

The  
Martineau  
Society

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Twenty-first Newsletter  
April 2006

Greetings from the Editor

The Martineau Society

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### **Greetings from the Editor**

As the recently-appointed successor to Newsletter Editor Valerie Sanders, who is now Chairperson of the Martineau Society, I aim to continue the tradition of excellence established by Valerie. Please forward Newsletter submissions to Professor Deborah A. Logan through e-mail attachment, fax, or "snail mail" (information provided under Contacts). The next newsletter is planned for September, which will re-establish the twice yearly Newsletter on a regular September and March schedule.

**In Memoriam:** The Martineau Society lost two of its most influential and valued members in 2005. **Professor Ken Fielding's** passing is marked in this issue in a memorial by his former student, Shu-Fang Lai. In addition, we announce the passing of Martineau Society president, the **Reverend Dr. Frank Schulman**, in December 2005, after a long illness. Our next newsletter, No 22, will focus on the life and career of Reverend Schulman, one of the founding members of the Martineau Society. Contributions for this Number honouring Dr. Schulman are most welcome.

### **Editorial: Liverpool 2005**

The Martineau Society 2005 AGM took place 14-17 July, 2005 at the University of Liverpool. This year's primary focus was a celebration of the bicentenary of James Martineau's birth. Paper presenters included Sophia Hankinson on the memoirs of James's daughter, Gertrude Martineau; Will Frank's "James's Robe," which was read by Elisabeth Arbuckle and accompanied by the (now quite fragile) clerical robe itself; Alan Middleton on James's near-career as an engineer, a discipline he had pursued prior to entering the ministry; and Simon Rathbone on a James Martineau quotation in P.G. Wodehouse's *Jeeves: Joy in the Morning* – the comedy of the narrative being well-matched by Simon's hilarious delivery.



Other presentations focused on the relationship between James and Harriet. Alan Ruston spoke on intellectual competitiveness and jealousy between the siblings; and Gaby Weiner and Valerie Sanders traced the decline in Harriet and James's relationship from childhood closeness to adult hostility. Several papers focused exclusively on Harriet Martineau: Shu-fang Lai spoke on the *Historiettes* and the Millais illustrations; Elisabeth Arbuckle on Rachel and Ellen Martineau in relation to their sister, Harriet; and Deborah Logan on Harriet's *History of England*. Trails included viewing the site of Park Nook, the Liverpool home of James Martineau, and an informative guided tour of Ullet Road Unitarian Church and the Ancient Chapel of Toxteth (1618-1918). In addition to a tour of the docks and old-town area of Liverpool, the group crossed the Mersey River to visit the Lady Lever Art Gallery and Port Sunlight village. The Society's celebration of James's birthday included dinner and a birthday cake on the Saturday night. The AGM concluded on Sunday morning, following the business meeting and lunch.

The Society welcomes participants in the 2006 AGM, which will be held 13-16 July in Edinburgh. Please join us for a combined meeting with the Carlyle Society. Paper proposals should be directed to Gaby Weiner, Secretary. Accommodations are through Kenneth MacKenzie Suites.

### **Remembering Professor K. J. Fielding by Shu-Fang Lai**

The six years (1993-1999) during which I was a postgraduate in Edinburgh and Glasgow, studying Dickens with Professor Fielding, were the most wonderful years of my life. This is because I had in him the most wonderful supervisor, master teacher and fabulous friend that an overseas student could ever hope to meet. At the turn of the millennium I went back to Taiwan to teach, but the influence of his instruction and caring messages never ceased. They continue to guide me to the present day.

Just before Easter, I wrote to send him my Easter greetings. In reply he told me of his trouble with his heel, "but it will be dealt with," he assured me. I said I hoped he would get well by July when I planned to visit him before the Martineau conference in Liverpool. Then on 29 March I received the last e-mail from him consisting of only one line:

\*\*\*\*OK\*\*\*\*

I have been looking at this message over and over again ever since, and now it almost reads like "end of the story" to me. But it was not the last message from him. On 20 May I received a parcel he sent in mid-March by surface post in which he enclosed three books, Chesterton on Dickens, Swinburne, and Sylvere Monod, books that used to belong to Professor John Butt. He gave them to me because of their Dickensian association. The following day, Martineau society members received Sophia's e-mail bearing the terrible news of his death on that same 20<sup>th</sup> of May. No words can express my feeling on reading Sophia's message.

