Sophia Hankinson: 'Lenton and the Richard Martineaus':

Sophia's paper was based on her study of *Memories of Lenton* by Mary Constance Martineau (1830-1917), eldest daughter of Richard Martineau (1804-65) and his wife Lucy Needham, ancestors of the Walsham-le-Willows branch, of whom Mr Richard Martineau, formerly of Whitbread's Brewery, is the current representative. Lenton House was in the village of Lenton not far from Nottingham, and belonged to her mother's family, the Needhams. Of her parents' marriage, MCM says: 'There never was a happier marriage.' Harriet Martineau is mentioned in the description of a visit to the Lakes in 1845, which Sophia quoted from the book. Richard Martineau is described as: 'a delightful travelling companion...liked travelling *en famille*, and did not grudge the expense...my mother could not with an easy mind have left the delicate baby Caroline...under the charge of a servant, so she and her nurse went with us...We went in our large, roomy travelling carriage, which we took on the railway as far as Leeds, posting thence by Ilkley to Bolton Bridge where we spent Sunday, seeing the ruins of the old abbey, and the Strid, celebrated in WW's poem....posted by Skipton, Kirby Lonsdale to Bowness, where we stayed 3 days. It was my first sight of the mountains, and very much I enjoyed it. The next morning was wet, but in the afternoon we drove to Water-head, to see cousin HM,...lodging there and planning her future home at Ambleside.'

There are three more references to HM: 'In May Cousin Harriet Martineau came and remained nearly a month...She had just been cured by mesmerism of her long illness at Tynemouth, and was very full of the subject. She had wonderful tales to tell, and we felt

ita great privilege to hear them. Mr Atkinson came, too, for a few days, but I do not remember that we greatly admired him, although of course we were much interested in seeing one of whom we had heard so much' (p. 75).

1846: 'This autumn we had a visit of a few days from Miss HM who was just starting from Egypt with Mr and Mrs James Yates. A visit from her was a great treat, both because her conversation was exceedingly lively and entertaining, and because her presence was sure to attract many interesting people...' (p. 85)

1847: 'in June we had another visit, on her return from Egypt and Palestine, and if her former visit had been interesting, this was much more so, for she was full of stories of her travels, which she told in a most interesting way, and seemed never tired of talking.'

The story closes in 1850, but the book also refers to Catharine Turner, whose pupil MCM became. Catharine was Harriet's cousin on her mother's side (only child of Elizabeth Martineau's brother), and the wife of Henry Turner of Newcastle. She ran a school for nearly thirty years, on broader educational principles than was common at the time: 'Her pupils were taught not only to play the piano, to draw, to dance, and to speak French, *but to think, and to have an earnest purpose in life.* She never took a larger number of pupils than she could keep under her own influence, and a most valuable influence it was, for she was one of those whom it was a privilege to know.'

Deborah Logan: '*Eastern Life, Present and Past,* and Western Ethnocentricity'

Deborah discussed the way Martineau has been seen as racist in *Eastern Life*, and suggested the difficulty arises partly from the

problem of deciding on frameworks for judgement. Lucy Duff Gordon felt 'Her attack on harems is outrageous: She implies they are brothels' (*Letters from Egypt*, 1865, p. 112). More recently (1999) Leila Ahmed has complained that having received the hospitality of the harem women Martineau 'wrote of how ignorant these Muslim were and how worthless and mindless their harem talk' (*A Border Passage from Cairo to America*, p. 193). Martineau was judging by the standards of her own country and time - for example on veiling, and the apparently idle life of women in harems. She expressed similar views about women in nineteenth-century Britain who were not allowed to earn money or lead an active life, but has been widely attacked for her apparently 'racist' attitudes. Deborah proposed resituating Martineau in the context of 'Orientalism' as a type of western approach to study of the East.

Gaby Weiner, 'Scholarship in Auto/biography and History: Placing Harriet Martineau':

Gaby's paper reflected on Martineau's place within mainstream history and recent historical scholarship on women, and argued that critics have tended to defend or attack her according to their own political standpoints. She can be seen as courting prejudice, and as engaged in a wide (too wide?) range of intellectual pursuits, for which she was condemned as 'second-rate' by R.K. Webb, though Caroline Roberts more recently argues that this 'eclecticism' was an advantage. Scholars continue to differ in their evaluation of Martineau's life and achievement. For example, she has been the focus of 'women-centred' scholarship, which has emphasized her 'repressed sexuality', her relationship with her mother and siblings,

and her feelings about being a woman and a spinster. Scholars interested in the intersections of class and gender have perceived Martineau's career in terms of a 'masculine choice', or conversely of celebrating domesticity.

