

The Martineau Society

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Martineau Society Subscription Information:

Yearly subscriptions are due on January 1st.

* UK: Individual members £20 // Concessionary rate £10 // Institutional membership £45. Life membership rate is £200.

* Overseas: Please contact the Treasurer (see above and endpiece).

Editor's Note

The pandemic lockdown in the United Kingdom has closed or greatly reduced many activities in all aspects of life, not least in academic works and publications. But many have got through. Our own Society is publishing online our dear Elisabeth Sanders Arbuckle's biography of Harriet Martineau, which will be of great help to future readers interested in the Martineau family and the nineteenth century (see the Society website).

A book of great interest arrived a few weeks ago – to your editor and, one hopes, to other members. This is *Rational Dissenters in Late Eighteenth-Century England* by Valerie Smith published in 2021 following her death in 2019 (Boydell Press, ISSN: 1464-6625). The cover of the book is the drawing of the Octagon Unitarian Chapel, Norwich, in 1828 by James Sillet (1764 – 1840) where Harriet and James Martineau were members and which clearly had enormous influence on them both. Sillet, a leading painter of the Norwich School, was also a member and is buried in the Rosary Cemetery in Norwich, created by Octagon members as the first secular graveyard in England.

The book traces how Rational Dissent led by Joseph Priestley with its central theological ideas including rejection of the established doctrines of the Trinity, the divinity of Jesus and of original sin, merged with Unitarianism. A leader of the Rational Dissenters was the Arian, Reverend Samuel Bourn (1714 – 1796) who was minister of the Octagon Chapel between 1756 (when the new chapel opened) and

1775. A subscribing-Arian well known to Harriet was the author, Anna Letitia Barbauld (1743 – 1825).

Valerie Smith suggests that James Martineau took Unitarian Rational Dissent in an entirely different direction from that of the late eighteenth century but clearly many Arian and Socinian ideas continue to this century. The Unitarians are still exploring the 'spiritual', but many have abandoned a spiritual divinity for 'creation' or Nature or, simply, 'good', which may well have met with approval by many Rational Dissenters.

This edition of your *Newsletter* explores the epidemic of cholera in the experience of Harriet Martineau, the relationship of James Martineau and Alfred Tennyson in the Metaphysical Society, two reviews by members of new books and obituaries for other dear members of the Society who we always thought of as inseparable, Barbara Todd and Maureen Colquhoun.

Many thanks to all our contributors. Any errors you find will, of course, be those of your editor.

We look forward to our real 2021 Society Conference in Scarborough!



Wood engraving in the Wellcome Library

Harriet Martineau and Cholera in 1831-1832: Uncertainty and Good Fortune

by John Vint

Introduction

The first case of the coronavirus (COVID-19) was reported to the World Health Organization in December 2019 and has spread throughout much of the world since. I am writing this in March 2021 and the virus has been with us in the UK for over a year causing great death and serious illness, suffering and stress, economic damage, health, social and educational problems, and uncertainty. Vaccines are now being administered in the UK but it may be quite some time before the world as a whole will be safe.

In 1831 Harriet Martineau was on the verge of her sudden success and fame. It was also a time of great upheaval, political change and uncertainty. There had been riots in towns and in agriculture, destruction of machinery in rural areas and strikes in factories. The Act to reform Parliament was imminent and there was ongoing concern with population, poverty, emigration and the poor law.

Late that year and early in the next, Martineau's efforts to find a publisher for the *Illustrations of Political Economy* also coincided with a developing cholera epidemic which was sweeping across Europe and then down through England. This brief paper explores the extent to which Harriet Martineau's indirect encounter with the epidemic, together with the uncertainty of the times, played an important role in a pivotal point in her life. Cholera did not touch her but brought great uncertainty and stress.

The Nature and Spread of Cholera

Cholera is a bacterial disease of the bowel contracted by ingesting contaminated water or food. It is prevalent in places with poor sanitation, unclean water and inadequate hygiene. It must be distinguished from similar diseases such as diarrhoea and dysentery which were endemic in Britain. Cholera was *not* endemic in Britain but was introduced from the continent at least five times during the nineteenth century and apparently not before.¹

A common (false) theory at the time concerning the cause of the illness was that it was a result of *miasma* – bad smells. In fact, the main factor in the spread of the disease was the contamination of the water supply in streams and wells by waste from cesspits. The main effect of the disease was severe dehydration which can be survived if treated correctly. The appropriate treatment would be to replace the large quantities of water and salts that were lost. Unfortunately, doctors in the 1830s generally tried to restrict fluid intake, to prescribe emetics and purgatives and even to bleed their patients in order to 'equalize the circulation'. Although essentially environmental in nature, the spread was due to poor individual hygiene (faecal-oral transmission) and washing of hands was important.²

Cholera was first noticed by British troops in India in 1817. By 1823 it had reached Russia and there were accounts in the press of the impact in St. Petersburg. From Russia the disease made slow but steady progress across mainland Europe and in Great Britain much interest was caused and many fears aroused by the continued presence in Europe of a disease which had until then been regarded as Asiatic. As a result attempts were made to prevent its arrival. In 1831, the Privy Council put all ships arriving in England from Baltic ports and from Russia under quarantine. It also reconstituted the Central Board of Health which had been initially set up in 1805 due to concern about yellow fever. Sir Henry Halliday, the President of the Royal College of Surgeons (from 1820-1844), became President of the renewed Board which met daily from June 1831 to May 1832. Its powers were limited, and parochial Vestry Committees were left with the responsibility for instituting measures within their own localities. They were often ineffective and slow to act.

Harriet Martineau in Dublin, London and Norwich 1831-1832

In 1830 the Unitarian Association became focused on the need for more effort on their part towards evangelization. They advertised a theological essay contest which offered prizes for three separate essays which would promote the Unitarian faith to Roman Catholics, Jews and Muslims.³ Harriet entered and was awarded all three prizes for these interreligious essays for which she received a total of £45 in prize money (worth around £4000 today).⁴ The prize-money from the essays enabled her to visit her brother James, his wife and family in Dublin staying for four months from June through to the end of September 1831.

Harriet was very happy during her stay in Dublin⁵ and she also became increasingly focussed on her ideas for her proposed series on the *Illustrations of Political Economy*. She notes in her *Autobiography*:

In the first place, — in that autumn of 1831, — I strengthened myself in certain resolutions, from which I promised myself that no power on earth should draw me away. I was resolved that, in the first place, the thing should be done. The people wanted the book; and they should have it (Martineau, 1877, p.161)

She wrote to two or three publishers from Dublin, putting forward her proposal but one after another turned it down on the ground of the 'disturbed state of the public mind, which afforded no encouragement to put out new books' (ibid, p. 162). The Bill for the Reform of Parliament had been recently thrown out by the Bishops and the cholera was on everyone's minds. During her time in Dublin the cholera was moving steadily on from Budapest to Prague and was en route to Vienna. She says in her *Autobiography* that cholera seemed to be regarded with as much horror as a plague of the middle ages — 'the terrifying Order in Council which froze men's hearts by its doleful commands and recommendations, was issued just at the same time with my poor proposals; and no wonder that I met only refusals'.⁶ Thus Harriet, while still only in Ireland, already began to pick up on the anxiety and uncertainty felt about cholera. She received one reply to her proposal which had some promise - Messrs. Baldwin and Cradock asked her to call in at London on her way back to Norwich to discuss the matter, which she planned to do. She left Dublin on September 30th.

London 1831

For her visit to Baldwin and Cradock Harriet took a lawyer cousin with her as a witness who told her later what an amusing scene it was to him:

Messrs. Baldwin and Cradock sat superb in their arm-chairs, in their brown wigs, looking as cautious as possible, but relaxing visibly under the influence of my confidence. My cousin said that, in their place, he should have felt my confidence a sufficient guarantee, — so fully as I assigned the grounds of it: and Messrs. Baldwin and Cradock seemed to be nearly of the same mind, though they brought out a long string of objections, beginning with my proposed title, and ending with the Reform Bill and the Cholera (ibid, p. 162).

