

ФГБОУ ВПО “Санкт-Петербургский Государственный Университет”

Филологический факультет

Кафедра истории зарубежных литератур

Цун Жигуан

ДВЕ АНГЛИИ В РОМАНЕ ЭЛИЗАБЕТ ГАСКЕЛЛ

«СЕВЕР И ЮГ»

Выпускная квалификационная работа

магистра филологии

Научный руководитель:

д.ф.н., профессор

И. И. Бурова

Рецензент:

канд. искусствоведения, доцент

Татьяна Петровна Швец

Санкт-Петербург

2017

Saint Petersburg State University

Department of philology

Cong Riguang

Two Nations in the Novel “North and South” by Elizabeth Gaskell

Thesis prepared for the Degree of Master of Philology

Supervisor:

Doctor of philological science and professor

I. I. Burova

Reviewer:

Candidate of art and associate professor

Tatiana Petrovna Shvets

Saint Petersburg

2017

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Introduction

Elizabeth Cleghorn Gaskell (1810-1865) has been a significant figure in the literary history and research. “She herself, unlike some of her literary contemporaries, successfully combined marriage, motherhood, engagement with local affairs, and an often hectic social and culture life with constant creative activity.”¹

Elizabeth Gaskell was born on September 29, 1810 at Chelsea, London. Her mother died at her early age, her father was a clergyman, and she was brought up by her aunt in Knutsford. She grew up in a peaceful village and had a deep love for nature. Gaskell received good education which helped her pave the way for literary creations. In 1832, after marrying William Gaskell, a clergyman, Gaskell moved to Manchester and lived there with her husband. In 1850, Gaskell began to contribute to the “Household words” magazine by the invitation of Charles Dickens.²

Her first novel “*Mary Barton*” was published in 1848. In 1855, another famous novel “*North and South*” was created. Both of the novels were known as industrial ones that described social problems and industrial life. In 1853, “*Cranford*” and “*Ruth*” came out. Gaskell apparently made readers’ attention turn to the female community. In 1857, Gaskell also wrote a biography called “*The Life of Charlotte Bronte*,” in which she narrated the Victorian female writer, Charlotte Bronte’s life at length. Besides, she created many other novels, such as “*Sylvia’s Lovers*” (1863), “*Cousin Philis*” (1864) and “*Wives and Daughters*” (1866), and a

¹ Forster, S. Elizabeth Gaskell: A Literary Life. Basingstok; Hamp: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002. P. 1.

² Sanders, G., Northup, C. S. Elizabeth Gaskell. New Haven: Yale university press, 1929. P. xi – xii.

series of short stories, such as “*The Old Nurse’s story*” (1852) and “*The Poor Clare*” (1856). She died in 1865, Hampshire, England.³

Gaskell was born to a Unitarian family, her aunt, uncle and other relatives around her were all Unitarians. Therefore, Unitarianism had an impact on Gaskell from the cradle. Unitarianism not only helped her form world view, but also played a vital part in her literary career.⁴ Moreover, her living experience in Manchester became the original material and inspiration for creating industrial novels, such as “*North and South*.”

“*North and South*” is considered as a work that “will be read when we are all dead and buried.”⁵ This novel “continued the narrative of events and issues in a great manufacturing center, dealing with the period subsequent to that treated in ‘*Mary Barton*’ and almost contemporaneous with the time of writing.”⁶

Critics have done many researches on Gaskell’s novel “*North and South*” from different perspectives, like woman question, class conflict, pollution and so on.

Angus Easson in his work “*Mr. Hale’s Doubts in North and South*” analyzed the novel from a religious viewpoint and pointed out that Mr. Hale’s role and function were just like commentator, his religious views were close to Gaskell’s.⁷

Carlo A. Martin combined Darwinism with the novel. He explained that Mr. Thornton and Mrs. Thornton represented those who were strong enough to

³ Sanders, G., Northup, C. S. Elizabeth Gaskell. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1929. P. xvii.

⁴ 吴庆宏. 唯一神教对盖斯凯尔夫人的影响 // 江苏第二师范学院学报. 2015. No.7 (31). P. 60-61.

⁵ Elizabeth Gaskell, the Critical Heritage / Ed. A. Easson. London: Routledge, 1991. P. 517.

⁶ Sanders, G. D, Northup, C. S. Elizabeth Gaskell. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1929. P. 64.

⁷ Easson, A. Mr. Hale’s Doubts in North and South // The Review of English Studies, New Series. 1980. No. 121 (31). P. 30-40.

make all their efforts to survive and meanwhile, maintain their business. And those who died in the novel, like Bessy, Mr. and Mrs. Hale, they were not able to adjust to the external environment and were eliminated by the nature.⁸

There are also some other critics who have done research on this novel. For example, Pamela Corpron Cooper's work "*Fictional Philanthropy in Elizabeth Gaskell's 'Mary Barton' and 'North and South'*," which was published in 1997, used Gaskell's belief to analyze the heroine Margaret's philanthropic activities.⁹ And later in 2002, Shirley Foster published her work "*Elizabeth Gaskell: A Literary Life*," in which, the author lightly revealed how Gaskell's family influenced her future literary creation and how the living experience gave her the inspiration of writing novels.¹⁰ In the same year, Elizabeth Starr published her work "*'A Great Engine For Good': The Industry Of Fiction In Elizabeth Gaskell's 'Mary Barton' and 'North and South'*." In this paper Elizabeth Starr's analysis concentrated more on social problems and how industry and commerce had changed people's daily life.¹¹ Besides, G. Sanders¹² objectively evaluates the novel "*North and South*," said that it's precious for a writer to think from both the working class and the manufacturers; both the critics W. Craik¹³ and A. Shelston¹⁴ connected the analyze of the novel "*North and South*" with Elizabeth Gaskell's true working experience with workers in Manchester, insisted that thanks to this

⁸ Martin, C. A. Gaskell, Darwin and "North and South" // *Studies in the Novel*. 1983. No.2 (15). P. 91-107.

⁹ Parker, P. C. Fictional Philanthropy in Elizabeth Gaskell's "*Mary Barton*" and "*North and South*" // *Victorian Literature and Culture*. 1997. No.2 (25). P. 321-331.

¹⁰ Foster, S. *Elizabeth Gaskell: A Literary Life*. Basingstok; Hamp: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002. 202 p.

¹¹ Starr, E. "A Great Engine For Good": The Industry of Fiction in Elizabeth Gaskell's "*Mary Barton*" and "*North and South*" // *Studies in the Novel*. 2002. No.4 (34). P. 385-402.

¹² Sanders, G., Northup, C. S. *Elizabeth Gaskell*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1929. 267p.

¹³ Craik, W. A. *Elizabeth Gaskell and the English Provincial Novel*. London: Methuen, 1975. 277 p.

¹⁴ Shelston, A. *Elizabeth Gaskell's Manchester*. [Electronic Resource] - URL: <https://www.lang.nagoya-u.ac.jp/~matsuoka/EG-Manchester-Alan.html> [accessed: 22.07.2016].

valuable experience, Gaskell had the inspiration to create this novel; D. Cecil¹⁵ negatively saw this work, thought that Gaskell as a woman unilaterally wrote about the industry, said that Gaskell didn't really understand the substance of it; N. Henry¹⁶ analyzed the novel from women's social status and situations and the conflicts between workers and capitalists. B. Remizov¹⁷ defined the novel "*North and South*" as a social one, because it not showed Gaskell's commiseration to workers and critiques to the society in the Victorian age; M. Firstova¹⁸ analyzed this novel mostly from the standpoint of women's fate and their family values in the nineteenth century; the research of A. Hopkins¹⁹ is mainly about the story happened between Charles Dickens and Gaskell; F. Prochaska²⁰ and A. Summers²¹, however, both concentrated on writer's philanthropic experience and its influence on Gaskell's writing to raise public concern.

As we can see, the research has covered many aspects, but there is no systematic research that has amply analyzed the reconciliation of the "North" and the "South" in this novel. Further, Gaskell's philanthropic perspectives through Margaret's practice realized. Thus, this thesis is an attempt to explore this perspective which is deeply hidden in the text.

¹⁵ Cecil, D. *Early Victorian Novelists: Essays in Revaluation*. Indianapolis; New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1935. 342 p.

¹⁶ Henry, N. *Elizabeth Gaskell and Social Transformation / The Cambridge Companion to Elizabeth Gaskell* / Ed. J. L. Matus. Cambridge; New York; Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 2007. P. 148-163.

¹⁷ Бунич-Ремизов, Б. Б. Социальный роман Э. Гаскелл. [Electronic Resource] - URL: <http://saint-juste.narod.ru/Remizov.html> [дата обращения: 05.07.2016].

¹⁸ Фирстова, М. Ю. Женская судьба в проблемно-тематической целостности романа Э. К. Гаскелл «Мэри Бартон». [Электронный ресурс] - URL: <http://www.rfp.psu.ru/archive/1.2012/firstova.pdf> [дата обращения: 15.07.2016].

¹⁹ Hopkins, A. B. *Dickens and Mrs. Gaskell* // *Huntington Library Quarterly*. 1946. No. 4 (9). P. 357-385.

²⁰ Prochaska, F. K. *Women and Philanthropy in Nineteenth-Century England*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980. 301 p.

²¹ Summers, A. *A Home Away from Home – Women's Philanthropic Work in the Nineteenth Century* // *Fit work for Women* / Ed. S. Burman. New York: St. Martins Press, 1979. P. 33-63.

In order to do a research on this perspective, the following tasks need to be done:

1. Do research on the history of the Industrial Revolution in England from the end of 18th century to the mid-19th century.
2. Find out the intentions of Gaskell to write industrial novels.
3. Do research on the combination of Gaskell's industrial novels with her belief.
4. Analyze the characters in the novel "*North and South*."
5. Do research on Gaskell's philanthropic idea in the novel "*North and South*."

Propositions to be defended:

1. Margaret and John Thornton represent two different cultures and traditions. Margaret represents the southern tradition and John Thornton – the northern one.
2. In the novel "*North and South*," the two characters, Mr. Thornton and Henry Lennox, try to understand the culture which opposes their own. Mr. Thornton as a northerner and a mill owner, likes classical literature. By contrast, Henry Lennox as a southerner and a promising lawyer in London, not satisfying the comfortable and quiet life in the South, he decide to make all his efforts to climb up the rank of the society in the North, in this way, he behaved himself like a northerner.
3. Margaret, the heroine in this novel, a southerner, demonstrates herself as a fusion of both the northern and the southern cultures.

The purpose and task of the research determined the structure of the thesis. The thesis consists of introduction, two chapters, conclusion and list of reference materials.

In Chapter I, the paper mainly introduces the history of the Industrial Revolution in England from the end of 18th century to the mid-19th century from different aspects, such as the changes in life and mentality in the society.

In Chapter II, the paper analyzes the novel “North and South” in the context of the Industrial Revolution in England in the mid-19th century from these aspects, such as the inspiration of Gaskell to create industrial novels, Gaskell’s belief, the analysis of the characters in the novel, Gaskell’s philanthropic idea in the novel.

Chapter I. The Industrial Revolution: its Causes and Consequences

As Mr. Hartwell recommended in his book, “ Of all the historical examples of growth, none is more important or more interesting than the Industrial Revolution in England: it was the first Industrial Revolution; it led to the first example of modern economic growth; it was a growth achieved mainly without external assistance; it was growth in the context of a free enterprise economy; it was growth accompanied by a social and political revolution which were achieved with little violence; it was the ‘engine of growth’ for other economies, stimulating them by example, by the export of men and capital, and by trade.”¹

What is the Industrial Revolution? When we think about this question, maybe there will be a lot of inventions coming to our mind that have made people’s life more convenient; for other people, when they talk about this revolution, first come to their mind maybe some consequences, like class struggle or even women’s consciousness of being independent, not just staying at home and doing some cooking and so on.

In history there is no lack of economists and historians who spent all their life trying to give a definition of the Industrial Revolution.

Charles More explained the Industrial Revolution with models; behind these models there are economic theories which can clearly explain the processes. All the models can be explained by the factors of production: land, labour and capital.

¹ Hartwell, R. M. The Causes of the Industrial Revolution in England. London: Methuen & Co. LTD., 1977. P. 3.

Needless to say, the period of the Industrial Revolution is generally considered from 1750 to 1850, because using an expansive period can help avoid taking particular dates as “turning points,” though it is suggested to regard other dates for the beginning as well as the end of the whole phenomenon.²

The Industrial Revolution actually played a fatal role in the human history. Nevertheless, as a coin has two sides, this event also had both the positive and negative impacts.

In this Chapter of the essay, we will focus our attention on the following aspects:

1. Why did the Industrial Revolution happen in the mid-18th century England?
Was the Industrial Revolution a chance or an inevitable event?
2. The results of the Industrial Revolution and changes it brought into the life of the society.

1.1. Why did the Industrial Revolution happen in the mid-18th century England?

Economist Yang Xiaokai in his article mentioned that according to the research of some of the Institutional economic historians, the trade over seas and oceans, such as the Atlantic, the Mediterranean Sea, the Black Sea, etc, that began in 1500, especially the long-distance trade stretched over Atlantic, was one of the key conditions of the Industrial Revolution. In addition, among these conditions the difference between political and economic system plays an essential role in the

² More, C. Understanding the Industrial Revolution. London; New York: Routledge, 2000. P. 1-9.

economic growth and the development of the Industrial Revolution.³

The evaluation of benefits the trade brought can be found in the book “*The wealth of nations*” by Adam Smith.

According to Adam Smith’s theory stated at the beginning of his book “*The Wealth of Nations*,” he pointed out that the effects of the division of labour can improve the level of specialization of productive activity and by improving the level of specialization those great manufactures can easily supply the great wants of the great body of the people, although the work may be divided into a huge number of parts; as a consequence, the trade is formed. The increase of supplies and demands means that the market is growing. And as the market expands, it will make further efforts to stimulate the improvement of specialization and the level of the division of labour, which formed a virtuous circle, in which divisions and market trade had become a causal relationship.⁴

Since 1500, the Atlantic trade had played a decisive role in the development of Western Europe and many countries got benefits from the Atlantic trade between the 16th and 19th century.⁵ However, Spain and Portugal at that time worked on the Atlantic trade as well, but how should we explain the Industrial Revolution happened only in England?

Recently Daron Acemoglu, Simon Johnson and James Robinson in their article “*The Rise of Europe: Atlantic Trade, Institutional Change, and Economic Growth*” have given an insight into the question above with abundant evidence.

³ 杨小凯. 工业革命为什么在英国而不在西班牙发生? URL: <https://www.douban.com/group/topic/1115844/> [accessed: 07.06.2016].

⁴ Smith, A. *The Wealth of Nations*: In 3 vols. Vol. 1. New York: Collier, 1902. P. 43-54.

⁵ 杨小凯. Op. cit.

They drew distinctions between England and Spain, England and Portugal in the Atlantic trade and found that Spain had been engaged in the Atlantic trade earlier than England, moreover, there had even been many conditions more favourable to England. In other words, if we just take the objective conditions into account, if the Industrial Revolution could happen in England, then, it would have taken place in Spain as well.