Gaby suggested fruitful ways forward for research on Martineau: more popular work was needed to identify niches for her: for example as a feminist activist. Alternatively, her elite intellectual status in the nineteenth century might be investigated, or her way of constructing woman as self-controlled and independent. More could be written on her journalism. Overall this paper brought out not only Martineau's multi-faceted career, but also the equally multi-faceted approach of scholars, who in effect still haven't decided who or what she is.

Alan Middleton: Harriet Martineau, James Martineau and William Morris: a cursory glance at their lives.

Alan began by asking why these three people were being considered together. His answer was that they all lived round about the same time (Harriet, 1802-1876, James, 1805-1900, W Morris, 1834-1896); they were all writers and wrote poetry to varying extent; they all had an interest in religion at times in their lives - negative or positive -; they all designed and had houses built; and there are other aspects of their diverse experiences which make them useful for comparison. His paper was 'primarily a set of notes and quotations on selected topics common to their lives with some pictures to illustrate the notes'. Some of the most interesting sections are given below:

Views of Religion.

Harriet in her Autobiography says that she was very religious as a child and this is probably best exemplified by her waiting for the

angels to appear from the skylights of the Octagon Chapel, and expecting those angels to whisk her away to heaven.[p22, V.1]. Her religious fervour intensified as she grew older ; she prepared devotional papers 'for the use of Families and Schools'[1] when she was twenty four (1826)[p130,V.1]; a second edition was published twelve years later. One of her books in HMCO library, *Miscellanies. A collection of Essays by Harriet Martineau'*, [Inscription: 'Presented to James Martineau.'] published in 1836 indicates that doubts were creeping into her thinking (Vol.I, Sabbath Musings, p160, .).'..when an experience over which I had no control shook my confidence in that which I held; when I discovered and rejected some of the falsehoods of my creed, and when I was therefore really wiser than before, the torment began.' She considers a swallow's nest - 'What do I know more than this young brood, of whence I came and how I exist, of who is my Maker, and whether there be indeed a Maker?'

By the time she met Mr Atkinson her views were, at least, agnostic but not atheistic, as she claims later.

In the posthumous edn of her *Biographical Sketches*, the publishers inserted a preface which states, 'The singular autobiographical fragment with which the volume opens was placed by Miss Martineau in the hands of the Daily News in 1855 for publication immediately on her death. It appeared as it was originally written, twenty one years later. August 1876.' That autobiographical fragment is a useful summary of the more detailed two-volume Autobiography. She writes about the changes in her

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[1] Martineau, Harriet, *Addresses; with Prayers and Original Hymns for the use of Families and Schools* (London: C.Fox, 1838)

religious views and reports that when the Atkinson Letters[1] were published ' this book brought upon its writers, as was inevitable, the imputation of atheism from the multitude who cannot distinguish between the popular and the philosophical sense of the word - between the disbelief in the popular theology which has caused a long series of religious men to be called atheists and a disbelief in a First Cause - a disbelief which is expressly disclaimed in the book.'...

And she goes on in the sketch, writing about herself in the third person, '....her cast of mind being more decidedly of the religious order than any other during the whole of her life, whatever might be the basis and scope of her ultimate opinions. Her latest opinions were, in her own view, the most religious - the most congenial with the emotional as well as the rational department of human nature'[2]

It seems that **James**, as a child, did not share Harriet's enthusiasm for the Octagon but attended dutifully as a member of the family. Not much is reported of his religious views until, of course, his so-called 'conversion' after he had started on his engineering training; his Biographical Memoranda records the influence of the other woman (Helen Higginson) in his life:'the incipient attachment which, seven years after, was crowned by marriage, favoured the mood of enthusiasm which impelled me towards the Christian ministry.' His father warned him that he was courting poverty but agreed to forfeit the premium he had paid for

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[1] Martineau, Harriet and Atkinson, H G, *Letters on the Laws of Man's Nature and Development* (London: John Chapman, 1851) [HMC copy inscribed: 'James Martineau.']

[2] *Biographical Sketches 1852 - 1875 (*New edn. with Autobiographical Sketch as Introduction.p xix (London: Macmillan & Co., 1885)

his engineering training and, further, to pay for his theological training at Manchester New College, York.