He planned things far in advance and always met deadlines. Perhaps that is one of the reasons why he became such a distinguished scholar in Victorian literature (among the top five in the field of Dickens and Carlyle studies). The work he did would take an ordinary scholar more than one lifetime to achieve: editing loads and loads of Dickens's and Carlyle's letters, writing articles that had great impact, giving illuminating talks, supervising postgraduates on any number of challenging topics, and offering researchers his expertise. Obituaries in the *Times*, *Daily Telegraph*, *Scotsman*, *Times Literary Supplement*, *Dickensian*, and other publications have enlightened us about his contributions to the world. "IS IT REALLY?" "LOOK IT UP!" "DOUBLE-CHECK!" Such were his golden instructions. To me, English literature is indeed a foreign literature, and whenever I was daunted by academic wordplay or hesitant to challenge others' comments, he encouraged me to consult primary material and think independently. He



scolded my poor English but always reminded me of my strengths. Those who went to the society's 2003 meeting in Oxford witnessed how he sat there, listened to me and backed me up.

To me, he was not just a great scholar but someone with a great mind and unusual powers of understanding and love. He was tough in the battle of life. I still vividly remember the scene of one afternoon in the summer of 1995, shortly after Mrs. Fielding had died. We were reading Dickens's sentimental but beautiful little piece, "A Child's Dream of a Star," an allegory about bearing the sorrow of loss of family by continuing the journey of life. When the Child looks at the star in the sky, he knows that his deceased family dwells there. While reading those lines, Professor Fielding was in tears. It is an appropriate sketch of him, I think, and those who knew him well would agree that he still strove for happiness regardless of the loss of his only child (at the age of seven), of his wife, and of their cat Sandy (who was run over by a car of the RSPCA!), and by his own declining health. He kept a stiff upper lip even in hard times. He taught me this, so even when my rented flat was all flooded because of broken pipes on that frozen New Year's eve of 1995, I was able to contribute with him an article on Dickens's "Poetry of Science" to the *Dickensian*.

Back in Taiwan, whenever I thought of him, the many Christmas dinners I and my husband had with him came to mind. Christmas is the most special occasion to the *Dickensian*, and it was a true ritual to him. Sometimes he talked in the tone of Scrooge. Friends rang him up from as far as the States. Other friends such as Professor Ian Campbell and Dr. Susan Shatto (with her cocker spaniel Taxi) popped in to have a drink and a nibble. His television always happened to be out of order after dinner (because he would rather talk and play games). I made up many quizzes from Dickens's novels to challenge him, such as "how many brothers and sisters does Pip have?" Several times an evening he would go into his

room and come out wearing a different coloured suit. Once we shocked him into speechlessness by the spectacle of Chinese cooking (and the messy aftermath of such cooking) in his kitchen. One year we had Christmas dinner with two most elegant ladies from a care home, Mrs. Butts and a painter friend of his and Professor Elisabeth Arbuckle's, and it was like dining with the Royal family.

In the airplane to his funeral, my tears welled up as I recalled the bits and pieces of my memories of him from the past. Suddenly I heard a stewardess broadcast: "THE WHOLE JOURNEY WILL BE ALL LIGHT!" The sunlight accompanied me all the way to Scotland, and I believe it was a message from him to let me know how he felt on his way to a bright and beautiful star.

#### **"JM'S Robe, and his Influence in America"<sup>1</sup>**

Written by Will Frank, edited by Sophia Hankinson, and read by Elisabeth Arbuckle

The long arm of coincidence struck, not for the first time in the doings of this society, when it suggested to Will Frank, a Unitarian of Norfolk, Virginia, who comes to Europe often to study, that it was time he visited Norfolk, England. He duly arrived at the Octagon Chapel, Norwich, and in the course of lunch with the Voegelis the subject of Martineaus came up. Frank was interested in HM for her work in the US; he knew of JM as a Unitarian, and that Norwich was their birthplace, but had not heard of the Society (which he promptly joined). After returning home, he emailed us a sermon given by his friend Revd. Earl Holt (Minister, First Unitarian Church of St. Louis, now minister of King's Chapel in Boston), who was also a