Johnson and the other two researchers made a list of roughly three aspects in which Spain and Portugal were was advantageous over England:

1. Spain and Portugal worked on long-distance seafaring explorations earlier than England and they were on top of nautical experience and seafaring skills. We may say that these two countries were the pioneer of the Atlantic trade, and for quite a long time they dominated, or even monopolized the whole Atlantic trade as well.
2. Because of the earlier seafaring trade, Spain and Portugal took the lead in capturing South America, where the natural conditions were superior to North America. As a result, these two countries possessed better natural resources to develop international trade than England.
3. Johnson explains that the development of imperialism is based on exploiting colonies, the more these countries are exploited, the more powerful the empire grows. Nevertheless, there were differences between England and Spain in treating the colonies. England governed all of her colonies by using the measure of autonomy. Basically, England gave the colonies rights to set up Parliament in order to put autonomy in force; all

her colonies had their own constitutions and independent tax policy. Only when England was involved in the war could it require all its colonies to pay the special tax to support war funding through a representative of the British parliament in each colony in a way of resolution. But in the colonies of Spain, on the contrary, there were not any parliaments, Spain had right to levy tax from these colonies, and most part of all the taxes that the colonies paid were sent back to Homeland. In other words, compared with Spanish and Portuguese, British governed their colonies not just for the purpose of satisfying the monopoly by exploiting the colonies, yet in Spain and Portugal the exploitation was put in force. Hence, according to the theory of Marxism, the Industrial Revolution should have happened in Spain and Portugal, due to the development of imperialism.⁶

In order to interpret this contradiction, Simon Johnson and James Robinson put forward three interesting presumptions:

1. The Atlantic Trade had essential influence on economic development in Europe;
2. The economic development impels the institutional change;
3. The precondition of the institutional change is related to the degree of imperial autocracy.

It means that the Atlantic Trade made an opportunity for an institutional change go on, and this change would be a virtuous cycle, which might cause the growth of economics and the Industrial Revolution. Moreover, the political system

⁶ Acemoglu, D., Johnson, S., Robinson J. The Rise of Europe: Atlantic Trade, Institutional Change, and Economic Growth // The American Economic Review. 2005. Vol. 95. No. 3. P. 546-551.

which had formed at the beginning of the Atlantic Trade has a close relationship with the institutional change. From the numerous statistics Johnson pointed out those countries which worked on the Atlantic Trade developed faster than those that did not, such as Italy. Johnson developed an institution index to describe three kinds of institutional characteristics:

1. The first one is to which degree the royals can interpose the commercial activities by using their rights;
2. The second is the level of private property protection;
3. The third and the last one is to which degree people were permitted to go into business deals freely.

These three characteristics can be regarded as proxy during the trade. As a result, the research showed that with the Atlantic Trade running deep and smooth, the countries which were involved in the business concentrated more on their protection of private property, the limitation of royals and the right to trade more freely. On the contrary, those which were not engaged in the business trade did not have those apparent changes. Johnson also found that at the beginning of the Atlantic Trade, the limitation to imperial priorities in England was more apparent than in Spain or in Portugal. In England, parliament had comparative ability to be against the royals, but the situations in Spain and Portugal were quite opposite, which means in England there was an imperial limitation, people's private property was protected, people could work on business freely and so on... all these rights stimulated the economic development, and naturally, England went further than Spain in economics. By virtue of those economic protection, there was a rise of

rich people, in order to create more fortune, rich people had conflicts with the royals. And soon there came out a series of political reforms, which had a positive effect. All these institutions were for the purpose of breaking imperial monopoly on trade, James II tried to monopolize the trade but failed, the parliament took warning from the overturned cart in front, so the Glorious Revolution occurred. All the possibilities for the royals to restore authoritarian rule were strangled by the parliament. Consequently, many large trading companies which used to have a close relationship with English royals continuously decreased in scale. The new trading chances made some businessmen, who had nothing to do with the royals, richer and richer. These persons paid taxes and had a place of their own in the parliament. Spain, unfortunately, gained an opposite result in this big commercial game. Spanish royals monopolized the Atlantic Trade, other people had no right to work on international commercial activities. The whole society had become richer because of this cycle, which stimulated the germination of the Industrial Revolution in England. The despotism had become a formidable barrier in the society. Moreover, at the same time, the Spanish royals tried to use the wealth to flaunt their social positions. The capital could not make a virtuous cycle, the interests from the Atlantic Trade could not be shared with the common people, and the so-called businessmen did not appear, not to mention new institutional innovations, no wonder it was less possible for the Industrial Revolution to take place in Spain.⁷

As Adam Smith said in his book, there are two different meanings to

⁷ Acemoglu, D., Johnson, S., Robinson, J. The Rise of Europe: Atlantic Trade, Institutional Change, and Economic Growth // The American Economic Review. 2005. Vol. 95. No. 3. P.551-575.

describe the word “value”: “value in use” and “value in exchange.”⁸ Both of them made the purchase market a virtuous cycle. It provided a favourable beginning and foundation for the Industrial Revolution.

Then the question arises, why did the Industrial Revolution first take place in the 18th century, and not earlier or later?

A Chinese economist Song Lijian in his recent research analyzed the internal and external factors that made the Industrial Revolution take place in the 18th century from the global perspective. Results show that the Industrial Revolution is to be regarded as a historical event which happened when global economics were in an interactive process that in some areas of England there had been price disparities between capital and labour for a long period and the gap worked in with its significant political, cultural and financial environment co-operatively. In the 18th century, the global market developed from time to time, especially England could be regarded as the pioneer in European market. British woolen industry provided a stable channel of distribution. When globalization combined itself with English unique economic environment, the Industrial Revolution came into the world.⁹

Wrigley’s book puts forward two conceptions: an “advanced organic economy”¹⁰ and “mineral-based energy economy,”¹¹ and points out that modern industrialization is a transformation from advanced organic to mineral-based trade

⁸ Smith, A. *The Wealth of Nations*: In 3 vols. Vol. 1. New York: Collier, 1902. P. 73.

⁹ 宋李健. 工业革命为什么发生在 18 世纪的英国 -- 一个全球视角的内生分析模型 URL: <http://economy.guoxue.com/?p=7339> [accessed: 08.06.2016].

¹⁰ Wrigley, E. A. *Continuity, Chance and Change: The Character of the Industrial Revolution in England*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988. P. 34.

¹¹ *Ibid.* P. 68.

in order to achieve modernization a country needed to get rid of all the economic bounds and be capitalized. And this capitalization required that gaining raw material only could be from mineral resources but not from agricultural products, especially when it was possible to exploit energy reserves.¹²

One of the famous Chinese historians Li Bozhong is one of the supporters of Wrigley's theory. In his opinion, the reason why the Industrial Revolution took place in England was because of its rich mineral resources.¹³

Mining revolution may be is one of those important parts of the Industrial Revolution, but it does not mean that mining revolution equals to the Industrial Revolution. In 2007, Gregory Clark and David Jacks wrote a research to prove that in the 18th century the coal mining boom was caused by the improvement of mining technique, which was due to the Industrial Revolution, but not the cause of it, what's more, mining industry had nothing to do with the growth of income which the Industrial Revolution had brought to people.¹⁴

Robert Allen in his research compared England with other countries in salary level and the rate of income and bottommost outcome of a family. The conclusion is that if income is far more than outcome, then it is more possible to form a capital accumulation. Allen also showed us a comparison of relative prices between income and capital, we can see that the relative prices of income and capital are far more than in other countries, hence in this situation, it is economical to use capital

¹² Wrigley, E. A. *Continuity, Chance and Change: The Character of the Industrial Revolution in England*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988. P. 34-98.

¹³ 李伯重. 英国模式, 江南道路与资本主义萌芽 // 历史研究. 2001 年第 1 期. P. 118.

¹⁴ Clark, G., Jacks, D. *Coal and the Industrial Revolution, 1700-1869* // *European Review of Economic History*. 2007. Vol. 11. No. 1. P. 39-40.

instead of labour. He also pointed out that the Industrial Revolution is a historical accident, and this accident has a close relationship with British unique geographical position. The war had broken the economic process in Holland, and Holland had to bear a burden of indemnity, which made the probable revolution impossible. But things were different in England, which, as an island country, had an advantage of being away from all disputes of European continent. The English Channel as a natural defense helped England concentrate on developing economics in a peaceful environment. Under the circumstances of high income and high deposits, England gradually tried to use capital instead of labour, and because of this, England was brought to the mode of modern economic growth.¹⁵

The Industrial Revolution was the result of unceasing development of the global market. The broad market grew fast, it brought steady needs of goods to England, as a result, England became the biggest woolen exporting country in Europe. There was a lack of labor in a short time in England because of the steady growth of export volumes. Hence, in that period the cost of labour was rising, which compelled most of the companies to adopt intensified mode of production in order to cut the cost.

Consequently, we can conclude that England had all the conditions to cause the Industrial Revolution: first, the creation of English bank indicated the appearance of financial revolution. Since then, London's high-authority financial market had sharply reduced the cost of transformation from market savings to investment; second, the parliament which was fundamentally based on

¹⁵ Allen, R. C. The British Industrial Revolution in Global Perspective: How Commerce Created the Industrial Revolution and Modern Economic Growth. URL: <https://www.nuffield.ox.ac.uk/users/allen/unpublished/econinvent-3.pdf> [accessed: 12.06.2016.]

compromise and the balance of interests provided essential protections; third, Protestantism encouraged entrepreneurial spirit; last but not the least, British favourable geographical position as an island country helped it stay away from European continental conflicts. Only in this way could it be possible that the Industrial Revolution happened in England. Because only in England it was possible to use machine instead of labour, and it was there that industrial revolution became fully developed.

Therefore, we can say that the Industrial Revolution in England in the 18th century was an inevitable event.

1.2. The Industrial Revolution and changes it brought into the life of the society

During the end of the 18th century and early decades of the 19th century, England experienced great changes in every aspect of life of the society. As a consequence of the Industrial Revolution, of course, the advanced technology and scientific inventions brought people a more brand new convenient life, development in agriculture and industry, financial expansion and so on. “The most dramatic changes were witnessed in rural areas, where the provincial landscape often became urban and industrialized following advances in agriculture, industry and shipping. Wealth accumulated in the regions and there was soon a need for country banking.”¹⁶

When Heinrich Buess was sorting materials for his paper, he came across the

¹⁶ Manolopoulou, A. The Industrial Revolution and the Changing Face of Britain. URL: https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/publications/online_research_catalogues/paper_money/paper_money_of_england_wales/the_industrial_revolution.aspx [accessed:13.06.2016].

diaries of Johann Conrad Fischer, a Swiss manufacturer, covering the years of the Industrial Revolution in social, economic, and technological areas. Buess, having summed up and used the diaries in his paper, perfectly showed us a unique view of the Industrial Revolution of a contemporary Swiss. The diaries were sorted out in four aspects of changes: mail coaches and railways made people's trips more convenient and comfortable; science developed rapidly, meanwhile mind and sense for industry were assimilated into the traditional British culture; the steam-engine was widely used in factories, productive efficiency had improved a lot, and mechanization first came true in cotton textile industry, what is more, an industrial structure of textile, metallurgy and mining was built; as for social situation, Fischer's references to social conditions are insufficient. "Nevertheless, he did not overlook the negative side of this great technical progress. In the last years of his life, he saw the social problems in a rather different light."¹⁷

As a matter of fact, the Industrial Revolution indeed had a positive influence. "The Industrial Revolution brought fundamental changes in the British way of life. Scientific innovations and technological improvements contributed to the advancement of agriculture... With the increase of capital and the need for credit, banking developed not only in London but also in the countryside... thus emphasizing the importance of such trade in the local and national economy."¹⁸

Nevertheless, as a coin has two sides, it also brought something negative.

17 Heinrich, B. A Swiss Manufacturer Sees the Industrial Revolution in England // British Journal of Industrial Medicine. 1962. Vol. 19, No. 1. P. 50.

18 Manolopoulou, A. The Industrial Revolution and the Changing Face of Britain. URL: https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/publications/online_research_catalogues/paper_money/paper_money_of_england_wales/the_industrial_revolution.aspx [accessed: 13.06.2016].

Therefore, let us see what positive and negative changes were brought to England.

1.2.1. Changes in agriculture

The dominant position of agriculture in Britain had lasted for hundreds of years. In the 18th century, new farming systems appeared and led to an agricultural revolution that caused higher output of crops to feed the increasing population. Arnold Toynbee in his book *“The industrial revolution”* quoted many statistics to indicate that the connections between the enclosure movement and improved agriculture were very close. Just because of the new systems and enclosures, “Taking a general view of the state of agriculture in 1760, we find that improvements were confined to a few parts of the country... Throughout the whole of the south of England, however, there had been a certain amount of progress.”¹⁹

Indeed, England did not take special measures to support agriculture. “We sacrificed the agricultural labourers to the industrial worker. England led the world in industry and invention, developments which have been copied by every other country.”²⁰ “On the whole, though the evidence on some points is somewhat contradictory... Still, in spite of the ignorance and stupidity of the farmers and their use of wretched implements, the average produce of wheat was large.”²¹ Hence, as a result, in spite of the phenomenon of urbanization and industrialization, agriculture was still regarded as a principal provider of employment in the provinces, both supporting and being supported by industry, due to the creations of

¹⁹ Toynbee, A. J. *The industrial revolution*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1956. P. 14.

²⁰ H. L. C. *Reviewed Work: Economic Development in the Nineteenth Century* by L. C. A. Knowles // *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts*, 1932. Vol. 80. No. 4163. P. 981-982.

²¹ Toynbee, A. J. *Op. cit.* P. 17-18.

new tools, fertilizers and harvesting techniques, which had caused an increase in productivity and agricultural prosperity. Geographical specialization of products was built, for instance, the south-eastern part of England specialized in grain, Scotland or Leicestershire in breeding cattle and sheep and so on. “Paper money such as that from Yorkshire or Herefordshire illustrates the importance of farming through idealized images of agricultural bliss.”²²

1.2.2. Changes in women

W. F. Neff emphasized in his work “Victorian working women; an historical and literary study of women in British industries and professions” that women were bound to home, it was their predestination. Women earning for living were not accepted by the philosophy of the Victorians. Women should marry and become potential mothers. “Classing women and children together as helpless creatures needing the protection of strong men, they were indignant at the knowledge that women had to support themselves, that they suffered degrading wrongs as working women.”²³

Eileen Jeans Yeo wrote in her review that “The middle-class women who people Eleanor Gordon²⁴ and Gwyneth Nair²⁵’s perspective and readable book are no delicate, sequestered angels in the home... the authors set out to confront the ideology of separate spheres... which posits a public realm for men and the home

²² Manolopoulou, A. The Industrial Revolution and the Changing Face of Britain. URL: https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/publications/online_research_catalogues/paper_money/paper_money_of_england_wales/the_industrial_revolution.aspx [accessed: 14.06.2016].

²³ Neff, W. F. Victorian Working Women; an Historical and Literary Study of Women in British Industries and Professions, 1832-1850. New York: Columbia University Press, 1929. P.14.

²⁴ Gordon, E. is working as a lecturer in the Conflict and Security Studies in the University of Leicester.

