

**TOWARDS A CRITICAL EDITION OF THE SHORT
FICTION OF SARAH GRAND, PART 1.**

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THESIS ABSTRACT

The majority of Sarah Grand's short stories have been out of print since their first publication in book form. As Grand is today considered to be a significant feminist writer of the 1890s and early 1900s, it therefore seems timely to make readily available a large body of her work which has previously proved difficult to access. The thesis is, therefore, submitted in two parts. **Part 1** contains critical and contextual work on Grand and her stories, and **Part 2** comprises a collected, annotated edition of the twenty-six stories published as *Our Manifold Nature* (1894), *Emotional Moments* (1908) and *Variety* (1922). In working towards presenting a critical edition of the short fiction of Sarah Grand, I have set out to show how reading these stories can contribute to an increased understanding of both the author, her most widely read novels, and her role in contributing to the debates about women and marriage in the 1890s and beyond. In Part 1, the Introduction sets out the aims of the thesis, the research undertaken, provides biographical information about Grand and her times, and offers an overview of the stories and their publication history. Chapter One demonstrates the significant shifts in critical evaluation of Grand's writing from 1894 to the present day. It provides a comprehensive overview of this critical response and substantiates my claim that an investigation of her short fiction can make a significant contribution to Grand scholarship. Chapter Two examines Grand's relationship with her readers through her use of narrative techniques, building a bond of trust which is both educative and entertaining. Chapter Three, in eight sections, provides a detailed thematic and textual analysis of all the stories, highlighting Grand's interest in and involvement with the life of the single woman, contemporary society, gender, marriage, eugenics, adolescence, class, employment and war. The Appendix, in providing details of Grand's publishing history with William Heinemann, throws light on the literary career of an important New Woman writer who was still producing work at the dawn of the Modernist age.

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INTRODUCTION

Aim

The aim of this thesis is twofold: to produce the necessary work towards presenting a critical edition of the short fiction of Sarah Grand (1854-1943) and to show how reading these stories in both their final published book form and in their original periodical publication form can contribute to an appreciation of a pioneering author and the innovatory qualities of her writing, as well as her place in the cultural and social debate about the position and role of women in the 1890s and beyond.

The research project

Sarah Grand's trilogy of feminist novels, *Ideala* (1888), *The Heavenly Twins* (1893) and *The Beth Book* (1897) has received considerable critical attention, with some attention also being given to her six other novels, *Two Dear Little Feet* (1880), *A Domestic Experiment* (1891), *Singularly Deluded* (1893), *Babs the Impossible* (1901), *Adnam's Orchard* (1912) and *The Winged Victory* (1916). However, comparatively little critical attention has been paid to the body of her short fiction (See Part 1 Chapter 1). It is clear, therefore, that there is considerable scope for further examination of the critical significance of her short stories, singly, in groups and in relation to her novels. Such an investigation will prove valuable in locating Grand within the literary, social and cultural context of the 1890s and the early 1900s and in furthering an understanding of her writing on important questions of the day, such as marriage, education, eugenics, class, empire and social reform.

My starting point in considering a collected edition of Grand's short fiction was *Our Manifold Nature*, her first volume of short stories, published in 1894, but readily available today as a print-on-demand volume. It was clear that there were striking similarities in subject matter between these stories and her novels. In tackling subjects such as venereal disease and the necessity for sexual purity, the town and country divide, paid employment for women, heredity and the fear of degeneracy, Grand demonstrates that she is a writer sensitively attuned to the intellectual and practical concerns aired so widely in contemporary fiction, in the pages of the burgeoning periodical market and on public platforms.

In addition, Grand wrote two further volumes of short stories, *Emotional Moments* published in 1908 and *Variety*, published in 1922. Although a print-on-demand version of *Emotional Moments* is available, *Variety* has not been reprinted since the 1922 edition. That the work of a New Woman writer was still being published in the 1920s is itself a significant feature of Grand's literary output. In the light of this I have attempted to evaluate the extent to which her writing reflected the development of the women's short story as a genre during a crucial period in literary history, from the *fin de siècle* to the emergence of feminist modernism.

Other Grand short stories survive, namely "Mamma's Music Lessons" (1878), "School Revisited" (1880) and "The Great Typhoon" (1881), all published in magazines. As these were never republished in book form, I have made the assumption that Grand considered them to be juvenilia which did not have a place alongside her writing of the 1890s and 1900s. I have, therefore, not included them in this study or in Part 2, my collected, annotated volume of short stories.

The publication history of Grand's stories has not so far been properly investigated. In her authorial Preface to *Our Manifold Nature*, she reveals that all the stories in the book had been previously published in magazines and that she revised many of them before their subsequent appearance in book form. In this Preface, Grand refers to the stories as having "appeared originally in magazines, some of them in a more or less unsatisfactory condition, having been mutilated for convenience of space or in order to remove from them any idea of unusual import" (6). She goes on to say that the stories in the book volume "appear for the first time un mutilated as well as carefully revised" (7). It is therefore reasonable to assume that she took responsibility for these revisions herself. A comparison between the two versions reveals that Grand made minor alterations to a number of stories and significant changes to only a few. The variants between the periodical text and the book text have been clearly indicated in my annotations to the individual stories (see Part 2 of Thesis).

It, therefore, seemed likely that if all the stories in *Our Manifold Nature* had first appeared in magazines, that the stories in *Emotional Moments* and *Variety* would also have been first published in periodical form. To date, the original publication details for twenty-one of the twenty-six stories in the three book volumes have been identified and I have established that a further two stories included in *Variety*, were,

by the author's own testimony, not previously published. Research is ongoing to determine the first publication details for the final three.

Wherever possible, I have compared the original magazine publication of the stories with their subsequent book publication in order to throw light on Grand's practice as a writer and editor, in many cases establishing significant textual variants between the two versions (see Part 2).

When Gillian Kersley wrote her groundbreaking biography of Sarah Grand, *Darling Madame: Sarah Grand and Devoted Friend* in 1983, she had complete access to the Sarah Grand archive in Bath Library as well as the diaries and letters of Gladys Singers-Bigger, Grand's friend and confidante for the last seventeen years of her life. Bath Library has given me access to the same material and I have also made use of the British Library's Grand holding; The Berg Collection, New York Public Library; The Mortimer Rare Book Room, Smith College Library, Massachusetts; National Library of Scotland; and The William Heinemann Archive, Northamptonshire. The Heinemann Archive has proved particularly productive for this study as it holds a significant amount of unpublished correspondence between Grand and Heinemann which throws light on the publishing history of her novels and short fiction and on the evidently strong friendship between author and publisher. Although I have incorporated some of this information into the "Publication History" (see Appendix D), I still have original material which falls outside the scope of this thesis¹.

As many of Grand's stories have been out of print for over ninety years, I am keen to make her short fiction accessible to a new audience. During the course of my research, I have, therefore, worked with three large groups of interested local readers, who have discussed selections of stories. While again, their detailed response to these stories cannot be included in this thesis, it is worth recording that they found the style accessible, the characterisation engaging and the subject matter both provocative and illuminating. This preliminary work suggests that Grand's writing still has value for a modern audience².

¹ Many of the insights into Grand's life and circle of friends afforded by her correspondence would be better placed in a biography.

² I am currently talking to two publishers about the possibility of issuing a selected edition of Grand's short fiction, aimed at a general readership.

The Stories

In Grand's short stories, as with her novels, the single women tend to lead happier and more fulfilled lives than those of their married sisters, often challenging the gendered stereotypes surrounding a lone woman in London. Josepha, at the heart of four separate but cleverly linked stories, namely "The Man in the Scented Coat," "Josepha Recounts a Remarkable Experience," "I Can't Explain It –" and "One of the Olden Time" is Grand's most striking portrayal of a successful single woman who grows from youthful impetuosity to a thoughtful maturity where she perceives in the first part of the twentieth century that many of the earlier battles, particularly those involving gender relations, have been won.

Single women also feature prominently in "An Emotional Moment," "A New Sensation," "She Was Silent," "The Wrong Road" and "The Undefinable: A Fantasia." Marriage is not the goal for any of the female protagonists, indeed, Grand is anxious to challenge the conventional romance formula of courtship and marriage. Daringly, the female playwright in "An Emotional Moment" and Aldah in "She Was Silent" explore and express their sensuality and sexual encounters outside marriage with an openness reminiscent of George Egerton's portrayal of women's experience in her short stories collected in *Keynotes* (1893) and *Discords* (1894).

Marriage is, however, a central concern of stories such as the appropriately named "When the Door Opened...?," "From Dusk Till Daybreak" and "The Condemned Cell," but it is shown as an imperfect institution where the need for equality between man and wife is still to be properly negotiated. It is perhaps only Mrs Durham, the butcher's wife in the humorous story of that name, who finally achieves marital equality but this she does with the aid of a dog whip.

Some of Grand's best writing is to be found in her depiction of female adolescence, both in her novels and her short stories. Demonstrating a real understanding of the physical and psychological development of her young heroines, and an awareness of contemporary scientific interest in child development, Grand argues persuasively for a broad education and plentiful exercise to equip girls for full lives which might include marriage and motherhood as well as paid employment. "The Yellow Leaf," with its many similarities to *The Heavenly Twins*, and "The Turning of the Worm" rely on a subversive humour to underpin Grand's belief in the need for improved

educational opportunities for young women and the vital importance of the role of a mother-figure as wise guide.

Much criticism of Grand's work has centred on her "relentless didacticism" (288) as John Foster Wilson calls it in *Irish Novels 1890-1940* (2008). "Eugenia" supports Grand's belief in the eugenic principle of selecting a marriage partner based on fitness to reproduce, demonstrating very clearly her engagement with the arguments of the day. It is the story that Grand edited most heavily between magazine and book publication, adding over four thousand extra words to the book version. This extra text is heavily didactic, based on her passionate views about the need for reform in sexual relations. These views are equally apparent in "Boomellen".

While "Eugenia" is ultimately successful as a story, in part through its vivid characterisation, Grand's didactic treatment of her subject matter, allied to her lack of humour in stories such as "Vanity and Vexation" and "A Thorough Change" make them altogether less appealing. And in "The Baby's Tragedy" it is only the working class, north-country nurse narrator who rescues it from being overtly instructive.

Critics such as Teresa Mangum in *Married, Middlebrow and Militant* (1998) and Anne Heilmann in *New Woman Strategies* (2004) have written persuasively about Grand as a middle-class writer with essentially middle-class concerns about marriage, home and family. While she does not achieve the documentary realism of writers like Margaret Harkness, George Gissing or Arthur Morrison, her social observation in stories like "Janey, A Humble Administrator," "The Rector's Bane," "The Butcher's Wife" and "One of the Olden Time" sees her engaging sensitively with matters of class, disability and old age.

In the final story in the collection, "The Commandant," only ever published in *Variety*, Grand ventures into new territory with a story set during the First World War. Related from a female perspective, this is a depiction not of warfare itself but of the horrific injuries and loss of life endured by a generation of young men. Focussing on medical detail and bureaucratic inefficiency, Grand again demonstrates her engagement with topical subject matter.

In his book *The English Novel in History 1895-1920* (1993), David Trotter briefly considers Grand as having modernist leanings (117) through her experimentation with tone and point of view in *The Heavenly Twins*, but as John Wilson Foster points out, this is still a “minority view” with the majority of critics still seeing her as no more than a “proactive feminist” (*Irish Novels*, 73). Angelique Richardson, nevertheless, includes Grand’s article “In Search of a Subject” in Appendix 1 of her collection *Women Who Did: Stories by Men and Women 1890-1914* (2002), explaining that it had not been republished since its inclusion in the *Bath Training College of Domestic Subjects Old Student’s Magazine* in January 1928. Its value, she asserts, lies in the fact that it

charts a development in Grand’s style of writing, from the domestic realism that her novels embraced, and which she maintained to greater or lesser degree in her short stories, to a self-reflexivity much more in keeping with the modernism of its time (393).

In the sections that follow, I have highlighted the structural and thematic development in Grand’s writing, particularly in the years between 1894 and 1908 when her first two very different collections of short stories were published. In finding new ways of telling stories and in experimenting with structure and the narrative voice, Grand demonstrates that she was much more than a “domestic” realist or strident feminist.

In being both novelist and short story writer, Grand was not unusual for her time. A number of her contemporaries, such as Thomas Hardy, George Gissing, Amy Levy, Arthur Conan Doyle, Grant Allen, Edith Nesbit and Arthur Morrison were successful short fiction writers as well as novelists. Short stories were often a convenient way to supplement a novelist’s income and they could be used to try out material and fictional approaches for subsequent use in longer fiction. Kristin Brady, in her edition of Hardy’s *The Withered Arm and Other Stories 1874-1888* (1999), points out that he “came to use them as important vehicles for experimenting with new ideas and techniques” (xviii), highlighting “Destiny and a Blue Cloak” (1874) as an early example of his “interest in the sexual politics of the romance plot” (xx), an interest which was to find its fullest expression in *Tess of the D’Urbervilles* (1891) and *Jude the Obscure* (1895). Similarly Grand in “Janey, a Humble Administrator” (1891) begins to explore the reality of married life for an intelligent young woman

denied the possibility of fulfilling work outside the home; a theme she develops more fully in *The Heavenly Twins* and *The Beth Book*.

Although female subjectivity is at the heart of Grand's writing, she does not confine the first publication of her stories exclusively to women's magazines. In the early 1890s she was a regular contributor to *Temple Bar: A London Magazine for Town and Country Readers*, a monthly shilling magazine aimed at the upper middle classes (*Edwardian Fiction: An Oxford Companion*, 385). "The Yellow Leaf" was serialised in three instalments in the *Pall Mall Magazine*, in 1893, the year of its launch. This magazine, which prided itself on the quality of its contributors, appealed to both men and women. Hardy's "An Imaginative Woman" was first published in *Pall Mall Magazine* in April 1894. In this story Hardy subjects the marriage of William and Ella Marchmill to the same sort of scrutiny that Grand applies to marriage in "When the Door Opened...?" which was published by *The Idler* in 1898. *The Idler*, which again had an impressive list of contributors including Conan Doyle, G.K. Chesterton and Mark Twain, was aimed at "the gentleman at leisure" and "made extensive use of short stories, usually of a neat, paradoxical kind" (*Edwardian Fiction*, 202). This might well account for Grand's unusual use of a male storyteller and the tight structure of this story, for she was particularly adept at writing for a specific audience.

More evidence of Grand's ability to match story and readership is apparent in the publication of "Ah Man" in the launch edition of *Woman at Home* in 1893. Under the editorship of Annie S. Swann, this sixpenny monthly was aimed, in the words of its editor, at "the middle class woman" with time "to devote to mental culture" (62). Margaret Beetham points out in *A Magazine of Her Own* (1996) that *Woman at Home* tried, mostly successfully, to reconcile the emerging New Woman's appetite for news, fashion, health and beauty advice with the very real need to address the issues surrounding women earning a living, either through economic necessity or to give meaning to an unfulfilling life (165-70). Writing as a profession for women was a regular theme of the magazine, and, of course, the woman writer and the meanings of the written word are central to "Ah Man" (See Chapter 3, section vi).

With Grand's status as a best-selling novelist confirmed by the publication of *The Heavenly Twins*, her stories enjoyed widespread circulation in the 1890s. The *Lady's*

Realm published “She Was Silent” in its launch edition in November 1896, lavishly illustrated by popular artist Ernest Prater, and “The Baby’s Tragedy” exactly a year later. In addition, it serialised her novel *Babs the Impossible* from June 1900 to April 1901. *The Windsor Magazine: An Illustrated Monthly for Men and Women* published “A New Sensation” in 1899, “The Wrong Road” appeared in the *English Illustrated Magazine* in 1895, while the American magazine *Cosmopolitan* published “The Undefinable, A Fantasia” in 1894. It was simultaneously published by *The New Review* in Britain.

Grand’s fictional treatment of issues surrounding women, marriage and sexually transmitted disease meant that during the 1890s she was invited to contribute articles to magazines and newspapers on a variety of subjects, ensuring that she was at the forefront of contemporary debates. Importantly, she was credited with being the first writer to use the phrase “new woman” in her article “The New Aspect of the Woman Question” (*North American Review* 158, March 1894). The *North American Review*, founded in 1815 and still published today, enjoyed an unrivalled reputation for reflecting America’s social and cultural climate. The contributors to this periodical included Joseph Conrad, Henry James, Abraham Lincoln, Mark Twain and H.G. Wells, and so it was undoubtedly a measure of Grand’s success that she was invited to contribute three articles to this prestigious publication in 1894. In May 1894, Ouida’s article “The New Woman” expressed an outraged response to Grand’s “The New Aspect of the Woman Question” and it is followed directly by another piece from Grand, “The Man of the Moment”. In June Grand’s third article, “The Modern Girl” was published, alongside two articles by male authors supporting woman’s suffrage.

Grand’s journalistic writing was frequently included in magazines that published her short fiction, with articles such as “The New Woman and the Old” appearing in *Lady’s Realm* in 1898 and “The Case of the Modern Spinster” in *Pall Mall Magazine* in 1913.

Sarah Grand

Born Frances Elizabeth Bellenden Clarke, in Donaghadee, County Down, Ireland on 10 June 1854, Frances (as she was known until adopting the name Sarah Grand in 1891) was the fourth of five children of naval lieutenant Edward Bellenden Clarke and his wife Margaret (nee Sherwood). Her father was posted to Ireland in 1852 and remained there until his death in 1861. At this point her mother returned with the children to her native Yorkshire, where they settled in Scarborough, to be near the Sherwood side of the family.

Frances received little formal education until 1868 when a legacy from a favourite aunt meant that she could be sent as a boarder to the Royal Naval School in Twickenham. She soon disgraced herself, however, by encouraging her fellow pupils to form a club to support Josephine Butler's crusade to repeal the Contagious Diseases Acts. Unfortunately little else is known about this precocious interest in Butler and her work.³ It is interesting to note, however, that when she wrote "Some Recollections of my Schooldays", published in the *Lady's Magazine* in 1901, she confessed "my conduct ... is chronicled in the record of the school as 'unsatisfactory'" (1, 42-3; qtd. in Ann Heilmann and Stephanie Forward, *Sex Social Purity and Sarah Grand*⁴ (2000), I, 196). From Twickenham Frances was sent to a finishing school in Holland Road, Kensington, but returned home again just a year later.

Frances had much in common with her fictional, subversive, irrepressible young women characters, such as Angelica, Adelesa, Babs, Beth and Beatrice, being disruptive in the schoolroom and then marrying a much older man. She married thirty-nine year old David McFall, a widower and Army doctor, in early 1871, at the age of sixteen, in order to escape from home, to gain unlimited access to books and the chance to travel the world. Their son David Archibald was born on 7 October 1871 and in 1873 the family set off for five years abroad, with army postings taking them as far afield as Malta, Singapore, Ceylon, China and Japan.

