies” marching to their workshops, and the “extremely bad” facilities for women. Occupied in sewing, “hopeful-looking girls” were thrown with “brutish-looking” women, while a grim engine, “stocks of a terrible construction,” stood in the room. Martineau ranked this prison, in *Retrospect and Society*, below the one in Philadelphia where prisoners worked in solitary confinement away from “vicious companionship.”

The party continued on their way, crossing Lake Cayuga by the “mile and eight rods long” wooden bridge set on piles. At Lake Seneca in Geneva, Martineau loved the “long row of handsome white and red houses each with its sloping garden,” and the attractive college. Outside a bookseller’s, to her surprise, she saw a placard advertising “Two Old Men’s Tales, price 80 cents [the work *she* had helped get published] in the back of the State of New-York!” At Canandaigua Lake that night Blossom’s hotel was full of drunken soldiers, so they locked themselves in their rooms.

Next morning a Scottish settler in the town took them to his “splendid new dwelling,” but at the Episcopalian church they heard a disagreeable sermon “full of dogmatism and bitterness.” That evening they left for a night ride to Batavia and after breakfast encountered their first experience of a “corderoy road.” These roads made a “deep impression on the imaginations of the English,” Martineau was to note in *Retrospect*, as examples of the innovative roads in America of limestone, mud or sand---and the hazards of each. American stage drivers, she added, “command admiration equally by their perfection in their art, their fertility of resource, and their patience with their passengers.” Now and then the figure of a solitary Indian appeared along the road, riveting the strangers by his “grave gaze . . . lank hair [and] blanket-wrapped form.” By contrast near Buffalo, they passed houses with porches of Ionic pillars. Then entering “the long main street,” their “exclusive extra” set them down at the Eagle hotel.

The party had planned on a week to see Niagara Falls. One day, however, Martineau and Louisa made a walking and ferry excursion from Buffalo to the ruins of Fort Erie on the Canadian side (destroyed in the War of 1812). Homely details of the site’s historical associations attracted Martineau: a desolate settler’s home evoked Buffalo’s history as a crossing point for fugitives from both Canada and the states and for runaway slaves. A local woman told of experiences in the War of 1812 when Buffalo was attacked by Indians spurred on by the British. Crossing to the Canadian side, the two women stopped at a house for dinner of “tea, beefsteak, hot rolls and butter, honeycomb, and preserved plums and crab-apples.” Local butter and eggs, they learned, were smuggled into Buffalo. Finally, Martineau walked on alone to sit in the ruined fort, feeling oppressed “with a sense of solitude.”¹⁰

In the spring of 1833, a panorama of Niagara Falls exhibited in Leicester Square quoted the heights and gallons of water passing over the various falls (but failed to show the *turbulence* of the water, the *Spectator* complained). In *Retrospect* Martineau vowed she would not *describe* Niagara “so much as to relate what we did” -- yet she likened the sight to one seen in heaven.

From Buffalo, the party crossed the river by ferry and while waiting for another stage were invited into the kitchen of “a comely English woman.” There a huge log blazed under washing boilers, Martineau wishing “the shivering poor of London” had such fuel “which lies rotting in the American woods.” Expecting to be disappointed by the falls, Martineau absorbed the minutiae of the scene along the winding road: an inn with the sign of the “Chippeway Battle Ground,” a plume curling “vigorously up,” the oily river, and the “little Round Island, covered with wood and surrounded by rapids.” When they reached the hotel at the falls, they ran “quickly from piazza to piazza” to the top. There Martineau’s emotion at the sight was “never [to be] renewed or equalled.” In a clearing sky the sun lighted the Horseshoe Falls, the “most striking appearance [being the] slowness with which the shaded green waters rolled over the

brink" (the falls' "unimaginable beauty" left her in a "state of intoxication," she told her family). Later the party wandered "through the wood, along Table Rock, and to the ferry." Back in their hotel, Martineau recorded the reactions of various guests: an eighty-year old American was full of awe, while an Englishman asked whether she didn't think "the natives made a very silly fuss about the falls," those of the Clyde [in Scotland] being "much finer."