James enjoyed the college course, and at that time the theological students had a broad curriculum which to James' delight included Mathematics. His one grumble was that the students were taught the calculus by Newton's method of 'fluxions' instead of Leibniz's notation. James left college with high achievements and his later prowess as a great thinker is well documented. His vision of truth, however, did not remain static; he became dissatisfied with Necessarian philosophy upon which Harriet was so firmly grounded. I quote from Dr Waller's essay and James's Biographical Memoranda, '..The change of view was very inconvenient to me. Almost everything I had written became worthless in my eyes: courses of lectures elaborately prepared for repeated use..., familiar text books...: every subject had to be melted down again in my own mind and be recast in other moulds.....'[1]

He went on to be one of the most respected theological and philosophical thinkers of his time, often too deep for the average person-in-the-street to comprehend. And you may remember (from NL No 13, June 2000) how his depth of reasoning is used by PG Wodehouse, in *Carry on Jeeves*, as an example of difficult comprehension to put Bertie Wooster off a rather unsuitable young lady.[2] James' colleagues were conscious of the problem: his friend and fellow lecturer at Manchester College, Francis Newman (brother of Cardinal Newman), wrote to James about his preaching,

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[1] 'Truth, Liberty, Religion' . Ed Barbara Smith. Pub. Manchester College Oxford. p246

[2] John Fletcher, 'P G Wodehouse and James Martineau', Martineau Society's Newsletter, No 13, June 2000.

'Your sermon is made for the study, not for the pulpit... Try to preach a little more popularly, so as not to strain the attention too painfully. Forgive the hint.'[1]

William **Morris** went up to Oxford to Exeter College with the intention of taking holy orders. It was there that he met Edward Burne-Jones, also training for the Church, and others who became life-long friends; they were self-styled 'the Brotherhood'. Burne-Jones speaking of Morris - 'I know not a single gift for which I owe such gratitude to Heaven as his friendship'.[2] While at College one might say that they got carried away on a tide of religion; Burne-Jones proposed that they should start a monastery and Morris considered joining the Roman communion; but, of course, when one descends from the student atmosphere in the ivory towers of Oxford the view of life changes and later, while on vacation in France, B-J and Morris had their own form of 'conversion' and agreed that rather than go into the church they would devote their lives to art. Morris declared, 'I don't think even if I get through Greats that I shall take my BA, because they won't allow you not to sign the 39 Articles unless you declare that you are "extra Ecclesiam-Anglicanam" which I'm not, and don't intend to be, and I won't sign the 39 Articles.'... In the end he signed (BA, 1856).

So it was in August 1856, instead of moving into an ecclesiastical mansion, Morris did a short spell in an architect's office but a few months later he and B-J moved into rooms in No 1 Upper Gordon Street., Bloomsbury, to begin their life of art.

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[1] FWNewman to JM, MSS letters ~ 1849, HMC.
[2] MacCarthy, Fiona, p59

Incidentally, James Martineau moved into No 10, Gordon Street, the following year.

Posterity.

Why are Harriet and James not well known? If one asks the question of an acquaintance, 'Do you know an author by the name of Martineau?' Frequently the answer is, 'No', but if, 'Yes', it is usually Harriet Martineau. Why is James, that great thinker, scarcely known? Why is Harriet not so well remembered as the Brontës or Jane Austen? Why is William Morris still so popular?

I offer some possible answers to the questions.

Harriet herself offers a prognosis, writing in her Biographical Sketches about herself, '.. But none of her novels or tales have, or ever had, in the eyes of good judges or in her own, any character of permanence.' [Biographical Sketches, p.xxi]

Some people took a dislike to Harriet's manner when she was around, some still do. Carlyle wrote to his mother, "Miss Martineau, perhaps you have heard, is off to Egypt with some very rich, benevolent, and very stupid Liverpool people: we saw her some time ago as she passed through;- certainly one of the most wearisome of all human beings if I were judge! Blown up with self conceit". [Collected Letters 21:93. quoted in Carol Keller's dissertation, p295.]

One of the Gurneys' descendants - you will recall that the Gurneys were linked closely with the Martineaus in Norwich - writing in 1968 comments,' .. Harriet Martineau, 'that dyspeptic Radical battle-axe' who was said to be the ugliest woman in the world....'[1]

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[1] Verily Anderson, *The Northrepps Grandchildren* [of the Gurneys] (Hodder & Stoughton 1968

Rebecca Fraser, in her recent book about Charlotte Bronte[1] makes several references to Harriet but one in particular acknowledges that 'in 1849 HM was at the height of fame. Then 46, astonishingly ugly, half deaf...'