³ At a meeting to celebrate the centenary of Josephine Butler, the *Bath and Wilts Chronicle and Herald* reported that Sarah Grand mentioned staying in London for a holiday with her mother's cousin, an eminent surgeon. She heard him and his colleagues discuss Josephine Bulter in disparaging terms and resolved to find out more about her. (*Bath and Wilts Chronicle and Herald*, 19 June, 1928, p. 7. Qtd in SSPSG, I, 317-8)

⁴ Henceforth to be abbreviated to SSPSG.

On returning to England in 1879, David McFall was posted to the army barracks in Norwich and two years later was made Honorary Brigade Surgeon and Medical Officer at the Warrington barracks. It was in Warrington where he became involved with the local Lock hospital, a position which Frances, with her sympathy for the work of Josephine Butler, would have found particularly distasteful.

Unusually for the 1890s, Frances left her husband after twenty years of increasingly unhappy marriage, having brought up their son Archie and her stepsons Chambers (later known as Haldane), and Albert. She took the bold step of deciding to live in London and pursue her writing career. At this point she had already published two novels: *Two Dear Little Feet* (1880) and *Ideala* (1888), the first under her married name Frances Elizabeth McFall and the second anonymously. *Two Dear Little Feet*, published by Jarrold and Sons as part of their “Books for Presents and Libraries” series is more of a tract on the dangers of fashionable dress than a novel. Only one edition was ever published. *Ideala*, however, enjoyed much wider circulation and even attracted the attention of Margaret Oliphant who reviewed it favourably in *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine* in 1889, calling the central character Ideala the product of the “revolution which has taken place in the position and aspirations of women during the last generation” (qtd in *SSPSG*, I, 387).

In 1891 Frances moved to London, took a flat in Kensington and began the next phase of her life as an independent woman. In order to distance herself from her previous identity, she changed her name to Madame Sarah Grand and set out to find a publisher for the novel which would launch her literary career, *The Heavenly Twins*.

Sarah Grand, as she will be referred to from now on, lived through a period of political and social upheaval which included both the Boer War and the First World War. Changes in legislation such as the Married Women’s Property Act of 1882, the repeal of the Contagious Diseases Act in 1886, and the formation of the Women’s Trade Union League in 1889 contributed to a climate where the rights and responsibilities of men and women could begin to be debated openly. Grand was a founder member of the Women Writers’ Suffrage League, formed in 1908 by Cicely Hamilton and Bessie Hatton, and took a leading role in the National Union of Women’s Suffrage Societies. In addition, she was a firm believer in physical

exercise as being essential for women's health and wellbeing, and was regularly featured in magazine photographs alongside her bicycle (see Appendix II).

Today Grand is best known for two novels: *The Heavenly Twins* (1893) and *The Beth Book* (1897). *The Heavenly Twins* was the highest selling novel for 1893. William Heinemann published it in three volumes in February of that year and reprinted it in April, May, July, August and October; it sold in excess of 20,000 copies while the American edition sold five times that number in the same year.

During the 1890s and early 1900s Grand had become a literary celebrity, supplementing her income from writing with extensive lecture tours of Britain and America. She felt out of place in America, calling it a "big, bold blustering vulgar country" in her letter to William Heinemann, written from New York in November 1901, telling him that "I have been having a 'real good time' here and hating it more than anything I have ever had to do in my life" (qtd. in *SSPSG*, II, 73-4). It is possible that her feelings about America might have found expression in her cruel portrait of American protagonist Eustacia Jobb in "Vanity and Vexation", although she is at pains to point out to Heinemann in the same letter that "everyone has been exceedingly kind" (74).

The only lecture to survive is "The Art of Happiness," published by Heinemann in 1900 as *The Human Quest: Being Some Thoughts in Contribution to the Subject of the Art of Happiness*. Her most popular lecture, "Mere Man", was, according to a letter she wrote to her friend Gladys Singers-Bigger in May 1930 (qtd. in *SSPSG*, II, 139), lost in the fire which destroyed her Bath home Crowe Hall in January 1926.

While in her youth she had been a passionate supporter of Josephine Butler, Grand later on became a prominent suffragist. Although during her lifetime she was considered to be a writer of influence and stature, most of her fiction has been out of print for the past ninety years, with the exception of *The Heavenly Twins* which was republished in 1992 and *The Beth Book*, republished in 1979, 1994 and 2013. While four of her short stories have appeared in anthologies of *fin-de-siècle* stories, published over the past twenty years, Grand's three collections, *Our Manifold Nature* (1894), *Emotional Moments* (1908) and *Variety* (1922), have not been republished since the original year of publication.

The Heavenly Twins was a direct challenge to publishers, readers and critics alike, more through its detailed representation of the effects of sexually transmitted disease than through its challenging structural experimentation or its use of multiple narrative perspectives. When she first approached the publisher William Blackwood, with the manuscript for this book, she was surprised at the vehemence with which he opposed it. He had already published *A Domestic Experiment* (1891) and *Singularly Deluded* (1892) with some success, but reacted to this novel with what Grand referred to as a “thunderclap of a letter” (23 September 1891, qtd. in *SSPSG*, II, 24). Grand quotes from this letter in her introduction to the 1923 reprint of *The Heavenly Twins*, illustrating Blackwood’s “repugnance” for plot and character development and voicing his fears about insulting “the novel-reading public” through Grand’s depiction of “the physical idea of marriage.” While the actual letter has not survived, Grand’s detailed response to it has. She justifies her choice of subject matter by telling him she had been “urgently incited” to write the book by women whose anger had been “simmering ... beneath the surface of society” and was rapidly coming to “the boiling point of open rebellion.” She admits to having “faults” in her handling of the material and just nine months later, wrote again to Blackwood to let him know that she had “now reduced the huge, unwieldy, amorphous mass of it ... into presentable form” (28 June 1892, qtd. in *SSPSG*, II, 25). Still he refused to publish it, leaving it instead to the young and ambitious William Heinemann to make his name with it, alongside Grand’s, in 1893. Grand wrote in praise of his foresight in the “Forward” to the 1923 edition of her book: “Mr Heinemann was in touch with the spirit of his day, if ever a man were” (xiv).

Heinemann (1863–1920) set up his company in London in 1890 and soon afterwards appointed Sydney Pawling as a partner in the firm. It was Pawling, rather than Heinemann who first spotted the potential of the largely unknown writers, Sarah Grand and Major Henri Le Caron. As John St John wrote in *William Heinemann: A Century of Publishing 1890-1990* (1990), Pawling “strongly recommended the publication of two of Heinemann’s bestsellers: Le Caron’s *Twenty-five years in the Secret Service* and Sarah Grand’s *The Heavenly Twins*” (17).⁵

⁵ Both books are still available today, although Le Caron’s only as a print-on-demand volume.

Having demonstrated that she was unafraid of controversy, Grand followed the publication of *The Heavenly Twins with Our Manifold Nature* the following year, again published by William Heinemann. This book, she confided to William Blackwood who was by this time a firm friend, was to be “of the study from life description,” aimed at women readers and reflecting the contemporary “social and moral problems” (24 July 1893, qtd. in *SSPSG*, II, 37-8). Five of the six stories in this book end with a death and all six are heavily didactic, focusing on marriage, education for women, empire, eugenics, disability and class. All had been published in magazines between July 1891 and December 1893. None, however, live up to the book preface’s promise of innovation, either in structure or content, although Grand’s handling of the narrative voice is particularly skilful (see Chapter 2) and her interrogation of marriage as a satisfactory institution for women points towards a new and refreshing openness in fiction. The fact that Evangeline, Kane, Ah Man, Janey and Boomellen all die, whether by suicide or accident, and that it is only Eugenia who survives, suggests that Grand could endorse the Darwinian idea of the ‘survival of the fittest’ but in the context of the need for social regeneration through education and adequate state provision for the sick and elderly⁶.

The publication of *The Beth Book* in 1897 cemented Grand’s reputation as a best-selling New Woman novelist. Its critical reception was almost as controversial as that of *The Heavenly Twins* but nonetheless the book gave her financial security and helped to make her a popular figure on the lecture circuit both in Britain and America in the 1900s. The pressure of lecturing gave her little opportunity to write anything new, although she found time to rework an earlier draft of the novel, *Babs the Impossible*, which was published by Hutchinson in 1901, having been serialised by *Harpers Bazaar* in America from June to December 1900 and by *Lady’s Realm* in Britain between June 1900 and April 1901.

William Heinemann continued to prompt Grand about the necessity of writing a new book in order to maintain her literary reputation, and in spite of having written to her former agent Mr Fisher on 1 January 1907 claiming that “I have a play blocked out

⁶ In this context it is interesting to note that she calls the woman’s movement “evolutionary – an effort of the human race to advance a step higher in its development” when writing to D. Lucas on 16 November 1897 (qtd. in *SSPSG*, II, 62)

and two novels⁷, & short stories and essays innumerable” (qtd. in *SSPSG*, II, 80), the promised “real riot of the pen” never materialised. She wrote later that year to her current agent, Mr Colles⁸:

I shall not have anything new ready for publication for some little time. Do you think it would be worth while to bring out a volume of short stories? I have about a dozen which have already appeared in various magazines, enough to make a short volume, 55,000 words.

Mr Heinemann will not bring them out now. He thinks they would do better after I bring out another long book. But I would rather get them out at once, just to keep my name before the public (qtd. in *SSPSG*, II, 80).

Mr Colles attempted to place the stories with Methuen initially. They required Grand to write another 11,000 words of text but her lecturing commitments meant she had no time to provide new material. Hurst & Blackett published these stories, with the title *Emotional Moments*, in 1908. Her letter to Mr Colles suggests that all twelve stories in the book had been published earlier in magazines. To date I have only been able to trace magazine publication for eleven of the twelve. Sadly all Hurst & Blackett records were destroyed in the London bombings during the Second World War.

The second decade of the twentieth century saw a marked shift in public perceptions of Grand. No longer seen as a controversial and strident New Woman, she enjoyed a new respectability as a campaigner for women’s rights. She was one of the influential women included in the 1910 book *Great Suffragists – and Why: Modern Makers of Future History*, edited by Ethel Hill and Olga Fenton Shafer, alongside chapters on Mrs Pankhurst⁹, Mrs Henry Fawcett¹⁰, Mrs Despard¹¹, Charlotte Perkins Gilman¹² and other prominent campaigners for women. The editors evaluate Grand’s contribution to the cause as being “a very eloquent” defence of the rights of women “to free development of intellect” and making earnest pleas “for a common-sense comradeship between men and women” based on equality rather than economic

⁷ These novels were *Adnam’s Orchard* and *The Winged Victory*, published by Heinemann in 1912 and 1916 respectively.

⁸ Mr W. Morris Colles (1865-1926), a prominent literary agent, founder of the Authors’ Syndicate and member of The Society of Authors, was a friend of Heinemann. He represented, amongst others, George Gissing, W. Somerset Maugham and H.G. Wells.

⁹ Mrs Pankhurst is cited in her role as Founder of the National Women’s Social and Political Union.

¹⁰ President of the National Union of Women’s Suffrage Societies.

¹¹ President of the Women’s Freedom League.

¹² In her role as author of the 1898 book *Women and Economics*.

considerations (140). There is no mention of her writing apart from a passing reference to “that strong and tender book ‘The Tenor and the Boy’¹³” where Angelica is cited as being Grand’s “mouthpiece.” They have completely overlooked the homoerotic content of this interlude. While the tone of the chapter is flattering and prone to generalisation, it is nonetheless significant that almost twenty years after the publication of *The Heavenly Twins* Grand is identified as making a lasting contribution to the debates surrounding education for women and gender equality. Yet her notoriety in bringing the whole subject of sexually transmitted disease out into the open is not mentioned. She has successfully positioned herself as a respected figure in the woman’s movement, with a special interest in votes for women while the more controversial aspects of her career have been overlooked.

At this point in her life, much of Grand’s campaigning through fiction, journalism and lecturing was behind her. She was, nevertheless, President of the Tunbridge Wells branch of the National Union of Women’s Suffrage Societies until its activities were suspended by the outbreak of the First World War. Less provocatively but equally publically was the fact that from 1910 to 1918, she lent her name and face as “the famous author” to a celebrity endorsement of the popular nerve tonic Sanatogen, claiming that it had made “a new person” of her. “I am able to enjoy both work and play again,” she affirms in magazines and newspapers during these years.

Retirement to Bath in 1920 brought new responsibilities. She served as Lady Mayoress alongside Alderman Cedric Chivers for six years from 1923, but in spite of Heinemann issuing another collection of short stories, *Variety* (1922), she no longer enjoyed recognition as a writer. As her obituary in *The Times* (13 May, 1943) tellingly puts it: “Sarah Grand, novelist of the nineties.”

¹³*The Tenor and the Boy* is the central section from *The Heavenly Twins*, which was published separately by Heinemann in 1899 under the *Heinemann Popular Novels* imprint.

CHAPTER ONE

Sarah Grand: The Critical Response 1894 – 2014

Sarah Grand's writing has undergone significant shifts in critical evaluation since 1894. The aims of this section are twofold: to provide a comprehensive overview of this critical response and to substantiate my claim that an investigation of her short fiction can make a significant contribution to Grand scholarship.

When *Our Manifold Nature* was published in 1894, Grand had won considerable literary fame as the author of the novels *Ideala* (1888)¹⁴ and *The Heavenly Twins* (1893). As my thesis is focussed on Grand's short fiction, I had initially intended to look solely at the critical response to the stories published in the three collections: *Our Manifold Nature*, *Emotional Moments* (1908) and *Variety* (1922). As the work progressed, however, it became clear that there was a striking variation in the volume of critical attention paid to each of her short story collections. While *Our Manifold Nature* had attracted considerable critical appraisal, there was little evidence of critical response to *Emotional Moments* and even less to *Variety*. In fact, there has been little indication of sustained critical attention to the short stories since the mid-1890s. In the light of this, I have widened the scope of this review of scholarship to some of Grand's other fiction writing, while giving particular attention to such published critical work on her short fiction which exists.

Contemporary Reception

The publication in April 1894 of *Our Manifold Nature*, the first of her three volumes of short stories, was marked immediately with anonymous reviews appearing in *The Spectator* (7 April 1894) and *The Critic* (7 April 1894). Of these two reviews, *The Spectator's* is most favourable, concluding that "All these studies, male and female alike, are marked by humour, pathos, fidelity to life" (qtd. in *SSPSG*, I, 524). *The Critic* comments on the "combative" tone of the introduction and asserts that "One of Mrs Grand's great faults is making her young girls too bright," with the anonymous reviewer likening "Janey, a Humble Administrator" to the stories of Miss Wilkins, insofar as they share "the same admirable qualities," (qtd. in *SSPSG*, I, 525-6) although these qualities are not identified. The American, Mary E. Wilkins,

¹⁴ When E.W. Allen published *Ideala* in 1888, it was published anonymously. It was not until William Heinemann republished it in 1893 that the author's name, Sarah Grand, was included.

was a contemporary of Grand's and a prolific writer of well-received short stories. But if Grand was intending to build on the reputation she had gained from *The Heavenly Twins*, then she must have been disappointed by the 5 May 1894 review in *The Athenaeum*: "This book shows a terrible falling off from *The Heavenly Twins* ... of these six stories the three bulkiest are really little more than tracts ... their authors should not write pretentious prefaces to draw attention to the art of their performances" (qtd. in *SSPSG*, I, 528). On 26 May 1894 *The Academy* was more positive, recognising that Grand's main theme in the book is "the true emancipation of women" (45, 434; qtd. in *SSPSG*, I, 530), and comments on Grand's effectiveness in raising the profile of women within the family as well as in society. In the same year, *The Bookman* writes of "half-a-dozen second or third-rate stories" (6,56; qtd. in *SSPSG*, I, 531), while *The Saturday Review* in September 1894 complains that "Mrs Grand's stories are not art at all" (78, 301; qtd. in *SSPSG*, I, 533).

The American critics, too, offer a mixed response. The unnamed *New York Times*¹⁵ reviewer, in a long piece published on 25 March 1894, begins by asserting "If these stories had not been written by the author of *The Heavenly Twins* ... they would attract very little notice." He goes on to point out, rather disparagingly, that "they are simply some of Sarah Grand's old contributions to English magazines" insisting that the stories "are simply ordinarily dull tales that were not intrinsically worth reprinting at all" (25).

That Grand's stories were published and reviewed simultaneously in Britain and America in early 1894 is testament to the regard in which she was held following the success of *The Heavenly Twins*. Even before the scandalous subject matter of this novel made it a best-seller on both sides of the Atlantic, Grand had been enjoying some recognition in the USA, as is evidenced by the concurrent publication of her short story "Boomellen" in the March 1892 edition of London's *Temple Bar* magazine and *The New York Times* on 3 April 1892.

Her novels also had a transatlantic readership. The American first edition of *The Beth Book*, published by D. Appleton and Company, New York, in 1897, contains, opposite the title page, a listing of other work by Sarah Grand, "Author of *The Heavenly Twins*," namely *Ideala*, *Singularly Deluded* and *Our Manifold Nature*. All

¹⁵ *New York Times* archive accessed in New York Public Library, 14 May 2013.

these were published by Appleton in the USA and are therefore highlighted, with prices for paper and cloth binding. Because *The Heavenly Twins* was published by Cassell in 1893, it only gets a brief mention¹⁶. Two excerpts from American reviews of *Our Manifold Nature* are reproduced in this edition of *The Beth Book*. The first is from the *Hartford Courant* and is undated. It reads:

Anything that Sarah Grand writes will be likely to get a hearing. The half dozen tales which make up this volume are written with vivacity and charm ... It is one of the proofs of Madame Grand's gift that she can write the story with a purpose without becoming prosy or disagreeably didactic (4).

The Charleston News and Courier is similarly complimentary: "All the stories are vigorous and ably written" (4).

It appears that Grand used the Introduction to *Our Manifold Nature* to stir up controversy amongst the critics in a deliberate and successful piece of posturing. This introduction does, however, remind the reader that while all the featured stories had been previously published in magazines, the book versions are not "mutilated" (*OMN*, 6) and are, by implication, closer to Grand's intention in writing them. *The New York Times* reviewer calls it "saucy" while the *Bookman* thinks it "much too high-pitched" and reminds the reader of Grand's "unjustifiable pretensions" in setting herself up as an artist, rather than a social reformer. *The Saturday Review* refers to "an astounding preface" to four "sympathetic, unambitious sketches" that "would not discredit a respectable magazine" but dismisses "The Yellow Leaf" and "Eugenia" as feminist "tracts." The critical consensus is that had the book not been written by the author of *The Heavenly Twins*, then it might well have been completely overlooked. Certainly, were it not for the provocative preface, the reviews would have accounted for fewer column inches.

