

Chapter 10 Dangerous Journeying in the “South” (1835)

Soon Martineau was to travel through a part of the United States that would give new impetus to her investigations: once over the Maryland border, she would be in slave territory. As she was leaving Philadelphia, a female writer of religious books for children whom she had heard “speak with strong horror of the abolitionists” challenged her. The woman demanded to know whether Martineau would not prevent “the marriage of a white person with a person of colour.” Judicially, Martineau answered that she would never try to separate “persons who really loved,” at which the woman pronounced her “an amalgamationist.” This was a new meaning of the term to Martineau, but was evidently a red flag to Americans. On her last day, a worried Dr. Julius arrived from New York to warn her not to go “a step farther south.” In answer she insisted she must “go straight on,” for she had come to *learn* about slavery. Her determination to act on her principles was unchanged -- and she forbade Furness from allowing her words to be *explained* in Philadelphia newspapers.¹

(Frances Trollope had visited Baltimore, Maryland, in 1830 and termed it “a beautiful city [with] several handsome buildings.” She noticed the splendid dress of women at church, their “shewy . . . display of morning costume” only surpassed by that “on a very brilliant Sunday at the Tuilleries.”²)

Martineau arrived there on New Year’s Day, to witness a snowy city and to admire “the sleighs, with their belled horses.” There, a Mr. Read presented her with an original George Washington letter and sent over Washington’s account book containing his war expenses for her to examine. At a “merry party of little folks” in the evening she was delighted when several came up to gossip with her.

Over the next week and a half Martineau visited the infirmary and medical school but was troubled to learn that in Baltimore “the bodies of coloured people exclusively are taken for dissection.” Among other distinguished citizens, she met James Barbour, former governor of Virginia and minister to England (an advocate of agricultural education and of education for the poor), Representative John Pendleton Kennedy (lawyer and writer, author of popular sketches of post-Revolutionary Virginia collected as *Swallow Barn*, who proposed to hold a party for her) and postmaster John Stuart Skinner, author of *American Farmer*. A John H.B. Latrobe was “full of information about colonization” and told her that abolition in a border state like Maryland would cause slaves to be sold farther South. “The state of feeling about these poor creatures is monstrous,” she recorded in her journal.³

Martineau and Louisa probably made the journey from Baltimore to Washington, D.C. by stagecoach. (In 1830 Trollope traveled by steamboat via Chesapeake Bay and the Potomac River, admiring “the wonderful facility for internal commerce, furnished by the rivers, lakes, and canals -- but she abhorred steamboat travel on the Mississippi. At the sight of the Capitol building in Washington Trollope was “struck with admiration and surprise,” the city as a whole

reminding her of “our fashionable watering-places.” Dickens traveled from Baltimore in 1842 by a combination of river steamers and railroads.⁴)

As Martineau entered the capital on 13 January 1835 she was struck by its unfinished appearance. It seemed to be “straggling out hither and thither” with “sordid . . . enclosures and houses” on the very verge of the splendid Capitol. She and Louisa stayed at Mrs. Peyton’s boarding house on Pennsylvania Avenue, a few minutes’ walk from the Capitol and “a mile in a straight line from the White House.” Their private drawing room and dining table were shared with a senator from Maine and Representative Stephen C. Phillips of Massachusetts, Phillips’s wife and his sister-in-law (Miss Pearle of Salem). The New York *Mirror* duly reported Martineau's arrival in the capital, praising her “lady-like simplicity” and the “force of her talents.” Hoping to witness proceedings of the “short session of Congress,” due to close on 4 March, she sallied out next morning escorted by Phillips to visit the Senate Chamber. Welcomed “heartily” by the British minister, Sir Charles Vaughan, she heard a debate on the President’s recommendation of reprisals over French depredations during the Napoleonic wars. Echoing Americans’ phrenological view of their national figures, she commented on the senators’ “forty-eight fine heads. Webster conspicuous. He and Clay spoke.” To her defective hearing, Daniel Webster’s voice seemed “beautiful” and more easily heard than Henry Clay’s-- but her “head ached vehemently,” and she had to go home. That afternoon the two senators from South Carolina, John C. Calhoun and William C. Preston and their wives, called on her. In the evening she declined “a great party” to visit with Edward Everett, American “man of letters *par excellence*” now a representative from Massachusetts.

Martineau's first day in Washington had offered a full taste of political lore. The Washington hostess and contributor to Godey's *Lady's Book* Margaret Bayard Smith (who knew nothing of Martineau's works except that gentlemen laughed at “a woman's writing on political economy”) called and spread a rumor that “near 600 persons” had called on Martineau the day after her arrival. Smith found Martineau “plain, unaffected and quiet in her manners and appearance, yet animated in conversation” as she conversed by means of her “speaking-tube.” Smith had planned to offer Martineau her patronage but found she was anticipated by the British minister, the secretaries and even the President!