They wanted her to abandon the words political economy altogether but she knew that 'the science' could not be smuggled in anonymously. They suggested 'Live and Let Live' as their title which she regarded as inadequate and revealing their lack of understanding of her proposal. However she went along with them for the moment. They then put out an advertisement which failed, but they still hung on. In the end they withdrew saying that considering the public excitement about the 'Reform Bill and the Cholera', they dared not venture.

Norwich 1831

Back in Norwich and downhearted she wrote to a number of publishers and received only one reply from Messrs. Whittaker. They kept up some correspondence but in the end joined in the 'general chorus about the Reform Bill and the Cholera' (ibid, p.163). Her friend and intellectual colleague, the well-known Unitarian minister Mr. W J Fox appeared at that time to be keen on the project; and a letter from him came by the same post with Messrs. Whittaker's last, saying that booksellers might be found to share the risk; and he named one (who, like Baldwin and Cradock, afterwards failed) who would be likely to go halves with Harriet in risk and profit. After discussion with her mother, and her brother Henry, it was agreed that Harriet should return to London to 'see what is to be done'.

During the first visit to London and the return to Norwich the epidemic had spread to Hamburg and crossed the channel to reach England for the first time - in Sunderland on October 20th.

London 1831

Harriet arrived in London on a dreary December Saturday night and the epidemic hit Newcastle on 7th December and continued its inexorable journey south. Her first step on the Monday was to meet with the publisher mentioned by Mr. Fox:

He shook his head; his wife smiled; and he begged to see the opening chapters, promising to return them, with a reply, in twenty-four hours. His reply was what was already burnt in upon my brain. He had "no doubt of the excellence, — wished it success — but feared that the excitement of the public mind about the Reform Bill and the Cholera would afford it no chance," &c., &c. I was growing as sick of the Reform Bill as poor King William himself. I need not detail, even if I could remember, the many applications I made in

the course of the next few days. Suffice it that they were all unsuccessful, and for the same alleged reasons (ibid, p.165).

Harriet's spirits began to decline:

Day after day, I came home weary with disappointment, and with trudging many miles through the clay of the streets, and the fog of the gloomiest December I ever saw. I came home only to work; for I must be ready with two first numbers in case of a publisher turning up any day. All the while, too, I was as determined as ever that my scheme should be fulfilled. Night after night, the Brewery clock struck twelve, while the pen was still pushing on in my trembling hand (ibid, 165-166)

She had promised herself one day's rest, and to dine and sleep at the Foxes'. Her resolve gave way and there were tears during the night. In the morning as she was about to leave, Mr Fox gave her the terms of a publishing agreement from his brother Charles Fox (who, as Harriet points out in *her Autobiography*, was a young bookseller). Mr Fox was sceptical of the terms of his brother's offer:

I do not ask you even to consider them; but they will enable you to tell publishers that you hold in your hand terms offered by a publisher: and this may at least procure attention to your scheme (ibid, p.166).

She immediately returned to town, and went straight to Whittaker's who again stated that the time was not suitable for new enterprises. Harriet played the Fox card saying to Mr Whittaker that it was now time for her to consider terms from another publisher which she had in her hand. In reply to this Whittaker asked for more time for consideration – twenty four hours.

At this point Harriet read the detail of the offer of Charles Fox.

I read it with dismay.... Subscribers were to be provided by both parties; and Charles Fox was to have half the profits, besides the usual bookseller's commission and privileges. The agreement was to cease at the end of any five numbers, at the wish of either party. As Charles Fox had neither money nor connexion, I felt that the whole risk was thrown upon me; and that I should have all the peril, as well as the toil, while Charles Fox would enjoy the greater part of the proceeds, in case of success, and be just where he was before, in case of failure. In fact, he never procured a single subscriber; and he told me afterwards that he knew from the beginning that he never should (ibid,p.167)

When Whittaker replied to Harriet he once again expressed his regrets that 'the public mind being so engrossed with the Reform Bill and the approach of the Cholera' and so on. Harriet was deeply disappointed. She soldiered on and drew up a Prospectus which included an appeal for subscriptions. She took this to Mr. Fox plus an advertisement announcing February 1st 1832 as the day of publication. Fox also stipulated that Harriet must sell a thousand copies in a fortnight or Charles Fox would give up at the end of two numbers. For the first time Harriet began to doubt whether the series would ever succeed but busied herself sending out circulars and

was pleased when an uncle was prepared to fund fourteen copies of the whole series.

Norwich 1832

Harriet decided to go home and await the results of her activities. In retrospect she remembered that it was ten days after the publication date that she received news from the publisher saying that five thousand copies of the first tale *Life in the Wilds* were now being asked for. She felt immense relief – ‘but nothing like intoxication’! She felt that her cares were over. In her *Autobiography* she recalls that ‘from that hour she never had any other anxiety about employment than what to choose, nor any real care about money....I think I may date my release from pecuniary cares from that tenth of February, 1832’ (ibid, p.178). After all the uncertainty, tears and depression there was good fortune at last.

Just four days later on the 14th, cholera at last struck London! She had missed the major outbreak in London by returning to Norwich - which appears not to have been greatly troubled by the epidemic as it moved down the west side of England via Bristol down to Exeter. It had not been a race against time as such, but afterwards it may have felt like it.

Afterwards

Somewhat ironically the sales of the political economy tales benefitted from all the uncertainty of the times which had been the source of her anxieties; it was what she had planned for and what she had claimed the people needed. Moreover she later benefitted directly from the legislation on the Repeal of the Poor Laws when asked to write a series of tales on the subject for Lord Brougham. This was another result of the success of the *Illustrations*. During the spring and rest of the summer of 1832 Harriet carried on with her writing for which she needed a great deal of information. In the *Autobiography* she recalls that:

Members of Parliament sent down blue books through the post-office, to the astonishment of the postmaster, who one day sent word that I must send for my own share of the mail, for it could not be carried without a barrow; - an announcement which, spreading in the town, caused me to be *stared at in the streets*⁷ (ibid, p.179).

Given the size of her plans for the *Illustrations* series it became clear to her that she must reside in London, for the sake of the extensive and varied information which she needed. She found lodgings in the house of a tailor in Conduit Street and moved there in November 1832 by which time the cholera outbreak in the city had almost disappeared. The following September she moved with her mother into 17 Fludyer Street, Westminster, where she stayed until 1839.

The epidemic had been a disaster but it is commonly held that it shocked the country into positive action. On this we should let Harriet have the last word:

The much-dreaded cholera proved the smallest of the prominent evils of the time. Its first assault was the most violent; and then it attacked few but the vicious, the diseased, and the feeble; and it carried off, in the whole, fewer victims than many an epidemic, before and since, which has run its course very quietly. Before its

disappearance from the United Kingdom, in fifteen months, the average of deaths was one in three and a quarter of those attacked; and the total number of deaths in and near London was declared to be 5275.⁸ No return was obtained of the number in the kingdom.⁹ When it is remembered how many deaths happened in the noisome places of our towns, and in damp nooks of wretched country villages, and in the pauper haunts of Edinburgh and Glasgow, and among the hungering Irish, it is clear that the disease could hardly work any appreciable effect in the open places, and among the comfortable classes of the kingdom. If a person of rank or substance, or in healthy middle age, was attacked here and there, it was spoken of as a remarkable circumstance; and the cholera soon came to be regarded as a visitation on the vicious and the poor. Happily, the preparations which depended on the apprehensions or the benevolence of the rich were made before that change in the aspect of the new plague, - the cleansing and whitewashing, - the gifts of clothing and food ; and the impression was made on all thoughtful minds, that improved knowledge and care on the subject of health were the cause of our comparative impunity under the visitation of this plague, and that a still improved knowledge and care were the requisites to a complete impunity hereafter. ***Though our progress from that day to this has been slower than it ought to have been, the awakening of society in England to the duty of care of the public health must date from the visitation of the cholera in 1831-2.*** (Harriet Martineau, (1877) *History of the Peace: Being a History of England from 1816 to 1834*, Volume III, Book IV, p.272; my emphasis.)