<sup>1</sup> Asked about JM's influence in US, Frank Schulman replied: "He's not known well, and mostly among church historians and theologians. In some quarters he used to be known as a philosopher. When I studied philosophy at the University of Oklahoma (I graduated there in 1950), we studied JM as a philosopher, but no mention was made of his being a Unitarian minister. When JM is mentioned he is described as the brother of Harriet. Martineau is well known by the faculties of the UU seminaries, but his fame is not spreading. I do my bit, of course."



friend of our esteemed late President Frank Schulman. What follows is an edited and annotated portion of that sermon, so imagine yourselves transported to St Louis back in September 1993:

**"Martineau's Robe": Sermon by the Rev. Earl K. Holt III**

I saw it this summer. Marilyn and I were the guests of the Rev. Frank Schulman, an old friend and colleague, and his wife, Alice, at Manchester College in Oxford, England, in early August. Some of you know Frank. For some 25 years he was Minister of Emerson Unitarian Church in Houston and has preached from this pulpit. (Alice has gained fame in a story Frank likes to tell about the time he came home from church one Sunday feeling rather puffed up from the reception to his sermon that day, and said, "Alice, just how many great ministers do you think there are in this denomination anyway?" To which Alice rejoined, "One less than you do, Frank, one less than you do." Alice admitted to us that this never actually happened, but the story has taken on a mythic dimension, so it really doesn't matter.)<sup>2</sup>

Anyway, Frank officially retired when he left Emerson Church, but the next year he took a temporary assignment in a little Unitarian church in England -- which is actually redundant: they are all little churches in England -- and then he was invited to become Chaplain and Tutor at Manchester College, which is the nonconformist or Unitarian school at Oxford. It is mainly an undergraduate school, but with a few ministerial students as well, who are Frank's responsibility as Tutor. As Chaplain he is in charge of the congregation at Oxford, preaching and conducting worship at the beautiful chapel, which is part of the College. Since we were there on a Sunday, Frank invited me to share the worship service with him and this led me to JM's robe.

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<sup>2</sup> Comment from Frank Schulman: "Yes, you can use that anecdote. As you have it, it is correct. I did tell the story and it isn't a true story, though people who know my wife agree that it's the kind of thing she would have said, had I made the remark about how many great preachers there are in the denomination. When I told the story I said, "How many great preachers" (not ministers). In fact I've never considered myself either."



JM was born in 1805 and died in 1900. If you are more interested in literature or politics than religion and philosophy, you may have heard of his older sister, HM, author and abolitionist. I didn't -- and don't -- really know much about either of them, but little as it is JM represents approximately 50% of everything I know about English Unitarianism. The other 50% is Joseph Priestley, whose influence on our movement not only in England but in this country was profound. Thomas Jefferson read all of Priestley's books, heard him preach, and once said that Priestley's religion was his own. Priestley is probably best known for his discovery of Oxygen, but it was not for his scientific views that his laboratory was burned by a mob, and he was forced to flee for his life, which brought him to America. He preached a rational faith, the response to which was irrational in the extreme. He preached a radical faith, which incorporated a rigid deterministic philosophy, and in which the progress of the natural sciences was the central evidence of the unfolding of divine purpose.

If religion were simply philosophy, if it were merely a matter of ideas and thought, Priestley would have been all that Unitarianism needed. He gave English Unitarianism its head, but JM gave it heart. And it seems fairly clear that without JM and his closest colleagues, English Unitarianism would have withered on its rationalistic vine. Reason, Freedom and Tolerance have been traditionally identified as the distinctive values of our way of faith. JM's family was Unitarian, no doubt in the Priestleian mode, but he breathed the air of the same Lake Country which influenced the Romantic poets, and he brought Romanticism and soul to his religion. His influence carried over to America, too, every bit as much as that of Emerson, who moved Unitarianism away from its traditional reliance on the authority of scripture toward an emphasis on the primacy of the individual human mind and conscience. Traditional Unitarian theology, for example, had denied the doctrines of the Trinity, the Atonement and everlasting

punishment on the grounds that they were non-scriptural; JM rejected them because they were irrational, and in doing so pointed a new direction for Unitarian theology. He recognised, and here was the source of his main departure from Priestley, that faith can and indeed must go beyond what reason can prove. But although faith goes beyond reason, it does not go against it. As JM himself put it, "A divine right...to dictate a perfectly unreasonable faith cannot exist." So of course he believed that the Bible should be read and interpreted like any other book, applying reason and intelligence and rational understanding.