From 1894 until 1900 Sarah Grand was the subject of a number of celebrity interviews, such as Jane T. Stoddart's "Illustrated Interview: Sarah Grand" in *Woman at Home* in 1895 and Sarah A. Tooley's "The Woman Question: An Interview with Madame Sarah Grand" in *The Humanitarian* in 1896. Sarah Tooley clearly enjoyed meeting Sarah Grand because she also interviewed her for the *Young Woman* for the 1897 feature entitled "Madame Sarah Grand at Home." These

¹⁶ This American first edition was accessed in The Mortimer Rare Book Room, Smith College Library, Massachusetts, 16 May 2013.

interviews had the effect of showing a softer, more conventionally feminine side of Grand than her reputation as an outspoken campaigner for women's emancipation might have suggested. Photographs show her as an elegant, fashionably-dressed woman in a comfortable and tastefully furnished home, welcoming her interviewers to woman-to-woman exchanges of confidences.

Evidence of Grand's continuing prominence in the literary marketplace is provided by the fact that when the biographer Helen Black compiled her book of *Notable Women Authors of the Day* in 1906, Sarah Grand featured prominently as one of the thirty writers with whom Black had personal acquaintance. She is sandwiched between Annie S. Swan and Marie Corelli, and there is a handsome in-profile photograph of her facing the opening page of the chapter. This photograph highlights the impression of conventional femininity Black emphasises in the memories and impressions of the author, her life and surroundings. Her recollections are framed by the narrative device of sharing these personal insights with a group of fascinated house-party guests: there is nothing but praise for Grand and her work with prominence given to *Ideala*, *The Heavenly Twins* and its reception, and *Our Manifold Nature*. Black reports the words of the *grande dame* of the party:

I am glad to find that Sarah Grand's writings are by no means confined to abstruse physiological subjects. I dipped into one of her books this afternoon that I found open upon the library table – it was called *Our Manifold Nature* – and I noticed many little touches that betray a deep poetic feeling, not to mention a keen sense of humour that peeps out, notably in one of that collection of short stories, "Ah Man, a Chinese Servant;" and I was touched by the pathos in another, "Janey, a Humble Administrator" (325).

In praising the accessibility of these stories as well as the author's ability to evoke an emotional response, she may well have pinpointed the reasons behind the comments that Grand made to William Heinemann on 14 August 1894: "I'm so glad you told me you like Kane and Ah Man. They are the kind of beings I visit with most ease and pleasure to myself."¹⁷

Fewer contemporary reviews of *Emotional Moments* (1908) can be identified. The nameless reviewer in *The Academy* on 16 May 1908 feels the collection has "little chance of success" (789) and singles out "The Condemned Cell" and "The Baby's Tragedy," condemning them as "a failure" while "The Undefinable" and "The Man

¹⁷ This letter is held in the Smith College Collection, Massachusetts.

in the Scented Coat” “are laboured efforts with trivial results.” *The Saturday Review* on 18 April 1908 is equally dismissive about all the stories “written with more impulse than art,” offering Grand “a parable” based on her own story “The Baby’s Tragedy” (503-4). In this the stories are likened to offspring of an author “more intent on keeping her social figure than on the duties of imaginative motherhood.” Less hostile, however, is in the short review in *The Times Literary Supplement* of 9 April 1908. The anonymous reviewer writes: “A few pretty imaginative tales of sentiment which may give pleasure to a reader who omits a ponderous and unnecessary preface of fifteen pages about the circumstances in which they were written, ‘the question of environment,’ the lowness of modern ideals, the vulgarization of ‘society’ and what not.” Just as in the Preface to *Our Manifold Nature*, Grand’s Preface to this book poses a problem for the reviewer who cannot understand why she has included it. This reviewer has clearly overlooked the fact that Grand, in drawing attention to the “circumstances” surrounding their composition, is highlighting the difference in tone between these stories and those in her earlier volume.

By 1922, Sarah Grand’s reputation as a writer was all but eclipsed by the passing of time and the fact that it had been six years since her last publication, *The Winged Victory*. *The Times* and *The Times Literary Supplement* on the 5 and 7 September 1922 respectively reviewed Sarah Grand’s final volume of short stories, *Variety*, published that year by William Heinemann. The two reviews find much to praise in the volume, with the *Times* calling “I Can’t Explain It” “a very skilfully handled tale of the uncanny” and the *TLS* commenting on the “welcome depth of background” in the stories and that the “twist” at the end of “A Thorough Change” “is perfectly done.” The final sentence in the *TLS* is, however, very telling: “Mme. Sarah Grand’s character-study has caught the truth of a time and holds it up to us in a time very different” with the implication being that her work had become dated.

The Saturday Review on 16 September 1922 again highlights the gulf between work of the 1890s and the expectations of the 1920s. For this anonymous reviewer, Grand’s satire in stories such as “Vanity and Vexation” has become “stereo-comic” (417), while even the slightly more successful stories appear more like “notes for stories” because plot and characterisation have not been developed. *The Bookman* in May 1923, however, praises Grand’s “unusual gift of characterisation” (117) while

pointing out that the stories are written in “what seems now a slightly old-fashioned literary form.” It is unclear whether the reviewer is referring to the short story form itself or Grand’s use of the medium.

The Revival of Critical Interest from the 1970s

In the many obituaries written at the time of Grand’s death in 1943, much is made of her forgotten fiction and her literary success in the 1890s. *The Times* on 13 May subtitled its obituary “Novelist of the Nineties” and says of *The Heavenly Twins*: “It struck new ground in English fiction: it discussed with greater freedom than before the relations of the sexes: and it was written with an intense and burning conviction” (*SSPSG*, 1, 559-60). *The Bath Weekly Chronicle and Herald* on 15 May remembered that “(t)ime was when the name of Sarah Grand stood for what was revolutionary feminism in the English novel” (qtd.in *SSPSG*, I, 564).

Grand and her books then disappeared from view until the publication of Elaine Showalter’s *A Literature of Their Own* in 1977. A pioneering critic, especially in the field of *fin-de-siècle studies*, Showalter was a fundamentally important figure in establishing the authority of feminist criticism in the 1970s. Unlike the contemporary critics and obituary writers, she gave *Our Manifold Nature* credit for being a significant book of the 1890s, rather than *The Heavenly Twins*, *Ideala* or *The Beth Book*, although she does not explain why. It was not until 1992, when Carol A. Senf introduced a new edition of *The Heavenly Twins* that this novel began to become regarded as Sarah Grand’s most important work. Similarly the fact that Showalter wrote about “The Undefinable” in *A Literature of Their Own*, where Grand humorously pits an unconventional New Woman against a self-important Old Man, contributed to making it the most frequently anthologised of Grand’s stories.

In the new introduction to her revised and expanded edition of *A Literature of Their Own*, published in 1999, Showalter looks back at the original publication of her book, from a perspective gained over twenty years and admits that she “would now be able to give much more emphasis to the 1890s as a transitional period for women’s writing” (xxvii). She highlights the value of Jane Eldridge Miller’s *Rebel Women: Feminism, Modernism, and the Edwardian Novel* (1994), Ann Ardis’s *New Women, New Novels* (1990), Rita Felski’s *The Gender of Modernity* (1995) and Margaret D. Stetz’s editorship of *Turn-of-the-Century Women* in the 1980s in

bringing overlooked and neglected women novelists back into view. She points out that in the 1990s new editions of the work of Sarah Grand, Amy Levy and George Egerton, amongst others, were published, adding that: “when I was writing *A Literature of Their Own*, most of these women were completely unknown” (xxviii).

Showalter (1999) refers to the year 1894 as being an “*annus mirabilis*” for New Woman fiction and in an impressive list of authors publishing work that year, includes Grand and her short story collection *Our Manifold Nature*. She claims that “The best women’s writing of the 1890s is in the short story rather than in the novel” and she uses Grand’s “The Undefinable: A Fantasia,” to illustrate her point about New Women looking for new words and forms to explore the feminist preoccupations of the 1890s. Showalter includes this story in *Daughters of Decadence: Women Writers of the Fin-de-Siècle*, her collection of twenty short stories from the 1890s, first published by Virago in 1993 and still in print today, where it is used as an example of the reworking of the idea of the artist and his muse. Showalter’s summary of the importance of the female short story in the 1890s, where she claims that the “form” of the short story made it an appropriate medium for “the strong feminist themes of the decade” is valuable for understanding the significance of Grand’s contribution to the debates surrounding women’s writing of this period. These themes, “the rebellion of the muse, the exploration of a New Woman’s language, and the protest against the appropriation, even theft, of women’s stories by men” (xxx1) are all central to Grand’s fiction in the 1890s.

Another influential study in this decade is Gail Cunningham’s *New Woman and the Victorian Novel* (1978). In her introduction, she calls Grand a “mild reformer” as opposed to the “radical” author Mona Caird. This she bases on their attitude to marriage, with Grand advocating reform and education, and Caird arguing for it to be abolished. Cunningham’s bibliography cites *Ideala* and *The Heavenly Twins*, but she only writes dismissively about *The Heavenly Twins*, although she concedes that it is “the first recognisable novel of the purity school” (51). She prefaces her analysis of Evadne, Edith and Angelica by assuring us that “(e)xtracting the main themes from its 900 pages of close print and haphazard arrangement of incidents and characters is a difficult process” (51). Cunningham is far more interested in George Egerton whose *Keynotes* appeared shortly after *The Heavenly Twins*, arguing that Egerton displays “a far more sophisticated attitude towards sexuality than Sarah

Grand and her followers” (64). In summing up the value of New Woman fiction for the literary critic as opposed to the feminist historian, she suggests that “it may appear a deservedly neglected by-way of popular ephemera, quirkily interesting but of no great importance” (79).

Patricia Stubbs in *Women & Fiction: Feminism & the Novel 1880-1920* (1979) is equally dismissive of Grand and her work. Although Showalter’s *A Literature of Their Own* is cited in the bibliography, there is no direct reference to it in the text. Only *The Heavenly Twins* is referred to and it is placed alongside Marie Corelli’s *Temporal Power* (1902) and Grant Allen’s *The Woman Who Did* (1895).

Stubbs’ main criticism of fiction of the 1890s is that most of the books “were treatises first, novels second” (117). She calls Allen’s characters “one-dimensional spokespeople for or against emancipation” but does acknowledge that Grand’s characters are slightly more convincing than his, and that the plot of *The Heavenly Twins* is “very daring,” involving “nice upper-class girls” as victims of the effects of male sexual incontinence (119). She calls *The Woman Who Did* and *The Heavenly Twins* “literary curiosities” with “little intrinsic value.” Particularly damning is her summing up, in which she accuses middle-class feminist novelists of turning to fiction as a means of earning money. She makes an exception for Olive Schreiner and George Egerton who “were exceptional in that they were gifted as well as hard up. Most of the feminist writers – women like Emma Brooke, Edith Johnstone and Sarah Grand – just were not good enough as writers to turn their material into an important challenge to the literary tradition” (120). While she acknowledges that the 1890s was a period of literary transition, she argues that it was writers like Thomas Hardy and George Moore who were responsible for moving fiction forward.

Joan Huddleston’s *Sarah Grand (Mrs Frances Elizabeth McFall, nee Clarke), 1854-1943: A Bibliography* (1979) is an invaluable source of information not only about Grand’s fiction and journalism but also about all the other writing that touches upon her life and work. All British editions of Grand’s novels are listed, together with the American and European editions. In the introduction to the bibliographical listings, Huddleston calls Grand “a perceptive and intelligently cool critic of the social scene” and a “modest feminist” (6). She sees *Ideala*, *The Heavenly Twins* and *The Beth Book* as being Grand’s most important work, leaving her other fiction without

discussion. She regrets that Grand's faults, namely her "weak storytelling and stridency of tone ... prevent her books from rising to the level of more major works" (11).

1979 was clearly a significant year for the revaluation of Grand's writing, in spite of the cool to icy appraisal of her work by Cunningham, Stubbs and Huddleston. Her earlier champion, Showalter, brought out a new edition of *The Beth Book*. While Huddleston is alert to the fact that "*The Beth Book* is to be reprinted by Virago Press in 1979" she might well have been surprised by the importance Showalter gives to the text. At the beginning of her introduction, Showalter states that the protagonist Beth "is a valuable and unusual heroine" because of her "extraordinary psychological reality" and calls Grand "the most productive and robust representative of a generation of English women novelists writing in the 1890s" (xi).

Shifts in critical perceptions do not happen in isolation. Scholarly interest, cultural climate and the conditions of book publication combine to create opportunities for reputations to be reassessed and for work to be available to a larger audience. The publishing company William Heinemann, publishers of the majority of Grand's novels and short stories, and rights holders up until the present day, should have been well placed to monitor levels of interest in works that had been best-sellers in their day. In this context it is relevant to note the internal correspondence within the company. On 5 March 1974, Elizabeth Wright of Heinemann's Agreements and Rights Department, wrote to Grace Cranston who had been in charge of publicity during World War II¹⁸, asking her advice about a request from an unnamed academic at the University of Queensland wishing to reissue *The Heavenly Twins*.¹⁹ In the letter, she reveals that in 1974 Heinemann still had the rights to the book and goes on to say "this does strike me as strange since Sarah Grand was a best-selling author and it seems a little unlikely that her books should have been forgotten since 1923, which was when we last had the book in print." Grace Cranston replied: "It was still in our catalogue in 1928 and may have been available longer. The most probable reason for its neglect is that it had ceased to sell." There is no record of further interest from the University of Queensland and no reissue of *The Heavenly Twins*. It

¹⁸ St John, John. *William Heinemann: A Century of Publishing 1890-1990*. London: Heinemann, 1990, 299.

¹⁹ This letter is held in the William Heinemann archive in Rushden, Northamptonshire and was accessed on 25th July 2013.

is likely that Heinemann's lack of interest and enthusiasm proved an obstacle to a new addition appearing in the 1970s.

Sarah Grand is next mentioned in the archive on 28 August 1978 when Gillian Ryan (later Kersley) wrote to Managing Director Charles Pick to say that she was writing a biography of Grand and would welcome any information the company might have. This letter was then forwarded by Editorial Director Roland Gant to Grace Cranston, with a covering letter dated 7 September 1978. "Many an old Heinemann author is being stirred to the surface and among them ... is Sarah Grand. I think that some of her novels will be reissued by Virago or the Womens' Press, with whom Charles is in contact, and now here comes a letter from Gillian Ryan." Grace Cranston replied on 12 September, stating that she had drawn "a complete blank" on information about Sarah Grand. "Alas, there is nothing at all on the files – no letters from her and not one biographical fact."²⁰

The Heinemann archive holds a copy of the contract between Heinemann and Virago Press for the publication of *The Beth Book*. This contract is dated 1 October 1978. There is also a letter in the archive from Gil McNeil, Rights Manager at Virago, renouncing the paperback rights on 28 January 1988: "We are out of print with our edition and do not plan a reprint."

Growing critical interest in Sarah Grand could be detected in the late 1970s and early 1980s, and on 29 May 1980 David Rubinstein (University of Hull), wrote to the Heinemann publishing group asking for information about *The Heavenly Twins* and Grand. Again, the letter was forwarded to the Publicity Department and Grace Cranston. Once again, the lack of knowledge about and lack of interest in Grand is striking in her reply of 10 June. She had clearly consulted one of her colleagues because she wrote: "Even John Dettmer knew nothing about her. In fact, he thought

²⁰ Sidney Pawling, who took over the running of Heinemann Publishing when William Heinemann died in 1920, sold off much of the correspondence between Heinemann and his well-known authors at a public auction in New York on 13 January 1922. Forty three of Sarah Grand's letters, written between 1893 and 1918, were sold at this auction along with letters by Edmund Gosse, Rider Haggard, Thomas Hardy and many others. Pawling took this rather drastic action in order to assist in restoring the company's ailing financial fortunes. These letters were presented to Smith College Library on 2 October 1948 by Bernice Barber Dalrymple, Class of 1910. She presented forty eight autograph letters from Sarah Grand to William Heinemann but I have been unable to trace the source of the five additional letters, or to discover where the correspondence was kept between 1922 and 1948. In addition, the Heinemann archive in Rushenden, Northampton, UK, contains a significant amount of correspondence between Sarah Grand, William Heinemann and Sidney Pawling.

she had died before he joined the firm in 1906.” In fact Heinemann published *Adnam's Orchard* in 1912, *The Winged Victory* in 1916 and *Variety* in 1922 and Grand did not die until 1943.

The Consolidation of Grand's Reputation in the 1980s and 1990s

Gillian Kersley's biography *Darling Madame: Sarah Grand and Devoted Friend* (1983) is still regarded as the most influential book on Grand to date. Kersley acknowledges her debt to Showalter, stating that it was in *A Literature of Their Own* that “Sarah Grand's name emerged in print for the first time since her death in 1943” (xv). Kersley was given access to the unopened cartons of documents that Showalter had discovered at Bath Library in 1971, and out of this large and important resource constructed a detailed biography. At the same time she reproduced about two thirds of the diaries written by Gladys Singers-Bigger, detailing her friendship with and hero worship of Grand from 1927 to 1943. The book provides fascinating and sometimes uncomfortably embarrassing reading, particularly in respect of some of the more effusive entries in Gladys's diaries, but a great deal of the biographical information has been pieced together by reading Grand's novels as though they were in part autobiographical. In spite of this, it is a valuable book but has to be treated with great caution. Kersley makes very little reference to Grand's short stories, mentioning, in passing, only nine of them.

Carol Senf examines Kersley's assumption that a great deal of Grand's fiction is autobiographical in her introduction to the 1992 University of Michigan reissue of *The Heavenly Twins*, and, while acknowledging the valuable work she has done, expresses concern about this interpretation. Senf offers a detailed examination of the contemporary reception of *The Heavenly Twins*, Grand's life and times, and proposes that this book is as significant for the readers of the 1990s as it was for those of 1890s, reminding them to be vigilant about the “psychological and social damage” that occurs when women at any point in history are denied equality with men. This edition was fundamentally important in bringing Grand to a new audience and, unlike the Virago reprint of *The Beth Book* it is still in print today, with four editions having been issued from 2004-7.

While Elaine Showalter had introduced the first new edition of *The Beth Book* since 1897, Thoemmes Press brought out a 1994 edition, introduced by Sally Mitchell.

This introduction is particularly interesting insofar as it positions Grand's work as encompassing the transition from Victorian realism to literary modernism. Mitchell also comments on the lack of critical interest in much of Grand's writing in 1994: "Her other fiction – *A Domestic Experiment* (1891), *Singularly Deluded* (1892), *Babs the Impossible* (1900), *Adnam's Orchard* (1912), *The Winged Victory* (1916) and the short stories" are "virtually undiscussed" (xxii-iii).