¹ See T. McKeown (1965) p.51.

² 'Documented transmission pathways included contaminated water sources, direct person-to-person transmission, transfer during food preparation, and contamination of food and drinking vessels'. R. Davenport et al (2019) p5.

³ The three essays (with publication dates) were: *The Essential Faith of the Universal Church* (1831); *Providence as Manifested through Israel* (1833); *Faith as Unfolded by Many Prophets* (1833). For further details see references.

⁴ See Susanne Calhoun (2017), pp.101-105.

⁵ 'What a paradise would life be to me if I could live forever with him and HI!.....'Martineau had felt immeasurably happy with James at Dublin'. Arbuckle,(2019), chapter 6, pp.2-3.

⁶ The Order in Council to which Harriet Martineau referred concerned 'the formation of Parochial Boards acting voluntarily and gratuitously; the division of Parishes, increased cleanliness, better drainage and freer ventilation both of Streets and Houses'.

⁷ My italics.

⁸ *Cholera Returns*, 1832.

⁹ Data on the death total for Cholera in Great Britain as a whole in 1831-32 give a total of 20753. Underwood (1947, p.4.

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Alfred Tennyson (1809 – 1892) in Middle-age
James Martineau and Alfred, Lord Tennyson

by Valerie Purton

Alfred Tennyson and James Martineau, contemporaries, friends and 'Great Victorians', share some telling characteristics, most strikingly a certain unworldliness. The adjective 'childlike' occurs in contemporary assessments of both. Both were valued for work which gave 'rest to the minds of many' (Drummond and Upton, II, 131). However, Tennyson, unlike Martineau, struggled painfully with doubt and with fears about Immortality. For Martineau, 'Nothing good in humanity can truly die.' We may lose the people we love but not our love for them: God only lends us the objects of our affections; the affections themselves he gives us in perpetuity' (from 'Nothing

Human Ever Dies', in Martineau 1843, 240-250). In contrast, Tennyson, in perhaps his greatest work, *In Memoriam* (1850), charts moments of absolute despair as he struggles to come to terms with the death of his dearest friend, Arthur Hallam, at the age of 23:

O life as futile, then, as frail!
O for thy voice to soothe and bless!
What hope of answer, or redress?
Behind the veil, behind the veil. (LVI)

Martineau too had lost a Hallam-figure in his life at an early age. There is a hint in his biography and letters that it was the death of a 'beloved young kinsman', Henry Turner, 'a young Unitarian minister...a cousin by marriage' (Drummond and Upton, I, 24), which prompted his change of vocation to the ministry. He describes this young man as "one of the purest and truest, most devout of men" and reveals that his early death "haunted me with a profound and sacred sorrow". A tempting comparison could be made with the effect of Arthur Hallam's death upon the young Tennyson. There is an even more obviously Hallam-like figure in Martineau's life too, from the period *after* his move to theology: Francis Darbishire, a fellow-student, who died of consumption in 1833: 'He and I especially were like two lovers, and had not a thought apart from one another.' (Drummond and Upton, I, 32). Tennyson and Hallam had experienced just such a passionate friendship and Tennyson's *eventual* response to bereavement, by the end of *In Memoriam* was, like Martineau's, a deepening of his religious belief:

Strange friend, past, present, and to be;
Loved deeper, darklier understood;
Behold, I dream a dream of good,
And mingle all the world with thee. (CXXIX)

Tennyson and Martineau met in the late 1860s when both were involved in the founding of the Metaphysical Society. Martineau had moved from Liverpool to London in 1857 and become minister of Little Portland Street Chapel. It was here that he achieved nation-wide fame as a preacher of extraordinary power. Among the admirers who made the expedition to Little Portland Street to hear him preach were George Eliot, Charles Darwin, Sir Charles Lyell, Thomas Huxley, Robert Browning and Tennyson himself. At about this time he became acquainted with the Tennysons who had been reading his *Endeavours after the Christian Life*. Emily Tennyson wrote in her Journal on November 1 1869: 'Dr Martineau came. He struck me as having a subtle and wonderful mind; he is mournful and tender-looking, 'a noble gentleman.' (Hallam Tennyson, II, 83) In their contribution to the Metaphysical Society, the complementary natures of Tennyson and Martineau become apparent: Tennyson is the inspiration behind the movement, while Martineau shapes, supports and sustains it.

The founding of the Society in 1869 came about from a discussion between Tennyson and the writer and literary entrepreneur, James Knowles. A fellow member wryly observed that the Society had *really* been set up 'for the purpose of convincing Tennyson of the immortality of the soul' (quoted in R. B. Martin, 483). Martineau was asked to join almost immediately and his reply included one absolutely crucial proviso which was to give the Metaphysical Society its peculiar character and significance:

I feel the deepest interest in these problems [of belief and unbelief], and for the equal chance of gaining and giving light would gladly join in discussing them with Gnostics and agnostics alike; but a society of Gnostics to put down agnostics I cannot approve and would not join.' (Letter from 1869, quoted in Drummond and Upton, II, 368)

The use of the word 'agnostic' to describe what Tennyson had called the 'physical men' is significant. Thomas Huxley is usually credited with having coined the word at the first meeting of the Metaphysical Society, but Martineau's use of the term obviously predates that. He also wants, characteristically, to '*gain and give light*' rather than merely to preach to the converted.

Tennyson's own cursory account (in a letter to the Duchess of Argyll, January 27, [1869]) has a quite different tone from the earnestness of Knowles and of Martineau. It is gruff, wry and off-hand, suggesting perhaps a much more casual approach to the Society. He is asking the Duchess to persuade her husband, the Duke of Argyll to become the first President of the as yet unnamed Society (or, as he rather less grandly calls it, the 'Club'):

We make our petition to him [the Duke] that he would become the President of our new club, to be called The Metaphysic [sic] and Theological Club or by some such name. In our meetings all the questions which agitate and perplex this 19th century are to be freely discussed and handled by men of all religious and metaphysical shades of opinion, and when they quarrel, as perhaps they are not unlikely to do, he is to keep us in order.

I hope he will consent. (Lang and Shannon, II, 517)

He then adds, with typical insouciance, a PS, which accommodates Martineau's proviso and at the same time plays wittily with the terms for metaphysical and scientific thinking:

We shall perhaps have the physical men also among us, Tyndall, Huxley etc. (Lang and Shannon, II, 517.)'

(The Duke declined in a letter of 20 February –but did eventually join the Society once it was well-established, in July 1870.)