At the same time as JM was moving toward a more critical approach to scripture and religious traditions, he also emphasized the importance for religion of the emotions, the conscience and the imagination. He sought beauty as well as truth in his writings and especially in his approach to worship. He emphasized worship and sought to incorporate in it not only an approach to the reasoning mind but an appeal to all the other faculties which make us human and which may make us wise: affection and intuition and feeling. JM always assumes that reason and intelligence will be applied in religion, but he stresses other dimensions: the affections, conscience, and imagination. He expressed sympathy for the Quaker notion of the Inner Light, and indeed JM's theism is primarily the God of the "still, small voice" of conscience, speaking within "every waiting soul."

JM became in time a Professor and for 14 years Principal of Manchester College, which in those years was located in London. Even had he spent his entire career in the parish he would still be the single most important figure in British Unitarianism. In retirement he opposed relocation of the College to Oxford, but his influence against the move while significant was in the end not decisive. Presumably he preached in the new college buildings in the last years of his life.



In any case his robe was still hanging in the closet at the back of the splendidly beautiful chapel where my friend, Frank Schulman, had invited me to share in the worship. At first Frank had me try on an Oxford robe, which some of you may know is one of the oddest-looking garments ever devised for such purposes. It is not only open in front, as many academic gowns are, but has no sleeves. It would look fine, or at least all right, if one were properly dressed in a black suit, with a vest. As it was I was wearing off-white summer pants, a light beige jacket and a cream-colored paisley tie. Set off against the Oxford robe I looked ridiculous. Frank had already shown me JM's robe: it really wasn't suitable for wear, and no one but Frank had put it on for a long time, I suspect. The collar was frayed and it was really too heavy for that unusually warm summer day, but certainly I didn't mind. In truth I had wanted to wear it from the first time Frank showed it to me. A silly thing, I know. I wore it, and I read the scripture, lines JM himself had certainly read in church, perhaps even standing in that same place a century before. At least in my imagination it was so, and he would have agreed that that was enough. And in the service I thought about him -- Frank referred to him as The Great Man -- and also of all the others, great men and lesser men, and women too, who have helped us to become what we are, whether we know them or not, whether we remember their names or not, whether we remember their thoughts, or not, whether the controversies that preoccupied them, the battles they won or lost, the things they lost sleep over matter to us any more, or not.

Still, they have contributed to what we are. They have done their part and they are gone. But not completely. Some part of them, recognized or not, lives on. Why else is it that we travel to distant lands, at considerable inconvenience and expense, to walk where the ancients walked, and see what remains of the world they knew? Why is it that we take our own pictures of the places that we have seen a hundred pictures of before? Is it

not to make our own connection with what has been, because in some far distant way we know it is part of us? Is it not when to seek or find a symbol of that lostness which is not lost? And if we find it, to put it on, to wear it, and to remember.

**"JM the Home-maker" by Sophia Hankinson**

As you may have gathered, an aim of this celebration, and of this brief paper, is to show JM without the academic trappings: the human being and family man. That he was born in Martineau House, Magdalen Street, Norwich, is already known to some of you, who visited that house with the Society on one of the occasions when it has been included in a Norwich 'Trail'. You may also recall that his next 'homes' were in Bristol, with the Carpenters, where HM had been so happy, and in Derby where he was apprenticed to an engineer and, lodging with the minister, Rev. Higginson, fell in love with Helen, the eldest daughter of the house. While in Derby JM also spent much time at the home of his cousin Catherine who had married the young minister, Henry Turner, at Nottingham. The influences met with in these three places caused him to change direction and train for the Unitarian ministry; he subsequently left for Dublin, to be assistant to Rev. Joseph Hutton, the aged minister there, and soon succeeded him as minister. At last he and Helen Higginson were able to marry and set up their first home, for the three years he remained there (1828-32). Much of what follows is quoted from the 2-volume *Life and Letters of James Martineau* (Drummond and Upton, 1902), and from Violet M's *Life of Gertrude Martineau*. Gertrude was the youngest daughter and the last of the 3 youngest sisters, all unmarried, to survive JM. This book often quotes from friends.