Two of the men of the party were to leave them at Queenstown, seven miles away in Canada, and the others accompanied them across the river. Coming back through woods they climbed to the top to the 145-foot high Brock Monument that looked over the forest, the "blue Canadian hills," the river and distant cities. Perched on a precipitous bank over the water Martineau mused on the falls "pouring down their flood ages before Babylon was founded or the Greek Mythology had arisen." Walking on, they were threatened by rain when two farm boys in a cart offered a lift. In chatting with the boys Martineau learned that farms in the area were of "about 100 acres generally" and owned by residents. Laborers earned \$120 a year plus room and board, the boys assuring her that gentleman settlers in Canada could find "ease and comfort" if not "wealth and luxury."¹¹

After spending a few days in Buffalo, Martineau and Louisa embarked on Lake Erie to land "at the back of Pennsylvania." At Meadville in the northwestern part of the state on 29 October, they were heartily welcomed by the hotel keepers--a father, his "fine, handsome son" and daughters. After seeing the recently established Methodist college with library and small museum, Martineau noted she was writing up her journal "with much sleepiness" that night. Unitarian minister Harm Jan Huidekoper now became their host for two days' walking and driving, including to a covered bridge, and Martineau lent Huidekoper's deaf sister her "spare tube." Besides chatting with callers, she read over reports of the blind institution, the house of refuge and penitentiary at Philadelphia. In the evenings, her ears were assailed by Huidekoper's conservative political sentiments: anti-Jacksonian, distrustful of the jury system and universal suffrage, and in favor of a tariff on corn and a national bank.

In recording shades of opinion among Americans, Martineau was preparing for the ambitious sociological analyses she would undertake in *Society*. As she neared the site of Joseph Priestley's home at Northumberland on the Susquehanna River, however, her journey became a pilgrimage. From Pittsburg she and Louisa crossed the Alleghenies and in four days were within eighteen miles of their destination. On 11 November, they breakfasted at Lewisburg after leaving "the most fretful stage company we were shut up with in all our travels," Martineau groaned.

In *Retrospect* Martineau was to devote an entire chapter to Priestley, quoting from his letters as well as from James's long article in the *Repository*. Deploring American Unitarians' failure to value Priestley, she wondered if dislike of some of his convictions made them insensible to "the majesty of the man." Now approaching Priestley's town, Martineau's excitement grew. She gazed at "the gleamy river bordered with pines, and the swelling and sloping fields" feeling more emotion than even at the "sight of the spray of Niagara." The hostess of their "clean little inn" referred to Priestley as a friend of her father's. At Priestley's grandson's they saw the original of the engraving published in the SDUK's "Gallery of Portraits." A Quaker judge and his wife living in Priestley's former house welcomed them inside and showed minutiae like the hole Priestley had made in the shutter for his optical experiments and the spot on the wainscot scorched by his burning glasses. At Priestley's tomb and that of his

wife and eldest son, Martineau planted a rose on the son's grave for herself and a snowberry on Priestley's for James. Finally journeying with Louisa on down the Susquehanna, having given personal tribute for "another pupil . . . whose homage I carried with my own," left her with a feeling of deep satisfaction.¹²

"All Philadelphia has called on me," Martineau vaunted to her family in December. At the home of William and Annie Furness she was meeting people "of many ranks and all opinions, religious and political." During nearly six weeks in the city she had "3 engagements a day besides sight seeing & calls in the morn^g," she told Charles Brooks, and was "almost in despair" over her journal. In contrast to social calls, dinner parties and balls, Martineau inspected Philadelphia's philanthropic institutions. While "grieved" by the too comfortable pauper asylum, "made to accommodate luxuriously 1200 persons," she praised the "active and cheerful" pupils of the blind institution.

Once the "vanities and toils of the day" were over, however, she could sink into "deep repose" at the Furnesses,' finishing the evenings in "delicious talk, till twelve or one, over the fire."