At breakfast over the following weeks, Martineau scanned “heaps of newspapers, documents, and letters” -- often with opposing versions of the “speeches and proceedings” she had witnessed the day before. John Quincy Adams called on the morning of 18 January and found the Daniel Websters and Miss Webster already there. Adams thought Martineau's conversation lively (he noted in his diary that she spoke of both American and English politics but had not read her *Conversations upon Political Economy* [sic]). To escape being “consumed with callers [and] too much exhausted before the fatigues of the evening began,” Martineau and Louisa paid visits to the House, the Senate and the Supreme Court. Judge Joseph Story reserved a reporter's chair for her at the court where she heard Chief Justice John Marshall deliver a judgment. Visiting the departments of government, she devoted a morning to “an examination of the library and curiosities of the State Department.” Callers thronged at her boarding house after dinner, or she went to a “ball, rout, levee, or masquerade.” To their shipboard friend Charles Brooks (who had given her a letter of introduction to Adams) she prattled that Washington seemed “the centre of delights, -- & no less, of polit^l knowledge.” Daily perusal of the Washington *Globe* and the *Intelligence* helped her to form judgments.

Personal acquaintance with men she had only known by name made her feel "a very high respect & regard" for all leading members of the opposition party -- but not for Jackson's Democrats.

In late January, Martineau began to sit for her portrait an hour every day in an unused committee room in the Capitol. On 2 February, one "of the coldest days [she had] ever felt," she and Louisa joined an excursion to Mount Vernon by carriage and horseback. Crossing the long bridge over the Potomac, now "in a sad state of dilapidation," they passed through Alexandria to reach the impoverished looking estate. Meeting the current residents and touring the house and grounds, Martineau imagined the figure of Washington walking in the piazza. She pondered the feelings of British officers passing Mount Vernon on their way to burn the capital in 1814. Both Washington's old moldering tomb and the new redbrick structure, like "an oven," seemed deplorable. At tea that evening in the boarding house, her letters and English newspapers seemed "a surprising solace, chilled or feverish as [both ladies] were with the intense cold and strong mental excitement of the day."

Early in February, Margaret Bayard Smith planned a small party for Martineau with the help of the popular mulatto caterer Henry Orr. Orr revealed that at another dinner given by Levi Woodbury (Secretary of the Treasury) he had watched Martineau conferring deeply with Henry Clay over the American and English national debts. Smith had invited Martineau and Louisa to spend the day of her party but was surprised when they came after their morning walk and asked the servant to show them upstairs to arrange their dresses and hair. Offered combs and brushes, Martineau refused, "showing the enormous pockets in her french dress . . . pull[ing] out nice little silk shoes, silk stockings, a scarf for her neck, little lace mits, a gold chain and . . . other jewelry, and soon ... was prettily equipped for dinner or evening company." Their host, Samuel Harrison Smith, publisher of the *Washington Intelligencer*, sat beside Martineau on the sofa but continually forgot which end of the speaking-tube to use and waved it about, gesticulating as he spoke. Tactfully filling in the gaps, Martineau "talked fluently of Lord Brougham, Lord Durham and other political personages." One of former President Jefferson's daughters sat down next to Martineau -- but the "tube" unsettled her.

At dinner, Martineau observed "interesting illustrations of manners, facts and opinions." Mrs. Smith was taken aback to hear that "spirits" had become too dear for the English poor who got small quantities of opium from apothecaries to "stupefy and satisfy the cravings of hunger." Yet she was impressed with Lord Durham's having become Martineau's "greatest and most intimate personal, as well as political friend."

Martineau put late guests like the Calhouns and "the unitarian clergyman," Harvard professor John Gorham Palfrey, at their ease. After singing by the young ladies (including "Scotch songs to perfection") the evening ended at eleven. Next day Smith showed Martineau and Louisa the elegant residential district, "Kalorama," and gleaned details of Martineau's life as a political writer in London. Now an admirer, Smith called her guest a "most original and powerful genius, apparently as good as she is great." Her "political address" to Martineau then appeared in her husband's *Intelligencer*.

Surprisingly for a partly deaf witness, Martineau characterized Clay, Webster and Calhoun -- three men who especially interested her -- by the content and manner of their speaking. Clay "would discourse for many an hour in his even, soft, deliberate tone," amazing her by the "moderation of estimate and speech" of such an "impetuous nature." Listening on

14 February to Clay's famed speech in the Senate denouncing the eviction of Indian tribes -- specifically the Cherokees of Georgia -- she saw tears falling on his papers. Webster told stories, cracked jokes and shook the sofa with laughter—or discoursed smoothly. In a long anecdote, Martineau illustrated his ability to master and argue the details of a case to sweep all doubt before him. Calhoun, "the cast-iron man," kept her "upon a painful stretch for a short while" until he left, and she could think over his "close, rapid, theoretical, illustrated talk" abounding in figures but unable to communicate with another mind. Calhoun, she recorded, was as "full as ever of his nullification doctrines" and only occasionally touched by sentiment.

Martineau's new patron, energetic, fifty-six-year-old Judge Joseph Story, sometimes brought his revered political opposite Chief Justice Marshall to see her. Marshall's "reverence for women," she laughed, which had "all the theoretical fervour and magnificence of Uncle Toby's," was admirably "clearsighted." For Martineau's travels, Marshall presented a letter commending her "to the good offices of all citizens, in case of need."

Judge Alexander Porter, formerly of the supreme court of Louisiana and now a senator, became another "hearty friend." With Louisa, Martineau attended dinners "at the president's, at the houses of heads of departments, at the British legation, and at the Southern members' congressional mess." On one occasion the two were invited to the British legation "to help to do honours as English ladies to the seven Judges of the Supreme Court." Webster, Martineau boasted, "fell chiefly to my share." At the White House they coincided with members of Congress invited alphabetically whose names began with J, K or L. During the meal she spoke directly to the President "of the governments of England and France." Jackson expressed sorrow at the desolation of Washington's tomb, but surprised her by complaining of the opposition majority in the Senate. Across from her sat Richard Mentor Johnson (Representative from Kentucky and later Vice-President under Van Buren), who piqued her curiosity by his wild countenance and lack of a "cravat."