²⁵ Nair, Gw. is the author of the book “Highly”.

as a private retreat where women preside.”²⁶

The theory of separate spheres and its connotation had an essential influence on marginalized status of lower-middle-class women in society where men and men’s activities played a leading role, and the fields related with female, such as family and feelings, were ignored. The separate spheres corresponding to the separation of gender had formed a traditional ideology of society, division of labour and family. We know from family members and women’s feelings mentioned in the research that during the transition of British society, women usually were in a passive, restrictive and dependent position in the whole process of marriage, including falling in love, engagement, leaving family home after marriage, even divorce and dealing with division of property. Nevertheless, with England stepping into the epoch of the Industrial Revolution, when the society was faced with transition, women’s thoughts and social position had also changed. The process of industrialization was accompanied by gender socialization: it established a marginalized position for women who actively made a contribution to the society; meanwhile, it provided a precondition of ideology of feminism. From then, women had the consciousness to fight for equal status with men.²⁷

At the beginning of the 19th century, in technical schools, the main principle of teaching mode was separation by gender. Women at the executive levels in school could only work as librarians. Although with the establishment of public examination system and development of women’s movement, technical education

²⁶ Yeo, E. J. Reviewed Work: *Public Lives: Women, Family and Society in Victorian Britain* by Eleanor Gordon, Gwyneth Nair // *Victorian Studies*. 2005. Vol. 47, No. 2. P. 303.

²⁷ 四川师范大学历史文化与旅游学院. 工业革命与英国妇女社会边缘化. URL: <http://economy.guoxue.com/?p=1189> [accessed: 15.06.2016].

had moved forwards, it was a pity that women did not share this change with men fairly. On the other hand, the process caused a new round of division of female and male labour force. The thought that “women were in lack of technical competition” had become a label of female identity. From workshop to factory, women, regarded as cheap labour force, had become away for employers to balance their interests. Meanwhile, in the 19th century, if a woman worked with men shoulder to shoulder, she was thought immoral. As a result, we can see that women were marginalized in this period in all aspects. In spite of all these bias to women, in the first half of the 19th century, they actively adapted themselves to the changing society and bravely fought for their equal rights; it was then that the word “feminism” emerged. No matter where, in the theatres, bookstores, bar or other public places, women tried to show their unique function and position in the society. It is worth mentioning that in the 19th century, women devoted themselves to philanthropy, in order to carry out obligations as citizens, meanwhile, their charitable organizations made a contribution to stabilize the lower class. What is more, women also participated in the political field; they affected the content of the policy by financial aid. Women strived for guardianship of children, property right, voting rights and so on; they demonstrated their capability of studying and working. They challenged the main ideology, showed their female subject consciousness, moreover, women had gained the right of speech and could criticize the situation of inequality between men and women, thus, made further efforts to develop ideology of feminism.²⁸

²⁸ 四川师范大学历史文化与旅游学院. 工业革命与英国妇女社会边缘化. URL: <http://economy.guoxue.com/?p=1189> [accessed: 15.06.2016].

1.2.3. Capital and labour

“In the early years of the period many of the industrial units were small family concerns or partnerships of two or three friends. In most industries the fixed capital required was not more than a domestic manufacturer, or even a workman, could supply from his earnings.”²⁹

As Phyllis Deane put it in her book “*The first industrial revolution*,” generally speaking, if any economy wants to expand its output, usually it depends on four fundamental factors:

1. The rate at which it can enlarge its stock of natural resources;
2. Technical progress;
3. The rate of new investment;
4. The rate of expansion of the labour supply.³⁰

If a worker works harder, longer, what is more, regularly, this leads to a larger output of goods and services. “These determinants are closely interrelated.”³¹ Nevertheless, it is true that the first three factors can require either increase in the numbers of those who worked on productive activity, or “some movements of workers between occupations or both.”³² However, it is not easy to increase the labour supply to the sector affected. The tremendous motivation from technical change promoted a considerable relative increase in the demand for labour. Consequently, the usual way to attract labour to an expanding sector is by offering workers a higher wage, so that they will not go anywhere. Yet, the lower the

²⁹ Ashton, T. S. *The Industrial Revolution*. London; New York; Toronto : Oxford University Press, 1948. P.102.

³⁰ Deane, P. *The first industrial revolution*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965. P. 134-135.

³¹ *Ibid.* P. 135.

³² *Ibid.*

increase of wages used to attract a large number of labour is, the more money can be given to new innovations or an investment. As a matter of fact, there was a certain number of unemployment or under-employment of labour, who received wages that were lower than prevailing rates in order not to be lured away from other occupations. Therefore, it is a feasible plan for investors to obtain sufficient labour at a relatively low price. In the late 18th and early 19th century manufacturers were able to increase industrial output without worrying about a rise in wage, which means the input for innovation was fiercely weakened and “shared between the investor and the consumer.”³³ This greatly encouraged the industrialization. “Profits rose and prices fell... plough back a high proportion of their earnings into further investment and so to increase output and opportunities for employment still more. As prices fell, demand rose, stimulated further investment and further demand for labour. The process was cumulative.”³⁴ Meanwhile, another way to help increase labour was to increase working hours per worker and per day. But there were also problems. There was, though, a lower increase of population growth at the beginning of the 19th century, compared with the 18th century, because of falling infantile death rate and rising birthrate in its early stages, children were found working in factories from five years old. The labour force at that time worked in a burdensome condition. As P. Deane mentioned in her book, “Men, women and children worked 12-16 hours per day or per night in continuous shifts. Whether the input of labour wrung from children working a daily 15 or 16 hours in temperatures of 80 degrees and above was more productive than, say 11 or

³³ Deane, P. *The first industrial revolution*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965. P. 136.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

12 hours worked in more humane conditions in one of the better-run factories is questionable. There must have been a point beyond which the extra time worked gave negative rather than positive returns even in the unskilled operations of child labour.”³⁵

In real life a worker had a lot of problems to worry about, such as wages, prices, rents, mortgages, sickness, unemployment and so on. At the same time an employer also had many headaches, like the large cost of salaries, the risk of investment and so on. As far as workers were concerned, “The capitalist is a parasite. He lives without working. He lives on the results of other men's toil...”³⁶ It rarely happened a worker came to an employer and proposed an increase in wages all by himself. Workers would be more likely to search for other employers on the street in order to gather effort to persevere their demands by standing in the position as a union. Only under these circumstances they could power become a fierce weapon to be against the employers and ask for improvements both in wages and working conditions.³⁷

Consequently, workers got together for bargaining power. With the Industrial Revolution growing deep and mature, workers generally thought that it was time for them to require promoting the level of wages because of the expansion of capital especially, in the 1830s and 1840s. “There were instances of worker’s combinations against individual large-scale employers but these were

³⁵ Deane, P. *The first industrial revolution*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965. P. 138.

³⁶ Socialist Party of Great Britain. * The Capitalist * The Worker * The Class Struggle * Wages * Depression * Politics. URL: <http://www.worldsocialism.org/spgb/pamphlets/capitalist-worker-class-struggle-wages-depression-politics> [accessed: 18.06.2016].

³⁷ Ibid.

exceptional.”³⁸

Capitalists are always thought to be of a blood-stained character, persons who are always being wrongly understood. In Deane’s book, she wrote in a more humanized way that employers were not good for anything but indulged themselves in gaining profits. Capitalists thought in a more logical and reasonable way to reduce wage cost. And John Foster in his book “Class struggle and the industrial revolution: Early industrial capitalism in three English towns” proved that what Deane had written was not just a manifestation of a woman’s mercy, but something objective. As a matter of fact, in 1847 the proportion of wage cost had already become the basic problem – nearly 85 % of income of the employers went to labor. Thus, the only way employers could do to regain profits was to find some way of cutting labour costs, naturally, the way of cutting wages was involved in their choices. Though it was dangerous, because it meant that employers had to dilute the labour force with well-paid jobs, and hired women and children instead of men, who were actually skilled workers.³⁹

Meanwhile when we look back to Deane’s book, we will find that the unskilled labour was not cheap, but on the contrary, though the supply looked like sufficient. In fact, by 1850 the employer was not as typical as the high-level capitalist, and the worker could not strictly be called employee, for there was an amount of subcontracting through skilled workers who were both employees and employers at the same time. All these tended to drive wages cost below productivity, which successfully kept the workers in a weak bargaining position.

³⁸ Deane, P. *The first industrial revolution*. Cambridge: Cambridge University press, 1965. P. 149.

³⁹ Foster, J. *Class struggle and the industrial revolution: Early Industrial Capitalism in Three English Towns*. London: Methuen & Co., 1977. P. 82.

So one reason “why the working-men of the 1830s and 1840s failed to exploit their sheer weight of numbers to turn the scale of the wage bargain in their favours was that they were too ill-educated.”⁴⁰ Although sometimes they would organize strikes, it was rarely for them to achieve success. Even there was a national trade union, which was going to establish the opposition to the employers, but it owned a short life and the strikes remained unsuccessful as well.⁴¹

The strike was not a wise choice for workers in their dispute with employers. Many times workers were compelled to return to work without income, or even worse, with losses. The purpose of strikes should not be unemployment or even severer living conditions, otherwise, workers should be aware that a better life could not be brought by strikes. Workers sometimes needed to take a more effective and rational way to fight for their rights. Besides making use of the trade union, workers also needed to recognize that “even at their best the unions cannot bring permanent security or end poverty. These aims cannot be gained within the limits of capitalist society.”⁴² If workers pursue a future society where there will be no conflict over wages, and at the same time each one can devote themselves to the productions by his ability and receive from it on the basis of his needs, then they should also recognize that it is necessary to turn the union into a political organization and have voices in politics.⁴³

⁴⁰ Deane, P. *The First Industrial Revolution*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965. P. 150.

⁴¹ *Ibid.* 134-151.

⁴² Socialist Party of Great Britain. * The Capitalist * The Worker * The Class Struggle * Wages * Depression * Politics.

URL: <http://www.worldsocialism.org/spgb/pamphlets/capitalist-worker-class-struggle-wages-depression-politics> [accessed: 18.06.2016]

⁴³ *Ibid.*

1.2.4. Mentality in the society

In fact, the Enlightenment provided for the spread of atheism. The 19th century scientific achievements built up a more objective picture of the world ruled by natural laws. In the middle of the century, however, there was a revival of religious feelings. Even if people were disenchanted with Christianity, they tried to find a new God, for instance, beauty.

In the 19th century Britain, the word “Lord” had become a distant existence. “We have forgotten God.”⁴⁴ God’s Laws had been explained as a sort of moral philosophy, or used as a political maneuvering, which “sanctioned by able computations of profit and loss, by weak considerations of pleasure of virtue and the moral sublime.”⁴⁵ Although there was a tremendous popularity of Christianity in this period, it was considered as “the religion of gentleness and resignation.”⁴⁶ Because Christianity was at that time under the serious control of Roman Catholics, it developed “under the heavier hand of the English.”⁴⁷

Thomas Carlyle in his book “Past and present” criticized that “England is full of wealth, of multifarious produce, supply for human want in every kind; yet England is dying of inanition.”⁴⁸ Carlyle mentioned us a society, where you could find no conscience or moral values. Money dominated the whole Britain. He called attention to kindness and love in people’s deep heart, rekindled Christian ideas, such as purity, honesty, godliness, tolerance, and patience. The conditions of

⁴⁴ Carlyle, T. Past and Present. London: Chapman and Hall, 1870. P. 171.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Havelock, E. The Nineteenth Century; a Dialogue in Utopia. London: G. Richard, 1900. P. 12.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Carlyle, T. Op. cit. P. 3.

workers' life were miserable. Even the successful skilled workers were shut in the workhouses working all day long. "They sit there, pent up, as in a kind of horrid enchantment; glad to be imprisoned and enchanted, that they may not perish starved."⁴⁹ Meanwhile, hundred thousand of workers even did not have a shelter in a workhouse. The law did not function and the liberty was regarded as a piece of paper. Judgment and justice were the things that had delayed for years.⁵⁰

Even though, Carlyle thought that bloody uprising, such as Manchester Insurrection year, was not wise. The basic social problem was not solved, workers were still unhappy. It was like millions of men came out into the streets, rose up, but what could they do? All they did was just standing there. Even under these circumstances, their behaviors could be a bright choice. Their living situations were grieved and insupportable, but these wrongs were not caused by a concrete person. "Our enemies are we know not who or what; our friends are we know not where! How shall we attack anyone, shoot or be shot by anyone?"⁵¹ Uprising gains little, but cost too much, for it is of no avail when men were against each other by violence done, "which is always sure to be injustice done, for violence does even justice unjustly."⁵²

So what could be done to save this miserable century? How was it possible to cure the society which was filled with scars and tears?

Unlike other scholars, Carlyle was the first to put forward the notion the world needed a hero – that was "Hero-worship."⁵³ He set us an example and lead

⁴⁹ Carlyle, T. Past and Present. London: Chapman and Hall, 1870. P. 4.

⁵⁰ Ibid. P. 3-16.

⁵¹ Ibid. P. 20.

⁵² Ibid. P. 21.

⁵³ Ibid. P. 41.

us to the right way of future. A hero can give us hope, cause a successful reform.⁵⁴

The second aspect to make people happier, according to “Past and present,” is work. The only happiness that a braver had always pursued is finishing his work, because as Carlyle said, “All work, even cotton-spinning, is noble; work alone is noble... A life of ease is not for any man, nor for any god.”⁵⁵ If we are eager to work, then we will have hope, we work not just for profits, but because we want to finish doing what needs to be done. A person should not complain every day of what he is lacking, but work to get what he wants. Working is not money worship, of course, you can gain food by working, but, on the opposite, if you just want food and work, then you will gain nothing. Hence people should know the meaning of working and enjoy it, because even a life full of God’s blessing is not easy, sometimes it can be even more difficult.⁵⁶

The third thing indicated in the book is that the value of the Bible truly exists; people should restore their faith in God. Compared with the immensity of universe, our interests are temporary and paltry. With our life coming to the end, all of these will turn into nothing. All, such as Rituals, Liturgies, Creeds, Hierarchies, cannot be regarded as religion. God is everlasting; He is with us all the time.⁵⁷ “The Universe, I say, is made by Law; the great soul of the World is just and not unjust.”⁵⁸ So just “let us hail it, with awestruck repentant hearts, as the voice once more of God, though of one in wrath. Bless be the God’s-voice; for it is true.”⁵⁹

Whether you believe in God or not, He is always there, His Law functions in the

⁵⁴ Carlyle, T. Past and Present. London: Chapman and Hall, 1870. P. 41-47.

⁵⁵ Ibid. P. 192.

⁵⁶ Ibid. P. 192-196.

⁵⁷ Ibid. P. 280-296.

⁵⁸ Ibid. P. 284.

⁵⁹ Ibid. P. 286.

nature. Wish God lead our soul, and wash away all the dirties in this world.

We can find all these consequences in the novel “North and South” written by Elizabeth Gaskell.