Martineau was also to meet the Philadelphia dignitary Nicholas Biddle--wealthy Quaker litterateur, scholar, statesman and recently president of the national bank (opposed by Jackson). Biddle approved of Martineau's political economy and admired *Demerara*; she told her family. At a solemn Quaker wedding performed by Dr. Joseph Parrish (physician to the Philadelphia almshouses, member of various hospital staffs and president of the Pennsylvania Abolition Society), Martineau could not help noticing the groom's wanting to giggle during the long speeches. Rev. William White (first Episcopal bishop of Pennsylvania, advocate of Sunday schools and of good relations with other denominations) called on her too. John Vaughan, a merchant active in the American Philosophical Society, asked her to write a "prologue" for the anniversary publication of the blind institution, and she dashed off a thirty-line poem.

Of perhaps greater interest to English ears, the English actress Fanny Kemble (now married to the dashing heir to Southern plantation money, Pierce Mease Butler) spent "glorious" evenings at the Furness home. Fanny was living at her brother-in-law's home in Philadelphia while their farm, called Butler Place and belonging to another relative, was being refurbished. Fanny had told Anna Jameson in late October that she felt baffled and lonely in her new country. Nor had she met Martineau, "that enlightened and clever female Radical and Utilitarian" (by 27 November, however, Fanny was complaining of the drawback of Martineau's deafness). Meanwhile the Furnesses were charmed with Fanny, Furness commenting "Mrs. B. is one of the most interesting women I ever saw;" she stayed three hours, talking and reading aloud a poem of Tennyson's, "how sweetly I cannot tell you." Later from Fanny's garden Martineau collected the hummingbird's nest promised to Maria, and she was present at the christening of Fanny's first child.

In addition to the meetings and festivities in Philadelphia, Martineau declared that her repeated visits to the Eastern Penitentiary were the most interesting in America "for the sake of discovering the causes of crime." As "almost the first" to interview prisoners in solitary confinement, she sat beside "murderers, burglars, forgers, and others" listening with her ear trumpet to "their eager and full confidences about their crimes and their miseries" (evidence from the visits was to appear in her series of articles in *Chambers's Edinburgh Journal* recommending the "Separate System," by which criminals communicated only with the prison

"guardian"). At the same time, she deplored the spy system, the whipping at Auburn and the ease with which the rule of not talking could be broken. The "first principle in the management of the guilty," she asserted, was to "treat them as men and women," and why not make prisoners stone masons to supply good quality epitaphs?

On Christmas day in Philadelphia, Martineau called on James Fortin, a well-off black philanthropist whose son-in-law, Robert Purvis, was a charter member of the American Anti-Slavery Society. Fortin's "dusky" complexion and white hair seemed to intrigue her, and she nodded approvingly at his having raised himself to competence by "sail-making."¹³

¹ *Auto.* 2: 4-5; Louisa Caroline Jeffery, the daughter of Rev. John Jeffery of Billingshurst (see chap. 7, note 42).

² *Auto.* 2: 5-12 and 3: 98ff (humming birds are found only in the Western Hemisphere); see HM to Louisa Jeffery, 2 November 1839, 18 April 1840 and Wednesday night [1842?], JRUL; "The Voyage," *Retrospect of Western Travel* (London: Saunders and Otley, 1838) 1: 1-5 [henceforth *Retrospect* or *RWT*, Martineau's first full-length travel book].

³ "The Voyage," *RWT* 1: 6-30.

⁴ *How to Observe Morals and Manners* (London: Charles Knight, 1838), rptd. (New Brunswick and Oxford: Transaction Publishers, 1989) with intro. by Michael R. Hill; Hoecker-Drysdale 50.