On what basis are such criticisms made about her looks? None of her portraits convey such acidic observations. The fact is that Harriet is being studied all over the world, the latest that has come to our attention is a teacher in Singapore and she is planning to visit HMC.

Now, what of **James**? Still studied by students of Theology, including Anglican priests, but, like all purveyors of religion, they are a diminishing breed. For the general populace the pertinent commentary is found in the latest edition of *Chambers Biographical Dictionary* where Morris, Harriet and James all appear, the length of text coverage in that respective order, but in the 'concise' version of James is dropped.

James's use of words is so particular, precise and descriptive that it is often difficult to formulate a picture of his message because the wood is lost in the trees. E R Sunderland writing about James's book,'Study of Religion',[2] says '...He was a great writer; but it was a writer for the cultured - for men with trained intelligence, for thinkers. He could not easily reach common minds.....'. Trained intelligence, ah! I think this is why James is dropped from the 'concise' version of the Biographical Dictionary - if it is not easy reading then it is not going to be popular - and so a few specialists have the task of keeping James's work alive.

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[1] Rebecca Fraser, *Charlotte Bronte* (Vintage 2003; Methuen,1988).
[2] E R Sunderland on 'his Greatest Book' (Study of Religion). p18.

But **William Morris**, he lives on - not so much by his writing as by his handiwork - stained-glass in almost every town, tapestry in many places including Art Galleries and Museums; wallpaper in many houses; and he was an interesting character. His first house, Red House, is now a National Trust property and his last house in Upper Mall, Hammersmith, known as Kelmscott House, is now privately occupied except the basement which is used by the William Morris Society partly as a Museum and partly as a meeting venue. When Morris was living there he disliked one of the rooms '...threatened to keep a pig in it or rent it to a Primitive Methodist..'[1]

His country residence at Kelmscott, as opposed to Kelmscott House in London, has many of his artefacts and is open by appointment to visitors.

In 1877 Morris was approached as possible successor to FHC Doyle as Professor of Poetry at Oxford. After Tennyson died, James Bryce, an MP in Gladstone's Cabinet of 1892...went to see Morris unofficially to sound him out regarding the possibility of Morris succeeding Tennyson as Poet Laureate. Morris turned both soundings down.

One may draw the following conclusions.

Harriet is readable and her books tend toward the marking of 'Cannot put it down'. The Society must do its best to counter the unjust remarks about her appearance. **James's** theology and philosophy are not easy to understand and I think the general populace would assign him in the manner of the concise

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[1] MacCarthy, Fiona. p396

Biographical Dictionary. But the experts still value his works. **Morris** has such a following and so many channels of interest that his future is secure.

Ruth Braithwaite: Below Stairs

Someone once said of Harriet Martineau that 'her maids were like adopted daughters' after visiting her at The Knoll. Unlike her mother, HM had an exceptionally strong maternal instinct, which overflowed into all her relationships. Even her last letter to Henry Atkinson, written to him when he was in Boulogne and she had only a few weeks to live, has the tone of a mother comforting a child, telling him not to be fearful of the dark. Of course, thoughts of an afterlife are nothing but superstition! Of course science is the only truth, the light of the world! And of course he must not trouble himself to make the journey to Ambleside so soon after his last visit...

Back in 1839, when Harriet Martineau went to end her days, as she thought, in a bed-sitting-room overlooking the sea at Tynemouth, the sight of Mrs Halliday's orphaned niece Jane immediately aroused her compassion. Jane suffered from some disease which may have been chronic conjunctivitis, and was a most unprepossessing skivvy, half blind, unable to mend her clothes, or to see what needed dusting. But she remained quiet and cheerful under her aunt's continual scolding, and this no doubt reminded Martineau of her own suffering when her mother refused to believe she was going deaf and she was punished for disobedience. Here was another young life which, as she said of her own, 'had had no spring.' Mrs Halliday, who was very happy to have a lodger who paid in advance and whose stay was of an

indefinite duration, agreed to let Jane sit with Miss Martineau when she could spare her. 'A more truthful, guileless, ingenuous, trustworthy young girl I never met,' Martineau wrote later, when her relations made certain allegations of dishonesty about Jane, who became HM's cook at The Knoll, the house she built at Ambleside.