Chapter 2. Gaskell's Novel "*North and South*" in the Context of the Industrial Revolution in England in the mid-19th Century

2.1 Why did Gaskell decide to create industrial novels

"Mrs. Gaskell's first novel was written between 1845 and 1847, then was published in 1848; it dealt with the period between 1832 and 1842. In it she treated the subject of class relationships in industry from the point of view of employees."¹ It is not difficult to find out that Mrs. Gaskell's creations of this period express her commiseration to workers and her critiques to the society in the Victorian age. This is the case with her first industrial novel, "*Mary Barton*."²

Later, in the novel "*North and South*," written in the 1850s, Gaskell continued creating a new story unfolding in the context of industrial development in a great manufacturing city, what's more, the issues and events happened in it almost in the same period as in "*Mary Barton*." "But now, instead of speaking chiefly for the employees, she spoke for the manufacturers."³ If in "*Mary Barton*" Gaskell saw the issues from the standpoint of a sympathetic woman writer, in "*North and South*" she saw more, not from employees' or employers' side, but from both sides. We can see in the novel that unlike the traditional image of fish-blooded employers that were described in most of the industrial novels, in "*North and South*" Mr. Thornton is a virtuous and candid manufacturer who cares for the employees and respects them.

Moreover, in these two books, Gaskell described the conflicts and struggles

¹ Sanders, G., Northup, C. S. Elizabeth Gaskell. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1929. P. 64.

² Бунич-Ремизов Б. Б. Социальный роман Э. Гаскелл. URL: <http://saint-juste.narod.ru/Remizov.html> [accessed: 05.07. 2016].

³ Sanders, G. D., Northup, C. S. Op. cit. P. 64.

between employers and employees with great effort, but the results were mentioned to be unsuccessful. Here, there will be questions coming to our mind, Lady Gaskell, a Victorian woman who would have been staying at home all day, doing housework, taking care of children, why did she took up her pen and decided to be a writer? Why did she decide to write on the conflict between workers and capitalists? What was her perspective of the unsuccessful class struggle?

2.1.1. The inspiration for writing industrial novels

When we read Gaskell's novels, we feel that the description of workers' living conditions and employers' daily life in them, are so real as if the writer had observed them every day before introducing them into her stories. For example, in "*Ruth*" she mentioned how a crowd of poor kids were playing in a cold weather: "Perhaps they feared that, if they unpacked themselves from their lumpy attitudes and began to move about, the cruel wind would find its way into every cranny of their tattered dress."⁴ In "*Mary Barton*," Gaskell drew us a vivid picture of a Manchester man, "born of factory workers," living among mills round the clock. "He was below the middle size and slightly made; there was almost a stunted look about him; and his wan, colourless face, gave you the idea, that in his childhood he had suffered from the scanty living consequent upon bad times, and improvident habits."⁵ In "*North and South*," when Margaret visited Bessy, a daughter of an old worker, who was seriously ill and had to stay in bed, she "found some water: and soaking her pocket handkerchief in it, she laid the cool wetness on Bessy's forehead, and began to chafe

⁴ Gaskell, E. C. *Ruth*. London: H. Frowde, 1906. P. 21.

⁵ Gaskell, E. C. *Mary Barton: a Tale of Manchester Life*. London: R. E. King, 1893. P. 13.

the stone-cold feet.” Then poor Bessy said, “Yo’d ha’ been deaved out o’ your five wits, as well as me, if yo’d had one body after another coming in to ask for father, and staying to tell me each one their tale. Some spoke o’ deadly hatred, and made my blood run cold wi’ the terrible things they said o’ th’ masters- but more, being women, kept plaining(wi’ the tears running down their cheeks, and never wiped away nor heeded), of the price o’ meat, and how their childer could na sleep at nights for th’ hunger.”⁶

In fact, the most important task for Gaskell was to portray the daily life during the industrial period in Manchester. The experience of living in this city could be spring water that had given her a steady flow of inspiration. “Gaskell, according to more recent critics, was superior in her novels of social reform to Disraeli and Kingsley because of her knowledge of working-class conditions.”⁷ It is a fact that she had “the advantage over them of personal experience and personal contact, of having not only observed, but known, visited, and helped men like John Barton and other mill-workers.”⁸

After her father’s death in 1829, Gaskell went back to Knutsford, where she married William Gaskell, M.A., of Cross Street chapel, Manchester, when she was twenty-two years old. As a result, Manchester remained her home from then on.⁹ “...Mrs. Gaskell knew the working people of Manchester, not as a professional dooler out tracts or charitable relief, not in any detestable, patronizing way, but knew them

⁶ Gaskell, E. C. *North and South*. New York: Harper & Bros, 1855. P. 60.

⁷ Martin, C. A. *Gaskell, Darwin, and “North and South”*// *Studies in the Novel*. 1983. No.2 (15). P. 91.

⁸ Craik, W. A. *Elizabeth Gaskell and the English Provincial Novel*. London: Methuen, 1975. P. 2.

⁹ Lyall, E. *Mrs. Gaskell // Women Novelists of Queen Victoria's Reign: a Book of Appreciations*. London: Hurst & Blackett, 1897. P. 124.

as friends.”¹⁰ From the depictions of some small details, like food price, clothes and furnishings and decorations in the house, we can draw a picture in our mind that the writer was working with her characters, eating with them, living with them, if not, the novel couldn’t have been so true to life and impressive.

2.1.2. Gaskell’s purpose for writing industrial novels

Lord David Cecil called Gaskell a “mild feminine Victorian,” because she “sees nothing but the flowers in the garden,” her understanding of industry and history have totally run out of “Victorian feminine intellect.”¹¹ Most people even regard “*Mary Barton*” more as a love story than an industrial one. The question arises whether Gaskell was against the class struggle or not, what was her perspective when she was creating her industrial stories?

In fact, what Gaskell encouraged was gradually developing society, but not its reestablishment in a revolutionary way. The process needed to be gentle, not riotous. In her work she tried to build an ideal utopia, where people relied on each other, but, on the other hand, she was a realist. Gaskell clearly knew that her ideal world contradicted the real one. She also struggled between her utopia and reality. She was actually trapped in this contradiction. On the one hand, Gaskell calmly narrated the social facts and the situation of capitalism, on the other hand, she deliberately put her thought of romantic idealistic capitalistic society in the novel. Nevertheless, deep in her heart, she struggled to resolve this contradiction. She knew that class struggle

¹⁰ Lyall, E. Mrs. Gaskell // *Women Novelists of Queen Victoria's Reign: a Book of Appreciations*. London: Hurst & Blackett, P. 134.

¹¹ Cecil, D. *Early Victorian Novelists: Essays in Revaluation*. Indianapolis; New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1935. P. 236; 237; 245.

is constantly in history. With the development of capitalism, the working class is also developing. When manufacturers hired workers to maximize their profit, workers at the same time also required their reasonable salary and legal rights. As a result, even though Gaskell had a negative attitude towards this revolutionary practice, she realized that this process was inescapable. B. Remizov summed up Gaskell's perspective in two words as "Christian socialism" and emphasized in his article that Gaskell had used a hazy idea of utopia to resist the radical class struggle, and her standpoint tended to be conservative: "Революционной борьбе она противопоставляет наивную и весьма расплывчатую утопию, связанную с некоторыми идеями Оуэна, а также - правого, так называемого христиански-образовательного чартизма."¹² (She put forward building an innocent and hazy Utopia instead of revolutionary struggle, like Owen and other conservatives, she called this idea a Christian-made Chartism.)

Her purpose of writing industrial novels was to support neither the rebellion of workers, nor manufacturers' oppression, but to offer a Christian way of solving social problems, especially of doing away with the class struggle and let the opposing classes reconcile. For Gaskell, revenge and hatred cannot make workers live a happier life, violent resistance cannot solve radical problem, only the love from God, this Christian love for one's neighbours can make employers and employees understand each other better. It is true that Gaskell's belief had become her part of life.

¹²Бунич-Ремизов, Б. Б. Социальный роман Э. Гаскелл. URL: <http://saint-juste.narod.ru/Remizov.html> [accessed: 05.07.2016].

2.1.3. Gaskell's belief and the Christian love in her industrial novels

Gaskell was born to a Unitarian family. Her father was a Scottish Unitarian minister, her mother was also Unitarian. After her mother's death, she was brought up by her aunt Hannah Lumb. All of her relatives were Unitarians. When she was young, she felt that Unitarianism was not a set of doctrines, but a way of living in this world, it stressed people's mental world, senses, and their attitude to each other, sincerity, tolerance, peace of mind, fairness and so on. Being brought up in this unique environment, she got a good education, her uncle and aunt encouraged her to go to church with them. Gaskell's father did not agree with the discriminations against women, he was especially against the Victorian education model which tamed women to make them more obedient. Thanks to that in Unitarianism the theories and doctrines are very countable which tend to encourage people thinking from different aspects. Therefore, when most Victorians were perplexed and helpless facing the organized religion limitations, Gaskell's belief provided her with a special view to observe society and human activities, moreover, gave her a chance to improve herself. Being born a woman in Victorian age meant that your throat was gripped, you could not speak, to an extent, you had lost the ability of speaking, women's social rights and chance of gaining education were denied¹³. At that time, British religion supported the idea of women's inferiority to men. So women were thought to stay at home and be potential mothers, while men went to work. In Chapter I we called this phenomenon "the ideology of separate spheres."¹⁴ Women's

¹³ 吴庆宏. 唯一神教对盖斯凯尔夫人的影响. // 江苏第二师范学院学报. 2015. No.7 (31). P. 61.

¹⁴ Yeo, E. J. Reviewed Work: Public Lives: Women, Family and Society in Victorian Britain by Eleanor Gordon, Gwyneth Nair // Victorian Studies. 2005. Vol. 47. No. 2. P. 303-305.

problems were out of the philosophy of the Victorians. Gaskell was lucky. Her husband William was unlike the other British men who commanded their wives to be under their control, he encouraged Gaskell to try creative writing with him. No matter how many times Gaskell's works were criticized, William never changed his mind to hearten wife's career. So it was under the influence of Unitarianism and with the encouragement from William that Gaskell could bravely continue creating more novels.¹⁵ In the 19th century, there was a boom of women writers. Like other women writers, Gaskell also wrote about women's fates but managed to find her own voice. She made working-class women her characters, combined feminist topics with the description of social environment, which, as B. Remizov commended in his book: “В тему судьбы пролетариата огранически входит вопрос о положении женщины из рабочей среды в капиталическом обществе...”¹⁶ (The topic of the fate of the proletariat, especially when connecting with the situation of women from the working class in the capitalist society.)

Besides, she even put forwards her view on such a sensitive topic as women workers. In some industrial centres, like Lancashire and Yorkshire, women played a very important role in labour force in factories. But we know that if a woman spent most of her time in factory, she would have little time at home, and this had caused resentment in the society. As M. Firstova mentioned in her work, “Между тем известно, что в таких центрах текстильной промышленности, как Ланкашир и Йоркшир, женщины составляли значительную часть рабочей силы... В романе «Мэри Бартон» Э.Гаскелл со свойственным художнику умением проникать в

¹⁵ 吴庆宏. 唯一神教对盖斯凯尔夫人的影响 // 江苏第二师范学院学报. 2015. No.7(31). P 61-62.

¹⁶ Бунич-Ремизов, Б. Б. Элизабет Гаскелл : Очерк жизни и творчества. Киев : Вища шк., 1974. С. 24.

суть вещей, с одной стороны, изображает издержки процесса социализации женщины, неизбежные в новой социальной структуре, подготовленной промышленной революцией. С другой стороны, показывает, как объективно усиливается роль женщины за пределами дома и семьи, приобретая экономическую и социальную значимость.”¹⁷ (As we know that in such centres of textile industry, like Lancashire and Yorkshire, women played an important part in labour. In the novel “*Mary Barton*” E. Gaskell uniquely shows us the essence of the thing. On the one hand, tells us the cost in the process of women’s socialization that is inevitable in a new social structure during the Industrial Revolution; on the other hand, demonstrates the importance of confirming women’s position as well as getting economic and social support outside.)

Gaskell used the character of Mary to express the idea that women needed to work, and that it was the inexorable trend in history and social development that women was to play a vital role both in economics and at home.

In the preface to “*Mary Barton*” the writer mentioned, “I had always felt a deep sympathy with the careworn men, who looked as if doomed to struggle through their lives in strange alternations between work and want; tossed to and fro by circumstances, apparently in even a greater degree than other men.”¹⁸ The main protagonist in the novel, John Barton was an honest worker who had lost his job due to economic depression and like other workers had been struggling every day to make ends meet. John took revenge on the mill owner Carson by killing his son.

¹⁷ Фирстова, М. Ю. Женская Судьба в Проблемно-Тематической Целостности Романа Э.К. Гаскелл « Мэри Бартон ». URL: <http://www.rfp.psu.ru/archive/1.2012/firstova.pdf> [accessed: 15.07.2016].

¹⁸ Gaskell, E. C. *Mary Barton: a Tale of Manchester Life*. London: R. E. King, 1893. P. 5.

After reading the Gospel during the whole night, Carson decided to forgive John, whose conscience was tortured after he had become a murderer. Obviously, in Gaskell's opinion, the best way to improve the relationship between workers and capitalists is staying within the indoctrination of God, advocating love and tolerance, meanwhile, fighting against violence. She implicitly suggested the property-owning class that a good relationship is the reflection of the spirit of God and capitalists need to keep this relationship by mercy and respect. Her first novel created much of stir and even caused discontent of her middle-class friends. However, she continued discussing the problem of employee-employer relations in her novel "*North and South*," in which she introduced a new type of female character, Margret, who played an assuasive role between the manufacturer and the workers¹⁹. In fact, in almost each of her works, Gaskell tried to put stress on the Christian love. In "Ruth" Gaskell depicted an innocent girl who lost her chastity and was abandoned, but still continued living bravely. Although she died from illness in the end, her soul was saved by God. Ruth commented upon herself: "I believe I have no fear. That is a great preservative, they say. At any rate, if I have a little natural shrinking, it is quite gone when I remember that I am in God's hands!"²⁰ An old man made a remark about Ruth, "Such a one as her has never been a great sinner; nor does she do her work as a penance, but for the love of God, and of the blessed Jesus. She will be in the light of God's countenance when you and I will be standing after off... for calling that woman a great sinner. The blessing of them who were ready to perish is upon

¹⁹吴庆宏. 唯一神教对盖斯凯尔夫人的影响 // 江苏第二师范学院学报. 2015. No.7 (31). P. 62.