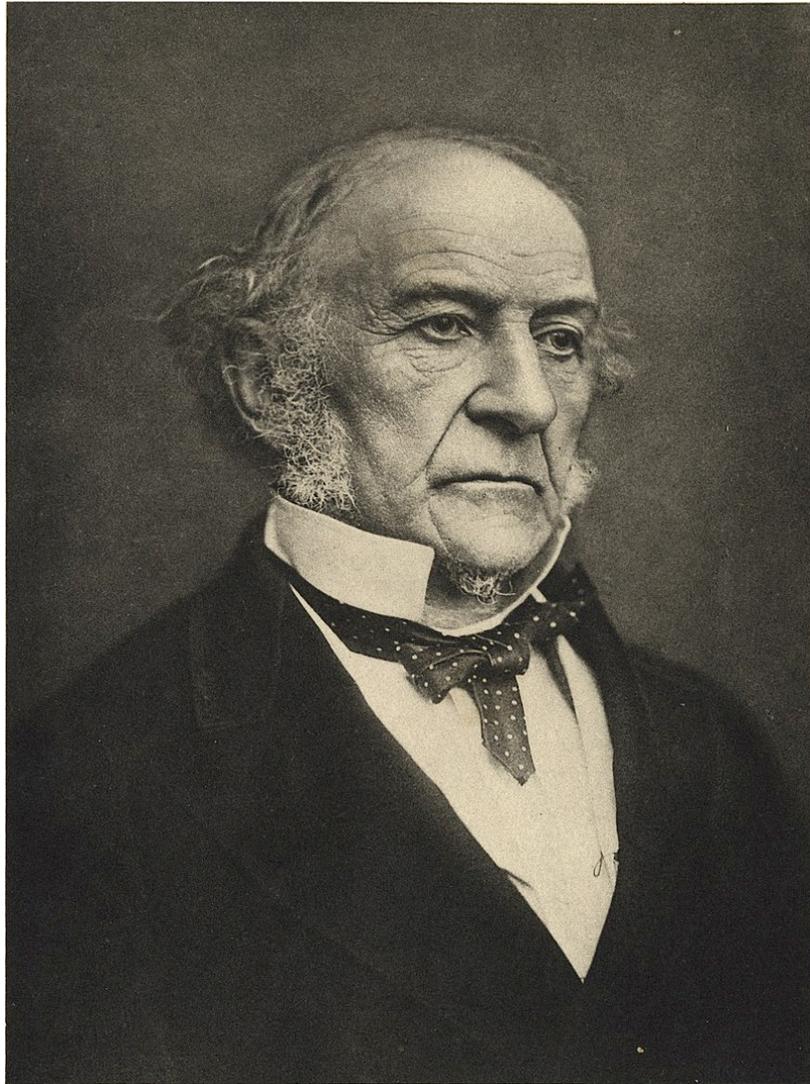
The fear that some 'metaphysical' men might be put off by the invitation being extended to the 'physical' party proved unfounded. Martineau went on to set up a second proviso, equally crucial to the success of the Society:

... at the first meeting it was distinctly settled that the members crediting each other with a pure quest for truth would confer together on terms of respectful fellowship, and never visit with reproach the most unreserved statement of reasoned belief or unbelief.' (Drummond and Upton, II, 368-9)

That last sentence is a key to the appeal – and to the abiding significance today – of the Society: it was from the beginning deliberately dialogic rather than adversarial. Such thinking is of the essence of the personality and the work of Martineau and it is there too in Tennyson's poems of the period, notably 'The Higher Pantheism' and 'The Holy Grail'.

A preliminary meeting of the Society was held in London on Wednesday April 21, 1869 – which coincidentally was Martineau's 54th birthday. There were 13 distinguished men present, including Tennyson, Knowles, Martineau, Arthur Stanley, liberal Dean of Westminster, R.H Hutton, Editor of the *Spectator*, W.G. Ward and, significantly, Thomas Huxley, 'Darwin's bulldog', and one of, in Tennyson's words, the 'physical men', the scientists. What is glaringly obvious to us in the twenty-first century is that there was never any question of this being anything other than an All-Male Club. This despite the fact that several obvious female candidates for membership immediately suggest themselves, at least to twenty-first century historians. Harriet Martineau, of course, is a striking omission, as is George Eliot, who had already proved herself in the male world of the intellectual journals and had become editor of the *Westminster Review*. It is all the more ironical, therefore that the person who coined the name of the group should have been a woman – Lady Augusta Stanley, wife of a founder member, Dean Stanley.

The absence of women seems never to have been noticed and was certainly never commented upon, in all the twelve years of the Society's existence, but Martineau for one was very much aware of the importance of femaleness. In a sermon entitled 'Neither Man nor Woman in Christ Jesus', Martineau shows how Christianity glorifies femaleness in the person of Christ and adds 'the blending of seeming opposites makes up an equilibrium of goodness' (Martineau, 1876, 285). This is echoed in Tennyson's *The Princess* in its powerful image of the complementarity of maleness and femaleness: The Prince and Ida fit together 'Like perfect music unto noble words' (Ricks, 839). This shared view does not, however, seem to allow of the possibility of a woman acting alone, in her own right.



William Gladstone (1809 – 1898) in 1862 and a member of the Metaphysical Society By Samuel Alexander Walker (Wikipedia)

The first proper meeting of the Metaphysical Society took place on Wednesday 2 June 1869 in Westminster, with Sir John Lubbock in the Chair and James Martineau among those present. Notable by his absence was Tennyson. He sent instead a revised version of an earlier poem, 'The Higher Pantheism', which James Knowles was deputed to read on his behalf. A practical explanation for his absence is difficult to find and it is tempting to attribute it to his shyness in just this sort of gathering. Meetings thereafter were held roughly nine times a year and the Society grew from strength to strength, attracting to its membership many of the original doubters. Martineau was an enthusiastic attender, but Tennyson, despite having been one of the moving forces in its foundation, managed to attend only 11 meetings out of the 95 that were held during the twelve years of the Society's existence, though he continued to command the respect of his peers. As one of the members

commented, of a meeting which he *did* attend, 'I do not remember that the Laureate took any part in the discussion, but his mere presence added dignity to a dignified assemblage' (Sir M.E. Grant Duff in Drummond and Upton, II, 371).

However, at an early meeting of the Society, on June 15 1870, Martineau gave a paper (one of two he was to give to the Society over the years), and somehow Tennyson was persuaded, not only to attend but actually to Chair the meeting – a role for which, on all the evidence, he was singularly unsuited. Martineau's paper was entitled, 'Is there any Axiom of Causality?' and it is reprinted in Martineau's *Essays, Reviews and Addresses* (III, 1890). It addresses issues that indeed could be seen to be likely to engage Tennyson: Was there a First Cause? Can Logic alone explain the universe? Would belief in a First Cause give us confidence to believe in Immortality? These certainly are issues over which Tennyson agonised throughout his life.

The demise of the Society only eleven years after its inception, in 1880, tells as much about the nature of the times as does its founding in 1869. Towards the end of the 1870s it seems quickly to have lost momentum. James Knowles was the Honorary Secretary during nearly all the twelve years of the society's existence, but resigned late in 1879 and James Martineau, who had remained a loyal member throughout, was forced for a time to act as both Chair and Secretary. Knowles's explanation of the Society's demise was that, after twelve years of debating, the members knew each other's views and 'there seemed little to be said which had not already been repeated more than once' (Willard Brown, 93). Thomas Huxley, who had been a much more assiduous attender, declared, mysteriously, that it 'died of too much love' (Kent, 2004). The final meeting was held on November 16 1880, in Martineau's house, under his chairmanship, and the last resolution was 'that the Chairman be requested to accept the Minute-book...as a token of the Society's thanks for his services during the past year' (369-70). Tennyson had sent in his resignation a whole year earlier, in October 1879, in a typically offhand note. It is almost comically terse:

To Sir John Lubbock October 16 [Aldworth]
My dear Sir John,
I send you my cheque for 16 guineas – which is my subscription to the
Metaphysical Society.
I must also pray you to accept my resignation and to believe me
Yours very truly,
A. Tennyson (Lang and Shannon, III, 181.)

His throwaway comment to his son about the reason for the Society's demise is equally revealing: it perished, he said, 'because in ten years of strenuous effort no one had succeeded in even defining the term "Metaphysics"' (Hallam Tennyson, II, 170).