Moving to Liverpool, as minister of Paradise Street chapel, with a higher stipend and a growing family, JM needed, and was able to acquire, a



more spacious home, first in Mount Street and then in 1838 in Mason Street, Edge Hill. In 1844, after more than a year's planning, they moved again. Land at The Park had been purchased by a friend, Richard Yates (whose sisters had taken HM to Egypt), and he persuaded JM (and lent him the money) to buy a plot on which to build a house himself, for his family, now numbering 7 children. This was Park Nook -- about which we shall be hearing more. "The planning and progress of the scheme was...a constant source of interest and amusement...especially as the rapid slope of the ground involved a terrace-garden, and a story more behind than before, and a mysterious tunnel-passage from the back door, and other first-rate provisions for hide-and-seek...and though the increased distance from town was sometimes inconvenient, the ampler space, the perfect quiet, the pure air, the outlook on grass and foliage and flowers, and the vicinity of some of our best friends, especially the good sisters Yates of Farmfield, far outweighed in benefit the added tax upon time and exertion. From Liverpool, too, they [5] had excursions in the neighbourhood..., across the Mersey, or up Bidstone Hill to look across to the Welsh mountains...or nearer, to the pretty dingle so full of wood anemones and wild hyacinths in the spring... Very often Father was too busy to come with us, but when he did come he was among the happiest of the party, and when he did not, we had to tell him all about our day as the hungry party sat at tea on our return."

[3] Every autumn the whole family migrated from Liverpool to spend a holiday in some beautiful spot where [JM] could rest his busy brain. The English Lakes, or a remote part of Scotland were generally chosen. Clearly Helen was as keen on exploring, and helped to set the pattern. When Gertrude was a year old, they went to Grange in Lancs, when their mother wrote down an account of their holiday for the children's benefit in later years. "When you are older you will be pleased that you went up to Rydal

Mount with me, past the pretty church, and peeped in at Mr W's garden gate'. "Aunt Harriet" was also visited, at Bowness, before the breach with JM.

At home in Liverpool "...in the summer evenings there was gardening till it grew quite late, and one child after another was sent in from the garden to bed. We especially enjoyed watering the garden; then with his coat off Father would carry an immense watering pot much too heavy for us, called 'the pump'. [Here we have JM the Inventor] Father and one of our uncles had devised a little windmill which was placed on the roof of the house and the wind used to pump up the water into the cistern in the attics. But when there was no wind to turn the mill, Father would take off his coat and climb out of the attic window and sit on the parapet with one leg outside doing the work of the wind. It always made us creep to look up from below and see him on the very edge against the sky, his shirt sleeves and his curly hair fluttering as he moved, but he only laughed merrily when we were frightened and said he was quite safe.

In the evenings Father would come home very tired after a long day's work; lessons to his own children before an early breakfast, then teaching in schools, sometimes lecturing, or writing sermons or lectures in his study. For some time when we grew older we had three or four girl friends living with us to share our lessons, and round the long tea table we were a merry party of nine or ten - Mother pouring out the tea for all behind the brown teapot, and the plates of bread and butter and bun loaf emptying very fast, for we, too, had busy days and worked hard. Only Father ate very little, but... while he sipped his tea he used to read aloud to us. He read nearly all Walter Scott's novels and most of Dickens' stories and some of Wordsworth and Southey's poetry and Coleridge's Ancient Mariner. When we had finished tea we got our work and drawing, and he still read on....When he hesitated whether he would read another chapter we all clamoured for



more, and I am afraid he often sat up all the later in the night over his work because of that extra chapter, but then he enjoyed it as much as we did. At Christmas time we always had a Christmas tree lighted up with little candles, and decorated, and presents for everyone were hung on the tree. Father used to take the dinner bell and ring a little peal, for each in turn, in order of age, to cut some present from the tree. With his own presents he used to write little poems or inscriptions, always pretty and ingenious.

