

From the Editor . . .

The Fall 2020 issue on Harriet Martineau began gestating several years ago when G. Peter Winnington, a Brit living in Switzerland, sent me his monograph, *Harriet Martineau, Miss J, and Ellen McKee*, which treats of Martineau, her traveling companion in America, “Miss J,” and Miss J’s daughter, Ellen. The work is full of cultural and historical background as well as fascinating details gleaned from local sources, in the British tradition of scholarship. I enjoyed Peter’s work, and proceeded to explore Harriet Martineau, a name I had heard much of, but never read. So began an Odyssey that led me to read Martineau’s *Illustrations of Political Economy* (1834), *Society in America* (1837), and the *Autobiography* (1877), which made me realize that Martineau was an intellectual giant in a century of intellectual giants. As a result, I began thinking about a special issue of *Nineteenth-Century Prose* devoted to Harriet Martineau, and I was fortunate to enlist Deborah A. Logan to guest-edit the Fall 2020 issue—and the rest, as they say, is history. Professor Logan recruited a group of first-rate Martineau scholars, and carried out the work in an organized and timely manner—unsurprisingly, given the amount of scholarship she has produced on Martineau!

Following the seven essays and introduction on Martineau are 11 reviews on a wide range of subjects. The first four reviews are on four literary giants of the nineteenth century in the United States and Britain: John Ruskin, Henry David Thoreau, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and Charles Dickens. Sara Atwood, our resident Ruskin specialist who has reviewed many a work for us on Ruskin over the years, reviews Robert Hewison’s *Ruskin and his Contemporaries* and tells us that in his position as a teacher of art, Ruskin believed that “clarity of sight and moral vision were far more important than technical achievement,” so that his students “might learn to see clearly.” From there we move to Sean Ross Meehan’s review of Jeffrey S. Cramer’s *Solid Seasons: The Friendship of Henry David Thoreau and Ralph Waldo Emerson*—part anthology of writings on friendship, part critical

assessment of their own sometimes uncomfortable friendship—from theory to fact. A useful exercise, despite problems of nuance and critical tact. There follow two more reviews of major figures: Tara Moore on Melisa Klimaszewski's *Collaborative Dickens: Authorship and Victorian Christmas Periodicals*, and then Benjamin Pickford on Sean Ross Meehan's *A Liberal Education in Late Emerson: Readings in the Rhetoric of Mind*—the title of the first is self-explanatory, and the second is expanding recent attention to late works of Emerson that have been ignored or downplayed as products of the author's decline.

The remaining seven reviews are mainly about cultural studies projects: late nineteenth-Century utopians, print culture on polar expeditions (who knew?!), the African colonization movement, the Victorian press and popular literature, imaginary representations of Cuba, and the invention of the tourist in American culture—a broad spectrum of interesting topics that hints at the extent of the field of cultural studies in its various permutations. And finally, a review of a new edition of Jane Porter's *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, a novel that I read long ago in the tenth grade, but remember nothing about. Perhaps it was a spin-off from my childish interest in Gothic novels.

The Spring 2021 issue may seem a long way off from here, but in terms of production time, it's not. Until then....

Barry Charles Tharaud