Jane Eldridge Miller in her 1994 study *Rebel Women: Feminism, Modernism and the Edwardian Novel* affords Grand brief consideration as a New Woman novelist, "the first, most influential and most popular of the New Woman novelists" (18). While she acknowledges that her fiction is "well-intentioned," she dismisses it as "unwieldy and rambling," in her effort to fit in too much educational detail for the benefit of the reader, at the expense of literary style and structure. It is only *The Heavenly Twins* and *The Beth Book* that receive any consideration and when she refers to Grand as a writer "who made an equitable marriage the ultimate goal of her feminist heroines" (57), she overlooks the importance of the psychological complexity Grand brings to her characterisation as a self-avowed investigator of human nature. This preoccupation is highlighted in the Preface to *Our Manifold Nature*, where she writes about her stories being "studies from life of our manifold nature" (v).

Anthologising Sarah Grand

A gender-based anthology is a natural by-product of renewed critical interest in various facets of women's writing, collecting together works which offers a variety of approaches, techniques and ideas from a selection of diverse authors and showcases them in relation to each other. It can bring into focus specific aspects of a woman's experience, such as marriage and motherhood, or preoccupations with form and style, including the gothic or ghost story. For a particular author to be included in various anthologies has the effect of highlighting different and possibly contrasting aspects of her work. This can be significant in making her familiar to a wider audience and in this way, a literary reputation can be restored or revitalised.

The lack of critical approaches to women's short fiction of the nineteenth century is deplored by Harriet Devine Jump in the introduction to her 1998 anthology *Nineteenth-Century Short Stories by Women*. She asserts that "there do not appear to

be any critical texts which have concentrated in any specific way on women's short stories of the period" (8). She acknowledges the fact that women's novels of the period have become "a staple of feminist criticism" but emphasises the fact that there is a significant gap in relation to the short story, perhaps because of the tendency to regard short stories as "mini-novels" (7) rather than a separate genre with greater flexibility than the novel. Nonetheless, she does not include anything by Grand in her anthology even though more than half the featured stories were published in the 1890s.

Jump is not the only editor to overlook Grand's contribution to the genre. Bridget Bennett compiled a volume in 1996 entitled *Ripples of Dissent: Women's Stories of Marriage from the 1890s* and in the introduction examined the contemporary debates surrounding relations between men and women. This anthology comprised thirty-two stories from writers including Amy Levy, Olive Schreiner, George Egerton, Edith Wharton, Kate Chopin and M^énie Muriel Dowie, designed to show "the great diversity and richness of women's responses to marriage" (xvi). Even though twelve of Grand's twenty-six short stories are about aspects of marriage, none are included in this book.

Carolyn Christensen Nelson, in her 2001 anthology *A New Woman Reader*, includes Grand's "The Undefinable" (1894) as one of the seven short stories chosen to illustrate the importance of female short fiction in challenging "society's construction of the feminine" (xiv). "The Undefinable" also appeared the following year, when Angelique Richardson included it, along with "When the Door Opened" (1898) and "A New Sensation" (1899), in her important anthology *Women Who Did: Stories by Men and Women 1890-1914*. These stories appear in date order, according to magazine rather than book publication, although the reproduced text of each story comes from Grand's second collection of short stories, *Emotional Moments* (1908). This anthology, which sets a selection of stories by men as well as women within the cultural, social and political context of the later part of the nineteenth and early twentieth century, explores the many faces of the New Woman and the challenges she posed for Victorian patriarchal ideas and ideals.

The humorously subversive element of Grand's storytelling is reinforced when Stephanie Forward includes "The Man in the Scented Coat" in *Dreams, Visions and*

Realities (2003), her anthology of seventeen *fin-de-siècle* stories by women. Forward cites the protagonist, Josepha, as someone who enjoys “the thrill of rebellion” as well as being one of the many characters in Grand’s fiction who “revel in being outdoors” (xxi). In addition she highlights the significance of Josepha’s night time exploration of London, alone, in demonstrating the New Woman’s potential for testing established social boundaries.

Towards a New Century of Criticism

Teresa Mangum’s 1998 study *Married, Middlebrow, and Militant: Sarah Grand and the New Woman Novel*, examines Grand’s novels in relation to the position of New Woman fiction and contemporary social and political issues. It is undoubtedly one of the most important critical works on Grand to date and her attention to the reasons why marriage continued to be at the centre of novels written in the 1890s is still influential for critics and scholars today. Mangum does not write about Grand’s short stories other than to mention “Eugenia” in the final chapter “The Eugenic Plot,” where she sees it foreshadowing a dissatisfaction with the romance plot and a move towards what she calls “an answer to social oppression in the biological promises of eugenics” (203) which Grand was to explore in her final novels, *Adnam’s Orchard* (1912) and *The Winged Victory* (1916).

“Eugenia” is also featured in *Love and Eugenics in the Late Nineteenth Century: Rational Reproduction and the New Woman* by Angelique Richardson (2003). This very important study of the feminist late nineteenth-century fictional appropriation of eugenics and the development of eugenic ideas discusses work by Sarah Grand, George Egerton and Mona Caird. Iveta Jusova analyses the significance of appearance in “The Yellow Leaf” in her pioneering book *The New Woman and the Empire* (2005), in the context of her discussion of race and Empire. Most of her consideration of Grand, however, focuses on *The Heavenly Twins* and *The Beth Book* and the way, as an author, she “intertwined her feminist objectives with Britain’s imperial agenda” (15).

Further evidence of more intensive critical interest in Grand’s writing and its contexts came with Ann Heilmann and Stephanie Forward’s *Sex, Social Purity and Sarah Grand* (2000), the most important Grand scholarly resource to date. This four-volume anthology contains journalistic writing by and about Grand, contemporary

reviews of her work, obituaries, selected correspondence from 1889 to 1943, and a selection of her shorter writings. Each of the four volumes has a detailed introduction. The overall effect of this resource is to reinforce the contemporary view of Grand as a significant feminist writer of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

Eighteen of the twenty-six short stories from the three volumes of Grand's stories are included in this anthology. There is no explanation for the exclusion of "An Emotional Moment," "From Dusk Till Daybreak," "A New Sensation," "The Condemned Cell," "The Wrong Road," "The Man in the Scented Coat," "A Thorough Change" and "One of the Olden Time." "The Baby's Tragedy" and "She Was Silent" are reproduced as they appeared in 1896-7 in *Lady's Realm* and "Ah Man" as it appeared in *Woman at Home* in 1893. Although three of the illustrations from the *Idler's* 1898 publication of "When the Door Opened...?" are included, it is the text from *Emotional Moments* that is reproduced. These editorial decisions are not explained. All the other text is reproduced from *Our Manifold Nature* (1894), *Emotional Moments* (1908) and *Variety* (1922).

The 2001 reissue of Lucy Bland's accessible 1995 study, *Banishing the Beast: Feminism, Sex and Morality*, furthers our understanding of sexual politics, both private and public, at the end of the nineteenth century. Bland gives Grand credit for writing the first novel to deal boldly with sexually-transmitted disease in *The Heavenly Twins* as well as stressing Grand's role in defining the New Woman in terms of attitude and expectations about education and employment. "Her hallmark was *personal* freedom" (144) wrote Bland, encapsulating her understanding of the New Woman and commenting on Grand's bravery in renouncing her marriage in order to concentrate on a literary career.

Raising the Dust: The Literary Housekeeping of Mary Ward, Sarah Grand, and Charlotte Perkins Gilman is Beth Sutton-Ramspeck's 2004 interdisciplinary study of the public and private sphere and the way in which these overlap in the writing of Ward, Grand and Gilman. Particularly interesting is her analysis of Grand's "fundamentally pragmatic aesthetic" (30) and her suggestion that much of Grand's didacticism arises from using "writing as a form of housekeeping" (24) where life's difficulties have to be exposed before they can be remedied. Although, again, it is

The Heavenly Twins and *The Beth Book* that receive the most critical attention, *Adnam's Orchard* and *The Winged Victory* also receive close scrutiny.

In the 2004 *New Woman Strategies: Sarah Grand, Olive Schreiner, Mona Caird*, Ann Heilmann argues, very persuasively, that Grand's construction of femininity works as both "an innate quality and a performative act" (19). This argument works well for *The Beth Book* and *The Heavenly Twins* and is also used in conjunction with the image that Grand creates for herself as a literary celebrity. There is little mention of Grand's short fiction.

Sally Ledger highlights two distinct approaches to female writing in the 1890s in her important essay in the *Cambridge Companion to the Fin De Siecle* (2007): "The New Woman and Feminist Fictions." She examines the social purity feminists, such as Grand, campaigning against "prostitution and decadent male sexuality" while writers such as George Egerton were arguing for women to be allowed to enjoy "the same sexual freedoms as men" (153). She examines these positions as well as those of the anti-feminists, exemplified by Eliza Lynn Linton, and considers marriage as viewed by other writers of the 1890s. *The Heavenly Twins* comes in for close and sympathetic scrutiny.

From years of relative obscurity, Sarah Grand is now claimed both as an English writer and an Irish novelist, although she only spent the first seven years of her life in Ireland. Her birth on 10th June 1854 in Donaghadee, Co. Down, albeit to English parents, has given her status as an honorary Irish writer. The significance of this is emphasised by the recent restoration of her birthplace. On 5 September 2008 a blue plaque was unveiled, giving the information "Ulster History Circle Sarah Grand (Frances Elizabeth Clarke) 1854-1943 Novelist and Suffragette born here." This tentative Irish link is exploited by John Wilson Foster in *Irish Novels 1890-1940: New Bearings in Culture and Fiction* (2008) who expresses surprise that Sarah Grand is not included in Bridget Bennett's anthology. He suggests that "When the Door Opened...?" from *Emotional Moments* (1908) would have been a good choice for inclusion because it subjects marriage to "trial by experiment ... using costume and mask by which, in fin-de-siecle style, to conduct the experiment of testing the institution, questioning essence, trying out roles" (284). He also briefly considers "The Undefinable: A Fantasia" (311). Foster is not the only critic anxious to claim

Grand as an Irish writer. Tina O'Toole in her 2013 book *The Irish New Woman* also justifies her inclusion of Grand in her study on the grounds that the first part of *The Beth Book* is a semi-autobiographical account of Grand's childhood in Ireland.

By 2010 there had been a reversal of the critical evaluation of Grand in the 1970s and 1980s. Angelique Richardson, who has done much to raise the profile of Grand as an important writer of her time, describes her as "one of the most popular New Woman writers" (134-5) in her essay "New Women and New Fiction" in *The Oxford History of the Novel in English*, Vol. 4. There are, however, two inaccuracies in her account of Grand's work. The first is in writing of the central character in the novel *Ideala*, "Ideala leaves her philandering, aggressive and controlling husband to live with Lorrimer" (135). While Ideala consults Lorrimer, as a doctor, and does indeed fall in love with him, she rejects the possibility of a life with him in order to work abroad promoting women's education. Richardson's second error occurs after writing about the success of *The Heavenly Twins*, when she goes on to say: "Most of her rejected stories were now published by Heinemann in *Our Manifold Nature* (1894)" (135-6). Richardson has cited Gillian Kersley as the source of her information about the publication of *The Heavenly Twins* but she has clearly also used Kersley as the information source for *Our Manifold Nature*, adopting Kersley's erroneous assumption that "In 1893, the serialised version of *Singularly Deluded* was published as a novel by Blackwood's, and the following year Heinemann published most of her rejected stories in *Our Manifold Nature*" (76).

In fact, Grand destroyed her rejected stories as she admitted to Sarah A. Tooley when she was interviewed for a piece Tooley was writing on "Some Women Novelists," for *Woman at Home* in 1897: "I wrote a number of stories, the majority of which were rejected of the editors, and ended in the flames. My first published story was 'Mama's Music Lesson' for a children's magazine" (176; qtd. in *SSPSG*, 1, 254). Of the six stories in *Our Manifold Nature*, four were first published in *Temple Bar Magazine*: "Eugenia" in 1893, "Kane, A Soldier Servant" in 1891, "Janey, A Humble Administrator" in 1891 and "Boomellen" in 1892. "The Yellow Leaf" was published by *The Pall Mall Magazine*, serialised over three issues in 1893, and "Ah Man" was published by *Woman at Home* in 1893.

Richardson's essay is, nonetheless, important in the prominence that it gives to marriage and sex relations in Grand's fiction, in the interpretation of New Woman fiction as being "strongly maternalist" (141) and her emphasis on "the concise appeal of the short story and its political and social value" (145) for the new century. She describes New Woman novels as "bulky" with a tendency to "describe and deplore;" the short story on the other hand, "asked questions, provoked thoughts and played with convention" (146). Grand's short story writing was, she concludes "far less didactic, focusing instead on the moment" (146). This is certainly true for the stories in *Emotional Moments*, but less so for *Our Manifold Nature* and *Variety*.

The extent to which the short story as a literary form allows writers to be bolder about depicting female sexuality than would be possible for them to be in the novel is an important consideration in Emma Liggins's 2012 article "The 'Modern Spinster's Lot' and Female Sexuality in Ella Hepworth Dixon's *One Doubtful Hour*." She draws some interesting parallels between "unconventional women positioned outside marriage" (5) in Dixon's writing and in some of Grand's stories in *Emotional Moments* (1908), citing the actress in "An Emotional Moment," the society hostess in "A New Sensation," and the artists' model in "The Undefinable: A Fantasia" as examples of women who have eluded the conventional romance plot. She argues, too, that the short story has "the advantages of its inconclusiveness and compression for commenting on the lives of the New Woman" (Liggins, 11).

2013 saw the reissue of *The Beth Book* by Victorian Secrets, an independent publisher dedicated to publishing overlooked Victorian works of fiction, biography and autobiography. With an introduction and notes by Jenny Bourne Taylor, this is a valuable addition to current Grand scholarship and its focus on *The Beth Book's* contribution to the literature of childhood and self with its exploration of the double perspective of the child through the eyes of the adult.

The twenty-first century has already seen a critical re-evaluation of Sarah Grand as a writer who engaged directly with the debates about gender, class, social welfare, nationhood and the redefining of women's roles in society and in the home. She is now considered to be important in her sensitive exploration of feminine psychology and also in being instrumental in giving women permission to expect more of themselves both mentally and physically than had been possible for their

predecessors. It is to be hoped that in the next few years more of her novels will be republished along with her complete short stories, allowing critics, scholars and general readers alike to have the opportunity to become familiar with her important body of writing and to understand why it still has relevance for a contemporary readership.

CHAPTER TWO

SARAH GRAND'S RELATIONSHIP WITH HER READERS

In this section, I examine the techniques Sarah Grand uses to communicate with her readers; how she establishes a contract with her audience and how an understanding of the nature of this contract helps to determine how her short stories might be interpreted by both a contemporary and by a modern readership.

Grand's use of the narrative voice is an essential component in encouraging and directing her audience to approach the text in a way which will bring out the layers of meaning implicit in everything from the everyday exchanges between husband and wife in "The Rector's Bane" and "The Butcher's Wife" to the fragmentary experiences around which stories such as "When the Door Opened...?" and "An Emotional Moment" are fashioned.

One of the most striking features of Grand's short stories is her use of the homodiegetic narrator. In 16 of her 26 stories, the narrator is a character within the story while in ten the narrator is a genderless third-person figure who nevertheless attempts to influence the reader's interpretation of the story. In *Our Manifold Nature* the middle-class female narrator of each of the stories performs an independent role in the story and while all the stories are narrated in the first person, it is not the same narrator. "The Yellow Leaf" is shaped by a successful author looking back on the experiences of her youth from a present-day perspective, while "Janey, a Humble Administrator" is a story told by a young, wealthy middle-class wife who befriends a disabled, working-class girl in order to give herself a purpose in life.

"The Yellow Leaf" was first published in 1893, the same year as *The Heavenly Twins*. There are some similarities between the two, as each has at its centre the stories of three young women with varied experience of education and marriage. When Teresa Mangum, in *Married, Middlebrow and Militant*, writes of *The Heavenly Twins* that:

characters learn to "read" the patriarchal assumptions that adhere in their culture's understanding of gender and in gendering institutions such as the family, schools, religion, and ultimately the social institution of marriage. In the process ... the audience is guided toward critical, comparative, resistant

reading strategies by the repetition and variation of female experiences structuring the triple plots (61).

her analysis could equally well be applied to “The Yellow Leaf” with its dissection of marriage, motherhood, female education and work for women through the interlinked stories of Adelesa, Evangeline and the nameless narrator. By placing the story in the hands of a financially independent, successful, female writer of books, Grand is making a powerful claim for gender equality through example, and by showing her reader the narrator’s growth from impetuous eighteen year old to mature woman, she is increasing the scope of this appeal to include the widest possible audience. Undoubtedly the narrator is providing a role model for young women in demonstrating that it is possible for them to enjoy a successful career without compromising their femininity.

The reader is first shown the young narrator as she appears through her own eyes, but as an older woman looking back on her youthful self with tolerance and affection, in the arresting opening of the story. The dual perspective is an important feature of the story which begins with direct speech from the narrator’s mother: “There will be no one to see you off today, as I cannot go myself.” She continued: “But I suppose if I send you to the station in the carriage you will be able to manage; and, now that you are out, the sooner you learn to look after yourself the better” (8). Much is revealed about the social standing of mother and daughter: the daughter has been presented to Society at a debutantes’ ball, and she is therefore in her late teens; the family is wealthy enough to own a carriage; the mother has no fears about her daughter travelling independently by train and believes that a young woman should learn to be self-reliant. In this first sentence, the reader is challenged to think about the roles of women, motherhood and the fitting education for a young modern woman. The young woman in question, however, is still tied to social tradition by having “come out” and she is therefore positioned as having enjoyed both a traditional and a more enlightened upbringing. The mother’s directness too, in confronting expectations about young women travelling alone and then unsettling the traditional views of appropriate conduct sets the tone for the story that follows.

The youth and naivety of the narrator are highlighted in her confident reply to her mother, while the older narrator looking back at her young and inexperienced self, reminds the reader she was mistakenly “under the impression that I had very little to

learn” (8). This confession has the effect of making the reader curious about what she is going to learn during the course of the story, effectively making them want to read on, and also indicates that this is a character with the potential for development who has justified her mother’s faith in her.

The language and construction of the next sentence reveals much about the narrator: “And so it happened that, on this particular occasion in my early girlhood, I found myself, with the most delightful sense of importance, travelling from London seawards, alone”(8). The rather discursive opening, with its confiding tone of address encourages the readers to relax in anticipation of an engaging story. Again the reader is reminded that the narrator is looking back to an incident from her youth, recalling how she felt about herself and the fact that she was going from her home in London to the seaside. The commas breaking up this sentence produce an effect of supplying evidence for the reader a bit at a time, conveying a sense of breathlessness such as might have been experienced by the excited young narrator. The feeling of suspense brought about by this build up of recollections culminates in the word “alone,” its prominence in the sentence highlighting the unusual nature of this mode of travel for a young girl.