"On Sunday evenings, after Father came home from his evening service and we had had supper, we used all to gather together in the drawing room and sing hymns. He used generally to choose what we should sing, and his greatest favourites were Mr Ogden's beautiful tunes. Father had never learnt to sing, but he was intensely fond of music, and had a beautiful tuneful voice... As we dropped off one by one to go to bed, there was something infinitely tender and consecrating in his kiss and goodnight. In the summer holidays we always went into the country for a glorious six weeks, very often to the Lakes. One very hot day, in Borrowdale, as we sat at dinner and Father looked out over the lake to Skiddaw, and thought of the cool breezes on the top, he rashly said, 'I should not be afraid to spend the night up there.' We at once took up the idea, and obliged him to carry it out; and by sunset we were all climbing the mountain side, not to come down till morning. How beautiful it was under the great calm dome of stars, but how hard the stones were. We were too excited to sleep more than a few winks, and one after another was seen sitting up, against the sky. It seemed soon to begin to get light, and though we had been almost cold in the night, when the sun rose gloriously above the mists that filled the valleys it at once grew hot again. We went home tired and very hungry, but triumphant, and had a sleep in the hot morning hours.

"Scotland was another favourite holiday place ('How well I remember those journeys! Dr M, sitting upright in one corner, hardly moving all night, the rest of us ['the Spinnies', as the three youngest daughters were called] reposing as we could')."

In 1876, on medical advice, JM went to the Spey valley, took his family, and they all liked it so much that the following year he "took another small house in the same neighbourhood, little thinking that...it would become the beloved home of nearly 50 yrs, more really home indeed than any they had known except Park Nook". This was the Polchar (Pool of Rushes), designed and built by the Grant family 60 yrs before, "a front and back door, a long passage, staircase, pantry, kitchen, parlour and two bedrooms above" (*Highland Lady* p322), heather thatch, kitchen garden and all, to replace a gamekeeper's cottage. "Sir John and Lady Grant were very friendly, and said they 'considered it an "honour" to have Papa as a tenant...and...long may it be before any change comes'. From here in 1885 JM, aged 80, climbed Braeriach (4248ft)."

I think that is enough to show that JM, far from being an austere academic, made wherever he was a happy home. Two more quotes to finish:

"November 1898. Gordon Square. Father is very well, but it is really rather wonderful how rapidly his old age has grown upon him [93]....how much more he notices...the flowers, trees...and with much enjoyment....He does not ever seem to miss his severer studies,...and says after meals that he must 'go back to his work'...As he is deaf, we can often open the study door to see that his fire is right, or take him his lamp, without even waking him."

And JM the gardener: "VM I tell my daughter Gertrude that I am taking a lesson from her last employment of every Saturday evening's twilight. In the avenue ...to my cottage [Polchar] her rake and broom can



always be heard gathering up and clearing away the fallen leaves and smoothing the... gravel in preparation for the following day. My week's work being over and the Sabbath drawing nigh, I am similarly... scraping together... such traces of the working days as I have left littering the path...and putting them to the test whether they can be put to further use as the leaf-mould of the future" (56-7). I rest my case.

**"James Martineau, Potential Engineer and Scientist" by Alan Middleton**

The world might have been a different place if James Martineau had not been apprenticed to Mr Samuel Fox but to an engineer like Sir Marc Brunel. Doubtless James would probably have had to perform some menial tasks during the early part of such training -- making the tea perhaps -- but it might not have worked well since Sir Marc's son, Isambard, was waiting in the wings. Isambard Kingdom Brunel was born 9 April, 1806, almost exactly a year after Martineau, and in the 53 years of his life achieved many significant successes. James Martineau lived nearly twice as long as I. K. Brunel. What might the world be like if Martineau had followed his first choice to be an engineer? Would he have achieved as much or more than Brunel? Would he have lived as long as he did?

So let us look at his potential. Martineau was proficient in mathematics from an early age -- indeed he expressed his displeasure that "mathematical studies were kept in a tantalizing subordination" at his Norwich school (BM, 300)<sup>3</sup> -- and mathematics is a prerequisite subject for an engineer. Later he boarded at Lant Carpenter's school at Bristol and in his Biographical Memoranda Martineau reports on the subjects he had

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<sup>3</sup> BM, 123 indicates 'Biographical Memoranda of James Martineau'; the number is the page in Dr Waller's thesis.

studied there, including the branch of mathematics dealing with conic sections and spherical trigonometry: you may care to reflect at what stage you studied these subjects. Lant Carpenter was so pleased with Martineau that he made an award to him of the two volumes of Poet Laureate Robert Southey's book, *Roderick, The Last of the Goths*, now in the archives at Harris Manchester College, Oxford. Inside the front cover of the first volume Lant Carpenter has written a testimonial, an extract of which notes, "These volumes are given to James Martineau as a testimonial of general and successful diligence in the objects of mental culture to which his has been directed during the preceding twelvemonth, and of satisfactory progress in several branches of useful knowledge" (Signed, L. Carpenter, Bristol, Midsr 1820). Martineau was 15. The book features a long poem about some obscure (to me) Spanish history followed by notes and references; the condition of the two volumes at HMC indicates that they were well used, or misused. Maybe Martineau liked Spanish history? Under the influence of Dr Carpenter his life began, as he records, "to assume its proper sanctity" (BM 301).