²⁰Gaskell, E. C. *Ruth*. London: H. Frowde, 1906. P. 425.

her.”²¹ In “*Cranford*,” the key word is Love – love one another as Christ had exhorted us. It was because of love that Captain Brown sacrificed himself to save a child; because of love, Peter Jenkyns took care of a dead soldier’s family; Miss Matty’s friends thought of a way to help her after her investment failed... With the revitalization of capitalism in the countryside, people’s love and care for each other did not change. In “*Cousin Phillis*” Mr. Holman is a typical image of a Unitarian. When talking about guilt and test, Mr. Holman answered like this, “My sins I confess to God. But if they were scarlet (and they are so in his sight,” he added, humbly), “I hold with Christ that afflictions are not sent by God in wrath as penalties for sin.”²²

There is no doubt that Unitarianism had a deep influence on Gaskell’s emotional world. It is meaningless to judge whether her religious intensity was right or wrong, although these views were not based on profound theory. She was just a woman who used all her efforts to call social justice back, criticize the morals flaws, and try to let people see the love and redemption from God. “Gaskell challenges us on the topic of class privilege and poverty. At the current time, around a quarter of children in the United Kingdom are raised in poverty. In the large world, a third of humanity still lives on the knife-edge of malnutrition. Gaskell would have us look at the privilege we carry as middle class westerners, and how our social institutions favour the well-to-do at the expense of the hard-working poor of the world... Gaskell challenges us on the topic of women’s rights. We have certainly come a long ways since the time when Harriet Martineau (a contemporary of Gaskell) observed that

²¹ Gaskell, E. C. Ruth. London: H. Frowde, 1906. P. 429.

²² Gaskell, E. C. *Cousin Phillis: a tale*. New York: Harper, 1864. P. 50.

women were like slaves, only treated with patronizing niceness. But there is still much work to be done. Women deserve more support in their choices around mothering and working. Women need full access to education... Gaskell challenges us to take our faith more seriously... Elizabeth Gaskell leaves us with these three challenges: to end poverty in the world, to champion the rights of women, and to be grateful for our spiritual faith and community. May each of us, in our way, respond to these challenges. May her vision of human dignity for everyone become the reality in our world.”²³

2.2. The Characters in the novel “*North and South*”

The name “*North and South*” comes from Nicholas Higgins, one of the main characters in the novel who says, “North and South has both met and made kind o’ friends in this big smoky place.”²⁴ The title was suggested by Charles Dickens and the book was first published in his *Household Words* magazine from 1854 to 1855, after which it was published as a separate volume. The novel was written from the author’s own experience.²⁵ The main protagonist Margaret moved from the rural southern England to the urban industrial north. The disparate lifestyle and the collision of moral opinions between northerners and southerners caused great pain to both Margaret and other characters, who suffered a lot from a series of ethical dilemmas and choices.

²³ Peart, A., Millard, K., Robinson J. A Worship Resource to Celebrate the 200th Anniversary of the Birth of Elizabeth Gaskell. URL: https://www.unitarian.org.uk/sites/default/files/2010_Gaskell_WorshipPack.pdf [accessed: 13.07.2016].

²⁴ Gaskell, E. C. *North and South*. New York: Harper & Bros, 1855. P. 30.

²⁵ Hopkins, A. B. Dickens and Mrs. Gaskell // *Huntington Library Quarterly*. 1946. No. 4 (9). P. 366-367.

2.2.1. The main characters in the novel

Margaret Hale

Margaret Hale is usually regarded as having the writer herself for the prototype. Margaret is thought to be a sagacious person, she is intelligent, brave and not to be enslaved by other people's opinions. It is still more important that Margaret is never limited just by imagination or theory, she always prefers to take actions.

Margaret was born in a countryside in the South, after a few years she was sent to her aunt Mrs. Shaw in London in order to get a further education. She grew up with her cousin Edith, who contrasted sharply with Margaret, and was a pretty fair lady. Although they were brought up together, Margaret's background formed her unique personality, independent and strong. However, she never envied her cousin, because her pride didn't allow her to do so: "...that if Margaret had not been very proud she might have almost felt jealous of the mushroom rival."²⁶

After Edith's wedding, Margaret moved back to her beloved Helstone, when Mr. Hale, her father, suffered a belief doubt. "Poor dear papa! How sad he looks! I am so glad I am going home, to be at hand to comfort him and mamma."²⁷ She felt she could be a kind of support that her father needed at that time. Margaret had a special view of marriage. She didn't want to get married for money, but hoped to marry for love. Hence, when Mr. Lennox proposed to her, she rejected him without hesitation. Margaret took all the family burdens on her shoulders as she felt it was her responsibility to do so. When she knew that her father had no courage to tell her mother, Mrs. Hale, his decision of quitting his job and moving to Milton, she decided

²⁶ Gaskell, E. C. North and South. New York: Harper & Bros, 1855. P. 7.

²⁷ Ibid. P. 9.

to tell her mother the truth instead of her father; when finding out the difficulty of renting a house to live in Milton, she decided to send her feeble mother to Darkshire until everything in Milton was well done; when Mrs. Hale complained about the life in Milton, Margaret started to comfort her and became her spiritual support. Even a negligible detail, like changing the wall paper, could show Margaret's strong character. Mr. Thornton also noticed her "frank dignity," when she "opened the door and went in with the straight, fearless, dignified presence habitual to her. She felt no awkwardness; she had too much the habits of society for that."²⁸

Unlike other female characters in the novel, Margaret showed her social shrewdness and was willing to defend her opinion at costs. Although Milton at that time was an industrially developed city, Margaret expressed her averseness to its air, chaos and manners. Though Margaret detested manufacture, she felt sympathy for the workers, and often argued with the manufacturer, Mr. Thornton about working people's difficult living conditions. Margaret also made friends with a worker, Nicolas Higgins and his feeble daughter, Bessy Higgins. Unconsciously, Margaret played a fatal role in the dash between these very classes. When Mrs. Thornton first mentioned that a strike would come, Margaret had no idea what a strike was and soon had an interest in this topic. In the face of the new environment Margaret said, "I would do my best...I do not know if I am brave or not till am tried; but I am afraid I should be a coward."²⁹ Later the Thornton family invited the Hales to dinner. "She was surprised to think how much she enjoyed this dinner. She knew enough now to understand many local interests – nay, even some of the technical words employed

²⁸ Gaskell, E. C. North and South. New York: Harper & Bros, 1855. P. 26.

²⁹ Ibid. P. 47.

by the eager mill-owners. She silently took a very decided part in the question they were discussing. At any rate, they talked in desperate earnest, - not in the use-up style that wearied her so in the old London parties. She wondered that with all this dwelling on the manufactures and trade of the place, no allusion was made to the strike the pending.”³⁰ When they were talking about the industry, Margaret was indulged in their conversation. And when the strike really came, she behaved calmly and bravely. “Mr. Thornton... go down this instant, if you are not a coward. Go down and face them like a man. Save these poor strangers, whom you have decoyed here. Speak to you workman as if they were human beings. Speak to them kindly. Don’t let the soldiers come in and cut down poor creatures who are driven mad. I see one there who is. If you have any courage or noble quality in you, go out and speak to them, man to man.”³¹ She was so kind: on the one side, she worried about the workers and Irish labourers; on the other side, she worried about Mr. Thornton’s safety. So she opened her arms like a hero to protect Mr. Thornton, thinking it was her responsibility to act so. She used the “human right”³² to protect both the master and his workers. At the end of the novel, when Margaret was totally financially independent due to the inheritance from Mr. Bell, she decided to help Mr. Thornton with his factory. Actually, Margaret’s character and behaviour are far from a Victorian woman’s daily life standard. Finally, this shrewd girl “had learnt...that she herself must one day answer for her own life, and what she had done with it; and she tried to settle that most difficult problem for women, how much was to be utterly

³⁰ Gaskell, E. C. North and South. New York: Harper & Bros, 1855. P. 65.

³¹ Ibid. P. 70.

³² Ibid. P. 47.

merged in obedience to authority, and how much might be set apart for freedom in working...Margaret gained the acknowledgment of her right to follow her own ideas of duty.”³³

Mr. Hale

Mr. Hale decided to resign from the Church of England, and because of this the Hale family had to move from the southern village, Helstone, to the northern industrial city, Milton. He chose to become a private tutor there to relieve his spiritual sufferings. As Mr. Hale’s sister-in-law mentioned, “Mr. Hale was one of the most delightful preachers she had heard and a perfect model of parish priest.”³⁴ We can see that Mr. Hale was respected in Helstone. Although the parish he served was not big, just a village, he appreciated this job and was responsible for it. He also did such things like teaching at school and comforting the survivors. Mr. Hale remained venerable among the local people and his family had a reputation in this tranquil village, too. He was a kind father and a considerate husband. As a man, he was susceptible. He easily became upset after hearing of a crime; in order not to disturb his wife’s dream, he tiptoed through the room. He was truly a gentle person, however, which does not mean he would easily surrender. “I can always decide better by myself, and not influenced by those whom I love... I cannot stand objections.”³⁵ According to how Mr. Hale commended himself, we conclude that he was the person who would insist on his principles and not change. He was gentle and independent.

³³ Gaskell, E. C. North and South. New York: Harper & Bros, 1855. P. 147.

³⁴ Ibid. P. 9.

³⁵ Ibid. P. 17.

Mr. Hale argued with the manufacturer John Thornton about the way of bringing up a child. He thought many parents mistook in regarding and treating their children as independent individuals, insisted that even a child might have his or her own opinions, parents needed to play a role of a friend or an adviser. Though no one exactly knows the reason of his resignation from Church, one thing is sure that he did not have doubt in his faith, maybe something at that time touched his conscience strongly. He said that “when God will not use thee in one kind, yet He will in another. A soul that desires to serve and honor Him shall never want opportunity to do it, regardless of forms of work.”³⁶

Mr. Hale’s kindness and gentleness were not only to his family, but also to a drunken worker, Nicolas Higgins. This “decorous, kind-hearted, simple, old-fashioned gentleman” politely welcomed Nicolas, offered him a chair, and called him “Mr. Higgins,” for Mr. Hale “treated all his fellow-creatures alike: it never entered into his head to make any difference because of their rank.”³⁷ These actions show that Mr. Hale supported the idea of equality. Just because of these respectful behaviours changed Nicolas from the “drunken infidel” into a “new creature” that he was “in the rough independence of his own hearthstone.”³⁸ It seemed that Mr. Hale’s resignation was the arrangement of God to eliminate the class hatred. Margaret gave feeble and poor Bessy (Nicolas’s daughter) hope; Nicolas began to look into his heart; Mr. Thornton decided to come into a conciliation with his workers and so on. It is true that in the story Mr. Hale used his way to influence

³⁶ Gaskell, E. C. North and South. New York: Harper & Bros, 1855. P. 16.

³⁷ Ibid. P. 88.

³⁸ Ibid.

others by his faith.

Mr. Thornton

Mr. Thornton was a mill owner in Milton, who hired Mr. Hale as his private tutor. Mr. Thornton was born to a not rich family, so he worked hard to become a master. All he was thinking was how to earn more. “Mr. Thornton was in habits of authority himself, but she (Margaret-C.R) seemed to assume some kind of rule over him at once. He had been getting impatient at the loss of his time on a market-day.”³⁹ He held a vivid point of view that a workman needed to blame himself for his poverty, because it was all caused by his laziness. “I believe that this suffering... is but the natural punishment of dishonestly-enjoyed pleasure, at some former period of their lives.”⁴⁰ Speaking these emotionless words, actually, Mr. Thornton was responsible for his workers. He did not like other people to walk into his heart and force him to treat his workers a certain way. “We wish people would allow us to right ourselves, instead of continually meddling, with their imperfect legislation. We stand up for self-government and oppose centralization.”⁴¹ He was independent and insisted on his rights to deal with his money and labour.

As a northerner, Mr. Thornton desired to study things traditional for the southern culture and considered useless for the northern middle class. He was eager for knowledge, but his family living condition was difficult when he was a child. He belonged to those who “in the prime of life... had the stern wisdom to acknowledge

³⁹ Gaskell, E. C. *North and South*. New York: Harper & Bros, 1855. P. 26.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* P. 35.

⁴¹ *Ibid.* P. 128.

their own ignorance, and to learn late what they should have learnt early.”⁴² Mr. Thornton valued the time spent with his tutor and enjoyed himself in reading classical literature. Mr. Hale was really satisfied with this pupil when he saw that classics had brought Mr. Thornton “enjoyment and appreciation.”⁴³ But Northern-Milton as an industrial city was full of competition, in the day Mr. Thornton needed to pay much attention to his enterprise, so there’s no wonder that Mr. Thornton would be exhausted after working. But in contrast to other northern masters, he would like to spend time on literature and hired a tutor, so he really valued the chance of studying with Mr. Hale. But Mrs. Thornton expressed her opinion as a typical northerner that it was suitable for her son, she said: “I have no doubt the classics are very desirable for people who have leisure... The time and place in which he lives seem to me to require all his energy and attention. Classics may do very well for men who loiter away their lives in the country or in colleges; but the Milton men ought to have their thoughts and powers absorbed in the work of to-day... Having many interests does not suit the life of a Milton manufacturer. It is, or ought to be, enough for him to have one great desire, and to bring all the purposes of his life to bear on the fulfillment of that.”⁴⁴ As a northerner and a successful manufacturer, Mr. Thornton had something in common with a southerner, like pursuing knowledge, he was a mix of southern and northern features, like Margaret. Hence, it possibly was the reason why they could attract each other and finally fall in love. Mr. Thornton was strongly attracted by Margaret at first sight. “Mr. Thornton saw her beautiful

⁴² Gaskell, E. C. *North and South*. New York: Harper & Bros, 1855. P. 29.

⁴³ *Ibid.* P. 46.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

eyes lifted to her father, full of light, half-laughter and half-love, as this bit of pantomime went on between the two, unobserved, as they fancied, by any.”⁴⁵ Then he fell in love, although was rejected by Margaret at first, he announced that “I have never loved any woman before: my life has been too busy, my thoughts too much absorbed with other things. Now I love, and will love.”⁴⁶ Margaret was so special to Mr. Thornton that she made him think beyond money, so he said to Margaret that he would love her forever. It was Margaret who changed Mr. Thornton’s way of treating his workers. When Nicolas Higgins went to him to ask for a job, he at the beginning rejected him. But after finding out that Nicolas had waited him for five hours outside door, he soon changed his mind: “Five hours...it’s a long time for a man to wait, doing nothing but first hoping and then fearing.”⁴⁷

Not only did Mr. Thornton change his mind, he also arose a kind of sympathy and admiration. “Once brought face to face, man to man, with an individual of the masses around him, and (take notice) out of the character of master and workman, in the first instance they had each begun to recognize that ‘we have all of us one human heart.’”⁴⁸

By the end of the story, Mr. Thornton began to cooperate with his workers. He built a dining room in his factory in order to eat with his workers. Finally, the ice melt between the master and labourers. He admitted that “future clash of opinion and action, when the occasion arose, would, at any rate, enable both master and man to look upon each other with far more charity and sympathy, and bear with each

⁴⁵ Gaskell, E. C. North and South. New York: Harper & Bros, 1855. P. 33.

⁴⁶ Ibid. P. 77.

⁴⁷ Ibid. P. 124.

⁴⁸ Ibid. P. 148.

other more patiently and kindly.”⁴⁹ “Nothing like the act of eating for equalizing men. Dying is nothing to it.”⁵⁰ By combining idealistic Unitarian perspective, Gaskell built an ideal responsible and sympathetic manufacturer.

2.2.2. Secondary female characters

There are other female characters, such as Mrs. Hale (Margaret’s mother), Edith (Margaret’s cousin), Dixon (a servant in the Hale family), Fanny Thornton (Mr. Thornton’s sister), Mrs. Thornton (Mr. Thornton’s mother), and Bessy (Nicolas Higgins’s daughter). All these characters can be regarded as a contrast to our heroine Margaret. These women do not change throughout the story.