Not only does the narrator remember feeling important but she felt “ecstatic” too and by using this imprecise, exaggerated word she is carefully conveying a strong impression of her youthful self. From her seat in the carriage en route to the station, journeying alone for the first time, the narrator remembers that she felt as if she “was looking at life from a new point of view.” This idea of perspective being altered by circumstance and emotion is not original, but it is characteristic of Grand’s fiction. The fact that the author is drawing her readers’ attention to this on the first page of her first volume of short stories is significant and encourages her readers not simply to actively engage with the narrative but also to identify with her protagonists and their development.

The technique of using an older self to recollect and interpret feelings, events and characters experienced and known by a younger self is one that Grand deploys in many of her later stories, particularly “An Emotional Moment,” “She Was Silent,” “The Wrong Road” and “The Turning of the Worm.”

In “The Yellow Leaf,” this dual view of her own story and Adelesa and Evangeline’s parallel stories is validated by the narrator’s thoughtful but essentially unchanged responses to the same people and similar situations in part two of the narrative where the story is brought up to date. The consistency of narrative perspective in this story is part of Grand’s skill in building up a bond of trust with readers who are more likely to accept her version of what constitutes true womanliness: an education where subjects like mathematics and science are taught to girls and boys alike, work outside the home, financial independence, marriage between equals based on true compatibility, or the freedom and choice to remain unmarried. That the narrator has forgiven Perceval for his youthful emotional dallying with her two friends and feels sympathy for him both as a parent and as a husband points towards a balanced maturity of thought and opinion, while her colluding with Adalesa at the end of the story to keep secret the fact that Evangeline committed suicide becomes a sign of virtue rather than a dishonesty, done, as it is, to protect the rest of the family. As with the story of Kane, Grand seems to be suggesting that the interpretation of right and wrong is not inflexible or pre-ordained by God but rather depends on individual circumstances.

Sarah Grand regularly uses female writers as narrators. Clearly this was something she felt comfortable doing from her own position as an author of some standing but it also gave her the opportunity to endow her narrators with additional powers of observation, insight and creativity in relation to themselves and the wider world. In “Ah Man” she deploys this device to distinctive effect, using her narrator to explore the meaning of books and writing for men and women. More broadly, this story examines some of the ways in which European literary endeavour might be perceived and responded to within a Far Eastern culture. A present day audience might well find the narrator’s musings on the difficulty of understanding the psychology of Chinese servants a little distasteful, but a contemporary predominantly female readership²¹ would have been likely to respond positively to having the exotic interpreted for them by a well-known female author, through the experiences of the first person narrator in the shape of an Englishwoman abroad.²²

²¹ This story was first published in *Woman at Home* in October 1893.

²² Travel writing in the Victorian era was a popular and predominantly middle-class genre. Popular writers like Dickens, Rider Haggard and Kipling incorporated travel into their work, although travel

The fact that the narrator is again looking back at the period of her life when she employed Ah Man has enabled her to interpret it with coherence not evident when events and characters were first unfolding. The unusual gender relations highlighted by the spectacle of an English female employer and Chinese male employees, the undermining effect of Larn-pidgin's lack of respect, and the sensitive dissection of depression where "life is blank as a wall without windows" (86), all benefit from this sense of a double perspective: "I was not very observant at the time," the narrator admits, "but it has since occurred to me." Retrospectively she looks back at Ah Man's preoccupation with her writing, her initial alarm at him "dusting my papers," how he viewed the pages "as if he would fain decipher the signs he could not comprehend" and the excitement with which he observed the beneficial effects of his employer reading *Far from the Madding Crowd* in the *Cornhill Magazine* in precipitating her recovery from depressive illness. When at the end of the story, Ah Man is discovered dead "grasping a bundle of papers" (89), crushed by a fallen beam from above the narrator's writing desk following an earthquake, Larn-pidgin makes it clear that Ah Man had endowed the narrator and her writing with magical, divine properties. By presenting an interpretation of the events through the eyes of a minor character, Grand opens up the possibilities for her readers to make their own assessments about Ah Man's motivation. Is it simply the loyalty of an employee for his mistress, or is it something more? The narrator, however, reads the moral of the story as she assumes Larn-pidgin would see it: that to worship false gods is a mistake.

"Decipher[ing] the signs" (87) is an apt way for Grand's narrator to refer to the process of working out language and meaning. Jane Tompkins, in *Reader-Response Criticism: From Formalism to Post-Structuralism*, identifies the "concept of language ... as a series of signs to be deciphered" (203) when she writes about the search for meaning being the ultimate goal of the reader. Ah Man is unable to understand the English alphabet, so his rudimentary knowledge of spoken English is no help to him in accessing the meaning and interpretation of the words on the page as the marks on the page are indecipherable to him. Equally incomprehensible is the cultural divide, between England and the Far East and between male and female.

writing was not exclusively a male occupation. Isabella Bird (1831-1904) for example, showed that it was possible for women to enjoy and write about overseas adventures. Although *The Englishwoman in America* is her best-known book, she also travelled extensively in Australia and the Far East.

This triple layer of impenetrability has the effect of making the readers question more closely their interpretation of Grand's language and meaning and its significance for their lives.

While there has been some significant criticism focussing on the narrative techniques deployed in Grand's feminist trilogy of novels, *Ideala*, *The Heavenly Twins* and *The Beth Book*, particularly by Teresa Mangum in *Married, Middlebrow and Militant* and by Ann Heilmann in *New Woman Strategies*, to date there is comparatively little examination of the short fiction. A striking feature of her trilogy is Grand's experimental technique in exploring a multiplicity of narrative voices²³ to question and provide alternatives to the traditional romance plot culminating in marriage, as well as patriarchal assumptions about women, their personal position and their role in public life. Heilmann takes this idea further, arguing that "her writings, and in particular her periodical press articles, are showpieces of ideological shape shifting" (15) as she highlights discrepancies within the various texts, particularly her "reaffirmation of normative codes" in relation to domestic life and maternity while painting a bleak picture of married life through the disastrous marriages of many of her fictional heroines.

Mikhail Bakhtin, the Russian literary theorist, considers the novel to be polyphonic or dialogic rather than monological. Central to the novel, or indeed to the short story, he argued, is its staging of various voices or discourses and it is this which establishes the differing points of view and perspectives. Teresa Mangum applies a Bakhtinian reading to the competing narrative voices in Grand's novels and uses this "dialogic" interpretation to highlight the role and significance of the individual characters who hold their own values and beliefs, thereby creating a complicated narrative world inherently full of tensions and contradictions (63-4). This reading works particularly well for Grand's feminist trilogy but it could equally well be applied to stories such as "When the Door Opened...?".

Grand's manipulation of the narrative voice is explored by Emma Liggins in *The British Short Story* when she examines the link between "The Undefinable" and

²³ Teresa Mangum writes extensively and persuasively about the function of the male narrators in *Ideala* (60-70) and reading practices and the role of the narrator in *The Heavenly Twins* (89-124). Mangum sees these books as "a critique of the conventions of the marriage plot, training presumed female audiences in the art of reading then rewriting those conventions as a preliminary, literary, step towards marriage reform" (60).

“When the Door Opened...?” in terms of a rebalancing of gender relations: a man’s responses to the emergence of the New Woman and the negotiations necessary in working out a satisfactory, forward-looking *modus vivendi*. For Liggins, “When the Door Opened...?” is the “subtler and more complex” of the two stories (72). This is certainly true in terms of the emphasis placed on the role of the narrative voice in highlighting the complicated and conflicting views of relationships and expectations about gendered behaviour.

A genderless narrator travelling home late one evening has the opportunity to witness a scene from an unsatisfactory marriage, where the man is effectively his wife’s jailor, played out in front of him/her and another lone male traveller. When the married couple leave the train, the narrator listens to an episode from the story of a different sort of marriage, that of “my solitary fellow-passenger” (164). This narrative within a narrative, re-told by the anonymous narrator who has opened the story with an in-depth reflection on the charm of the fragmentary in story-telling, offers the reader a variety of perspectives on the challenges faced in making a marriage work, including those of trust, jealousy and intellectual and emotional compatibility. Equally important is the view that emerges of marriage as an institution in flux in the 1890s. How does a man with traditional expectations of marriage reconcile these with the emergence of the New Woman who requires more freedom, mentally and physically, than her mother or grandmother? Is it possible to negotiate a satisfactory way forward? Can a man alter his traditional views of woman as either virtuous wife or prostitute? Such questions are prompted by the narrative shifts within the story and encourage the readers to participate in the debates surrounding the late nineteenth century Marriage Question. As Grand puts it in 1894 in “The New Aspect of the Woman Question,” *North American Review* (qtd. in *SSPSG*, I, 35): “the Woman Question is the Marriage Question.”

Grand adds an extra layer of complexity to her writing through her conjuring up of a fictional world which has an existence outside the immediate confines of individual stories. This is something she does to great effect in her four Josepha stories, where her feisty female protagonist is encountered by the reader at various points in her life, in a variety of situations. Through this device, Grand explores the maturing of a character in relation to social change, historical events, attitudes towards men and women and politics, in a way more usually found in the unfolding of a novel. While

the link she makes between “When the Door Opened...?” and “The Undefinable” is not as comprehensively explored as it is in the Josepha stories, it nevertheless opens up additional possibilities for interpreting the stories because the reader is invited to consider the same male protagonist at different points in his life.

“The Undefinable” was first published simultaneously in the English *New Review* and the American *Cosmopolitan* in the autumn of 1894, when Grand was at the height of her literary fame as a pioneer for reform of the relations between men and women. “When the Door Opened...?” was published three and a half years later, in *The Idler*, in early 1898. The successful male artist narrator of “The Undefinable” makes a return as the “man about forty, with dark hair going grey, and a pleasant, clear-cut, well-disciplined face” (171) who tells the tale of the masked ball in “When the Door Opened...?”. Grand makes the fact that this is the same man explicit for alert readers of *Emotional Moments* when she inserts an additional sentence into the book version of the story which does not appear in the magazine. The suspicious husband dresses in an elaborate costume taken from the large old chest kept in his studio, making it absolutely clear that he is one and the same as the self-important artist in “The Undefinable,” albeit a reformed version who has clearly benefitted from his encounter with the elusive model (Part 2, 173, note 214).

The slimmer, fitter, more thoughtful artist, who has given up casual affairs and married in the intervening time, albeit to a younger wife with whom he has little in common intellectually, is clearly making good progress in his quest to become a New Man. For all his protestations about the right of wives to have independence and freedom, he cannot quite rid himself of the idea that without supervision women are capable of deceit and wanton behaviour. By adding the dimension of a world continuing beyond her stories with these connected stories offering snapshots of this world, Grand is building up a complicated fictional landscape peopled with believable and realistic characters through which to examine the preoccupations of the day.

By using men and women as narrators and principal characters in her stories, Grand could be seen to challenge critics, like Israel Zangwill, who in *Cosmopolitan* in 1898 accused her of only being interested in writing about the predicament of women oppressed by tyrannical men: “to be a man at all,” he wrote, “is to come under Sarah

Grand's suspicion" (qtd. in *SSPSG*, I, 492). Posing the question about why Charlotte Mew chooses a male narrator for her story "A White Night" (first published by *Temple Bar* in May 1903), Elaine Showalter suggests that "For him, the terrible fate of the woman is both a 'spectacle' and 'a rather splendid crime.' Reading the story through his eyes emphasises the crucial differences for the *fin de siècle* between male and female forms of experience and story-telling" ("Introduction" to *Daughters of Decadence*, xviii). Grand demonstrates a similar preoccupation in her stories, whether it is the male view of women as decorative playthings perpetrated by the unredeemed artist at the beginning of "The Undefinable," "Now, a really attractive, womanly woman looks up, clings, depends, so that a man can never forget his own superiority in her presence" (208) or man's view of life as an adventure, not to be taken too seriously, in "The Saving Grace" and "A Thorough Change." Where Grand uses male narrators to facilitate the telling of women's stories, such as in "She was Silent," "I Can't Explain It" and "Josepha Recounts a Remarkable Experience," their function is to put themselves in the readers' place. They are able to ask questions that the wider audience might ask as well as offer a male perspective on a female understanding of people and events.

The male narrator of "Josepha Recounts a Remarkable Experience," returns to Josepha's home one evening after they had spent the day together. He is clearly a friend of long standing, who knows Josepha well, perceives her "human weakness" (283), and whose interpretation of moods and events is unlike hers. In response to a discussion about ghosts and haunting, he observes "'Perhaps we don't mean the same thing by spiritual adventures,' I answered, comfortably" (284). His questionings and promptings encourage Josepha to recount her tale of a supernatural experience, in her own words, or at least the words her narrator remembers her using. By placing the reported speech in quotation marks rather than simply using a free, indirect style, the narrator is making a claim for the veracity of his version, thereby attempting to form a strong bond of trust with the readers of the story. This double framing of Josepha's ghost story, as a story within the wider story of a friendship and in the recollection and telling of it from a male and female perspective, encourages the readers to suspend their judgements about the subject matter.

Much of the strength and poignancy of “An Emotional Moment” derives from the fact that it offers a male and female version of the same event. The third person narrator is a distant figure, whose function is simply to set the scene for the female playwright and her would-be lover and husband to act out, in direct speech, the crisis in their relationship. When asked “Do you love me?” the woman responds by telling her suitor the story of a previous relationship which was effectively ended by an open declaration of love. Instead of valuing his partner’s honesty, the suitor takes this as a presentiment of the likely outcome of pursuing his feeling, while the woman has, in fact, made up her mind that he is the right man for her. Tellingly, the suitor says: “You were good enough on that occasion to reveal yourself to me from your own point of view; and I have since been considering you by the light of that revelation from my point of view” (133). While the woman sees her confession as part of the necessary openness required by a couple before embarking upon a new relationship, he sees such an admission as evidence of her faithlessness and is repelled. Faced with these opposing views, and a story with an ambiguous ending, it is open to the readers to interpret the events of the story in their own way and to decide whether the outcome is tragic or whether both parties have had a lucky escape from a disastrous union. Underpinning this is Grand’s implicit comment on the difficulties of reconciling the male and female perspective about relationships.

A further effective narrative device Grand employs with great skill elsewhere in her stories is the open ended nature of the conclusion: the effect is to withhold from her readers a neat and satisfying answer to the questions raised in the course of the narrative and to thwart their desire for the expectations she has created to be easily satisfied. Aldah in “She Was Silent” refuses to tell her close male friend whether or not she is still having an affair with the man she has been sharing inadvertently with a female friend. As if the idea of an extra-marital liaison were not shocking enough for Grand’s readers, the idea that the relationship might not have been abandoned when the *ménage a trois* became apparent raises questions about a single woman’s rights and responsibilities in navigating her own sexual pleasure outside the confines of marriage. Grand, who, in much of her journalism affirms her belief that an equal marriage is the best state for men and women and the raising of children²⁴,

²⁴ Sarah Grand, “The Modern Girl,” *North American Review*, 1894, 158, and Sarah A. Tooley, “The Woman’s Question: An Interview with Madam Sarah Grand,” *Humanitarian*, 1896, vol. 8.

nevertheless leads her readers to evaluate alternatives in a refreshingly straightforward manner. Through her provocative depiction of a modern woman, Grand is engaging her audience with the contemporary debates about female lifestyle and is ensuring that her stories continue to live in the imagination.

As a leading reader-response theorist, Wolfgang Iser famously gave prominence to the responses of the reader of a text rather than simply the text itself:

[o]ne text is potentially capable of several different realizations, and no reading can ever exhaust the full potential, for each individual reader will fill the gaps in his own way, thereby excluding the various other possibilities; as he reads, he will make his own decision as to how the gap is to be filled (280).

In identifying the different possibilities for meaning that a reader might bring to a text, whether through a purely personal reaction or because of social or cultural conditioning, Iser proposes the text as a complex and ever-changing entity, sustained by the active engagement of a readership. The original intention of the author therefore becomes irrelevant. This view is helpful in evaluating Grand's relevance for a modern audience and offers a perspective which helps to clarify the open-ended nature of much of her writing. Nevertheless while Grand, the author, regularly leaves "gaps" in the text, she also manipulates the voices of her various narrators. This contributes to the possibilities for interpretation within her stories. In addition to engaging and educating her readers, this has the effect of challenging their opinions and beliefs, particularly if these views are conservative in nature.

Grand was skilled at choosing the right tone for her work, whether as a journalist, feature writer, lecturer, novelist or short story writer. Her presentation of her views, whether about education for young people, choice of a marriage partner or paid employment for women, was invariably tailored to suit her audience, although J. Macarthur sounded a note of caution to those simply seeking sensational content in his article "Notes of a Bookman" in *Harper's Weekly*, 2 November 1901: "(p)eople who rush to hear her in the hope that her lectures will savor of the problems in *The Heavenly Twins* and *Babs the Impossible* will be disappointed" (qtd in Kersley, 108). The author who aptly published "Should Married Women Follow Professions?" in the magazine *Young Woman* and the story "Ah Man" in *Woman at Home* understood the inclinations of her readers and audiences and knew that her lecture followers

would appreciate the light hearted nature of “The Art of Happiness,” “Mere Man” and “Things We Forget to Remember”²⁵ more than the didacticism of her writing on the need for sexual purity. In a letter to William Heinemann on 6 December 1900, she writes about giving a lecture in New Cross to “an audience of two thousand” and then speculates about whether “all this lecturing is making any difference in the demand for my books,” (qtd. in *SSPSG*, II, 72-3) with the implication being that there was no overlap between them.

Grand was not only aware that subject matter needed to be targeted to a specific audience but also that its presentation could affect its reception. That she chose to write prefaces for three of her works, *Our Manifold Nature*, *Emotional Moments* and the 1923 edition of *The Heavenly Twins*, was clearly a deliberate attempt to influence the way these books are read, as well as to place them within the context of her own life as a successful writer. It was done with a clear understanding of her readership. The fact that all six stories in *Our Manifold Nature* have nameless female narrators to comment on the various protagonists and to examine aspects of their characters points towards an anticipated female readership. This coupled with the fact that all are subtitled “Studies from Life,” might lead a reader to question whether or not these stories are in fact autobiographical fragments. In exploiting this ambiguity, Grand is clearly capitalising on the curiosity about her own life since the success of *The Heavenly Twins* catapulted her into public consciousness.

Our Manifold Nature evidently suggests Grand’s interest in investigating human nature through her fiction. The title at once suggests the complexity and variety of humankind, and it also echoes a key passage in *The Heavenly Twins* where Colonel Colquhoun observes Evadne’s excitement and intelligent interest in her new surroundings in Malta as “yet another facet of her manifold nature” (17). This emphasis on how people inadvertently reveal things about themselves by actions and expressions of emotions as much as through words contributes considerably to the subtlety of Grand’s characterisation.

If this preoccupation with the examination of human nature occasionally feels personal, however, the quasi-scientific language which Grand frequently employs in

²⁵ The titles of the three lectures that Sarah Grand gave, with great success, in the UK and USA from 1901 to 1907.

writing of the observations of her narrators lends a countering tone of detachment to the stories. Such a stance contributes a degree of impartiality in which the presence of the author is consciously relegated, as well as gesturing towards the popular interest in subjects such as evolutionary theory and medicine. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the opening of “Eugenia,” where the narrator calls herself “a humble artist, studying always in the life-school of the world,” who wishes to examine the “diseases that disfigure” life, in order to cure them (48).