On another occasion, after a congressional funeral, Martineau witnessed the aftermath of an assassination attempt on the President. Coming down the stairs at the Capitol, she saw the insane culprit struggling in the crowd as the attack "threw the old soldier [President Jackson] into a tremendous passion" (The Boston *Atlas* later printed gossip that Jackson was "fascinated" with Martineau and might follow her back to England).

One mild day, Martineau and Louisa climbed the dome of the Capitol from where the streets looked like "one sheet of ice." Other times they were "drawn before the fire up to the very fender" on their drawing room sofa. On dining tables Martineau was amazed at the profusion of canvass-back and other duck and of turkey. The variety of *humans* jostled together in the city further impressed her—including foreigners and members of the government "down to Davy Crockett," as well as

flippant young belles, "pious" wives . . . saucy travellers, pert newspaper reporters, melancholy Indian chiefs, and timid New England ladies, trembling on the verge of the vortex . . . like the higher circle of a little village.

Martineau's five weeks in Washington proved "one of the most profitable, but by far the least agreeable" of her stays in America. Beyond the sheer quantity of new ideas and personalities, her experiences failed to fit into a familiar pattern. Nevertheless, enthusiasm for *future* travel shone through her letters. After visiting former President James Madison, she told Brooks, she planned to go to Charleston, then to New Orleans and then to accompany Clay's daughter up

the Mississippi River to Kentucky. "Invitations from all quarters abound," she added buoyantly, "& we are disposed to go wherever we can."⁵

At a suggestion from Furness, Martineau wrote from Washington to ask Rev. Samuel Gilman of Charleston, South Carolina, if he would "harbour any [letters] which may arrive." After "quitting this bewitching place for the South," she hoped to get to Charleston "about the 27th" of February.

Telling Durham what she had learned of American democracy, she cited Calhoun's "Report on Executive Patronage" (published by the Senate in 1835) for "an unfavourable idea of the state of affairs under the present Administration" in which the "virtues of the Opposition leaders will countervail the popular admiration of Jackson *the General*."⁶

Martineau's heady sojourn at Washington ended on 18 February 1835. Armed with letters of introduction from distinguished Americans she and Louisa left by early morning coach. At Charlottesville, Virginia, they hired another coach for the roughly five miles to former President James Madison's home at Montpelier (Madison usually sent his carriage for guests, Martineau declaring this to be one of only two times in ten thousand miles of travel when she was unfairly charged). Eighty-three-year-old Madison, suffering from rheumatism but warmly wrapped and cared for by his wife, had not lost his relish for conversation. Over the next three-and-a-half days, he impressed Martineau with his faith in the commonwealth he had helped to found but equally with his despair over the evil of slavery. He regretted the War of 1812 (as Martineau was to record in her *Introduction to the History of the Peace*) and lamented the death of Malthus. He discussed population and food production, spoke in favor of the "security of literary property" and of the need for training both "hand and mind" of youth. For two hours one morning, he spoke of past American presidents and present politicians, explaining the "anomalous institution of the American Senate" and commented on religious sects. He discussed the American quarrel with France and told anecdotes of Benjamin Franklin. The poetry of Dr. Erasmus Darwin pleased him, he admitted, and he spoke of languages and their literatures. Finally, he gave Martineau his views on national debts and taxation. When she moved away to give him a rest from talking, he followed her across the room. A "virtuous statesman" she winningly called him in *Retrospect*. Sadly, before Martineau could fulfill a promise to return to see him, Madison died in June 1836.

Leaving from Montpelier on Sunday, 22 February, Martineau and Louisa met the stage to Charlottesville "between five and six in the morning . . . at the Orange Courthouse." When the driver stopped for a rest, all the passengers walked to a farm by way of a field path through "a perfect slough" to be served "an excellent breakfast . . . in a bed-chamber." At Charlottesville, Martineau toured the University of Virginia. Avowing in *Retrospect* that she was the first British traveler to do so, she carefully described the buildings, the students, the professors and their disciplines. While making no comment on Jefferson's classical plans for his university, she offered practical details for accommodation and costs for its 206 students. Through a letter of introduction, she met "Natural Philosophy" Prof. Patterson and was warmly welcomed by his family. Reporting on local housekeeping, she learned that "plump fowls ready for the fire," could be had for "a dollar a dozen" and that "Mrs. Patterson's coachman, a slave, could read." At dinner she responded to eager questions about "the living authors of England, especially . . . Mrs. Somerville and Mrs. Marcet." Next morning, she heard a lecture on Natural Philosophy and was invited to "stay a month" to talk over a range of topics. To her regret, a

snowstorm kept her from seeing Monticello. Saying goodbye to her new friends, Martineau was astonished by the "speed with which it is possible for foreign minds to communicate, and lasting regard to be established."