It is tempting to speculate on Tennyson's relationship to the Society: did he feel guilty for having prompted the establishment of a society in which he participated so little? Was he grateful to Martineau for taking on a role for which he himself felt unsuited? Was he perhaps slightly in awe of Martineau's competence, both intellectually and administratively? In early 2019 I came across a cluster of letters from and about the Tennyson family, in the G.F. Watts archive in the National Portrait Gallery in London. One particular letter caught my attention. It seems to have slipped the notice of Lang and Shannon, the editors of Tennyson's Letters:

Dec 27/72

My dear Watts, Signor, I mean,

I have been asked to use my interest with you – I hope that I have some – or am I mistaken? – to take a portrait of James Braithwaite Martineau¹ – a good man and a great metaphysician. Certainly one of the noteworthy men of our times, and one of my friends, and with a head and face which his congregation and his daughter think you alone can render justly: he himself knows nothing of this covert desire among his friends and admirers, to have him added to your historical gallery. Pray revolve it in your mind and let me if possible have a favourable answer.

Tennyson was a famously recalcitrant letter-writer and the NPG catalogue reveals that he had been prompted to write on this occasion by a group of Martineau's old pupils. If the Metaphysical Society commenced proceedings in April 1869, over three and a half years had elapsed before Tennyson wrote to Watts in December 1872 – long enough for him to have come to appreciate Martineau's qualities. It is striking that he describes Martineau to Watts as 'a great metaphysician'. This suggests that Tennyson had Martineau's role in the Society uppermost in his mind at this point and might even have been prompted to act as a way of recognising his services – services that he himself was too shy to undertake.

Drummond and Upton reveal that when it was first unveiled, there were strong reservations about the portrait:

.. some of [Martineau's] friends were greatly disappointed with it when it first appeared, and lamented that its very greatness as a work of art would perpetuate a wrong idea of the subject. Mr Martineau was ill at the time, and had not been previously known to Mr Watts; and the artist may have formed a somewhat erroneous idea of the man before him...[The portrait] does no justice to his natural vivacity and cheerfulness, or to the radiant look of his face when his thoughts were flying forth in golden speech to enrich the minds and hearts of others. We see before us the philosopher and mystic, with his dreams of diviner worlds, but not the man of action and the prophet... (II, 20-21).

¹ Tennyson seems to be confusing James with his distant cousin, the artist Robert Braithwaite Martineau (1826-1869)

That phrase, 'the man of action', suggests perhaps the key difference between the temperaments of Martineau and Tennyson. Tennyson's membership of the Metaphysical Society and his admiration for James Martineau are tempered by his unease with abstract discussion. Yet the power of Martineau's personality, rhetoric and attitude to life did influence the Poet Laureate, as it did so many other people who encountered him. It is a so far unexplored influence – and it can be seen in both the argument and the texture of two poems written at the time of the Society's flourishing, 'The Higher Pantheism' and 'The Holy Grail'.

The poem which Tennyson (surely rather guiltily?) submitted to be read in his absence at the first meeting of the Metaphysical Society was a reworking of an earlier, unpublished poem called 'Speak to the Lord: he is close at hand'. 'The Higher Pantheism', the reworked version of that earlier awkward little poem, is reminiscent of Martineau's vision of 'the perennial indwelling of God in Man and the Universe' (Drummond and Upton, 1, 288):

The sun, the moon, the stars, the seas, the hills, the plains –
Are not these, O Soul, the Vision of Him who reigns?

Is not the Vision He? Though He be not that which he seems?
Dreams are true while they last, and do we not live in dreams?

Earth, these solid stars, this weight of body and limb,
Are they not sign and symbol of thy division from Him?

Dark is the world to thee: thyself the reason why;
For is he not all but that which has power to feel 'I am I'?

Glory about thee, without thee; and thou fulfillest thy doom,
Making him broken gleams, and a stifled splendour and gloom.

Speak to him, thou, for He hears, and Spirit with Spirit can meet.
Closer he is than breathing and nearer than hands and feet.

God is law, say the wise, O Soul, and let us rejoice.
For if he thunder by law, the thunder is yet his voice.

Law is God, say some: no God at all, says the fool;
For all we have power to see is a straight stick bent in a pool.

And the ear of man cannot hear, and the eye of man cannot see;
But if we could see and hear, this Vision – were it not he?

In 1893, Hallam Tennyson asked Martineau for his own account of Tennyson's membership of the Metaphysical Society, to contribute to his *Memoir* of his father. Martineau reported that at this first meeting, there was not a word of criticism or comment from the members of the new Society after 'The Higher Pantheism' had been read, although, as he goes on to say, 'Nothing that [Tennyson] ever wrote was more likely to lead to interesting discussion' (Hallam Tennyson, 1897, II, 171). Willard Brown, historian of the Metaphysical Society, also reports the silence after the reading, interpreting it as a *favourable* response and declaring that "The Higher Pantheism" was thus allowed to remain what in its essence it was, a prologue to the drama of ideas which the Metaphysical Society was about to present' (Willard Brown 1847, 43).

A slightly later poem, 'The Holy Grail', also written during Tennyson's membership of the Metaphysical Society, is a poem which embraces, indeed celebrates, openness and plurality. It is one of *Idylls of the King* which evolved over a period of over 50 years (1831 – 1882); the group of Idylls written in the 1860s embody the spirit of that era: they are imbued with the non-judgemental pluralism displayed for a precious twelve years by the earnest and idealistic members of the Metaphysical Society, and embodied in the life and work of James Martineau.

Tennyson's admiration for James Martineau is obvious. Against all his previous patterns of behaviour, and overcoming his shyness, he agreed to chair the meeting at which Martineau gave his first paper. As that initial letter to Watts declares, to Tennyson, as to most people of the time, Martineau was 'one of the leading spirits of the age' but he was also 'a friend of mine'. He reported to his son that during his time at the Metaphysical Society, 'the finest argumentative duels that he had heard...and those which impressed him most, were between Huxley and Martineau.' (Hallam Tennyson, II, 168) and he regarded Martineau, he said, as 'the master mind of all the remarkable company with whom he engaged.' [NPG catalogue – unreferenced]

The admiration was obviously mutual. In a letter written when he was in his 90s, Martineau speaks of his 'strong personal attachment 'to Tennyson, an 'admiration and reverence [which] were already deep before I had known him..' (Drummond and Upton, II: 245). It is evident that Martineau had been a great reader of Tennyson for many decades before they met. In a letter of 1856 he had described 'my sacred guides': 'after my Bible, with Plato, and Leighton, and the 'Theologia Germanica' and Coleridge, and Tennyson, and the German and Wesleyan Hymns' (I, 348). When asked by Tennyson's son to give an account of Tennyson's relations with the Metaphysical Society, he listed the papers Tennyson had attended and went on, tactfully, 'I cannot recall anything that fell from your father in the discussion of these topics. But in general his sympathies went with the advocate of the more conservative aspects of moral and metaphysical questions... He continued: 'That in a certain sense our great Laureate's poetry has nevertheless had a dissolving

influence upon the over-definite dogmatic creeds within hearing or upon the modes of religious thought amid which he was born, can hardly be doubted.' He glosses that wonderful word 'dissolves' thus: 'What I meant by 'dissolving' is not destroying religious faith, but releasing it from imprisonment within tight propositions which define the Infinite' Hallam Tennyson, II, 171-172). This is tellingly close to Tennyson's definition of poetry: 'I hate to be tied down to say, "This means that"... Poetry is like shot-silk with many glancing colours' (cited in Ricks, 1463). Both men value openness and fluidity – in belief as well as in poetry. Martineau himself, in the Introduction to *Endeavours after the Christian Life*, makes a direct comparison between his work and that of the poet:

In virtue of the close affinity, perhaps ultimate identity, of Religion and Poetry, preaching is essentially a lyric expression of the soul, an utterance of meditation in sorrow, hope, love, and joy, from a representative of the human heart in its divine relations. (xii)