While Kersley in her influential biography, *Darling Madame*, read much of Grand’s fiction as autobiography, particularly *The Beth Book*, she was facing in quite the opposite direction from Roland Barthes for whom, of course, the narrator is the author’s construction and no more than a narrative device: “[t]he author of a narrative is in no way to be confused with the narrator of that narrative” (A Roland Barthes Reader, 282). In her first two collections of short stories, Grand refutes the idea that these stories are autobiographical by introducing prefaces to each of the volumes, so deliberately distancing herself as author of the stories from her fictional creations within them.

Grand wrote the Preface to *Our Manifold Nature* in March 1894, several years after the first magazine publications of the stories. In it she declared them to be “an experiment” (7). Precisely what she meant by this, she does not make explicit. It is likely, however, that her “experiment” refers to her deployment of a narrative perspective which allows her characters the perceived freedom to make their own judgements. Yet it is not only the characters who exercise this freedom; the narrators too, are given this capacity, particularly where the narrator is also a character, as is the case in “Kane, a Soldier Servant.” Here the reader observes Kane through the eyes of his female employer who paints a convincing picture of “a reprobate” and “vice-worn” lazy, amoral ex soldier. Nonetheless, she judges him according to her own point of view having weighed up his “virtues and vices.” He redeems himself entirely, in her opinion, through his friendship with her six year old son and, more significantly, by his attitude to the children of the woman he loves where he goes without food so that they can eat. It is a provocative and challenging conclusion to satisfying story because ultimately the narrator calls on Divine “justice” to overlook his many faults and reward his “chivalrous soul,” suggesting that her judgement is more valuable than a conventional apportioning of good and bad.

As mentioned earlier, all the stories in this collection made their first appearance in periodicals. In this Preface, Grand, in her role as author, attacks the magazine market, accusing it of being reactionary and neglecting contemporary “grievances,” “interests” and “demands.” By implication, she is accusing magazines of being out of touch with their audience, whereas she offers, instead, her readers something up-to-date and in tune with their expectations of fiction. From the beginning, she courts her readers by flattering them and giving the appearance of taking them into her confidence. She is consciously inviting them to take the stories seriously and to look for meaning relevant to them and their times. By offering her audience “unmutilated” and “carefully revised” writing, she implies that their taste is superior to that of the magazine editors with their condescending view of their readership. By distancing Sarah Grand the author from the teller of the stories, she is inviting her readers to identify themselves with the situations, characters and points of view embodied in the text.

Having provocatively attacked the magazines that first published these stories, Grand then turns her attention to the critics who labelled her “little essays” as “melodramatic and altogether impossible.” She insists that they are “literal facts,” singling out Evangeline’s story as being true in every detail.²⁶ Again, she is flattering the taste and judgement of her audience, thereby inviting them to take at face value the claim of their subtitles - that these stories are indeed “studies from life,” although not autobiographical. At the same time she deliberately belittles her own literary achievement in writing these “little essays,” in order to appear on a level with her readers. This mock humility is at odds with the full page studio image, taken by the well-known photographer Mendelssohn, of Sarah Grand, positioned opposite the volume’s title page where she looks every inch the literary celebrity who had just achieved best-selling status with *The Heavenly Twins*.²⁷

²⁶ This is reminiscent of her strategy in defending *The Heavenly Twins* against criticism that Edith’s story is far fetched. In her letter to F.H. Fisher, the editor of *The Literary World*, written on 22nd March 1894 she confirms “I have myself known eight of those dreadful Edith cases,” while she also wrote in her foreword to the 1923 Heinemann edition of the book “eight young married women told me the same tale, and I saw their children” (xii).

²⁷ Ann Ardis writes about the “self-presentational/self-promotional strategies of fin-de-siecle New Woman writers” and cites Sarah Grand as a good example of an author well-versed in manipulating her image, in chapter 11 “Organising Women: New Woman Writers, New Woman readers, and suffrage feminism,” in *Victorian Women Writers and the Woman Question*, ed. Nicola Diane Thompson, Cambridge University Press, 1999 (195).

Her Preface to *Emotional Moments* is very different. Rather than berating the editors of magazines, she focuses instead on the power of the local environment to influence the quality and content of an author's work. Whereas *Our Manifold Nature* sets out to be "from life," *Emotional Moments* came out of Grand's response to London life in the 1890s. She writes at length about the conditions and circumstances under which the twelve stories were produced, at the time when she first came to London to live, as a writer beginning to enjoy a measure of success. She admits that emotions might have coloured the content of the stories for "in works of art phrases of feeling find permanent record," (123) and calls the work "fruit of that feverish time" (127).

From the tone of the Preface, it is clear that she now wishes to appeal to a more varied and sophisticated audience than the predominantly female readership of *Our Manifold Nature*. With the exception of the final story, the narrators of these stories are genderless and over half employ a third person narrator with an altogether more omniscient view than the female first person narrators of *Our Manifold Nature*. Again, this has the effect of distancing the author from her creations but at the same time inviting her readers to approach the stories in a spirit of curiosity, to find out more about the potentially titillating "practical insight into a kind of life with which I had had nothing but a theoretical acquaintance heretofore" (126).

Grand has a complicated relationship with her readers. She expects them to engage with her fictional world, working hard to interpret her stories, to learn lessons from them and to widen their world view. Reading, she suggests, is not a passive activity; it demands imagination and empathy. We have seen how she uses the narrative voice and multiple perspectives to engage the reader, but significant too in defining this relationship with her audience is the prominence she gives to realistic detail and dialogue.

In order to create multi-dimensional characters, men and women with whom the audience could identify or at least find interesting, Grand inserts psychological details in a subtle and skilful manner. When the playwright at the centre of "An Emotional Moment" reflects upon being in love, a condition she refers to as an "obsession," she says to her suitor: "It was the medium through which I beheld all that interested me at that time" (130). Not only is she admitting that preoccupations vary according to one's stage in life but that circumstances and emotions also colour

the perspective. If obsessive love is the lens through which life is perceived in this story, it is bound to offer a distorted and unreliable view. That Grand's female protagonist displays such self-awareness and such understanding of her own responses to a particular stimulus gives the reader, and her suitor within the story, additional emotional interest. To be psychologically astute, however, does not necessarily make for happiness, as both the playwright and her would-be lover discover.

Grand's use of irony in making the self-satisfied Rector in "The Rector's Bane" blind to everything but the welfare of his immediate family offers a powerful mix of the comic and the tragic, as well as being a pointed social comment. "It has been my earnest endeavour all my life to walk in God's way," (177) he pompously observes at the beginning of the story, echoing the affirmations of the Church worldwide. In order to make her general criticism of organised religion more hard-hitting and more personal, however, Grand has focussed it through a socially diverse group of inhabitants in a village setting. The third person narrator sets the scene but stands aside to give the main protagonists the opportunity to articulate, mostly through the use of direct speech, different perspectives of the same events.

A society wedding seen through the joyful eyes of the participants and also through the eyes of two working-class women who comment that the cost of the flowers "As 'ud keep a poor man's fam'ly in comfort fur a year" (177) is contrasted with the eviction of an elderly couple from their tied cottage and their admission to the workhouse. The Rector, his wife, the Bishop, the land agent, Martha and Dick Jordan, villagers, workhouse inhabitants and the workhouse matron all have a view about provision for the elderly and poverty. Each view is subtly conveyed through the dialogue. Unexpectedly, the land agent who performs the eviction, after his initial bluster, admits "They might as well have kept you here," with "they" being an offhand dismissal of the landowning class. But most eloquent is the Bishop's silence, underlining as it does, the story's criticism of social inequality and the hypocrisy of the Church. In widening the range of the story world to include social comment, Grand is broadening the appeal of her short fiction. By personifying the victims and giving them their own voice, she is provoking a reaction from her readership by inviting them to consider how it might feel to experience injustice.

Grand's fictional world of rich and poor, city and country, travel, entertainment and affairs of the heart does not appear unlike the world of her readers. It is, therefore, reasonable to assume that their understanding of their life and environment would inform their ability to understand the world her characters inhabit. Even in the Far East in the story of "Ah Man," the geographical, linguistic and cultural divide is mediated through a middle-class female narrator. By exploiting the idea of familiarity, Grand reinforces the reality and authenticity of this fictional world, thereby making it easier for the reader to fill in details and bridge the gaps that the brevity of the short story form has made inevitable.

In setting out to investigate Grand's relationship with her readers, the building of a bond of trust through shared experience as well as wholehearted engagement with the subject matter, points of view and characterisation are fundamental considerations in establishing the contract between author and audience. The narrator, whether as a character within the narrative or a distant figure facilitating the telling of a story, is the key component in this process. This narrator, whose gender, stage of personal development and emotional state influences the interpretation of events, offers the possibility for differing perspectives and ways of telling stories. In making the appeal of her short fiction as broad as possible, Grand who as author distances herself from her narrators, is not afraid to leave the conclusions open ended. This flexibility of approach encourages the audience to remember Grand's fictional world: a world populated by characters made believable through realistic dialogue, social and psychological detail. Above all, readers are given space for their imaginations to roam, even when the book is closed.

CHAPTER THREE

CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF GRAND'S SHORT STORIES²⁸

Section i.

SINGLE WOMEN: “An Emotional Moment,” “A New Sensation,” “She Was Silent,” “The Wrong Road” and “The Undefinable: A Fantasia”

Although Sarah Grand is prepared to expose and confront the unsuccessful, unequal and abusive marriage in her fiction, she also offers examples of partnerships that work and provide happiness and stability for the couples involved. Dr Dan McClure, vivisectionist, bully, adulterer and keeper of a Lock Hospital, and syphilitic Sir Mosley Menteith are among the worst of her vile husbands but at the other end of the scale there are male characters like Dr Galbreith and Saxon Wake who are exemplary husbands and, furthermore, excellent fathers. For Grand, men were not simply to blame for unhappy marriages, but women too. In *The Human Quest*, she writes of the “tragedies” of “honest, industrious, unselfish men, self-denying and uncomplaining” married to “idle” ladies of “insatiable greed” (qtd. in *SSPSG*, I, 166-7).

Married for twenty years before leaving her husband to live alone and concentrate on her writing and lecturing, Grand was always firm in her support for marriage as the condition that provided the best way of life, particularly for raising a family, although she was equally adamant that to remain single was infinitely better than to endure a bad marriage. In her article “The Modern Girl” in the *North American Review* in 1894, she states “that marriage is the holiest and most perfect state both for men and women” but concedes that “many amongst us are not suited for the sacred office” (qtd. in *SSPSG*, I, 36).

Four years later she expanded on this theme in an article in *Young Woman* in 1898, entitled “At What Age Should Girls Marry?”

²⁸ All the page numbers for quotations taken from Grand's stories in this chapter correspond to Part 2 of the thesis.

The modern girl ... knows that life is no longer considered a failure simply because she does not marry; and this makes her not only independent, but also somewhat defiant. ... We have less jeering at 'old maids' ... but we do hear of 'glorified spinsters,' single women, whose independence and varied interests make them the envy of many a married sister (163; qtd. in *SSPSG*, I, 116).

While, in her journalism, she regularly examines marriage and its alternatives, particularly in the context of the New Woman's freedom to choose, Grand's fiction is presented slightly differently, with the complexities of marriage being made explicit. Many of her independent single women, such as Ideala, Beth and Josepha, have extricated themselves from unsatisfactory marriages before embarking on careers working to improve women's lives. Satisfying work is always presented as a fulfilling alternative to marriage and married women, such as Angelica in *The Heavenly Twins* deplore the lack of opportunity for worthwhile employment for intelligent women²⁹. Marriage is never the main aim of her protagonists: there is no social stigma attached to spinsterhood and the state of being single is never equated with celibacy.

Recent scholarship on spinsterhood³⁰ includes Emma Liggins' "Having a Good Time Single? The Bachelor Girl in 1890s New Women Fiction."³¹ Here Liggins considers depictions of "female singleness" and the "more enabling labels than the familiar one of old maid," the necessity of financial independence, and accommodation outside the traditional family home (98-9). This important investigation into the changing attitudes to unmarried women in the 1890s is expanded in her 2014 book *Odd Women? Spinsters, Lesbians and Widows in British Women's Fiction, 1850s-1930s*, where she credits Sarah Grand and Clementina Black with helping "to unsettle the outdated notion of female dependency" through their "feminist discussions ... of

²⁹ Angelica, in explaining her dissatisfaction to the Tenor, having been caught out masquerading as a boy, says "I think it dangerous to leave an energetic woman without a single strong interest or object in life. Trouble is sure to come of it sooner or later" (453, 1923 ed). She laments the lack of responsibility in her life, expresses her wish that she could at least have raised money for a charity hospital through her violin playing, and goes on to imagine a time when there could be equality of opportunity for men and women, based on their abilities. "I hope to live, however, to see it allowed that a woman has no more right to bury her talents than a man has; in which days the man without brains will be taught to cook and clean, while the clever woman will be doing the work of the world well which now is being so shamefully scamped" (453).

³⁰ The University of the West of England Long Nineteenth-Century Research Exchange event held on 20 March 2013, "Spinsters in Fiction: New Critical Perspectives" was valuable in bringing this body of work to my attention.

³¹ Contained within Gavin, Adrienne E. and Carolyn W. De la L. Oulton, Eds., *Writing Women of the Fin de Siecle*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012, 98-110.

married women's right to work and the challenges of combining motherhood with a career" (79).

Work in this field is also typified by Katherine Holden's, *The Shadow of Marriage* (2010), where she examines attitudes to spinsters as well as their views of themselves and looks at the extent to which work was seen as a salvation to the problem of post-war gender imbalance. Holden writes about "society's confused and contradictory expectations of unmarried women in relation to sex" (81) and although she is writing about the early 1930s, these attitudes could equally well be applied to the 1890s.

For those who did not choose to be single, then sexual frustration, the role of mistress or prostitute were some of the unattractive options open for women, at least in society's view. Grand exploits the distinction between "old maid" and "spinster;" for her the former state is less desirable than the latter. She makes use of the phrase "glorified spinster"³² for women who choose not to marry in order to have more fulfilling lives unencumbered by husbands and children and for her protagonists, remaining single is never represented as a problem. While boredom, inertia and depression can be features of a woman's life in Grand's fiction, these emotional states are never seen as a mechanism for not coping with spinsterhood, unlike in George Gissing's portrayal of the Madden sisters in *The Odd Women* (1893).

In "An Emotional Moment," "A New Sensation," "She Was Silent," "The Wrong Road" and "The Undefinable: A Fantasia," Grand examines aspects of the lives of five very different single women, how they see themselves, and their relations with both men and women. All are financially independent women, and with the exception of the middle-aged protagonist known as "Lady Grace" in "The Wrong Road," none could be easily identified as spinsters or old maids. The other four protagonists are single from choice. They are all financially secure, mature, sexually active women who negotiate their lives, the geography of the city or country and their relationships with an ease which might, a few years earlier, have been defined as "masculine." They travel in a spirit of independence, both at home and abroad,

³² This term was first used in "The Glorified Spinster," *Macmillan's Magazine* 58 (1888): 371.

have the opportunity for interesting work, and insist on their right to choose a variety of partners.

The starting point for three of the stories, “An Emotional Moment,” “She Was Silent” and “The Wrong Road” has the female protagonist telling a story to an interested audience. The successful playwright in “An Emotional Moment” recounts her revealing confession to a would-be lover or husband; the enigmatic Aldah tells her story of a *ménage à trois* to a close but emotionally and sexually uninvolved male friend in “She Was Silent” while wise Lady Grace cites hers as a cautionary tale for a young woman in “The Wrong Road.” “A New Sensation” differs from the other stories of single women insofar as it is entirely related in the third person, while in “The Undefinable,” an established male painter describes his encounter with an archetypal “New Woman” with surprising honesty and to great comic effect. In deploying these differing narrative frames, Grand is exposing her single women to scrutiny which is, at times, both uncomfortable and challenging. Her single women do not emerge as ideal or always fully rounded in these stories, but often as shallow, depressed, egoistical and troubled. While they are independent and self-assured, they still exhibit very human failings. Even the artist’s model in “The Undefinable,” the symbolic New Woman, describes herself as “altogether an outcome of the age, ... an impossible mixture of incongruous qualities, which are all in a ferment at present” although there is the promise of an “admirable composition” in the near future (215).

When the nameless, would-be husband/lover in “An Emotional Moment” opens the story with the interrogative “Do you love me?” it is as if the reader is plunged into the script of one of the plays written by the single woman at the heart of the story. Much of the story is written in the form of dialogue between the two characters, with the third person narration taking the form of stage directions: “He threw himself back in his chair, and gazed at her” and “when at last she spoke, it was in the same sort of weary, monotonous tone” (128).

Grand does not name her central character but situates her firmly as an independent, creative person, who is artistically successful and in touch with her emotional life: “It was some years ago” the playwright begins, “in the summer – and in the London season. I was living on the reputation of my first successful play” (128).

She goes on to talk of her feelings at the time, contrasting the “festivity” of the London season with her “unemotional” and “negative state.” She analyses her inability to write after this first success, making a telling point about real creativity being a combination of head and heart. She recognises that her state of mind at the time made her “ripe” for a love affair, not, that is, just “ripe” in the sexual or physical sense but psychologically prepared too. She then proceeds to tell her anxious current suitor about this affair, a confession she feels she needs to make before committing herself to a new relationship. Grand deliberately leaves ambiguous whether this confession is made as a stalling tactic to postpone the decision to accept or not the advances of the suitor, whether it is a deliberate and cruel game or whether it constitutes a genuine attempt to interpret her own feelings and motivation.

It is interesting that such a self-aware woman has been unable to answer the initial “Do you love me?””, has protested that she is not “playing” with him and then says: “if you cannot explain me to myself, I may, whether I accept you or whether I reject you, make a fatal mistake” (128). This plea for explanation and interpretation is indicative of the New Woman’s struggle to negotiate her choices in the field of male/female relations as well as her struggle to formulate an identity for herself outside traditional confines of marriage and motherhood. Her suitor, however, perceives her story as being about her ability to be an ideal wife for him, suggesting that his view of marriage is more conventional. It is in this gap between understanding and expectations that the sadness of this encounter lies. Equally, however, the questioning and misunderstanding between the two protagonists can be seen to illuminate the complexity of the nature of love itself as well as exposing the difference in their expectations of marriage.