⁵ On the Victorian craze for woolwork see Shirley Marein, *Stitchery Needlepoint Applique and Patchwork. A Complete Guide* (New York: Viking, 1974) 85; "The Voyage," *RWT* 1: 1-38; Martineau later learned that the riots were against the wealthy philanthropic Tappan brothers (Lewis Tappan, active in antislavery agitation since 1822, had invited George Thompson--the English antislavery lecturer rumored to be on the *United States*--to stay with him, but Thompson had been warned and arrived only in September); *Auto.* 2: 75-78.

⁶ "The Voyage" and "First Impressions," *RWT*, 1: 39-41 and 42-44; eight years later, Dickens was impressed by the life and bustle of Broadway but amused at the pigs roaming the streets (Charles Dickens, *American Notes*, chap. 6); Gen. Mason's son Stevens Thomas Mason, the "boy-governor" of Michigan; see HM to [family], 22 September 1834, *CL* 1: 251-52.

⁷ For Dickens, see last note; *Society in America* (London: Saunders and Otley, 1837; rptd. Cambridge, U.K., etc.: Cambridge UP, 2009) [henceforth *Society* or *SA*]; *Auto.* 3: 113-15.

⁸ Webb 1-2; *Auto.* 3: 115-16; Irving had returned to America two years earlier after seventeen years in Europe; Martineau's article, "Miss Sedgwick's Works" (*L & WR* 6 and 28 [October 1837]: 42-65), called them "humble but vital little works," causing Sedgwick's Yankee pride to flare and to claim she did not "know Miss M": see Bertha-Monica Stearns, "Miss Sedgwick observes Harriet Martineau," *New England Quarterly* 7 (September 1934): 533-41).

⁹ "The Hudson," *RWT*, 55-80.

¹⁰ "High Road Travelling" and "Fort Erie," *RWT* 1: 106-39 and 140-50 (in *American Notes* [chap. 9], Dickens anathematized the experience of a Pennsylvania canal boat as like being on a barge in a tiny house filled with scruffy, constantly spitting male passengers); Introduction, *SA* v-vii; "Civilisation. Idea of Honour. Intercourse" and "Sufferers," *SA* part III, chap. 1, sec. 3, and chap. 4.

¹¹ *Spec.*, 15 June 1833: 552-53 (the falls were shown against autumn foliage); "Niagara," *RWT* 1: 151-74 (British commander in Upper Canada Gen. Isaac Brock fell in the War of 1812); on Niagara, see also *Auto.* 3: 117-18.

¹² *Auto.* 3: 118-19; "Priestley," *RWT* 1: 176-98; Martineau crossed the Alleghenies again the following year by the portage-railway built between two canals in a series of inclined planes, the cars moving "at a rapid pace along the heights of the mountain" (see *American Notes*, chap. 10); JM, "On the Life, Character, and Works of Dr. Priestley," *MR* 7 (January, February and April 1833): 19-30, 84-88 and 231-41; for Martineau's fictional portrayal of the death of Priestley's son.

¹³ HM to [family], 12 December 1834, *CL* 1: 253-56; "Sufferers," *SA* part III, chap. 4; "Prisons," *RWT* 1: 123-39 (in *Society and Retrospect*, Martineau recorded visits to four prisons--at Auburn, New York; Philadelphia; Charlestown, Massachusetts; and Nashville, Tennessee); Fanny Butler's introduction to Martineau must have come through Catharine Sedgwick; Frances Anne Kemble, *Records of Later Life* (London: Richard Bentley and Son, 1882) 1: 4-5, 17); *Journal. By Frances Anne Butler* (Philadelphia: Carey, Lea & Blanchard, 1835); William Henry Furness to Ezra Stiles Gannett, 15 December 1834, Houghton Library Am 1888.4 (25) Item 27 (Furness supported Martineau's later disapproval of part of Fanny's soon-to-be published journal of her American theatrical tour with her actor father, Charles Kemble, causing Fanny to withdraw thirty pages); HM to Charles Brooks, 25 January 1835, *CL* 1: 258-59; "Prison Life," *Chambers Edinburgh Journal* (1, 8 and 15 December 1838): 353-54, 362-63 and 370-71; *Auto.* 3: 123-25.