At Richmond where the Virginia legislature was in session, Martineau excited "no small sensation in the *monde* . . . like a 'star shot' *brightly* . . . from its sphere," reported the *Southern Literary Messenger*. The well-known journal quoted a verse celebrating Martineau's "sensible stories . . . on labor and wages" and spoke of whispering "words in her ivory ear" to listen to her "voluble chat." One afternoon in the drawing room of her boarding house, she was "attacked" by three gentlemen on the subject of slavery. Though holding her own for three hours, she felt the subject begin to weigh heavily. She had heard earlier that Everett was sympathetic to slavery and wrote to ask him to clarify his position.⁷

Before they had left Washington, Martineau spread out a map of the states and asked Louisa if she might be afraid to travel in the south, where the author of *Demerara* could be in danger and where "the badness of the roads and of the wayside accommodations" were proverbial. Their route would take them to Charleston and Columbia in South Carolina, to Augusta in Georgia and to Montgomery and Mobile in Alabama, a "vast extent of country" to be crossed before they arrived at New Orleans. Louisa had no qualms, but the journey from Richmond to Charleston was to prove a cast-iron test of their stamina and good tempers. Travelling for nine days (mostly by stage) with only three nights' rest, they set off "sometimes in the evening, sometimes at midnight; or . . . at two or three in the morning." They might snatch "an hour's sleep" while a meal was prepared or nap "amid the jolting and rollings of the vehicle." When they stopped where no bed or sofa was available, Martineau found she could lie on the floor with her carpetbag for a pillow. Several men in the coach who were travelling from New York "looked dreadfully haggard and nervous," she thought.

In *Society*, Martineau recounted hilarious details of the journey. Departing from Richmond on 2 March, they had had no rest by midnight when we came to a river which had no bridge. The "scow" had gone over with another stage, and we stood under the stars for a long time; hardly less than an hour. The scow was only just large enough to hold the coach and ourselves; so that it was thought safest for the passengers to alight, and to go on board on foot. In this process, I found myself over the ankles in mud.

After a change of coaches, they continued till daylight when the new stage "sank down into a deep rut," and all passengers had to get out again. Taking out an axe, the driver briskly cut down a young tree to use as a lever, and (as in future *contretemps*) a "rescue was effected in [no more than] a quarter of an hour to two hours." But the cold was intense, and they walked on for two miles, seeing nothing but "the wild, black forest . . . and the red road cut through it, as straight as an arrow," like a painting by Salvator Rosa. In the morning, the passengers were faint with hunger but got nothing to eat until after midday, when a kind woman at a private dwelling gave them dinner for a quarter each. In the evening, just a half hour before they were to stop for tea, the coach broke down again, and the passengers walked "through a snow shower to the inn." After tea, the coach had another breakdown, but the passengers "were allowed to sit still in the carriage till near seven in the morning." Approaching Raleigh, North Carolina, they saw a carriage "mired" and deserted by driver and horses, but "tenanted by

some travellers who had been waiting there since eight the evening before." At that point, their vehicle "once more sank into a rut."

In spite of such mishaps, Martineau boasted that in America she travelled for ten thousand miles "by land and water," without accident. On stage journeys the wiles and the ingenuities of the drivers continually amazed her. Seeming to thrive on movement through the primitive landscape, she thought the "novelty and the beauty inexhaustible," with the coaches "open or closed all round at the will of the traveller" sometimes allowing a 360° view. Even rain in the pinewoods was soothing compared to rain in English cities which brought the rumble of coaches, "the clink of pattens, the gurgle of spouts, and the flitting by of umbrellas." Though travellers might be exhausted by their all-night rides, "In the morning you wonder where your fatigue is gone. As the day steals through the forest, kindling up beauty . . . the traveller's whole being is refreshed."

Feeling "all hoarse & headachy" at three in the morning when they got to Branchville, they climbed into a stage to go on. Nearing a hotel, the good-humored driver "screeched" his horn loud enough to be heard almost to Charleston but could not wake the sleepy attendants. "Music hasn't no effect on 'em at all," he said comically, "I doubt whether short of firearms will do" (Martineau quipped they should have been charged a dollar apiece for the driver's wit). Owing to the impassable roads below Raleigh, they were advised to proceed through Camden and then to Columbia. Arriving at a hotel at "3 in the morn^g," they saw next day the "round, good humoured face of Col. [William] Preston," come down to meet them in a sleek wig.

In Columbia for several days, where Gilman had forwarded their letters and newspapers, Martineau had "scarcely a half an hour" to command in discussing moral and Christian philosophy with local men and being taken "by a benevolent physician" to see the state lunatic asylum. (Preston's wife was surprised that Martineau was not a convert to Unitarianism, a relatively unknown sect in the South and thought to be slightly odd).

"Come to Augusta . . . We are positively to be there on Sat^y afternoon," Martineau dashed off in a letter to the Gilmans. For Augusta she had a letter of introduction to Rev. Bullfinch, whom they could keep "in Unitⁿ sympathy for 3 days." Blessing "M^{rs} G. for her capital letters" she longed to see them both.

On the evening of 9 March, Martineau and Louisa set out from Columbia by stage to meet the eleven o'clock train at Branchville (sixty miles away) by the following morning, hoping to reach Charleston in time for dinner. Early the next morning the stage hit a stump and stopped, but they need not have worried: at Branchville the train was delayed until afternoon. As Martineau basked in the sun before a house made of "piled up wood cut from the forest," she watched robins twice as large as English ones and turkeys strutting about. From the isolated train stop surrounded by forest, "with the rail-road stretching through it, in a perfectly straight line, to the vanishing point [like a setting in Chekov]," she watched for the train, which appeared at first only as a black dot "marked by its wreath of smoke." Once they had boarded, the boiler broke down -- the first of numerous accidents -- and passengers began to get hungry. When the train stopped near a house with dinner on the table, the gentlemen rushed out to carry food back to their parties. Martineau ended with only "some strips of ham, pieces of dry bread, and three sweet potatoes, all jumbled together in a handkerchief." Soon she fell asleep

to be awakened by a terrible din of "knocking, ticking, creaking, and rattling in every variety of key," a racket caused by frogs in a swamp where they had broken down again.