When she asked Mrs Halliday what was being done for the girl's eyes, the landlady shrugged and murmured that 'she had always been like that,' but when Martineau asked her brother-in-law, Dr Thomas Greenhow, to examine Jane, he told her that although it was a serious condition and would probably lead to blindness, if Jane had been able to live a healthier life, there might be a hope of saving her sight.

If only she herself had not been condemned to die! Martineau must have longed to able to take Jane into her own home, to see what rest, good food and decent living conditions might do. 'Many were the heartaches I had for her in those days, when her muscles were like dough, and her eyes like - I will not say what,' she wrote. Far from being a self-centred, neurotic invalid - whatever the causes of HM's illness may have been - from the moment Jane opened the door of Mrs Halliday's boarding house at Tynemouth, Martineau had a reason to live.

Jane's eyesight was eventually restored by mesmerism - or so Martineau insisted. The fact that when Jane was in her room, she was invited to help herself to the bowls of fruit which were always there may have helped, if her eye trouble was due to a dietary deficiency.

When Martineau sent money to Mrs Halliday to enable Jane to travel to Ambleside, to become one of her maids at the Knoll, her

aunt gave her niece so little of it that Jane walked sixteen miles from Keswick, arriving in a pitiable state: 'Her clothes were in rags, and her eyes were like those of a blind person, as if the iris was covered with tissue paper. I mesmerized Jane three times a week, and in ten days her eyes were as clear as my own.'

Jane was installed as housekeeper and cook at The Knoll and remained with HM for seven years. But she was so carried away by a lecture Martineau gave in the village hall on Emigration that - like several of the farm labourers - she became convinced that her destiny lay in Australia. It was surely with a heavy heart that her mistress resolved not to stand in her way. Armed with excellent references, Jane sailed for Australia to become cook in the family of the High Sheriff of Melbourne.

One blow was to follow another for Martineau, whose notion of heaven on earth was domestic peace: 'My dear servant Jane resolved to emigrate (for reasons which I thought sound) and was to sail in November - Now I heard that the other servant, no less beloved, was to marry Mr Carpenter, the Master of the Ragged School at Bristol, who had been her headmaster at the Norfolk Workhouse School.' Putting on a brave face, she congratulated Martha, and asked her how she would like to be married from The Knoll at Christmas?

A few days before the wedding, Martineau wrote to her friend, Mrs Ogden, telling her that she had accompanied Martha to Kendal, to register the intended wedding, 'which will take place in the chapel here, Mr. P. Carpenter (brother of the bridegroom) officiating. 'I have ordered plenty of cake, and the Arnolds and other neighbours have promised flowers. We shall be twenty four at the

breakfast...All this would be too much for poor, delicate 'Currer', whose visit, if at all, must be sooner.'

Charlotte Brontë had declined the invitation to the wedding, because of her father's 'precarious state of health.' Mr Brontë lived to be 82!

The evening before the wedding Martineau sent Martha with the bridegroom and his party to the village hall, where the Rev. Phillip Carpenter was to deliver a lecture on Temperance. The entire household in the The Knoll were included in his captive audience, while the bridegroom's sister Mary and Martineau were busy setting out the table for the morning, dressing the flowers, and putting out the cold dishes before 'We covered up everything and shut up the cat.'

Miss Carpenter and Miss Martineau may have had a glass of wine in the drawing-room while they rested and waited for the others to return from the Temperance lecture. The Unitarians considered it perfectly acceptable to 'take a little wine for thy stomach's sake' as St Paul advises, while preaching Temperance to the lower orders. The Revd Patrick Brontë, Rector of Haworth, after being elected President of the Temperance Society in the village, obtained a letter from Dr O'Malley of Keighley, stating that, as he suffered from indigestion, it was 'absolutely necessary' for him to take a glass of port with his meals.

All went well on the wedding day, and after the ceremony in the chapel at Ambleside, they returned to The Knoll for the wedding breakfast. 'The kitchen was the only room large enough for the party; and there, after the ceremony, we had a capital breakfast, with good speaking, and all manner of good feeling.'

The local gentry at Ambleside, who had a strict 'No Followers' rule for their maids, thought Miss Martineau much to blame for allowing Martha to correspond with her lover, however respectable he might be - or might have been, if he had not stooped to marry a domestic servant.