Throughout her writing career, Grand had much to say both in her fiction and her journalism about choosing a mate. She contributed a feature to the magazine *Young Woman* in 1898, entitled “On the Choice of a Husband.” In it she writes:

Of all the tests to which ladies put their lovers long ago, the time-test seems to me to have been the most satisfactory; and that for all that the modern girl is happily situated. Now that marriage is no longer the only career open to her, she can take time to make her choice, and time to be sure of herself as well. She should never

marry a man because she has a passion for him; she should wait until she is sure that she can love him. Passion and love are not the same thing (110; qtd. in *SSPSG*, I, 106-11).

Grand goes on to explain: “Passion is a transient state of feeling, a mere physical condition, which usually precedes but does not necessarily resolve itself into love” (110). In stressing the difference between sensuous appetite and a lasting emotional bond, she is being very explicit in the advice she gives her readers. Equally bold is her reminder that paid employment has now become a possibility for young women and this is a valid alternative to marriage.

As its name implies, the monthly magazine *Young Woman* (1892-1915) was aimed at “the great body of young women who read and think.”³³ Liggins attributes its longevity and its continuing appeal to the fact that in its pages it addressed:

the strong-minded single woman, offering careers guidance, interviews with female ‘breadwinners’ and serious articles on living alone and the growth of women’s clubs” together with “the more traditional elements of the domestic magazine, such as recipes, fashion, fiction and advice on child care, servants and marriage” (“The life of a Bachelor Girl in the Big City,” 217).

In choosing to call marriage a “career,” Grand not only downplays the idea of romantic feeling being a base for marriage but is placing this alongside all the other life choices open to young women in the 1890s.

By drawing attention at the beginning of “An Emotional Moment” to the nature of her protagonist’s attraction towards her previous suitor, namely the fact that she knew him as a good friend before thinking of him as a lover, Grand links her fictional stance with her journalistic pronouncement on the need to take time to reflect honestly before making a marriage commitment. At the same time, in highlighting the possibility of a platonic relationship between the sexes, she is reinforcing the fact that marriage itself is less important to ‘advanced’ women of the 1890s than to dependent women of an earlier age.

³³ “To our Readers”, *Young Woman* 1 (1892-3), 24.

Grand's female playwright remembers the moment in the past when she first became aware of her feelings for an anonymous friend of her brother: she is painfully honest with her prospective suitor - with her complexion, breathing and voice all revealing that the memory still has the power to affect her. At the same time she makes it clear, with hindsight, that what she felt was "passion:" "[b]ut these passions which flash and flame in a moment burn with a terrible intensity. It was an obsession that devoured me" (129). Interestingly, Aldah, the single woman at the centre of "She Was Silent" regards her feelings for Strawne as an "obsession," but only when she looks back to the beginning of the relationship, after a period of time. Grand's male confidant in "An Emotional Moment" cannot be expected to appreciate the distinction, particularly as he is emotionally involved himself and prone to jealousy. He does, however, share Grand's belief (expressed in "The Modern Girl," 706) that while there are satisfactory alternatives to marriage, it is marriage itself that provides the best framework for men and women to make a life together, invoking an "age when love lasted because it was held to be a sacred sentiment" (133). He has not acknowledged that passion, or obsession, are not the same as love. Indeed he is more scathing: "fever-fits of passion, such as you describe", he says, "are a disease of the moral nature" (133) so making a prospective marriage partner appear less attractive.

The story's subject matter, that a woman can desire a man and then reject him once sexual intimacy has taken place, confuse feelings of desire with love and behave with complete disregard for the man's feelings, is challenging. This is behaviour usually attributed to a man and to hear a woman's story where she admits such selfishness and emotional blindness is still shocking today. When Lorna Sage writes of Katherine Mansfield's work: "[t]he stories refuse to honour conventional sentiments – that is part of their modernity, and their courage and distinctiveness" (xii) she could equally well have been writing about this story, in which Grand deliberately mounts a challenge to her readers' expectations.

Grand is refreshingly honest about the sexual component of the feelings aroused in her fictional single women by their perceived admirers. The playwright says: "I glowed. I was burnt up with passion. I would lie for hours with my arms rolled up in my hair, my whole being one great ecstasy, conscious of him as if he had been with

me, and at the same time yearning for him with a great ache” (130). This, of course, is a source of displeasure to the would-be suitor, as is the news that the object of his affection lost interest in her lover as soon as the relationship was consummated. Instead, all her energy was channelled into writing another play: “[m]y next play was the child of my love” (132).

Not unreasonably, the suitor, after considering the playwright’s story for a week, decides to leave her. Much is made in this story about points of view or perspective, about the different ways men and women express and perceive love, and the way people see themselves and are seen by others. There is only one authorial aside in this story: “[W]hen people are absorbed in the contemplation of themselves, they are apt to forget that they may be looked at from points of view other than their own” (133). Grand is deliberately not taking sides, completing the story with an acknowledgement that both parties end up unhappy although both are unaware of the suffering and pain each has inflicted and received.

“A New Sensation” has much in common with “An Emotional Moment” in that the society hostess at the centre of the story looks at aspects of life from a narrow and selfish perspective. Again, Grand is not glorifying her single woman or making her life enviable for the married sisterhood. Instead she is portraying the monotony of social success and wealth enjoyed solely for its own sake. Her society hostess is the female equivalent of Brinkhampton in “Eugenia,” satiated by fifteen years of entertainment, conquests, fine food, wine and fashion. She confesses, like Brinkhampton, that she is in need of a “new sensation” and leaves town for the restorative effects of the country.

Through the agency of the unspecified third person narrator, Grand offers a trenchant critique of society’s values, from the men and women who “perk” about in new clothes and “trifle” with each other, to the “conquests,” “satin boudoirs” and women as “butterflies.” Her choice of vocabulary highlights her distaste for the shallowness of a society that measures its worth in the pages of “the ladies’ papers.” The tone of this story has much in common with the introduction to *Emotional Moments*, where Grand writes of the London in which the stories were produced as being “a world that knew no lovely leisure; a stifling world, reeking of full-fed humanity, of the

baser passions; a terribly hustling, jostling, over-crowded world” (125). In was a world, she observes, “in which there was too much of everything ... that pertains to the flesh ... but never a crumb for the spirit” (125).

Her portrait of Lady Flora de Vigne, however, allows for the possibility of redemption. In all of Grand’s writing, the natural world is a source of joy and healing. The power of nature to lift the spirits and to reconnect people with what is best in themselves is constantly stressed; human feelings are mirrored in natural imagery. Surrounded by the beauty of the countryside in spring, Lady Flora felt “as if something evil and oppressive slipped like a cloud of cobweb from her jaded soul, releasing it from contamination, and making way for her to come into possession of her better self” (143). In such a mood she is ready to imagine herself in love and who better to become the object of her infatuation than an attractive young man who appears oblivious to her charms. The market gardener, whose name Adam suggests tradition and strength, provides a welcome contrast to the shallow society men with whom she has spent so much time flirting and “conquering.” Her appreciation of Adam is initially couched in sexual terms: “The physical aspect of the man pleased her immensely. He was such a splendid young animal, so strong and healthy!” (144). Adam’s class and origins are not straightforward. Just as Saxon Wake in “Eugenia” has risen from lowly roots through education and hard work, it is clear that Adam has come to his fine home, his well-cut Scotch tweed clothes and his gentleman’s accent via a route more complicated than birth alone. Lady Flora is intrigued and exasperated in equal measure.

In allowing this single woman to imagine herself in love and loved in return, Grand is setting her up so as to mock her pretensions. Liggins (2012) interprets this story as “suggesting that there are limits to female passion, and that passionate older women can be seen as ridiculous” (11), but it seems more likely that Grand is ridiculing a type of older woman rather than older women generally. After all, Aldah, the passionate older woman at the heart of “She Was Silent” is anything but ridiculous. Rather, her situation and her dilemma provoke sympathy and understanding. Indeed Grand asserted confidently in 1898 in the *Young Woman* in her article “At What Age Should Girls Marry:” “[s]ome of the handsomest women of the day in England are over forty, and are proud of their age” (qtd. in *SSPSG*, I, 117). Lady Flora, however,

in finding herself in love but unloved in return enjoys the “new sensation” of the story’s title and the implication is that she will return to her old way of life very little altered for the better.

Grand is, however, more judgemental about Lady Flora than about her other single women. This is made apparent through linking the story to Tennyson’s poem “Lady Clara Vere de Vere” where the poem’s protagonist, prompted by boredom, seeks to play on the affections of a “foolish yeoman.” The similarities in names and subject matter would have been apparent for Grand’s contemporary readers, many of whom would have been steeped in Tennyson from an early age. To make this connection absolutely clear, she supplies a direct quotation from the poem within the story (Part 2, 141), the lesson being that high birth and wealth have no value without goodness. The poem ends with an exhortation to Lady Clara to take up charitable work with the poor, thereby giving her dull life some purpose. By implication, Grand is suggesting the same for Lady Flora.

Referring to a Victorian tradition of ending novels with happy marriages, Angelique Richardson suggests that “[t]he short story was streets ahead of the novel in releasing writers from the codes of convention,” concerned as it was “with biographical snapshots, moments of real life.” They “could be plotless, and love and marriage could be omitted, or explored in new ways” (*Women Who Did*, liv). “Eugenia” is the only one of Grand’s stories to end with marriage although marriage itself is a feature of nine of her stories. As with “A New Sensation,” Grand is adept at exploring the situation of the single woman and her interior emotional life through “snapshots” and telling glimpses of her day-to-day life. This she does to great effect in *Emotional Moments* and nowhere is this more apparent than in “She Was Silent,” where Grand mobilises the compact form of the short story to chart a complicated love affair with no prospect of marriage.

Aldah, the successful and self-sufficient single protagonist of “She Was Silent,” relates her story in the form of a confession to a dear male friend of long standing. The few instances where he questions Aldah, looking for confirmation or elucidation, mirror closely the thought processes and interrogation of the interested and curious reader, establishing here a close and confiding bond between narrator,

audience and reader. The scene is set, with the two old friends sitting at the fireside on a winter afternoon, and the erotic undercurrent of the story is suggested by the imagery in the opening paragraph: “the sun had set, but the colour still lingered, like a happy flush brought by a kiss to a pale cheek, and left there burning” (164).

We learn nothing about Aldah herself, her age, appearance, where she lives or where the encounter described in the story took place. All we know is that she was staying in the country with a group of “congenial friends” who all had their “chosen work as well as ample leisure” (165). She is clearly a mature, independent woman who is used to being alone and is as comfortable with her own company as she is with intimate friends, whether men or women. For Aldah, however, the tranquillity of a country house stay, surrounded by the restorative energy of nature at its most abundant, is disrupted by the arrival of Strawne, an unattached man known to the others in the party but a stranger to her. In a story with so few facts, the amount of detail we are given about Strawne’s appearance - his height, build, face, eyes and voice – is notable. It is as if Sarah Grand is inviting her readers, through Aldah’s infatuated eyes, to assess his potential as a lover.

In this story Grand observes, very sensitively, the awkwardness that Aldah feels towards the object of her “obsession,” once she has acknowledged to herself that friendship has taken on a sexual dimension. Her feelings are complicated, ranging from an initial “resentment” to embarrassment and a sense of being at a disadvantage. Aldah and Strawne embark on a passionate affair without either feeling a need to declare lifelong commitment to each other or to mention marriage. Their power struggle in this relationship is evident and while each gains the upper hand at some point during the narrated part of the story, this struggle is never portrayed in purely gendered terms. It is all about erotic surrender and domination: “the days were a dream, the nights a passionate protest; ... I had been captured by a generous force that heals when it wounds, and gives to the utterly vanquished the greatest joy” (167). Again, Sarah Grand writes in an open and honest way about female sexual feelings and relationships conducted outside marriage.

Mangum cites George Egerton and Olive Schreiner as being two New Woman novelists who successfully represent female sexual desire in their work. While

Grand, she argues, is usually less explicit, Agatha Oldham's feelings towards Vainrecourt in *A Domestic Experiment* and those of the female playwright in "An Emotional Moment" are notable exceptions (*Married, Middlebrow, and Militant* 45). It seems to me, however, that Grand's portrayal of Aldah's sensuality is equally powerful.

Writing in *The Pall Mall Magazine* in 1913 in an article entitled "The Case of the Modern Spinster," Grand is uncompromising in her assertion that: "[t]he state of celibacy is an unnatural state for normal people, and the modern spinster knows it, and is not resigned to it" (qtd. in *SSPSG*, I, 144) The greatest difficulty for Aldah, "modern spinster" that she is, is in coping with her feelings when she discovers that she is not the only woman enjoying a sexual relationship with Strawne, particularly as his other lover has become her close friend. She admits her feelings of jealousy to herself and to her male confidant although she says nothing to her female friend. Her motives for not revealing the truth to her friend are unclear. One possibility is that she values this friendship as much as she values her liaison with Strawne. The ending of the story is ambiguous. When her male confidant questions her, Aldah replies that she decided not to see Strawne again once she discovered his duplicity but refuses to confirm whether or not she stuck to her decision. Implicit in this silence is the second idea that ultimately, even for this most independent and worldly of women, the sexual bond is greater than the bond of female friendship. Grand leaves the end of the story and Aldah's motivation deliberately unclear in part to ensure her readers' continuing interest, but also to highlight the complexity of human relationships - particularly where sex can be freely offered or withheld by both men and women.

It seems very likely that there is a veiled reference in this ending to Ella Hepworth Dixon's *The Story of a Modern Woman*, published in 1894, just two years before *Lady's Realm* published "She Was Silent." Mary Erle, forced by her father's untimely death to support herself and her brother through writing for magazines, sustains herself throughout much of the novel by the idea that she will marry Vincent Hemming. Vincent, vain and selfish as he is, marries someone else. When he realises his mistake, he asks Mary to live with him. Although she loves him still and does not mind the thought of public censure, she turns him down saying "I can't, I won't,

deliberately injure another woman” (184). The bond of female solidarity that she and her friend Alison swore, insisting that “we modern women are going to help each other” (164) proves greater than the power of heterosexual love and she is, therefore, incapable of hurting Vincent’s wife and daughter.

In “The Wrong Road,” the protagonist Lady Grace is quite unlike the nameless playwright in “An Emotional Moment,” Lady Flora de Vigne or Aldah. Her physical appearance, her voice and manner are all clearly described and there is a note of melancholy underlying this careful delineation, from her “hair prematurely grey” to her “tender, pathetic face” and eyes with “a strange, far-away expression” (183). From the opening of the story, the tone is one of quiet regret and acceptance with the phrase “one who has lived the inner life of contemplation” suggesting that there is a nun-like quality about Lady Grace. The geographical location is very precise and still recognisable today. The house in Kensington Square, near the Greyhound Pub; and Kensington Gardens where the Broad Walk, the South Flower Walk and Albert Memorial are all referred to and used to give a sense of realism to the setting of a story of lost love. Her geographical confinement and containment mirror the narrowness of Lady Grace’s life - a life spent passively waiting for her suitor Gregory to return. Grand’s other single women are not passive; they work, move easily between city to country and travel abroad.

When the story opens, it is in Lady Grace’s “quaint drawing room” with its overtones of slightly old-fashioned accommodation. Grand makes the point that “All the girls loved her ... she understood them so well, and, although a single woman, was so much more sympathetic than most of the married ladies of their acquaintance” (183). She is regularly sought out by unmarried girls wanting her advice about relationships with the opposite sex and the story within a story that she tells to one particular young woman recounts an episode that altered the direction of her whole life and destroyed her chance of marriage. It is a tale of pride, misunderstanding, jealousy and wasted opportunities and is used to reinforce her belief that honest communication between the sexes is the way to foster trust and ultimately, happiness.

Lady Grace in narrating her own story is remembering her much younger self and her feelings and emotions at the time. Of course these emotions are recalled by an older woman and it is up to the reader to decide on the accuracy of her recall or the authenticity of her perception of events. These slight variations of perspective are highlighted by the fact that the two magazine publications of this story have different titles. When it was published in *The English Illustrated Magazine* in 1895, it was entitled “The Wrong Road” and it still bears this name in *Emotional Moments*, thirteen years later. When, however, it was published by *Cosmopolitan* in America in December 1895, it was called “A Momentary Indiscretion.” By suggesting that the protagonist has taken the wrong road, the emphasis is placed on a wrong life choice, for whatever reason. A momentary indiscretion, though, places a slightly sexual emphasis on the waltz in the park that Lady Grace enjoys with the “harum-scarum sort of young fellow,” Grey. The mature Lady Grace points out to the young listener to her story that Grey was “one of those whom a young girl may play with, but never thinks of seriously” (184). She was, however, charmed by his carefree attitude and his sense of fun, offering a welcome contrast to her serious fiancé Gregory. The American magazine, in emphasising the importance of this encounter through the story’s title, raises questions about the choice of a suitable marriage partner as an interesting subtext to the overt suggestion about the need to resolve misunderstandings promptly and, if necessary, be the first to apologise.

If, however, Grand’s readers are expecting a traditional happy ending with lovers reunited after surviving misunderstanding and adverse circumstances, they are disappointed. It is in this reversal of expectations that the principal interest of the story lies. When Lady Grace and Gregory meet again, years after the “momentary indiscretion” has separated them, they are very different people with little in common. Gregory has immersed himself in the financial world and, with his nicely observed thinning hair and thickening waist, had become “one of those men who care for nothing but mere worldly success and animal well-being” (189). Grace, on the other hand, feels that “her trivial girl’s mind” had “grown in strength and beauty” enabling her “to reach up to the highest ideal of life and conduct.” She does confess, though, that she has no interest in the world of business, and the reader senses Grand’s ambivalence about this sentiment when she has Gregory reply ““Ladies don’t, as a rule. All that is done for them”” (188).

Maturity has changed them both and has made them incompatible. Both have remained single. Grand leaves unanswered the question about whether or not they might have grown together and influenced each other for the better. More likely is the idea that she is confirming what she stated in the “The Modern Girl” in 1894: that not everyone is suited to marriage and that a number of people are better off unmarried.

Incompatibility is at the heart of “The Undefinable – A Fantasia,” the final story in *Emotional Moments*. In it, Sarah Grand is indulging her mischievous sense of humour to the full in juxtaposing an archetypal “Old Man” with an ideal “New Woman.” In subtitling it “A Fantasia,” she is suggesting that the story should not be taken too seriously. Published in the American magazine *Cosmopolitan* in October 1894, it is satirical in tone and humorously illustrated by W.T. Smedley (1858-1920), a well-known New York based painter and book illustrator.

The nameless self-confessed artist, the “I” of the story begins his tale on “a hot summer evening” (206). Pompous and self-important, his pretensions to grandeur are mirrored in the long, convoluted sentences and overblown language he uses to begin his story of a life-changing encounter with one of Grand’s most glorious female creations. He patronises his audience, clearly imagining them to be his intellectual inferiors:

Well, in a word, if I may venture – with all becoming diffidence, and only, it will be understood, for the good-natured purpose of making myself intelligible to the general reader – if I may venture to quote a remarkable critic of mine... (206).