Coming into Charleston between four and five in the morning of 11 March, the ladies were reluctant to disturb the Gilmans. They boarded an omnibus for the Planter's Hotel, but within minutes the omnibus hit a curbstone, "jolted and stopped." At last staggering into hotel rooms, they tried to order food but got only biscuits and bad wine. Next day, they formed "such a dismal group of aching heads as could hardly be matched out of a hospital." Finally, at the Gilmans, the travellers were considerably allowed to read their letters and newspapers beside a fire in their room, Martineau now keeping up with American as well as English correspondents. With satisfaction she gazed at the chest where her clothes had been "laid in drawers, for the first time" since she'd landed. That day too, a surprise gift arrived: the return of two-and-a-half dollars she had spent for a "hack-carriage" fare in Richmond.

As a contributor to the *Monthly Repository*, Samuel Gilman knew Martineau's writings. His wife, Caroline, was a writer and former editor of the *Southern Rosebud*, one of America's first newspapers for children. And Charleston *deserved* its reputation for hospitality, Martineau was to aver. Six carriages were put at her disposal, servants awaited her orders and a phrenologist sent her complimentary tickets to his lectures. Bouquets of hyacinths, jars of preserves, "wafers," a fan, "six . . . cambric handkerchiefs, marked with various emblems of [her] character and fame" were all sent to the Gilmans' as well as publications that included a set of the *Southern Review*.

During her fortnight in Charleston, Martineau climbed a church steeple from where the city looked romantically "oriental" in the spring sunshine (in *Retrospect* she noted that a traveler's first business in a foreign city should be to find "the loftiest point" he can reach and then to read the local newspapers). On their first morning she found an article that "told "volumes" about unjust taxes in a slave society. In the families she visited, the "Union gentlemen and ladies" appeared dispirited, their "anxious watchfulness" contrasting strangely with "the arrogant bearing of the leading nullifiers." Calhoun's arrival from Washington indeed seemed "like a chief returned to the bosom of his clan," though "an air of mysterious understanding between him and his followers" may not have meant anything, she concluded.

Witnessing an exchange on the subject of slavery between Martineau and Governor Robert Hayne of South Carolina, another American commented on *his* "ready wit and affluent speech" and on *her* "striking points of opposition." Hayne, occasionally leaning forward "eager and eloquent," displayed "the courtly urbanity and polished calmness of manner for which he was remarkable." Martineau sat erect and ungraceful, "oddly arrayed, yet dignified and agreeable . . . with the trumpet at her ear, and the corners of her mouth drawn slightly down," her "plainer physiognomy" being redeemed by light blue eyes "full of intelligence and brilliancy."

Hayne had "engaging manners," Martineau was to record, "with much of the eagerness of the schoolboy mixed with the ease of the gentleman." With all the talents of a politician, however, he could not reason and in Senate debates had been "ground to powder" by Webster.

The Hayne and Calhoun families escorted Martineau on visits to the public library, the arsenal and a panorama. Excitement over nullification extended to the ladies, who had subscribed "their jewels to the war fund" and were "very animated in their accounts of their State Rights Ball." During their drives into the "flat and sandy" country, Martineau viewed

planters' mansions in the woods, with gardens of yucca and hedges of Cherokee rose. By contrast along the shore, flocks of buzzards hovered over a "reeking expanse of slime."

To Martineau the citizens of Charleston presented dramatic contrasts. She forced herself to witness a slave auction and received flowers in "fine houses" where every laugh seemed hollow. She went to "a young heiress's first ball" as well as the slaves "Saturday night's market." Both the poor house and the orphanage were faulty, she noted, providing for whites only. Yet in a long letter to Martineau's mother, Caroline Gilman praised their guest's simplicity and tact with men like Calhoun. Martineau and Samuel Gilman looked over his synopses of *Repository* articles including hers and read aloud Carlyle's articles in the *Edinburgh*. Indeed, Gilman solved a puzzle: Martineau had heard a strangely familiar parable from the Furnesses' six-year-old Willie. He learned it from Bronson Alcott, then conducting a school in Philadelphia. In Baltimore, Martineau had heard the story of "The Wandering Child" that Gilman now identified as one of *hers* from the *Repository*!

On her last day with the Gilmans, Martineau turned down another invitation to visit their daughters' dancing school to go for a ramble in the country with the parents. When they returned, fourteen-year-old Louisa Gilman presented her first piece of music, a "Martineau Cotillion."

Writing to his brother-in-law, Boston lawyer Ellis Gray Loring, Gilman congratulated himself and Caroline for having invited Martineau to stay. He did not believe "a woman ever lived who had such power to inspire others with affection." Louisa Jeffrey, he termed, "an original, keen, frank, intelligent young lady." Martineau adored her brother James, Gilman added, "more than anybody else in the world, and next to him Mr. Furness."