It was HM who realized, a century before her time, that a well-kept Victorian kitchen, with its rows of copper pans shining like mirrors, the fire that only needed to be banked up at night to provide hot water as well as heat for the oven (inspiring the inventor of the aga some time later) fragrant with bunches of herbs hanging from the beams, with the aroma of roasting coffee beans or freshly baked bread could be as beautiful as a Vermeer interior, a pleasant place for intimate conversations over the fire, or at the table with friends as well as maids.

Even her friend Jane Welsh Carlyle, however much she liked to fly in the face of convention, didn't dream of asking Harriet Martineau to step into the kitchen for one of those 'nice, feminine chats' before dinner at no 5 Cheyne Row. The Carlyles' faithful maid-of-all work, 'Helen of Kirkcaldy', had been invited to become housekeeper for her brother in Dublin, who had made a fortune manufacturing coach fringes for railway carriages. 'Helen cries about leaving me - but to me made a lady all of a sudden does not fall in one's way every day! I can do no other than encourage her,' she wrote to Mrs Russell, the doctor's wife at Nithsdale. 'All that remains is to look for another in her place..' This did not prove easy. 'I wonder if Margaret would have taken the place, if I had sent out the heavy washing? I cannot think our work *hard*, for Helen, who did it all for eleven years, was far from healthy - in fact asthmatical'.

She wrote to Mrs Russell in December 1846 reporting: 'Alas! The girl had come out of a family where eight servants were kept - and found within 12 hours that it was 'too lonely' to be an only servant - and that "all work" spoiled her hands. The girl declared that if she were not allowed to depart she would "take fits, and be laid up on bed for a year!"

Carlyle has been giving signs of having reached the limits of his patience - and says that if he do nottsoon have a pair of shoes cleaned for him, and his Library swept, he also will "take fits"...'

Jane did all she could to shield Carlyle from domestic crises, but on one occasion she could not help herself unburdening her trouble to him. Carlyle was in Dresden, researching his biography of Frederick the Great. She gave him the good news first - 'Fanny is really a very nice servant; a dash of Irish rough and ready in her, but a good cleaner and a good cook. Very tidy too in her person..'; - and then the bad: 'An awful complication revealed itself two or three days after she came. When the new painted kitchen was capable of being slept in, she fell to taking the bed to pieces to give it "a good washing".

Anne, who would never be at the trouble to look to her bed, told me when she finally took it down by my express order before she left, to have found 'nothing worth mentioning - only four bugs, and these very small ones." Well I was sitting writing here when Fanny came and said "Do step down, Ma'am, and see what I have kept to show you" - and there lay her bed in pieces, and beside it a large basin of water containing the drowned bodies of something like two hundred bugs!! The bed perfectly swarmed with these "small beings"! We gathered it all up and carried it into the garden to be

sold to a Broker, and I went the same day and bought a little iron bedstead for the kitchen, for £1.2s. 6d.

The horror of these bugs quite maddened me for many days, and I would not tell you of them at the time, that you might not feel them positively biting you; but now I think we are quite shut of them. The Painter's consolation, that he knew "fine houses in Belgrave Square where they were crawling about the drawing-room floors" did not help me at all..'

Nothing like the happenings below stairs at Cheyne Row could ever have taken place at The Knoll. Nor could Harriet Martineau have called a maid of hers 'That Creature!' as Jane Carlyle did when she dismissed 'Mary, the worst of girls,' who gave birth to a child in the china cupboard next door to the room where Carlyle was talking to the novelist Geraldine Jewsbury. But then HM would have known better than to accept such excuses as 'They wore out with washing, Ma'am,' when her fine linen napkins disappeared.

There would be nothing sleazy about HM's kitchen, no flea-ridden mattress where 'Cook' - promoted from maid-of-all-work - fell asleep exhausted and unwashed every night. 'Justice was in short supply for children and for servants, in our household,' Martineau wrote of her childhood. 'But Mrs Martineau, however harsh her demands, did not expect any of the maids to sleep in the kitchen. The maids, like the children, slept in the attics of the house in Magdalen Street. No doubt Mrs Halliday's orphaned niece Jane slept in the damp basement of her aunt's boarding house at Tynemouth - little dreaming that one day she would live in the Lake District, or end her days as Cook to the High Sheriff of Melbourne!

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NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS

Articles, book reviews, letters, notes and observations, for the next Newsletter should be sent by the end of January to Prof Valerie Sanders, English Department, University of Hull, Hull HU6 7RX

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