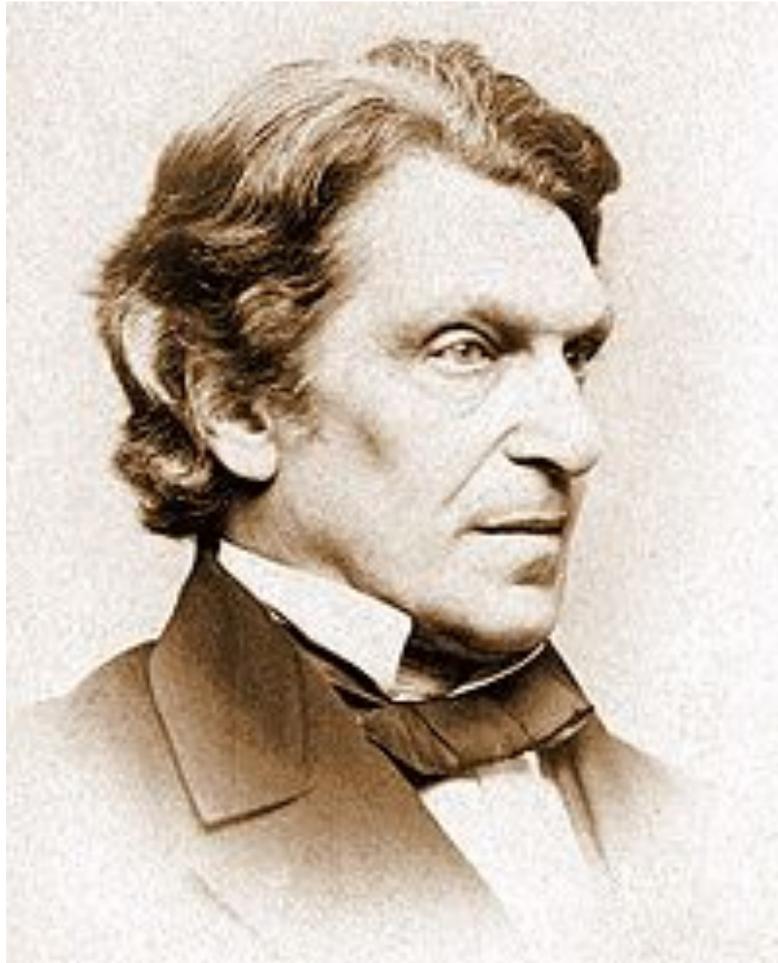
Each of Martineau's sermons is (as he suggests himself) a 'lyric' just as each of Tennyson's 'brief swallow-flights of song' which make up *In Memoriam* is a separate lyric. Martineau and Tennyson thus share a vision of 'shot-silk' – their writing full of 'many glancing colours'. To both, poetry and belief are ultimately one.

On his 83rd birthday (21 April 1888) Martineau received an Address 'expressive of reverence and affection', followed by a series of signatures – 650 in all! – suggesting that he had by then attained the status of what we would now call a 'National Treasure'! (Drummond and Upton, II, 130). The Address, which Benjamin Jowett had helped compose, thanks him 'for the help which you have given to those who seek to combine the love of truth with the Christian life. You have taught your generation that, both in politics and religion, there are truths above party...you have sought to harmonise the laws of the spiritual with those of the natural world... you have given rest to the minds of many.' (131) The list of signatories is indeed astonishingly diverse – and the first is Alfred, Lord Tennyson. In the words of Professor Joseph Estlin Carpenter, 'Happy was it to such men of genius that in later life they found each other out; and when Tennyson passed away Martineau could say that there had passed with him one of the supreme interests of [his] life for the rest of his days.' Such was the affinity between the two that, according to Carpenter, Martineau could well be described as 'the Tennyson of preachers'. (Article in *The Christian Life*, April 29 1905).

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James Martineau (1805 – 1900)
by Elliot and Fry

Review of 'Mrs Gaskell's Personal Pantheon' by Robert C.G. Gamble

by Stuart Hobday

Robert Gamble's new book has the subtitle 'Illuminating Mrs Gaskell's Inner Circle' and it certainly does just that, bringing several figures out of the shadows that had an important influence on the writing of Elizabeth Gaskell. In particular, Gamble seeks to clarify who is the Miss Mitchell that appears in letters and biographies and makes a convincing argument that until now she has been misidentified as Rosa Mitchell, a governess in the Gaskell household, when, in fact, the Miss Mitchell who had a profound influence on Gaskell's life and writing was Rosa's older sister Janetta Bishop Mitchell who knew Gaskell well when she first moved to Manchester.

The focus on Janetta Bishop Mitchell also provides a link to Harriet Martineau as this Miss Mitchell, in her younger days, became a friend and mentor to Harriet in 1820s Norwich and they retained a lifelong correspondence. This builds the picture of the intriguing relationship between Gaskell and Martineau in that they moved in very similar Unitarian circles, their respective families had many links and Martineau definitely somewhat inspired Gaskell towards her own writing. The intrigue is that, despite these close ties, they remained emotionally and intellectually distant from each other and their spiritual differences became a wedge between them. Gamble's book confirms and builds on this picture.

The book goes into great detail about the family networks that surrounded Gaskell and Martineau and provided both of them support, progressive thinking, and also much source material for their writing. Gamble presents members of the Turner, Holland, Welbank, Howarth, Needham, Greg, Kenrick families as well as the Gaskell, Martineau and Mitchell families and one is left with a sense of the crucial role that Victorian families played in the developments of the era in industry, commerce, culture as well as the writing of these pioneers.

Gamble provides details of Janetta Mitchell staying with Martineau at her London home in Fludyer Street and reinforces the image of Harriet as being at the centre of a busy London circle in the late 1830s and, at this time, Mitchell becomes a link person between Martineau and Gaskell. Also that *Deerbrook* as a novel was read and admired not just by Gaskell but also the Brontës in Haworth.

The characters that Gamble brings out from the shadows include Harriet's first cousin, Richard Martineau and his wife Lucy, who provided much practical support to Harriet in the late 1830s and the 1840s and continued to provide her with a London base after the move to Ambleside so that their house in Westbourne Street was where Martineau first met Charlotte Bronte before inviting her to The Knoll.

However Gamble also confirms that the scandal Martineau caused by her writing partnership with Henry Atkinson with a mixture of mesmerism and atheism, caused not just a rift between the great writers but also within the Martineau family itself. Following Martineau's first meetings with Atkinson, Gamble surmises:

While her Lenton friends were constant, some of Harriet's family began to question her sanity. The affronted Greenhows were supported by Harriet's mother, who had left the condemned Fludyer Street following the death of Aunt Lee, to live amongst those gathered around James Martineau's home in Liverpool....Janetta Mitchell and the Turners in Manchester must have found their loyalties perplexingly divided between Harriet and her allies on the one part and their old Newcastle friends, the Greenhows and Harriet's mother on the other...Elizabeth Gaskell was sceptical but curious about mesmerism. Perhaps in part for Janetta's sake, Elizabeth would in future maintain a

respectful if rather distant relationship with the intellectually intimidating Miss Martineau.

Mrs Gaskell's Personal Pantheon is a great resource for any Gaskell or Martineau scholars in building the picture of Victorian networks that played such an important role in the development of these two great writers. It also reaffirms the sheer determination that both had to have, to overcome the discouragement and gender assumptions of the time.