Riding on the same train with Martineau and Louisa from Charleston back to Branchville, Calhoun related stories of his early days. But just when Martineau had wanted to wave goodbye to the Gilmans, Calhoun thrust his "Absolute Majority" on her! Two years later she deplored "the great nullifier's" insistence "that the pirate colony of Texas" be admitted as a slave state.

During a three-day rest at Augusta, Martineau determined "to see how the place had got on since Captain Basil Hall saw it cut out of the woods." He noted jocularly that "a long line cut through the coppice wood" was grandly designated the "principal street," yet now it had three principal streets "with many smaller, branching out into the forest," as well as good houses, five hotels, and a population probably over 2,000. Martineau could hardly stop watching the Indians who swarmed past her window in the evening--"a few Choctaws [and] Creeks" soon to be the victims of a "fierce war." In particular she noticed the squaws shuffling along barefoot carrying baskets on their backs, "while their lords paced before them, well mounted." Some Indians wore gay blue and red clothing and embroidered leggings "with tufts of hair at the knees, while pouches and white fringes dangled about them." On a footbridge over the Chattahoochee River she watched Indians skillfully catching fish "in a net laid among the eddies." The two English ladies dined at a table of seventy-five people set with knives so blunt Martineau wondered "how the rest of the company obtained so quick a succession of mouthfuls."

From Augusta, Martineau planned to travel to Columbus (Georgia) and then to Montgomery and Mobile (Alabama), although people they met at each stop gave "dreadful reports" of travel conditions farther west or south. From Charleston they had carried a large basket of "wine, tea,

cocoa, cases of French preserved meat, crackers and gingerbread," only to partake of the wine and crackers. Leaving Augusta by stage at seven in the evening, they crossed the long, covered bridge into Alabama. There the driver stopped "to hold a parley" about a parcel with a woman "who spoke almost altogether in oaths," a gentleman in the stage remarking they must have got "quite to the end of the world." Through the night passengers remained silent but with daylight began to shout "instructions" and wisecracks to the driver. When they finally stopped at a house for breakfast, Martineau was shocked to find both men and women were expected to wash in a shallow pan set "in the open passage."

Travelling through "Creek Territory," however, she was charmed by the spring wildflowers: the grandest being the honeysuckle. Though unable to enjoy the scent, she gathered a bunch to *look* at. They passed "companies of slaves" mostly going westwards to "Yellibama," and Martineau noted their vacant, unheeding and depressed looks. By contrast, the slaves in an establishment of Indians seemed "sleek, intelligent, and cheerful-looking." Indians on horseback gave the stage grave glances as they passed, while "the piazza at the post-office" was filled with Indians and their children.

Leaving Creek territory "just as the full moon rose" they hoped to reach Montgomery two hours before midnight, but an emigrant's wagon had blocked a ford in the river. Advised to cross on a log, Martineau strode forward unafraid and suddenly found herself waist-deep in water. Climbing out, she "could hardly keep upon the log for laughing." As they traveled, they spotted emigrants' encampments everywhere in the woods that conjured up notions of warmth and sociability. Children were being cared for and the adults cooking, spreading sailcloth shelters or standing guard by the fire. Farmers taking goods to market made up other encampments. When the stage got to Montgomery after eleven at night, Martineau and Louisa found their "bespoken" room at the hotel still without water or sheets. Cold, hungry and wet, Martineau nibbled at some biscuits and fell asleep--to find two mice running merrily around her trunk next morning. The hostess apologized for the unprepared room and served a vast breakfast of corn bread, buns, buckwheat cakes, broiled chicken, bacon, eggs, rice, hominy, fresh and pickled fish, beefsteak, tea and coffee (she and her children and slaves gazing at the food all the while). This was Sunday, so Martineau and Louisa attended an "intensely light and hot" Methodist church where a visiting preacher spoke on great sinners dying violent deaths. That sermon suited Montgomery, Martineau decreed, for they heard of stabbings, shootings and the overturning of carriages among residents.

The travelers spent "nearly a fortnight in and near Montgomery" learning about the economic and social functioning of plantations. Their hosts -- recently moved from South Carolina -- were staying in a log house built on two sides of an open passage but boasting an abundance of books and handsome furnishings. Hummingbirds hung over roses and honeysuckle by the door, the inundations of a river having enriched the soil to produce "a perfect Eden." There were no trees growing near the houses, however, from the fear of mosquitoes. Martineau observed the ploughing and easy planting of cotton seed and learned that profits on cotton in Alabama were thirty-five per-cent. Plantations grew most of their own food, vegetables from a kitchen garden being particularly pleasing. Wine and groceries came from Mobile or New Orleans where tea was dear at "twenty shillings English per lb." Clothing and furniture were ordered from the north. At seven o'clock breakfast, a planter's table offered breads, eggs, ham, beef and fowl. Lunch at eleven was of cake and wine or liqueur,

dinner at two of soup, turkey, ham, fowl, tongue, breads, rice, potatoes, vegetables and pickles -- and of these "you are asked to eat everything with everything else." Finally appeared pies, preserves, fresh fruits from the West Indies, nuts and raisins and "large blocks of ice cream." Champagne, cider and claret were abundant, ale and porter less so. At six or seven came a light supper and at nine or ten, cake and wine.