Northern female characters

Bessy was a weak, pale, dying young woman. She felt curious when talking with Margaret: “I want to know so many things, and am so tossed about wi’ wonder,”⁵¹ and she explained to Margaret that “I’ve always wanted to get up high and see far away, and take a deep breath o’ fullness in that air.”⁵² On the one hand, Bessy admired Margaret and also wanted to be the support of the family: “I’ve longed for to be a man to go spreeing;”⁵³ on the other hand, she felt inferior to Margaret and somehow could be jealous: “I could go mad and kill yo’, I could.”⁵⁴

As we know that the Thornton family used to be poor and then got rid of that state, then it is logical to think that Fanny Thornton had grown to be a strong woman.

⁴⁹ Gaskell, E. C. *North and South*. New York: Harper & Bros, 1855. P. 148.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.* P. 139.

⁵¹ *Ibid.* P. 37.

⁵² *Ibid.* P. 41.

⁵³ *Ibid.* P. 55.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.* P. 41.

However, Gaskell disappointed us. In contrast to Margaret's calmness, when riot started, "Fanny had returned, screaming upstairs as if pursued at every step, and had thrown herself in hysterical sobbing on the sofa."⁵⁵ She always acted a fragile person who refused to do anything she found disagreeable. As for Fanny's marriage, we can infer from the conversation between Martha and Margaret that Fanny would marry a rich gentleman, Mather who was much older than her. When Martha said it would be a good marriage because Mather's mills were "somewhere out beyond Haylegh" and all he had "got such gray hair,"⁵⁶ Margaret kept silent for a long time before recovering her propriety, for Margaret insisted on true love, it seemed that Fanny's marriage was just a form to fulfill her duty as a housewife, like Edith.

What impressed me the most was Mrs. Thornton's role as a mother. Mrs. Thornton loved her son John Thornton very much. "...she looked fixedly at vacancy; a series of visions passing before her, in all of which her son was the principal, the sole subject – her son, her pride, her property."⁵⁷ So when she first met Margaret, she warned her son: "Take care you don't get caught by a penniless girl, John... What business had she, a renegade clergyman's daughter, to turn up her nose at you!"⁵⁸ Moreover, she was also a strong woman who liked to show authority to others and firmly insisted on her educational methods to her children. "Mrs. Thornton was not a woman much given to reasoning; her quick judgment and firm resolution served her in good stead of any long arguments and discussions with herself..."⁵⁹ She believed that no one could touch her children's heart and understand them better than

⁵⁵ Gaskell, E. C. *North and South*. New York: Harper & Bros, 1855. P. 69.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.* P.133.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.* P. 82.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.* P. 32.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.* P. 38-39.

she did. In contrast to Mrs. Hale's crying and complaining scenes, Mrs. Thornton behaved calmly and was seldom found frustrating expressions on her face. When strike started, Mrs. Thornton insisted being together with her son. She said: "Where you are, there I stay."⁶⁰ And Mr. Thornton also relied on his mother, he proudly: "My mother is not given to complaints."⁶¹

Southern female characters

Having no Margaret's power and control, Edith was a typical example of traditional Victorian woman. She married like her mother not for true love but to find a reliable shelter. She could spend a careless day with her wealth, did not like to seek any adventure or improvement to change her stable life. Her function at home was to show her beauty. She was like a flower raised by her husband. When Captain Lennox, Edith's husband looked at Edith in dress, "he was anxiously attentive to Edith's dress and appearance, with a view to her beauty making a sufficient impression in the world."⁶²

Mrs. Hale, Margaret's mother died from illness. She was also eager for freedom, but finally surrendered for she found that it was extremely hard for her. She was reproachful after finding that Margaret had adopted "factory slang."⁶³ Moreover, she often thought about something negative rather than hopeful and hoped to gain her daughter's comfort. There are many scenes when meeting with difficulties Mrs. Hale could do nothing but crying and complaining. When

⁶⁰ Gaskell, E. C. North and South. New York: Harper & Bros, 1855. P. 69.

⁶¹ Ibid. P. 39.

⁶² Ibid. P. 144.

⁶³ Ibid. P. 92.

mentioning about moving the furniture from the South, she wondered “how in the world are we to manage the removal? I never removed in my life, and only a fortnight to think about it.”⁶⁴

As to Dixon, the servant in the Hales house, she was a brave woman who tried to challenge the social order by her free words. She commented on the head of the family, Mr. Hale, complained how many miseries he had brought to Mrs. Hale: “What would poor Sir John have said? He never liked your marrying Mr. Hale, but if he could have known it would have come to this, he would have sworn worse oaths than ever, if that was possible!”⁶⁵

2.2.3. Secondary male characters

Northern male character

Nicolas Higgins plays an important role among the workers in Milton. For this northern workman, “politeness” is a word far from him, so when Margaret gave the ill Bessy a bouquet of flowers, he said with suspicion, “I’m none so fond of having strange folks in my house.”⁶⁶ Indeed, he was a workman with little education and money, but when he had to ask for a job again from Mr. Thornton, his pride made him tell Margaret, “It would tax my pride above a bit; if it were for mysel, I could stand a deal of clemming first; I’d sooner knock him down than ask a favor from him.”⁶⁷ He would rather fight for a dinner rather than ask his master for help. But the fact is that he was repelled by the employers in Milton as an organizer of the

⁶⁴ Gaskell, E. C. *North and South*. New York: Harper & Bros, 1855. P. 20.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.* P. 21.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.* P. 31.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.* P. 118.

strike, and in order to support a family he needed a job. In the novel, his rude world view became softened after talking with Mr. Hale, he finally went to Mr. Thornton and suggested him how to cooperate with his workers. It is an example by which Gaskell wanted to show that even between the masters and workers could build such a friendly relationship like Mr. Thornton and Nicolas, when both of them decided to cooperate with each other.

Southern male characters

Frederick Hale was the son of old Mr. Hale. According to Mrs. Hale's descriptions we should have expected to see an angelic image, but the first time Frederick showed up, he greeted Margaret quite in a non-angelic manner: "Margaret what a bungler you are! I never saw such a little awkward, good-for-nothing pair of hands. Run away, and wash them."⁶⁸ His words made him not behave like a mature man, he was just a kid. He had "delicate features, redeemed from effeminacy by the swarthy complexion."⁶⁹ As he admitted, "Thinking has, many a time, made me sad; darling; but doing never did in all my life."⁷⁰ Just because of this bright spirit, he rebelled against the cruel treatment of his captain. A member of the crew, who was afraid of being punished by the captain, fell off the mast and died. Frederick was involved in the violence and finally chased out of England. The main purpose of Gaskell to set this character here perhaps was that: "Loyalty and obedience to wisdom and justice are fine, but it is still finer to defy arbitrary power

⁶⁸ Gaskell, E. C. *North and South*. New York: Harper & Bros, 1855. P. 95.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.* P. 96.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.* P. 97.

unjustly and cruelly used – not on behalf of ourselves but on behalf on other more helpless.”⁷¹

Henry Lennox, according to the novel, was close by his handsome brother; he was the plain one in a singularly good-looking family; but his face was intelligent, keen, and mobile.”⁷² Henry was not as handsome as his brother, instead, he was clever and ambitious. He came from the South, but was not just satisfied with the quiet and peaceful life, he desired to climb the top of the society, on this point, it seemed that he was a northerner. He was both a representative of the Southern culture and a prosperous lawyer in London, he had the similar characteristics to Mr. Thornton and Margaret, who combined the features of both northerners and southerners. No wonder he was deeply attracted by Margaret and even made a proposal to her. But after having been rejected by Margaret, he said, “Margaret, don’t despise me; I have a heart, notwithstanding all this good-for-nothing way of talking. As a proof of it, I believe I love you more than ever – if I do not hate you – for the disdain with which you have listened to me during this last half-hour. Good-by Margaret – Margaret!”⁷³ This ambitious young lawyer, although trying to climb the ranks of the society, insisted on his loving the truth.

Henry Lennox and Mr. Thornton were both in the intermediate position, neither of them was a typical southerner or northerner, although they were rivals in love, Margaret played an assuasive part between these two men, so there would be a possibility for them to compromise and even become friends.

⁷¹ Gaskell, E. C. *North and South*. New York: Harper & Bros, 1855. P. 44.

⁷² *Ibid.* P. 8.

⁷³ *Ibid.* P. 15.

2.3. Gaskell's philanthropic idea in "*North and South*"

2.3.1. Gaskell as a philanthropist

In the mid-19th century, charitable organizations won unparalleled public support and ladies visiting societies were in their florescence.⁷⁴ The practices of philanthropy permeated every aspect of Victorian life. Charitable scenes were depicted everywhere: in newspapers, biographies, diaries, sermons and so on. Nevertheless, what charitable organizations valued was the number of cases they participated in, but not the number of people they employed, so we can not tell the exact number of women who helped in philanthropic work, such as visiting the homes of the poor.⁷⁵ Women were regarded quite suitable for philanthropic work due to traditional domestic opinions, people believed that women have the ability to distinguish the "deserving poor" from dissimulators because of their natural sympathy.⁷⁶ The role of women as home visitors was often connected with their place as the guardians of the home, which obscured claims that women's acceptance was equal to "relative creatures," however, "women's philanthropic work became more than a logical extension of their cultural role as domestic angels; it was another of the significant economic and political functions performed by middle- and upper-class wives. While genuine compassion, religious faith, and concern for social stability prompted many women into philanthropic activity, it also became a social imperative for those of the upper and middle classes."⁷⁷ Also there were writers

⁷⁴ Prochaska, F. K. *Women and Philanthropy in Nineteenth-Century England*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980. P. 97.

⁷⁵ Summers, A. *A Home Away from Home – Women's Philanthropic Work in the Nineteenth Century* // *Fit work for Women*/ Ed. S. Burman. New York: St. Martins Press, 1979. P. 34.

⁷⁶ Prochaska, F. K. *Op. cit.* P. 110.

⁷⁷ Parker, P. C. *Fictional Philanthropy in Elizabeth Gaskell's "Mary Barton" and "North and South"* // *Victorian Literature and Culture*. 1997. No. 2 (25). P. 323.

among those philanthropists. The writers showed their great moral authority for their missions with a purpose to behave kindly. As to women writers, the combination of literature and philanthropy often made them much closer to the public sphere and political influence. And Elizabeth Gaskell became one of those women writers, who combined literary careers with careers in philanthropy and social reform. “Elizabeth Gaskell’s prominence as a writer gave her even greater clout when requesting funds for charitable organizations, such as Manchester’s District Provident Society.”⁷⁸

“Elizabeth Gaskell actively supported her husband’s socially-engaged Unitarian ministry in Manchester and involved herself in many charitable projects of her own.”⁷⁹ For example, she taught at the ragged schools, joined to help fallen women, opened up funds for charitable causes, made visits to the poor people.

Gaskell had long been trying a series of experimental writing projects, such as didactical tales, to help her husband with teaching courses for workmen in Manchester.⁸⁰

In her first novel “*Mary Barton*,” she advocated workers as a sympathetic woman philanthropist even though it could alienate her middle-class readers. However, she put more of her concentrations on self-efforts and merciful actions, and had hope in the sympathetic capabilities of her “wealthy” readers, encouraging them to devote themselves to the acts of philanthropy. As a matter of fact, Gaskell’s works indeed played their part to carry out her philanthropic intentions. In 1850, she wrote to Lady Kay-Shuttleworth:

⁷⁸ Parker, P. C. Fictional Philanthropy in Elizabeth Gaskell’s “*Mary Barton*” and “*North and South*” // *Victorian Literature and Culture*. 1997. No. 2 (25). P. 324.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.* P. 321.

⁸⁰ Warhol, R. R. *Gendered Interventions: Narrative Discourse in the Victorian Novel*. New Brunswick; London: Rutgers University Press, 1989. P. 49.

“I believe that there is much to be discovered yet as to the right position and mutual duties of employer, and employed; and the utmost I hoped from Mary Barton has been that it would give a spur to inactive thought, and languid conscience in this direction...I think the best and most benevolent employers would say how difficult they, with all their experience, found it to unite and practice.”⁸¹

As it was mentioned by P. C. Parker, Gaskell created “a rhetoric of fictional philanthropy,” which means “she positions her literary contributions as benevolent gifts to an ignorant and needy reading public...these novels attempt to ‘speak comfort’ by assuring the suffering workers that the upper classes are not without compassion even as she challenges her readers to more explicitly philanthropic enactments of that compassion.”⁸²

But most people of that period questioned that maybe for women writers, philanthropy, like writing, was nothing but an entertainment, or a potential bomb that might bring disruptive results. Indeed, women writers regarded what they did as an action of philanthropy, from which they might feel themselves useful as a community connection, which could help solve class conflicts and expand the spheres of effects. As F. K. Prochaska indicated in his book, middle-class women tried to help the poor so that to help themselves, which might take on ambiguous meaning⁸³. Was Gaskell also doing the same thing in the same way that time? Did Gaskell also write to gain more authority and more achievements? In her fiction she “not only represents an important area of women’s social participation, it also

⁸¹ Gaskell, E. C. *The Letters of Mrs. Gaskell* / Ed. J.A.V. Chapple and Authur Pollard. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967. P. 119-120.

⁸² Parker, P. C. *Fictional Philanthropy in Elizabeth Gaskell’s “Mary Barton” and “North and South”* // *Victorian Literature and Culture*. 1997. No.2 (25). P. 322.

⁸³ Prochaska, F. K. *Women and Philanthropy in Nineteenth-Century England*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980. P. 137.

engages in the discursive struggle surrounding the philanthropic movement, as well as the struggle for feminine authority deeply embedded within that movement.”⁸⁴

2.3.2. Gaskell’s philanthropic idea - to build an environment-friendly society

Being a philanthropist in the real life, it is no wonder she could depict her ideal society in her works. The original relationship of human beings’ existence lies in the connection between humans and the nature. Then, human beings continued exploring this relationship after separating from the nature. On the one side, humans’ huge advancement differed them from the nature with the development of history; on the other side, the separation unfolded the loss of humans’ natural quality and the contravention of their origin.⁸⁵ As a reflection of the mid-nineteenth century, “North and South” shows us two totally different pictures: one is Milton – a seriously polluted and chaotic industrial town. When Margaret first heard that her father intended to quit his job and move to “Milton-Northern” with the family, she was shocked because she called it “the manufacturing town in Darkshire,”⁸⁶ which indicated the environmental situation there. The other is Helstone – a peaceful and idyllic village. “There is the church and a few houses near it on the green - cottages, rather - with roses growing all over them,” we can see it was “a village in a tale rather than in real life.”⁸⁷ Margaret loved this place and people in Helstone also enjoyed its natural beauty.

⁸⁴ Parker, P. C. Fictional Philanthropy in Elizabeth Gaskell’s “*Mary Barton*” and “*North and South*” // *Victorian Literature and Culture*. 1997. No.2 (25). P. 325.

⁸⁵ 李定清. 文学伦理学批评与人文精神构建 // *外国文学研究*. 2006. No.1. P. 47.

