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MARTINEAU'S "SEAT OF AUTHORITY IN RELIGION."

THE life of James Martineau virtually spans the present century, born about the middle of its first decade, he has fairly entered upon the last, and—to judge from his latest work—with mental vigor unabated. Born into an Unitarian home, he has ever remained true to the name, he stands to-day the representative Unitarian of England. It cannot, however, be said that the dogmatic faith of the author of the "Seat of Authority in Religion" is the same as that in which little James was trained, for Channing and Priestly owned the supreme authority of the Sacred Scriptures, with which Dr. Martineau deals as freely as he would with Geoffrey of Monmouth's History of Britain, its letter of Brutus and prophecies of Merlin; or with the legend of Saint Brendau and his seven years' search for the blessed isle. To the spiritual faith in the great unseen but realized personality in whom all love and righteousness centres, the man of fourscore years retains his childhood's faith with a manly grasp, presenting a pleasing contrast to his gifted sister Harriet, who, through a narrow evangelicalism—and evangelicalism can be narrow—passed into the mists of agnosticism, in which her pilgrimage closed. James Martineau retains his faith, which gives tone to all he writes, so that even when he attacks the cherished traditions of our evangelical Christianity, there is a spiritual warmth which forbids the chill experienced as you meet the unsympathetic agnosticism of the Spencerian philosopher, or Huxley's merciless scalpel.