A gentleman with children needed seven hundred to a thousand pounds "per annum," Martineau learned. Sons bought land and slaves for themselves early and daughters were married "almost in childhood." The whole aim seemed to be getting money "so that education [was] less thought of, and sooner ended, than in almost any part of the world." At the local Franklin Institute for boys and girls, however, Martineau noted prints, books, maps, shells and "some philosophical apparatus," while the general "order and neatness" earned her approval.

She observed ladies cutting out clothing for their slaves; and she visited "the negro quarter," which seemed "unfit for human habitation." Slave women working in the fields looked stolid, ugly and brutish, "[t]he natural good taste, so remarkable in free negroes" having been "extinguished." Yet when they passed crowds of blacks "enjoying their Sunday drive" she thought how competent and gallant they appeared (in *Society* Martineau was to build her case against slavery incrementally as "the possession of irresponsible power"). Speaking with dozens of white southerners, she wrote down "pages" of talk while less successfully trying to converse with slaves.

From Montgomery, the ladies descended the winding Alabama river to Mobile. While there for a day or two Martineau heard of a lynching not even reported in the local press. Now a cousin "kindly offered" a house in New Orleans where he or his partner sometimes stayed. On 24 April they left Mobile by stage to cross through "the most beautiful" forest Martineau had ever seen, of myrtles, magnolias and blossoming shrubs. Though the stage stopped every half-hour when the accompanying four-passenger hack broke down, they dined regally in the gallery of a log house in the midst of the forest, "plentifully supplied with excellent claret."

Just as they reached the coast, "the thunder burst, sheets of lightning glared over the boiling sea, and the rain poured down in floods." Their umbrellas broken, they ran along the pier to catch the steamboat for New Orleans, Martineau deeming it "worth getting wet for such a first sight of the Gulf of Mexico." On board, however, they could not rest during the night as the boat "swarmed with cockroaches." At last before morning, they entered Lake Pontchartrain to be "whirled away to the city" by train, "five miles in a quarter of an hour." Martineau was enraptured by the "acres of blue and white iris" and green cypress growing in the water: "It was like skimming . . . in dreams, over the meadows of Sicily, or the plains of Ceylon," she exclaimed in *Society*.

In New Orleans in her "own" house for ten days Martineau had "leisure and repose" to observe her surroundings (the slaves had been promised their freedom if they behaved well). After arriving at ten in the morning, "in the intervals of visits from callers" the travelers seated themselves at a window. Everything outside looked "very new, very foreign," Martineau thought. Women on the street wore "caps or veils instead of bonnets . . . negroes [shouting] their peculiar kind of French." Believing hot weather caused fever, Martineau declared the "intensity of glare and shadow" an ominous reminder of "the scorching power of the sun." For protection against mosquitoes they wore gloves and "prunella boots" in the daytime and shrouded themselves in a mosquito net at night.

Yet the first night produced a frightening experience. In their large second-floor bedroom Martineau discovered, after Louisa had gone to sleep, that she could not close a French door opening onto a balcony. Having heard that "of all cities in the civilised world," New Orleans was "the most renowned for night robbery and murder," she moved a heavy chair in front of the door and piled it with heavy objects. Blowing out her candle, she got into bed and put her trumpet within Louisa's reach. Soon Louisa woke her to whisper that someone was walking around the room, and *both* women realized they did not know where the slaves slept or how to call for help. Martineau wanted to try to sleep, but Louisa woke her again and again whispering that the person was without shoes, that he was standing by the bed or pushing against the furniture or "washing his hands" at the basin. When at last the intruder left, Louisa got up braving mosquitos to push a trunk against the door. Next morning, their jewelry and clothing were scattered about, but nothing seemed missing. Concerned to identify the intruder, though reluctant to accuse the slaves, they listened to their chatter at breakfast. Martineau could make out nothing, but Louisa soon identified the culprit— a large dog unchained at night to catch rats. Intrepid as she was, Martineau had been badly frightened. "I have felt nothing like it on any other occasion, since I grew up," she recorded.

A physician who had written a pamphlet denying the unhealthiness of New Orleans, may have arranged a tour of the hospital where Martineau admired the care given even to "sick and destitute foreigners." From the top of the hospital, however, she could see a marsh, lots of flooded ground, and "stagnant pools" making the area "peculiarly unhealthy."

Later from the turret of a cotton gin, she gazed down on a healthier scene of ships, "the Levée, the busy streets of the city, and the shady avenues of the suburbs." At parties Martineau heard the French complain of Americans' not speaking their language, while American ladies ridiculed the French for the "liberal use of rouge and pearl powder" — though they did it "with great art" Martineau admitted. The bad repair of the streets meant that ladies walked everywhere. While the sun blazed as if "that part of the world [were] millions of miles nearer," she and Louisa kept on the shady sides. From the ramparts in the moonlight they saw "the picturesque low dwellings of the Quadroons" and from their balcony they watched the lightning "in night-long conflagration." On Sundays, New Orleans bustled with trade. Meat and vegetables were displayed in the market, men smoked and girls with "ribands streaming from the ends of their long braids" walked and flirted. In the Catholic cathedral they noted whites and blacks kneeling together. Listening to a Presbyterian clergyman, attacked for exposing the city's Sunday activities, Martineau was surprised at his lofty style.