James left school in 1821. Next we learn that he has started his engineering apprenticeship with Mr Samuel Fox of Derby, with the ultimate object of becoming a Civil Engineer. But he found himself engaged on work of a limited educational nature, and he states, "My master, - an ingenious and energetic man, - had himself been an artisan; and, following methods of his own devising, was hardly competent to give systematic instruction in Mechanics, and thought it enough to put tools before me, and give me the run of his shops...In spite of my taste for mechanical work, this total want of intellectual help disappointed me" (B M, 302). Thus, at the end of the first year he had doubts about his engineering future in such circumstances. If only he had been with someone like Sir Marc Brunel who would be aware of the need for educational training! James' future was compounded by the



fact that he was lodging in Derby with the Unitarian family of the Revd and Mrs Higginson; they had a daughter, Helen, and she and James were taken with each other. In his B M he records a typically Martineau-ish assembly of words, "the incipient attachment which, seven years after, was crowned by marriage, favoured the mood of enthusiasm which impelled me towards the Christian ministry." In other words he was persuaded by his girlfriend to become a minister. If he had been with Sir Marc Brunel he would not have lodged with Mr and Mrs Higginson and would not have met Helen, etc., etc. Perhaps this tongue-in-cheek view of Helen's influence is unfair; after all, there are many examples of cases where an individual is so overcome as to be compelled by the vision of "calling". In fact, he said in a speech at Nottingham in 1876 that "the light was so bright". The following limerick is not intended to be flippant but as a light-hearted analogy of the sort of situation James might have found himself in:

There was a young student at Trinity  
Who computed the square of Infinity;  
So great were the digits  
That he got the figits [*sic*]  
And changed from Maths to Divinity.<sup>4</sup>

James approached his father and asked to be bought out from the apprenticeship. Mr Martineau, senior, acknowledged the determination in James' manner and agreed to meet the cost of cancelling the apprenticeship and, in addition, to pay for his college training, but warned James that he might be faced with a life of poverty. There is some evidence that such thoughts about poverty were generally accepted as the situation facing a Unitarian minister, for in the Manchester College Annual Report of the Session 1892/3, the Principal made inquiries of the Students as to the

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<sup>4</sup> I cannot find the reference from which this is extracted. – A. M.

expenses of living in Oxford, with the following results: "That Undergraduates living in College needed, after most careful management, at least £120 [£8940 in 2005] per annum; whereas the Theological Students could, for their three terms, manage on £50 [£3725 in 2005] p.a. of their exhibitions; the Committee do not think it well to place before Students such pecuniary inducements to enter the College that they can do so without any of that training in self-sacrifice which is so important a discipline for ministerial life."<sup>5</sup>

So now this student, thirsty for knowledge and mathematics in particular, with the backing of his father and other members of his family, and, not least, the encouragement of his "incipient attachment", was prepared to train for a life of poverty and entered Manchester College, York. To the credit of the College the curriculum at that time was broad enough to satisfy James; he was able to read Newton's *Principia Mathematica* and understand the beauty of the Calculus.

While at college part of his training involved the conduct of religious services at villages near York, and one such village, Welburn, between York and Malton, had accrued sufficient funds to build a new chapel. James was called upon by the other students to draw the plans since he "had engineering experience and could design anything" (BM, 305). Thus in 1824 he added architectural design to his CV. The building did not remain long as a chapel but was served by a succession of ministers in its short life, the last record being in 1862, i.e. about 40 years. Now it is made into luxury living accommodation.

James finished his course at York in 1827 and modestly acknowledged his achievements. He then answered the call of an ailing Lant Carpenter from his school in Bristol - who probably remembered

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<sup>5</sup> Manchester College Annual Report 1892/93, 22/23 June 1893 p15.