In my own research one of the revelations was to find Mrs Gaskell to be quite contrary to her cosy image, reinforced by costume dramas, and that below the tales of small town intrigues, often lay a quiet punch of social improvement, feminism and equality. Linking Gaskell to Martineau and the Unitarian family networks helps make sense of Gaskell's desire to speak out and raise issues in her novels. Robert Gamble's book is definitely worth a read for those interested in delving deeper into the social networks that produced the important ground breaking work of these great nineteenth century writers

***Essex Girls: For Profane and Opinionated Women Everywhere*, Sarah Perry, published by Serpent's Tail, 2020, pp89, £7.99**

Gaby Weiner

Why, you might ask, am I reviewing this book about Essex Girls for the Martineau Society Newsletter? None of the Martineau family came from Essex as far as we know, though the book does feature Harriet Martineau. The origins of the book came from the invitation to its author, Sarah Perry (author also of *The Essex Serpent* and *Melmoth*) who now lives in Norwich but who originally came from Chelmsford in Essex,



Harriet Martineau (1802 – 1876)
By Richard Evans (Wikipedia)

to give the Harriet Martineau lecture in Norwich in 2018. In so doing, she looked into the life of Harriet Martineau and identified an opinionated woman who refused to conform, much like depictions of the Essex girls of her youth who were mocked for being 'tough, loud, vulgar and unashamed' (p10). This short book is the outcome of her investigation into the origins and characteristics of the Essex Girl:

What is an Essex girl, if not a woman who cares nothing at all for a good reputation? I began to understand that perhaps she was feared and despised because, having rejected one female duty, she was better equipped to reject them all (p17).

In her deconstruction of the misogyny inherent in the portrayal of Essex Girls, Perry investigates how they became anti-established icons and whether there were historical antecedents in Essex and elsewhere, with similar characteristics of tenacity, rebellion and disobedience. And, of course, she found them: for example the sixteenth century Protestant martyr, Rose Allin, from Chelmsford, the nineteenth-century feminist abolitionist, Anne Knight, also from Chelmsford, and Emily Hobhouse from East Wittering who campaigned against the horrors of the concentration camps of the Boer War. Perry was determined to show, however, that an Essex girl is not bounded by geography, citing those with similar dispositions, such as Audre Lorde, self-described as 'black, lesbian, mother, warrior, poet', Kim Kardashian, the celebrity icon, and our very own Harriet Martineau.

What is so interesting in this book is which of Martineau's many works Perry is most moved by. Surprisingly, to me anyhow, it is not Harriet's feminist or anti-slavery writing, or indeed her political economy tales, but rather *Life in the Sickroom* which was based on her experience as a long-term invalid, contributing significantly as Beth Torgerson has shown in a recent Martineau Society conference paper, to nineteenth-century debates on the need to reform the medical system.

The book starts with a quote from *Life in the Sickroom*, which I assume reflects Perry's perception of her own book:

As I write this, I cannot but wonder when and
how you will read it,
and whether it will cause a single throb at the
idea that
it may be meant for you

Coming after a tribute to Kim Kardashian invoked as an Essex Girl 'displaced from Southend to Los Angeles' with a particular type of agency and a particular kind of disdain, Perry commands Martineau to 'walk out of Norfolk, to cross Suffolk without pausing', so that she may introduce Martineau to Perry's Sussex ghosts, claiming that Martineau too, in her way, had been an Essex Girl. She provides a brief Martineau biography which members of the Martineau Society will recognise. On Harriet's controversial legacy, Perry is particularly sharp:

But it is not easy for a woman to secure a lasting reputation, since this seems to me to be predicated on being liked and respected by peers, and about being assessed against a series of subtle and punitive social norms, as on her work. After the publication of Martineau's correspondence with Atkinson, it was felt she had been duped by his malign influence, since certainly no mere woman could arrive at so anarchic position as atheism on her own account. It was a 'humiliating inversion of the natural order' wrote her brother, after which he never saw or heard from her again. (p25)

Many of us in the Martineau Society have long pondered on why Harriet Martineau's historical legacy has been so difficult to sustain. We have argued at an intellectual level, that it might be due to the abundance or range of her writing or her adoption of 'radical' causes (Sanders and Weiner, 2017). But could it be, rather, a consequence of her outlandish reputation? Was it because, as Perry argues, and like other of the Essex Girls mentioned in the book, Martineau was too disreputable, too disrespectful, too disobedient, and that she spoke out of turn, too loudly and too often? Was it because she could be irritable and irritating, a thorn in the flesh of the established and ruling classes? But most concerning of all, could it be primarily due to her not-so-quiet resolve to protect her freedom to speak and independence of thought?

Perry puts forward a compelling argument! I recommend that you read the book.

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Early Memories of Barbara Todd

by Moira Kermode

I first met Barbara when we were both receiving spiritual direction for our confirmation at our village church in Monmouthshire.

We became friends sharing a love of literature – especially poetry and the theatre. We frequently journeyed through the Severn Tunnel (there was no bridge in those days!) to see plays at the Bristol Old Vic.

Inspired by a story about the Cinque Ports we decided on a cycling holiday on the Romney Marshes. I think the highlight of the week for Barbara was our visit to the home of Ellen Terry at Smallhythe Place, near Tenterden, Kent.

After leaving school, Barbara went to Cardiff School of Drama, afterwards entering the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London. By this time, my father had been moved to London and we lived in Surrey. Barbara was living in a flat in Baker Street and pursuing an acting career. It was there I first met the man she was to marry, Lyon Todd. We met often, and I saw her in the dual-roles of Mrs Organ-Morgan and Mrs Dai Bread One in the first production of Dylan Thomas's *Under Milk Wood*, roles Barbara acted to perfection. The last time she visited my home Barbara told me Lyon was going to Canada, and within a few days I received a card informing me she

was flying to Toronto to marry Lyon! I received another card from Martha's Vineyard in America where they spent their honeymoon. She told me the house was called 'God's Pocket' and someone gave her a signed photograph of Ellen Terry as a wedding present. I still have that card!!

Later Barbara and Lyon moved to Boston where they lived with their daughters, Mairi and Tilda.

And then I lost touch, until one very, very wet, windy day I went to the WI market in Ambleside. I stumbled in and sat on the nearest chair, aware of another figure at the far end. I remarked on the weather to hear a voice say 'You don't recognise me, do you? Yes, after over thirty years, it was Barbara!!



Barbara examining the bust of Harriet Martineau at Wellesley College, Massachusetts, during the visit in 2009 of the Martineau Society: *Photo Bruce Chilton.*

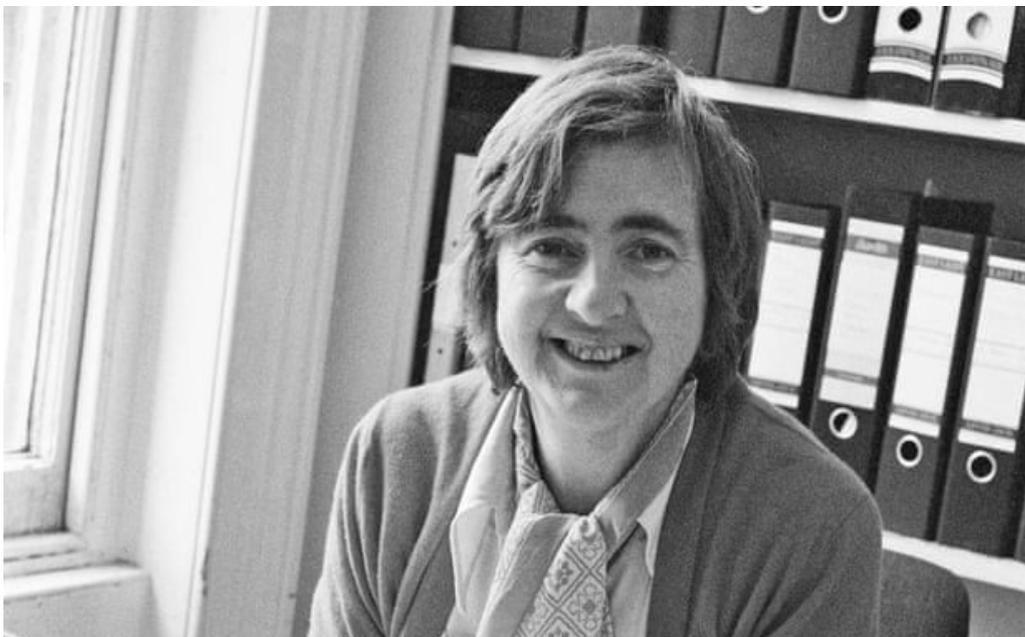
Maureen Colquhoun

by Gaby Weiner

I first met Maureen when I attended the Harriet Martineau Bicentennial Conference in Ambleside in July 2002. I remembered her name as a revered feminist MP who helped pass the Sex Discrimination Act in 1975, but who fell foul of Labour Party small town politics when she was deselected by her local party after she left her husband for a woman. I was honoured to meet Maureen and ‘that’ woman, Babs Todd, at the conference, and was able to visit their house, the Knoll, which Harriet Martineau had built and lived in for 30 years or so.