Among visits to the homes of "intimate acquaintances," Martineau remembered "one true Louisiana day." Before dinner, the ladies took their workbags into a cool parlor. Afterwards, the gentlemen "trundled rocking-chairs and low stools into the garden" to entertain them with Irish melodies and native stories. Their host may have been Judge Porter (an immigrant from Ireland) who took charge of them in New Orleans. At other times they were taken for drives and dared to take a ropewalk through thickets of fig, catalpa and fragrant, lilac-flowered Pride-of-India trees, seeing "the cottages of the negroes imbowered in green." On a warm 4th of May they visited the site, four miles from the city, of Gen. Jackson's victory over the British in 1815. Scanning the "deadly battle-field" where "nearly 3000" British had died, Martineau wondered at the British leaders' failure to cross the river and march "the four

miles up to the city." On the drive, she saw more roses in gardens along the river than she thought she had ever seen. Returning, they lingered in a "delicious" garden retreat.

On a (less bucolic) occasion in the city, Martineau was approached by Mary Austin Holley, "with two or three companions," who made her an astonishing offer "in the name of the Texan authorities." If Martineau would promise to live in Texas for five years, help to write their constitution and use her influence "to bring over English settlers," she would be given "an estate of several thousand acres in a choice part of the country." Martineau was to scoff at their "folly and romance," as well as their concealing "that Colonel [Stephen] Austin was . . . in jail at Mexico." More disgusting, were the number of duels fought in New Orleans, comprising over a hundred in the first four months of 1835. "The spirit of caste, and the fear of imputation, rage in that abode of heathen licentiousness" she concluded in *Society*. Tales of feuds and revenge, of cruelty to slaves and slave escapes and the history of eight-year-old Ailsie, a mulatto child she hoped to "adopt," figured in both of Martineau's American books. Finally, she disparaged the "dreary," "damp and neglected" Catholic cemetery drained by "ditches of weedy stagnant water," its wooden crosses warped or rotting.

By contrast, their housekeeping at New Orleans was a grand success. Allowing the slaves to choose what *they* wanted to cook, the travellers enjoyed excellent coffee, French bread, radishes and strawberries for breakfast; and broth, fowls, beefsteak, peas, young asparagus, salad, new potatoes, spinach and claret for dinner, with coffee "worthy of Paris." Martineau approved of the hard beds, baths "of the coldest water . . . morning and night," doors and windows kept open with curtains drawn and "ice in the water-jug, ice on the lump of butter, ice in the wineglass, and ice-cream for dessert." A friendship she formed there (since "eclipsed by death") made Martineau happy to have gone to New Orleans even if not a place where "one who prizes his Humanity would wish to live."⁸

¹ *Auto*. 2: 14-19; "First Sight of Slavery," *RWT* 1: 228-34.

² Trollope, I, chap. 19.

³ A.H. Brune reported that everyone found Martineau pleasant but her trumpet "very appalling" [sic]: see William R. Seat III, "Harriet Martineau in America." Diss. Indiana U, 1957, 73-76; John Pendleton Kennedy ("Mark Littleton"), *Swallow Barn* (Philadelphia: Carey and Lea, 1832); HM to Benjamin Bussey Thatcher, Saturday evening [c. Winter 1834-35], *CL* 1: 257 (rejecting a request for support of the Colonization Society formed to resettle American slaves in Africa).

⁴ Trollope, I, chap. 20.

⁵ "Life at Washington" and "The Capitol," *RWT* 1: 235-73 and 274-310; *Auto*. 3: 126; New York *Mirror*, 17 January 1835: 231; "Mount Vernon," *RWT* 311-18; Margaret Bayard Smith, *Forty Years of Washington Society*, ed. Gaillard Hunt (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1906) 354-57 and 359-69; John Quincy Adams, *The Diary of John Quincy Adams* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951) 456; for Martineau's portrait by Samuel Stilman Osgood, see *MSN*, 40 (February 2017): 5; the *Atlas* article was reprinted by the Vincennes, Indiana, *Gazette* 4 (18 February 1835); nullification--the right of a state to nullify a federal law--formed one of the two vital issues of the Jackson presidency along with the question of a national bank; HM to Charles Brooks, 25 January 1835, *CL* 1: 258-59.

⁶ HM to Samuel Gilman, 11 February, 29 March and 1 April 1835, *CL* 1: 260, 264-66 and 266; HM to Durham, 13 February 1835, *CL* 1: 260-62.

⁷ See Willard C. Frank, Jr., "Harriet Martineau in Virginia, 1835: The Theory and the Practice," *MSN* 23 (December 2007): 13-19; "Miss Martineau," *Southern Literary Messenger* 1 (February 1835): 319; HM to Edward Everett, 12 March 1835, *CL* 1: 262-63.

⁸ For Gen. Jackson's victory over the British in 1815, see *Intro. HP* (London: Charles Knight, 1851), ccclv; HM to "Sir," 29 March 1835, *CL* 1: 264; Hall 3: 283; "New Orleans" and "Cemeteries," *RWT* 2: 120-60 and 3: 272-93; ["South Country Life,"] *SA* 1: 285-312; ["Civilisation. Idea of Honour. Intercourse,"] *SA* 1: 53-104; *SA* 2: 179-80; *Auto.* 2: 20-21, 51-53 and 86-90; for Martineau's transcriptions of black English see J.L. Dillard, *Black English. Its History and Usage in the United States* (New York: Random House, 1972) 103; Mary Austin Holley, widow of Horace Holley, past president of Transylvania University; Col. Austin, soon released, became the "founder" of the state of Texas; Martineau may refer to the death of Clay's daughter, see chap. 12, note 3.