⁸⁶ Gaskell, E.C. *North and South*. New York: Harper & Bros, 1855. P. 17.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.* P. 7.

In Milton we can hardly find any human – nature relationship, instead, with the manufacture developing, the number of factories had increased a lot, and the ecological balance was broken and brought a series of environmental problems, such as infectious diseases and deaths among local townsfolk. There was a big ecological crisis in front of Milton, and Mrs. Gaskell called on to build an environment-friendly society, like the one depicted in the novel.

“For many miles before they reached Milton, they saw a deep lead-colored cloud hanging over the horizon in the direction in which it lay. It was all the darker from contrast with the pale gray-blue of the wintry sky; for in Helstone there had been the earliest signs of frost. Nearer to the town, the air had a faint taste and smell of smoke; perhaps, after all, more a loss of the fragrance of grass and herbage than any positive taste or smell. Quick they were whirled over long, straight, hopeless streets of regularly-built houses, all small and of brick. Here and there a great oblong many-windowed factory stood up, like a hen among her chickens, puffing out black “unparliamentary” smoke, and sufficiently accounting for the cloud which Margaret had taken to foretell rain.”⁸⁸

Before reaching Milton, Mrs. Gaskell used “lead-colored” to describe the cloud, and Margaret thought it was the sign of the coming rain. Moreover, when “they drove through the larger and wider streets, from the station to the hotel, they had to stop constantly; great loaded luries blocked up the not over-wide thoroughfares.”⁸⁹ Clearly, Milton was energetic in industry, but the mess, dirty smoke and air ruined its image.

⁸⁸ Gaskell, E. C. North and South. New York: Harper & Bros, 1855. P. 25.

⁸⁹ Ibid. P. 25.

In Helston, when Mr. Lennox came to visit the Hale family, he saw a cute house surrounded by flowers and trees: “The middle window in the bow was opened, and clustering roses and the scarlet honeysuckle came peeping round the corner; the small lawn was gorgeous with verbenas and geraniums of all bright colours.”⁹⁰

On the contrary, the environment of their house in Milton was depressing: “The thick yellow November fogs had come on; and the view of the plain in the valley, made by the sweeping bend of the river, was all shut out when Mrs. Hale arrived at her new home.”⁹¹

As to Mr. Thornton’s enterprise, which Margaret called on with her father first time, she heard the continuous whirl and din there. “Her unaccustomed ears could hardly catch her father’s voice, as they stood on the steps awaiting the opening of the door.”⁹² Even the Thornton family had to bear the smell of steam and the noise of machines.

“I only know it is impossible to keep the muslin blinds clean here above a week together, and at Helstone we have had them up for a month or more, and they have not looked dirty at the end of that time. And as for hands – Margaret, how many times did you say you had washed your hands this morning before twelve o’clock? Three times, was it not?”⁹³

From Mrs. Hale’s complaint we can see that curtains in Milton needed washing every week, and air pollution was so severe that Margaret had to wash her hands so frequently just in a morning. Eventually, Mrs. Hale felt ill and “Margaret had noticed

⁹⁰ Gaskell, E. C. North and South. New York: Harper & Bros, 1855. P. 12.

⁹¹ Ibid. P. 28.

⁹² Ibid. P. 45.

⁹³ Ibid. P. 34.

her mother's jaded appearance with anxiety for some time past," because "the life in Milton was so different from what Mrs. Hale had been accustomed to live in Helstone, in and out perpetually into the fresh and open air; the air itself was so different, deprived of all revivifying principle as it seemed to be here."⁹⁴ Unfortunately, in the end her sickness caused her death, despite the doctor's treatment, the care of her family and the faithful servant.

Margaret's friend, Bessy Higgins was another victim of the industrialization. When Margaret first met Bessy, Bessy was walking with her father. Margaret found Bessy unhealthy and frail. Bessy said that she had a lung disease, always coughed all night. Actually, she had been a strong and healthy girl before she fell ill. She used to work in a cotton plant, the fluff in the workplace got into her lungs caused the disease.

"'Fluff,' repeated Bessy. 'Little bits, as fly off fro' the cotton, when they're carding it, and fill the air till it looks all fine white dust. They say it winds round the lungs, and tightens them up. Anyhow, there's many a one as works in a carding-room, who falls into a waste, coughing and spitting blood, because they're just poisoned by the fluff.'⁹⁵

Bessy's words showed that in Milton most workers' health was negatively influenced or even ruined by the fluff in the carding-room. A great wheel could carry off the dust, however, it could be a waste of money and not bring profit, so few factory masters would like to put them into use. Instead, the workers needed to sacrifice their health so that to earn bread, they had to endure the noise and fluff.

⁹⁴ Gaskell, E. C. *North and South*. New York: Harper & Bros, 1855. P. 36.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.* P. 41.

As a matter of fact, many researchers believe that Manchester was the prototype of Milton and Milton was a reflection of the ecological crisis which had been brought by the industrialization in the mid-nineteenth century. During the Victorian period, Manchester was “a symbol of the new industrialism,” “what particularly impressed the earlier commentators were the simple physical manifestations of the new industrialism, its impact on the landscape, and above all the sense of hitherto unrealized extremes – of the way in which industrial achievement polarized human experience us never before.”⁹⁶ At that time, the mill-owners took profits as their first consideration, they didn’t care the value of the nature, just enlarged their factories and expanded the ways of selling goods. In the novel “*North and South*” Milton capitalists had already given up establishing a clean city to purse money. “The process of industrialization in Britain had precipitated rapid shifts into the cities to seek work in factories. Crowding, lack of sanitation, and other ills of urban expansion gave rise to concerns about ‘the condition of England,’ as Thomas Carlyle famously put it.”⁹⁷ As a woman philanthropist, Gaskell also worried about that environmental condition. She gently expressed her love for nature and desire of building an environment-friendly society by the protagonist in the novel “*North and South*,” Margaret Hale. From Margaret’s depiction we can strongly feel Gaskell’s love for nature.

“Biographers have made us familiar with the pastoral setting of her childhood: her aunt’s house on the edge of the heath, Church House with its secluded garden,

⁹⁶ Shelston, A. Elizabeth Gaskell’s Manchester. URL: <https://www.lang.nagoya-u.ac.jp/~matsuoka/EG-Manchester-Alan.html> [accessed: 22.07.2016].

⁹⁷ The Cambridge Companion to Elizabeth Gaskell / Ed. J. L. Matus. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007. P. 27.

the home of her uncle the Knutsford surgeon, Sandlebridge, her grandfather's farm, and the rich countryside that enfolds them all.”⁹⁸ Gaskell grew up at Knutsford, her aunt's home. She spent her peaceful childhood in this countryside, she was fascinated by the nature as Margaret was. Then she moved to Manchester's Cross Street in 1832, although the industrial innovation and technology boomed here, she felt as if the city experienced environmental catastrophe at her time. She wrote to her friend and told that Manchester was “a cold clammy atmosphere, a town with no grace or beauty in it.”⁹⁹ A visitor named De Tocqueville wrote what he saw in Manchester: “Look up and all around this place you will see the huge places of industry. You will hear the noise of furnaces, the whistle of steam. These vast structures keep light and air out of the human habitation which they dominate...A sort of black smoke covers the city. The sun seen through it is a disc without rays...A thousand noises disturb this damp, dark labyrinth, but they are not at all the ordinary sounds one hears in great cities...”¹⁰⁰

No wonder in those terrible surroundings of Manchester Gaskell would miss her hometown. She wrote many novels to express her worry, including “*North and South*,” “*Cranford*” and “*Wives and Daughters*.” She hoped that the nature-friendly relationship in Manchester could be rebuilt one day by portraying the peace and quiet of the country and the kindness of the country people.

In “*North and South*,” before Mr. Hale quitting his job in Helston and deciding to go to Milton, Margaret had loved living in the country very much. All things in

⁹⁸ Foster, S. Elizabeth Gaskell: A Literary Life. Basingstok; Hamp: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002. P. 1.

⁹⁹ Chapple, J., Pollard A. The Letters of Mrs. Gaskell. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1966. P. 51.

¹⁰⁰ Shelston, A. Elizabeth Gaskell's Manchester. URL: <https://www.lang.nagoya-u.ac.jp/~matsuoka/EG-Manchester-Alan.html> [accessed: 22.07.2016].

the Southern village of Helstone had fascinated her, such as forest, animals, land and so on. She had been attracted by the beauty of the forest. “The forest trees were all one dark, full, dusky green; the fern below them caught all the slanting sunbeams; the weather was sultry and broodingly still.”¹⁰¹

In “*North and South*” Margaret is a symbol of nature who came from the South. And Mr. Thornton is a representative of the Northern industrial civilization. No matter how much Mr. Thornton was proud of industrialization, Margaret blamed its negative environmental influence. However, at the end of the novel, both of them came to an agreement. Margaret decided to help Mr. Thornton by investment with her inheritance, as to Mr. Thornton, after visiting the place where Margaret had grown up, where he had picked some flowers as a gift to Margaret, he understood the beauty of Margaret’s hometown. Misunderstanding and loathing disappeared, and in the end Mr. Thornton and Margaret decided to get married, which hints at the reconciliation of the environmental protection and industrialization. Margaret found the value of industry and commerce, realized that the trend of industrialization was unescapable. Mr. Thornton admitted that nature and industry were indivisible, people needed to value and respect the nature. This happy ending again conveys Gaskell’s ecological opinion to readers that humans are a part of the nature and dependent on it, but even if it is true that industrialization is an inevitable trend, that does not mean that we have the ability to set us apart from the nature and change it as we want. So we need to take the responsibility to maintain the balance of the environment and the industrial civilization. Only in this way can people go far and

¹⁰¹ Gaskell, E. C. *North and South*. New York: Harper & Bros, 1855. P. 9.

realize more dreams.

2.3.3. Gaskell's philanthropic idea of building a harmonious human-friendly relationship

As a matter of fact, there are mainly two aspects in building a harmonious human-friendly relationship, according to the novel: one is to build an equal gender relationship, and the other is to concentrate on the fusion of capitalists and labourers.

As for the gender relationship, what Gaskell wanted to call for was the importance of gender equality. Therefore, she used her pen to create such a heroine, brave, equal, friendly, like Margaret Hale. Whether you remember or not, in "*North and South*" when Margaret lived in London, her aunt Shaw insisted "that a footman should accompany Edith and Margaret if they went beyond Harley Street or the immediate neighborhood."¹⁰² It was considered improper for a lady of the middle or upper class to show intimacy with a man in a public place. For women in the Victorian age, to behave properly and improperly was strictly defined. So when Mr. Thornton saw Margaret walking with a young man in the streets, he thought it improper and disgraceful. Men severely controlled women in the family, and women just behaved themselves like instruments, because "a middle-class woman had all of the work she would need within the context of her private familial roles."¹⁰³ In the novel, Margaret's cousin Edith was a vivid example of a traditional Victorian woman. She was strictly treated by her husband Captain Lennox and acted like a beautiful

¹⁰² Gaskell, E. C. *North and South*. New York: Harper & Bros, 1855. P. 30.

¹⁰³ Colby, R. B. *Some Appointed Work to Do: Women and Vocation in the Fiction of Elizabeth Gaskell*. Westport: Greenwood Press, 1995. P. 48.

flower at home.

But instead of fulfilling woman's responsibilities, Gaskell wanted to show us something different. That is why she portrayed Margaret, a woman who not only showed her responsibilities in familial affairs, but also actively participated in the society activities with wisdom and bravery.

Margaret received a good education. She was independent and anti-tradition, actually she was the true leader in the family. When Mr. Hale decided to quit his job and move from Helstone to Milton, he had no courage to tell his wife about this decision, so he turned to Margaret for help. "Margaret, I am a poor coward after all. I cannot bear to give pain. I know so well your mother's married life has not been all she hoped – all she had a right to expect – and this will be such a blow to her, that I have never had the heart, the power to tell her."¹⁰⁴ On hearing this, Margaret "felt that it was a great weight suddenly thrown upon her shoulders."¹⁰⁵ She took all family responsibilities on herself, including comforting her mother and arranging the removal. On their arrival in Milton, Margaret helped her parents to find a new house and encouraged her mother not to lose hope. "Margaret made a good listener to all her mother's little plans for adding some small comforts to the lot of the poorer parishioners."¹⁰⁶ Her successfully dealing with the family issues also won the admiration from Dr. Donaldson and servant Dixon. After the death of Mrs. Hale, both Mr. Hale and Fredrick sank into sadness, but instead of sobbing, Margaret chose to become "as a strong angel of comfort to her father and brother," although she

¹⁰⁴ Gaskell, E. C. *North and South*. New York: Harper & Bros, 1855. P. 17.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.* P. 22.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.* P. 18.

plumbed the depths of sadness, “she had no time to give way to grief, she must be working, planning, considering. Even the necessary arrangements for the funeral seemed to devolve upon her.”¹⁰⁷ She insisted on accompanying her father to the funeral, even when he explained that women did not generally attend the funeral, she said “because they can’t control themselves. Women of our class don’t go, because they have no power over their emotions, and yet are ashamed of showing them. Poor women go, and don’t care if they are seen overwhelmed with grief. But I promise you, papa, that if you let me go, I will be no trouble.”¹⁰⁸ Margaret’s words showed her determination to require equal treatment with men and she believed that she could behave as proper as men, too. In fact, she proved herself to be more rational and unyielding than men.

Margaret was not just satisfied with playing an active role in domestic issues, but also developed her social relations, such as friendship with the Higgins family. By visiting and communicating with the Higgins family, Margaret deeply understood the struggles and difficult living conditions of workers. Moreover, Margaret actively participated in economic affairs, such as cotton manufacturing and trade. But as a matter of fact which we know well is that “all the moralities tell them that it is the duty of women, and all the current sentimentalities that it is their nature, to live for others; to make complete abnegation of themselves, and to have no life but in their affection.”¹⁰⁹ When Mr. Thornton came to visit the Hale family as a guest, Margaret bravely argued with him about his workers’ difficult life, criticized

¹⁰⁷ Gaskell, E. C. *North and South*. New York: Harper & Bros, 1855. P. 97.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.* P. 103.

¹⁰⁹ Mill, J. S. *On Liberty. The Subjection of Women*. New York: H. Holt & Co., 1882. P. 233.

his opinion on the relationship between employers and employees. It is not once that we see that she talked with Nicolas Higgins about the current strike; when workers all gathered in front of Mr. Thornton's house, the Thornton family suddenly sank into panic, Fanny Thornton sobbing on the sofa. In contrast to other women's fear and despair, "in this real great time of reasonable fear and nearness of terror," Margaret felt "only an intense sympathy - intense to painfulness - in the interests of the moment."¹¹⁰ She refused to hide upstairs and insisted on her staying with Mr. Thornton, in her heart she really cared about the poor Irish labourers' safety. "She threw her arms around him; she made her body into a shield from the fierce people beyond. Still, with his arms folded, he shook her off."¹¹¹ This is the high tide of the strike scene, Margaret bravely protected others with her body, and just because of the bravery she challenged the male-dominated Victorian society. As for marriage, unlike other Victorian women, Margaret was the one who chose, instead of the one who was chosen. Margaret refused Mr. Thornton's love announcement without hesitation, instead, she thought that wealthy capitalist did not respect her. However, at the end of the novel, Margaret realized her true feeling: she had fallen in love with Mr. Thornton, although at that moment Mr. Thornton broke up due to bankruptcy. But for Margaret, what she pursued was true love, not fortune. At last, Margaret moved back to Milton. Thanks to Margaret's independence and her insistence on equality, she not only won a happy marriage, but became influential in Milton. Gaskell's desire for an equal gender relationship was successfully achieved as to Margaret.