Some years later, Maureen and Babs nearly persuaded my partner and me to purchase the other half of the Knoll which was then for sale. The idea was to reunite the two parts of the house at some time, to create a study centre for Martineau scholars. It wasn’t to be, but Maureen retained a long-term wish for the Knoll to become a study centre which also sadly wasn’t to be.

At another Martineau Society meeting, Maureen complained to me that a book had just come out which totally misrepresented her, both as a political and private figure. She had written a well-received memoir in 1980, *A Woman in the House*, but that was long ago.



Maureen Colquhoun (1928 – 2021) *The Guardian*

To ensure that her concerns were aired, I suggested that she update her own account, for instance, via a recorded interview with me, which would then be digitised and lodged with her papers. Any future researchers would have access to

that interview as another record of her life. She agreed, we decided on the questions she wanted to be asked, and the interview was conducted in 2009, with a copy lodged among her papers.

Moving on to the present day, a week or so after Maureen's death, I was contacted by her granddaughter Clover Colquhoun, who asked me if I was 'the Gaby' who had interviewed her grandmother, and if so, whether I had a copy of the interview. It appeared that though members of Maureen's extended family knew about the recording, they had not actually heard it. (Babs definitely did, as she remarked to me at the time that it revealed things about Maureen's life that she had not known.) And Maureen was no longer there to tell them where they might find it. Luckily, I located my copy and was able to send it immediately, which delighted Clover no end!

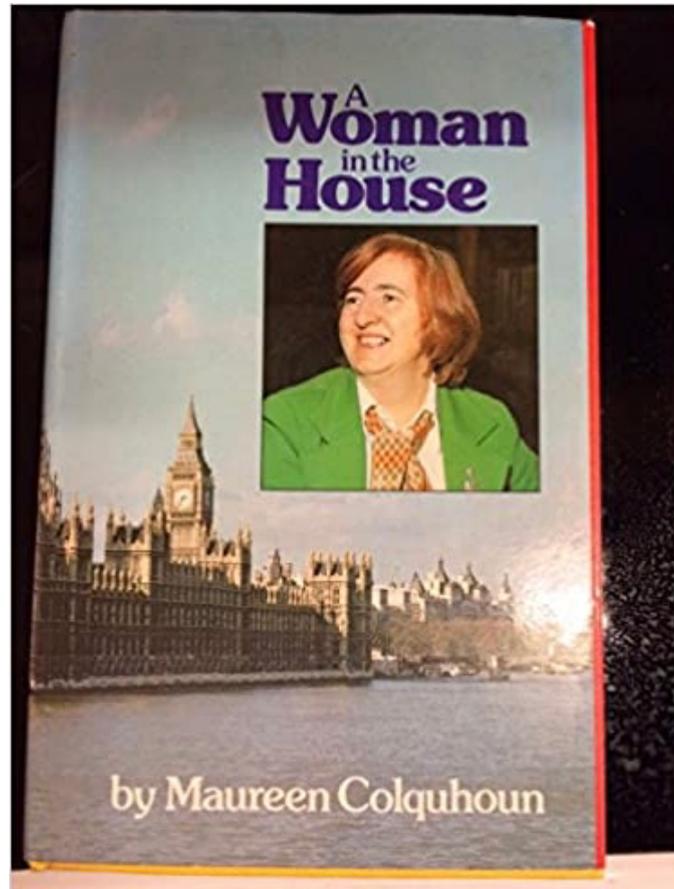
To cut a long story short, I know rather more about Maureen's life than many of her media obituarists, but, because we agreed that the interview was confidential, only the bare bones can be disclosed. Maureen had very humble beginnings in Eastbourne, but managed to gain a good education via a local convent school and won a place to study at the prestigious London School of Economics (where her papers are now lodged). She was introduced to the Labour Party in her late teens by her future husband, journalist Keith Colquhoun, after which she became local councillor and then Labour MP for Northampton North in 1974. Her political career prospered, and she came to my generation's notice because of her pursuit of a range of feminist campaigns including a crèche for women MPs, eradication of sex discrimination in public life, and protection of prostitutes. She also asked to be addressed as Ms instead of Mrs in the House of Commons! She was a wonderful speaker and appeared at many events organised by the burgeoning women's movement of the 1970s.

Then came her 'outing' as the first (openly) lesbian MP when she left her husband of 25 years for Babs. The scandal was enormous, her constituency party didn't approve, and she lost the possibility of standing for Labour in the 1979 election. She applied to several other constituencies but was unsuccessful. She spent most of the rest of her life as a parliamentary researcher and as Councillor in Hackney and latterly in the Lake District where she and Babs settled in 1990s. By chance they came to buy the house which Harriet Martineau built, but once they were aware of the house's history, became committed advocates of Harriet's legacy and strong supporters of the Martineau Society.

This is how Penny Henderson, Secretary of Westmorland and Lonsdale Constituency Labour Party, remembers her:

Maureen was a stalwart of our local Labour Party in South Lakeland; always welcoming, she kept our local branch afloat when others hit the deck. She was outspoken and not afraid to ruffle feathers but always with the purpose of standing up for those less fortunate and for those whom she felt were not getting a fair deal, especially women.

She will be hugely missed!



Recent Deaths of Members

Michael Purches and Maureen Colquhoun

Recent New Members (UK unless stated)

Charlotte Bird, Caroline Gardner, Suzanne Grogan (France), Catherine Heyrendt-Sherman (France), Valerie Purton, Lyn Relph (USA) and Bob Stillwell

The Martineau Society

The Martineau Society was founded in the early 1990s by members of the Octagon Unitarian Chapel, Colegate, Norwich, to foster interest in the descendants of Gaston Martineau, surgeon and Huguenot refugee who settled in Norwich in 1695.

Their skills developed in many fields: medicine, art, writing, engineering, education, religion and industry and the Society publishes papers on their lives and correspondence with others in these fields and with their other contemporaries.

The Society is a registered charity (no. 1064092) and holds an annual conference which includes an AGM, papers and visits to places connected with the Martineau family. The Society issues *The Martineau Society Newsletter* twice each year, containing scholarly articles and news of events and publications.

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The Martineau Society Newsletter submissions of 2,500 – 4,000 words or less may be sent to Bruce Chilton, Newsletter Editor:

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James Martineau

Though a leader of Unitarians, he was not a leader of Unitarianism. He had in his mind an ideal English Church though for the moment it consisted of himself and his chapel. It was to gather under its wings all the religious minds and make the nation a fountain of living waters for all races, without any doctrinal Christianization of them. He was jealous of everything that tended to detach the Unitarian spirit and critique from the general religious life of the country, or organise it into a distinct church. It was here that his contempt for 'consequences' had serious effects.

From the autobiography of Moncure D. Conway (1832 – 1907), the secularist and leader of South Place Ethical Society



James Martineau (1805 -1900)
Unitarian Hist. Soc.