¹¹⁰ Gaskell, E. C. *North and South*. New York: Harper & Bros, 1855. P. 69.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.* P. 70-71.

In the novel “*North and South*,” besides representation of women’s struggle for equality with men, Gaskell also stressed the conflicts between classes. It is an adage the “nineteenth-century social transformation known as ‘industrialization’ raised questions about what constituted progress. Technology was improving; markets were opening; finance was becoming more sophisticated; many grew rich. Yet the working class suffered, first through loss of jobs to machines and later through unregulated factory conditions and the fluctuations of trade.”¹¹² The industrial revolution didn’t bring benefits for the workers, on the contrary, it resulted in poverty and starvation. As a result, the capital-labour relationship and social justice were aggravated, at the same time, a mistrust and hatred relation was built. Gaskell worried about that and hoped to establish a harmonious and friendly capitalist-labour relation by writing “*North and South*.” For most capitalists in Milton, workers were just a part of their machines. Choosing between profits and workers’ health, manufacturers picked up the former without hesitation. And this lack of communications led them to misunderstanding and distrust. Mr. Thornton is a good example. At first he thought that laziness and failure led the workers to live a poor life, because “a working man may raise himself into the power and position of a master by his exertions and behavior.”¹¹³ He had no sympathy for the workers, for their poverty was reasonable, so he did not have the duty to care for their lives. He explained “I maintain that despotism is the best kind of government for them; so that in the hours in which I come in contact with them I must necessarily be an

¹¹² Henry, N. *Elizabeth Gaskell and Social Transformation / The Cambridge Companion to Elizabeth Gaskell* / Ed. J. L. Matus. Cambridge; New York; Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 2007. P. 156-157.

¹¹³ Gaskell, E. C. *North and South*. New York: Harper & Bros, 1855. P. 35.

autocrat.”¹¹⁴ As a result, the misunderstanding and distrust grew deeper than ever, but Mr. Thornton thought that he chose a just way to treat his workers. Among the workers there was one of the leaders of the Labour Union, Nicolas Higgins. In his point of view, from children to adult workers they were all suffering from both miserable living conditions and spiritual burdens. In order to struggle for their equal rights and salary standards, Milton workers all got together and organized a strike. But their masters would not admit workers’ requirements for “the mastership and ownership of other people’s property,” and made “the masters into slaves on their own ground.”¹¹⁵ Facing this situation, Mr. Thornton would rather hire the labourers from Ireland rather than surrender, and the strike was prolonged. When “the fate that, as a master, might be his own in the fluctuations of commerce, he was not likely to have more sympathy with that of the workman.”¹¹⁶ In the end the strike turned out to be a failure. Gaskell wrote to yearn for fusion between capitalists and workers, for violence could not solve their contradiction, but on the contrary, led to social instability.

By witnessing the crisis in Manchester, Gaskell was inspired to write this novel, created a heroine Margaret Hale who was to become a conciliator between the two conflicting classes. She came as an embodiment of understanding, love and equality. She communicated with the two sides like a bridge to build their understanding each other. After Boucher’s death, Nicolas Higgins felt guilty and took the responsibility to take care of his family. When Nicolas came to the Hale family for help, Margaret

¹¹⁴ Gaskell, E. C. *North and South*. New York: Harper & Bros, 1855. P. 48.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.* P. 47.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.* P. 60-61.

suggested him to find a job in Mr. Thornton's factory, although unwillingly, he finally decided to follow her advice. At first Mr. Thornton rebuffed Nicolas who had been the initiator of the strike that brought the Thornton family an economic loss. But then his attitude changed. When "looking out of the window a minute after, he was struck with the lean, bent figure out of the window going out of the yard: the heavy walk was in strange contrast with the resolute, clear determination of the man to speak to him."¹¹⁷ Having found that Nicolas had waited for him for a long time, Mr. Thornton took the first step to communicate with his worker. After sincerely talking with each other, Mr. Thornton learned the truth and was touched by Nicolas's generosity and kindness. What was more, Mr. Thornton also asked for forgiveness for his former rude behavior, offered Nicolas a job and sent Boucher's children to school. At the same time, Nicolas was also moved by Mr. Thornton's understanding and sympathy, he appreciated Mr. Thornton and promised to work hard for him. Thanks to their heart-to-heart conversation and understanding, the capitalist-labourer relationship first came to a fusion.

According to Gaskell in the novel, the key point of solving the conflict between employers and employees was that the manufacturer needed to have conscience. She wrote it through Mr. Hale's words.

"I wish some of the kindest and wisest of the masters would meet some of your men, and have a good talk on these things; it would, surely, be the best way of getting over your difficulties, which, I do believe, arise from your own ignorance—excuse me, Mr. Higgins — on subjects which it is for the mutual interest of both masters and

¹¹⁷ Gaskell, E. C. *North and South*. New York: Harper & Bros, 1855. P. 124.

men should be well understood by both.”¹¹⁸

From these words, we see that Mr. Thornton did so. He took on his shoulders the burdens suffered by his labours, understood the living conditions of his workers, and then, decided to help them, he hired Nicolas, the “enemy”, and gave Boucher’s children a chance to go to school. They even reached an agreement to build a dining-room. According to Mr. Thornton’s words, if the dining-room was built, it would help Nicolas save a lot of money, and when workers ate together, they might feel more comfortable. As it mentioned in the novel: “...by buying things wholesale, and cooking a quantity of provisions together, much money might be saved, and much comfort might be gained.”¹¹⁹ It also would be a good chance for the master to communicate with his workers. No doubt the proposal won labourers’ trust and appreciation, workers and masters began to collaborate. “My enemies, if I have any, may make a philanthropic fuss about this dinner-scheme; but you are a friend, and I expect you will pay my experiment the respect of silence. It is but a new broom at present, and sweeps clean enough. But by-and-by we shall meet with plenty of stumbling-blocks, no doubt.”¹²⁰ The words came true when economic crisis came due to a bad trade and Mr. Thornton’s factory was faced with bankruptcy. But Nicolas and other workers insisted on working for him, despite their master’s business failure. Hence, at the end of the story, workers and their master gave up their own averseness and came to an ultimate reconciliation.

Understanding, sympathy, communication, patience... all of these positive

¹¹⁸ Gaskell, E. C. *North and South*. New York: Harper & Bros, 1855. P. 90.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.* P. 139.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

words helped to solve the conflicts between workers and manufacturers in the novel, conscience woke up masters' responsibility to their workers and workers abandoned their bias to their employers. Although it was not easy to realize in reality, Gaskell believed that equality, cooperation and understanding were the key elements to build a harmonious relationship instead of distrust, bias and conflicts.

2.3.4. The limitation of Margaret's philanthropic practice in "*North and South*"

In the novel "*North and South*," readers regard Margaret Hale as a reflection of a female philanthropist. She traveled from Helstone to Milton, from poverty to a solid capital base. The Higgins family became Margaret's first "human interest" and our heroine decided to do some "kinder thing" although her own family was enduring financial problem and illness.¹²¹ Margaret showed her sympathetic consideration by visiting Higgins's house, a poor ill girl of working class, Bessy, whose health was damaged seriously by the cotton mill in the carding room. When Bessy was nineteen years old, her illness grew even worse that she would rather end her life than bear the torture from factory when she was alive. Margaret's showing philanthropic care is listening respectfully as well as giving warm encouragements, reading the Bible for Bessy, promising to be her friend and so on. However, the conversations between the Higgins family and Margaret are not always about sympathy or sentiments, but sometimes about their class positions. For example, once Bessy impetuously and ironically said to Margaret:

¹²¹ Gaskell, E. C. *North and South*. New York: Harper & Bros, 1855. P. 31; 53.

“I think if this life is th’ end, and there’s no God to wipe away all tears from all eyes – yo’ wench, yo’!” said she, sitting up, and clutching violently, almost fiercely, at Margaret’s hand, “I could go mad and kill yo’, I could.”¹²²

Actually, in Bessy’s point of view, the world of Margaret (what she had seen and experienced) did not belong to her, she always felt inferior to Margaret, admiring Margaret’s clothes and ladylike behaviours, and by degrees, deep in her heart she felt strongly her class bitterness.

Margaret’s existence in Higgins’s family is like a conditioner: on the one hand, she offered Mary Higgins a job as a household servant, mollified Bessy with reassuring words of the heaven; on the other hand, she expressed her antagonistic views against a working-class Higgins on his negative opinions and brought some complaints back to the mill owner, John Thornton. Margaret’s harmonic action is due to her background of Southern gentility. As for Margaret’s definition, she would rather call herself “the lady” instead of “the laundry-maid.”¹²³ “Visiting the Higgins family thus enables Margaret to extent her range of domestic influence into the public arena of social and economic intervention. In addition, Margaret’s home visits help her sort out her own place in the social pecking-order of Milton, where aristocratic roots matter less than current economic earnings.”¹²⁴

We remember Margaret as a person proud of being educated, because when she talked with Bessy about “the first folk in Milton,” Margaret described the Hales as “educated people” who had “lived among educated people.”¹²⁵ Though the Hales

¹²² Gaskell, E. C. *North and South*. New York: Harper & Bros, 1855. P. 41.

¹²³ *Ibid.* P. 31.

¹²⁴ Parker, P. C. Fictional Philanthropy in Elizabeth Gaskell’s “*Mary Barton*” and “*North and South*” // *Victorian Literature and Culture*. 1997. No. 2 (25). P. 328.

¹²⁵ Gaskell, E. C. *Op. cit.* P. 59.

were enduring crisis and had no financial clout, Margaret was not shaken by all of these adverse circumstances. Such visits between the Hales and the Higginses “confirmed the visitor herself in her own domestic role and prevented her from finding a different status in society,”¹²⁶ and C. Lansbury argues the idea that “Margaret Hale’s awareness that she is a lady is not based upon wealth or even birth; it is derived from the sense of propriety that is best expressed as a consciousness of social responsibility. Wealth was not despised so long as it was not used as a means for oppressing others less fortunate.”¹²⁷ Actually, when Margaret first arrived in Milton, she admitted herself “a lady,” differed from the workers and masters there, and when she established a relationship with the Higgins family, her sympathetic feelings and thirst for equalitarianism strengthened her feelings of class imparity. As for Boucher’s family in the novel, Margaret and her mother sent a basket of reserves in order to help that family who had suffered from hunger a lot. Nevertheless, what they wished was either they “helped to prolong the struggle by assisting the turn-outs” or the “kindest thing was to refuse all help which might bolster them up in their folly,” and the basket from Mrs. Hale was “somewhat lavishly used by the children.”¹²⁸ Instead of providing a basket, Nicholas Higgins, the poor, hard-working man, actually gave a majority of support to Boucher’s children. Later in the novel “*North and South*,” though the stolid master John Thornton had tried his best, he ended up finding himself in a bankrupt. Meanwhile, Margaret had become a wealthy capitalist and a philanthropic angel who had power to rescue both the master

¹²⁶ Summers, A. *A Home Away from Home – Women’s Philanthropic Work in the Nineteenth Century // Fit work for Women/* Ed. S. Burman. New York: St. Martins Press, 1979. P. 57.

¹²⁷ Lansbury, C. *Elizabeth Gaskell: The Novel of Social Crisis*. New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 1975. P. 107.

¹²⁸ Gaskell, E. C. *North and South*. New York: Harper & Bros, 1855. P. 63.

and those who worked for him. This time, her sympathy functioned with the help of the capital. From the Higgins, Boucher and Thornton families, we can find out that Margaret's philanthropic actions experienced three periods, during which are all under the complicated social situations. Bessy died in the end, despite the efforts of Margaret, the strike continued; the basket to Boucher's family was just a decent gesture, it could not help the family get out of the hopelessness either in economy or in spirit after John Boucher's committing suicide; when John Thornton broke up, Margaret helped him escape the financial ruin with her unexpected inheritance. We subtly feel how individual philanthropy works efficiently in calming down the strike and unpredictable economic crisis. "...individual philanthropic gestures must be balanced by ethical business practices, that social and economic reform go hand in hand and that men and women should join together in those efforts."¹²⁹

As far as I am concerned, as a southerner, Gaskell thought that South was a source of philanthropy because of the southern habits and outlooks. South was not like North, where people were busy working all day long. People in the South lived more comfortable and leisurely. They loved nature and have more time to read books than the northerners. As a result, the southerners had a lot of time to keep a close relationship with God, read the Bible and go to the church every weekend. With the love from God, Gaskell thought that she had duty to love people, and philanthropy is a good way to realize this Christian love.

¹²⁹ Parker, P. C. Fictional Philanthropy in Elizabeth Gaskell's "*Mary Barton*" and "*North and South*" // *Victorian Literature and Culture*. 1997. No. 2 (25). P. 330.

Conclusion

Elizabeth Gaskell's novel "*North and South*" vividly demonstrates us a series of personalities and social changes. The story took place in the context of the Industrial Revolution when there were a lot of social problems existed in England in the mid-nineteenth century, such as gender inequality, class conflicts and so on. However, as a Christian, Gaskell had a good expectation for this society. There is a lot of scholars who have done research on analyzing the social problems in the novel, but this paper pays attention to Gaskell's beautiful plan. In order to realize her philanthropic plan, Gaskell created Margaret Hale, the protagonist in the novel who played the role of a mediator. She was a southerner, but not a typical one. She argued for independence, love, understanding, equality and compromise between employers and employees. Having realized that the class conflicts were inevitable, Gaskell explored a better way of mediating their relations, because for Gaskell, riot could not solve the problem. In the novel, Margaret, on the one hand, wanted workers to struggle for their rights without violence; on the other hand, she wished the mill owners could understand their workers' conditions and help them with conscience. At last, Higgins and Mr. Thornton became friends, they chose to believe and understand each other, which indicated that the two classes were united.

In this thesis, there is an introduction to the history of the Industrial Revolution in England from the end of 18th century to the mid-19th century. Then, it points out why she had the thought of writing industrial novels and top of that put Christian love in her novels. As to the character analysis, besides the main characters, a man

called Henry Lennox needed to be paid attention to. Both Henry Lennox and Mr. Thornton tried to understand the culture which opposed their own. Although they were rivals in love (because they both deeply loved Margaret), there was a possibility for them to compromise or even develop a friendship, the thesis has analyzed this possibility. Further, the thesis specifically analyzes Gaskell's philanthropic ideas through Margaret's activities, from which we can feel Gaskell's deep concern and beautiful wishes to the society.

“*North and South*” is not just a geographical meaning, it also means opposing culture, classes or even the distance between people's hearts that have divided England into two parts. Gaskell's inner value lies in restoring people's relationships, and her aspiration for establishing a united homeland.

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