Onwards he rambles, in the same sentence, for another one hundred and six words, extolling his own “genius.” Tellingly, he admires his “last-accomplished work” before and after his dinner, with his dinner and his digestive system receiving almost as much attention as his art. Over the course of eight pages, we learn much about the artist, his self-indulgent way of life, his love-affairs with the society ladies he paints, his preoccupation with “capital” – both financial and artistic, and the sad realisation that his powers of perception might be failing, possibly through “the coarse influences of indigestion” (207).

This is a well-judged piece of gentle mockery. While her artist is every bit as exaggerated as the anonymous New Woman who is about to make her entrance, Grand's comic facility is used to great effect in making serious points about gender relations. George Egerton is doing something very similar in her story "A Little Grey Glove," in *Keynotes* (1893). Her "sex-shy" and equally pompous first person, male narrator is comically ignorant about women, although he finds them uncomfortably alluring. He too is making assumptions about the mood of the audience for his tale: "I knew you'd laugh sceptically at that," he says having revealed his analysis of women as being "in a spirit of purely scientific investigation" (34). Inherited wealth has made it unnecessary for him to work, so he indulges his passion for fly-fishing instead. The enigmatic divorcee who symbolically and comically "hooks" him, initially with a fishing hook through his ear lobe, changes his life and perceptions as radically as Grand's New Woman disrupts the artist's life. The conclusions of both stories are similarly open-ended with both men acknowledging the incompleteness of their existence without the exceptional and unconventional women who have unexpectedly entered their lives.

Grand's artist has very decided views about women. His first glimpse of the young woman who knocks at his door, offering to model for him, does not bode well: "I did not think her particularly attractive in appearance, and the direct look of her eyes into mine was positively distasteful" (208). It is eyes, rather than her face or figure that continue to trouble him: "mocking eyes ... out of which an imperious spirit shone independently, not looking up, but meeting mine on the same level" (208). What disturbs him is less a matter of her height than the easy assumption of equality. This is confirmed when he goes on to state: "Now, a really attractive, womanly woman looks up, clings, depends, so that a man can never forget his own superiority in her presence" (208). Grand is being deliberately heavy-handed and provocative here in order to communicate her feminist agenda to her magazine and book readers, but it is also an effective way of setting up the artist for the revenge his model is about to exact at a subsequent meeting when she persuades him to undress, replacing his usual clothes with a skimpy, Classical fancy dress costume.

This scene is striking for its humour, lightness of touch and also for its psychological complexity. Initially the amusingly self-aware model deliberately addresses the artist in language as pompous and convoluted as his own before her presence had reduced him to a shorter, more succinct manner of communication. She accuses him of a “gross” appetite, not just in food and drink, but in the “Tree of Life,” saying that: “You have fed your senses to such a monstrous girth that they have crowded the soul out of you” (211).

We learn nothing concrete about the model during the story. The artist imagines that she must be from a wealthy family of good social standing but that is because money and class are important to him. She admits that she has inherited her irreverent sense of humour from a relative who worked as a cartoonist on a weekly comic paper but this reference is likely to be a literary trick that Grand is fond of using in her fiction – namely to ground some of her flights of fantasy in contemporary realistic detail to make them more believable.

The model’s effect on the artist is powerful. Not only does she make him look at his painting with more critical eyes, but she causes him to re-evaluate his view of womankind too. As the reader has come to expect, however, it is still not a rounded view. Ever grandiloquent, he effuses:

My first thought was of England and America, of the glorious womanhood of this age of enlightenment, compared with the creature as she existed merely for man’s use and pleasure of old; the toy-woman, drudge, degraded domestic animal, beast of intolerable burdens (216).

He is suddenly aligning himself with the “age of enlightenment” in his new understanding of the female sex but one suspects this view is confined to his model rather than to the likes of Lady Catherine Claridge, the society lady of the “love-limpid eyes,” who is dropping unsubtle hints about her desire to be his next mistress. “Toy-woman” the model is emphatically not: in her own words, she is ““a woman with all the latest improvements. The creature the world wants”” (214).

While “The Undefinable” makes a persuasive case for women enjoying the same artistic and creative recognition as men; it is also making a plea for men and women

to work together for the empowerment of both. At times slightly clumsy in its characterisation and notably didactic, it is nonetheless clear why this has been the most anthologised of all Sarah Grand's stories.³⁴

While Grand, in her journalism, actively explores the "Woman Question" of the 1880s and 90s including arguments for and against marriage³⁵, her short fiction focuses on the variety of ways that women and men lead their lives, with varying degrees of satisfaction. While marriage is subjected to close scrutiny and analysis in her novels, the short stories featured in this section are more concerned with the quality of the single life. Choice, or lack of it, is not a concern. Sarah Grand's single women embrace their lives and live them to the full. Even Lady Grace, confined as she is by her nature as much as convention, relishes her role as confidante and advisor to the younger women on the verge of making choices about the lives they want to lead. Grand's single women are bold and unconventional, occasionally foolish, but always psychologically convincing.

³⁴ Included in *Daughters of Decadence: Women Writers of the Fin-de-Siecle*, 1993; *A New Woman Reader: Fiction, Articles and Drama of the 1890s*, 2000; and *Women Who Did: Stories by Men and Women 1890-1914*, 2002.

³⁵ Some of the best examples of this debate are to be found in the journalistic writing of Grant Allen, Eliza Lynn Linton and Mona Caird. In "Plain Words on the Woman Question" (*Fortnightly Review*, 46, October 1889) Allen, writing about the "crisis" in "the position of women" stresses the importance of woman's maternal function although considers the term "wife" in the "broadest sense," while Eliza Lynn Linton deploras "emancipated womanhood" in her provocative attack on the New Woman in "The Wild Women: As Social Insurgents," (*Nineteenth Century*, 30, October 1891). Mona Caird, in her fiction and journalism, was consistently critical about the institution of marriage, particularly in *The Daughters of Danaus* (1894) and "Marriage" (*Westminster Review*, 130, August 1888).

Section ii.

THE JOSEPHA STORIES: “The Man in the Scented Coat,” “I Can’t Explain It,” “Josepha Recounts a Remarkable Experience” and “One of the Olden Time: A Study from Life.”

The anonymous *Times Literary Supplement* reviewer, writing on 7 September 1922 of Sarah Grand’s final volume of short stories, *Variety* (1922) suggests that the “older readers” will find much to enjoy in the book and implies that Grand herself could be designated as “One of the Olden Time” (*SSPSG*, 1:554-5), the title of the sixth story in the collection and the final Josepha story. By 1922, Grand had been writing short fiction for over thirty years, and her four Josepha stories all engage in a significant way with contemporary preoccupations, whether it is in demonstrating a woman’s right to move un-chaperoned and unmolested in public city space or discussing the welfare reforms of the early twentieth century. From 1891 to 1922, the content of Grand’s writing, particularly about Josepha, continues to be in tune with the times and the *TLS* was rather unjust in suggesting that her stories had become old-fashioned. The aim of this section is to demonstrate how the Josepha stories explore topical concerns and to show how these stories inform the reading of Grand’s better known feminist trilogy of novels, *Ideala*, *The Heavenly Twins* and *The Beth Book*.

Grand’s Josepha first made her appearance in *The Lady’s World* in June 1904. Although the title of the story, “The Man in the Scented Coat,” suggests a male protagonist, it is Josepha, a Grand heroine in the mould of *Ideala*, *Angelica*, *Beth*, *Adalesa* and *Babs*³⁶, who is dominant. This story was included in *Emotional Moments*, and Josepha reappears in 1922 in three of the eight stories in *Variety*, “Josepha Recounts a Remarkable Experience,” “I Can’t Explain It” and “One of the Olden Time.” The fact that Josepha appears four times in eighteen years suggests not only that Grand, as Stephanie Forward affirms, was “fond” (*Dreams*, xxi) of her but also, that she was keen to chart aspects of the progress of the first part of the twentieth century through her protagonist’s eyes. In developing Josepha’s potential as a character and a psychologically believable woman, Grand is exploring the

³⁶ *Angelica* is a central character in *The Heavenly Twins* (1893), *Beth* in *The Beth Book* (1897), *Adelesas* in “The Yellow Leaf” (1893) and *Babs* in *Babs the Impossible* (1901). All are spirited and unconventional New Women.

female perspective in a rapidly changing environment. Her skilful handling of Josepha's maturation suggests that her character is consciously positioned within a fictional world orchestrated by an awareness of social change in the real world.

The "connecting character" is something Beetham points to as being a feature of magazine fiction in the 1890s and she cites Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes series in the *Strand* and Annie Swann's Doctor stories centring on Elizabeth Glen MD, in *Woman at Home* as being good examples. Both series are located in London, with Swann using instead of the detective genre "naturalism to explore a range of social problems, especially as they affected women" (*A Magazine of Her Own?*, 171). Beetham also highlights the way in which both series are "constructed ... round the interplay between a protagonist and an observer/narrator" (171), a device Grand also deploys, albeit more discreetly than Swan, who is herself the narrator, or Conan Doyle whose Dr Watson provides the commentary.

Although Josepha is one of only three protagonists to appear more than once in Grand's short stories, she is without doubt the most fully developed character. Of the other two, the male artist who features in both "When the Door Opened...?" and "The Undefinable" undergoes significant personal development, particularly in his views of women, whereas the male protagonist of "A Thorough Change" and "The Saving Grace" redeems himself at the end of his life, after years of disreputable living, through his devotion to a virtuous woman. While there is evidence of character growth in these areas, there is nothing in the stories to suggest that these men are becoming older or responding to society altering around them.

Characters featuring more than once in Grand's novels are also seen to develop while they are also shown in a variety of settings. Ideala, the central character in the book of the same name, has a cameo role in *The Heavenly Twins* and again in *The Beth Book* where she lives up to her early promise of distinction by becoming a campaigner for women's rights. Dr George Galbraith, a central character in *The Heavenly Twins*, appears in *The Beth Book* as wiser Sir George, still married to Evadne who has not overcome the damage inflicted by her disastrous first marriage to Major Colquhoun; Angelica, half of the "heavenly twins" and wife of father-figure Mr Kilroy, has a prominent role as an influential friend to Beth in *The Beth Book*; and, of course, attractive Lord Dawne, the unreliable narrator of *Ideala*, makes

further appearances in *The Heavenly Twins* and *The Beth Book*, as does Mrs Orton Beg and Mr and Mrs Hamilton Wells. Through these re-appearances, Grand's readers enjoy the pleasure of being allowed to see what becomes of a character as he or she develops over a longer period of time than that encompassed by the first encounter.

Grand is skilled at 'behind-the-scenes' character development. Caught up in the world of her fiction, the reader is implicitly invited to imaginatively fill in the gaps in the narrative through the placing within the text snippets of information about the characters at various points in their lives. The reader enjoys an assumed intimacy with these figures while the idea of the passing of time conveys a real sense of socio-historical progression through the changing environment in which these characters participate. In this way the flawed Ideala who fled an abusive marriage and struggled intermittently with depression and lack of purpose in *Ideala*, emerges as a confident teacher and writer, travelling the world in her single-minded quest to better the lives of women through the pages of *The Heavenly Twins* and *The Beth Book*.

If Ideala, Angelica and Beth all become "New Women" through the course of the novels, Josepha starts out from this position. The tone of the opening sentence of "The Man in the Scented Coat" establishes the mood of the story: light-hearted and iconoclastic. This is no demure girl, but an independent woman with a past. "Josepha, well known for her talents, much loved for her charming personality, a little alarming to her friends on account of her occasional eccentricities, but always interesting..." (198). These positive traits are not developed explicitly but the adventure story that follows illuminate these qualities very clearly. At the beginning of the story Josepha is having tea late on a winter afternoon, with a female friend who lives in Portland Place. On parting, they shake hands, a surprisingly male salutation, but in keeping with the character of the energetic Josepha who twice on the first page "runs" down stairs.

Stephanie Forward suggests that during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century women writers were using the short story to challenge "[c]oncepts of compromise and conformity" in order to "experience more freedom from restrictive life-styles and mundane responsibilities" (*Dreams*, xx). This is certainly true of the stories in which we see Josepha moving about London, alone, un-chaperoned and

unafraid, delighting in chance meetings and always receptive to new experience. On leaving her friend's house Josepha declares her intention of getting home by train, "the quickest and warmest way." Undeterred by a thick fog which transforms the everyday with "a touch of mystery," she plunges headlong into the darkness, telling the bemused footman at the door "I never was out in anything like this before!" (199) The effect of this is twofold: the fog induces a sense of unreality, a state where anything can happen; and confirms Josepha in her sensation-seeking New Woman role where conventional social boundaries have disappeared as thoroughly as the fog has obliterated the geographical outline of the city.

In the last twenty years, critics such as Judith Walkowitz, Deborah Epstein Nord and Deborah Parsons have written about the dangers of Victorian London as well as the opportunities for mobility for late-Victorian women away from the secure space of home. They all recognise the fear of women being perceived as prostitutes through venturing out alone. "A woman's occupation of public space does more than unsettle her domestic and private identity; it threatens her respectability, her chastity, her very femininity" (117) writes Nord. "The Man in the Scented Coat" tackles this preoccupation in a very direct way through Josepha's insistence on stepping out into the fog alone. While the novelist and poet Amy Levy was also concerned with investigating the various aspects of the city in her novel *The Romance of a Shop* (1888), the four Lorimer sisters spend much of their time viewing London from behind the windows of their Baker Street flat, although Gertrude, the most independent of the sisters, feels "something of a passion" for "the pulses of the great city" (87) and uses the public transport system to move around it.

Rather than being afraid of London, the streets and the transforming fog, Josepha finds the experience "exciting" and is aware of "being rapidly wound up into the mood for adventures" (199). In this heightened frame of mind, she is almost run over by an omnibus which had mounted the pavement. Undeterred, she becomes aware of a strong, flowery perfume, and, following it "guiding herself by the sense of smell instead of the sense of sight" (200) she becomes aware of two men ahead of her. It is the shorter and stouter of the two from whom the perfume emanates. When, as is to be expected in night time London, Josepha and the men are set upon by a gang of "roughs," there is no real sense of danger or fear. Instead, Josepha attaches herself to the two men and follows them to the safety afforded by a narrow black door between

two shop windows which opens to reveal a steep staircase. Characteristically, she “ran up after them intrepidly” (201), to find herself in a discreet private club.

The narrator, whose identity is not made clear, gives us some more information about Josepha at this point: “She was one of the best known women of her day, her portraits were everywhere, and the man in the scented coat recognised her face the moment he saw it”(201). The reader does not learn any more about her identity and the next piece of proffered information indicates that one of her weaknesses is “she dearly loved a joke.” We are never explicitly told the identity of the man in the scented coat, although there are plenty of hints in the text that he is the Prince of Wales through the suggestion that he is wasting his considerable abilities in gambling and the “royal” scorn with which Josepha rejects a gift from him. In addition, in the magazine version of the story, Josepha calls him “Mr Edwards.”

After an evening of dining, smoking, chatting and playing cards, the three companions leave the private club via a lift shaft and a secret tunnel. The man in the scented coat then sees Josepha home in his discreet carriage, marvelling at what “a cool-headed lady” she is. She agrees, and continues: “I am fond of life, and devote myself to the study of it in all its phases; and this leads to occasional adventures; but I am prepared for anything” (204). Her preparation means she carries a gun. This she acknowledges as “a melodramatic touch” and by acknowledging the sensational quality of this admission effectively draws her audience into her confidence. This half-humorous highlighting of potential difficulties in making characterisation or narrative believable is a device Grand uses regularly to defuse potential criticism.³⁷

Throughout the story, Josepha has been seen behaving in a traditionally masculine manner, moving through the London streets independently and unafraid, accosting strangers, smoking and shaking hands. In the very final part of the story, some months have elapsed since the adventure, and the man in the scented coat’s companion, cheekily named by the irreverent protagonist as “Colonel Perturbation,” presents Josepha with an expensive gift as a reward for her silence about the events of the night. It is an offended Josepha who refuses the offering, deeming that she had not been trusted to keep a secret. Her allegiance to a code of honour is almost as

³⁷ See also “The Undefinable” and the “deplorable disease of inopportune mirth” which besets the artist’s model and Adelesa’s bull pup in “The Yellow Leaf,” used to poke fun at Aunt Marsh.

conventionally masculine as is her “scorn” in response to the implication that she might not have lived up to this code.

In her novels and short stories alike, Grand explores what Ann Heilmann (2004) calls “the liberatory potential of radical transformation through gender-transgressive behaviour” (45). While Heilmann applies this to shifting gender positions in *Ideala* and *The Heavenly Twins*, an examination of Josepha in these terms offers some insight into Grand’s feminist political agenda in her short stories. We are not looking at cross-dressing in the Angelica sense, as “masquerade,” but rather the appropriation of traditionally male attitudes and behaviour.

Heilmann argues that of all Grand’s successful depictions of New Women, it is only ultimately *Ideala* and Beth who achieve any significant potential for socio-political transformation since they choose the public rather than private arena to stage their feminist resistance to patriarchal authority. I would argue, however, that it is Josepha who, of all Grand’s protagonists, represents the most complete embodiment of the New Woman’s challenge to male-dominated society. By necessity, through the constraints imposed by the concise nature of the short story, we are shown little of Josepha’s early life and development. There are, of course, hints, such as the fact that she is well known, that she requires periods of solitude (although this has not always been the case), she is economically independent and holds firm political views. Taken together, each of the four Josepha stories act as pieces of a jigsaw, slotting together to provide a picture of a rounded, mature character who has successfully grappled with aspects of her own nature as well as the pressing issues of the day concerning women and their place in society. Josepha does not need to campaign aggressively on behalf of her sex; rather she offers herself as a striking example of what a women can achieve by leading an uncompromising and uncompromised life in the public view.

“The Man in the Scented Coat” has the elements of a traditional adventure story: disguise, danger and escape. Two of the Josepha stories in *Variety*, however, have more in common with the Gothic ghost story.³⁸ In both stories, the supernatural

³⁸ Ann Heilmann who in *Sex, Social Purity and Sarah Grand* (2000) has organised her selection of Grand short stories into various categories, including “Sisterhood,” “Decadent Women,” “Class and Gender,” and “War,” rather than organising them by publication date and categorises Grand’s two

element is hinted at rather than made explicit, through Josepha's preoccupation with "ghosts" who haunt the scene of wrongdoing and can lure "the unwary to self-destruction", or in the rumours about the empty next door house which had once been a nursing home and out of which "nobody came out at all – except as a 'coffined corpse'" (261).

As with "The Man in the Scented Coat," Josepha is not the main narrator of the stories. Rather her telling of two ghost stories within these stories is framed by a first person narrator, of indeterminate gender, who sets the scene for the storytelling and who reveals a great deal about Josepha herself. The narrator has clearly known Josepha for some time and regards himself or herself as close friend and takes delight in encouraging her to speak of her experiences. On each occasion, the storytelling takes place within a comfortable domestic setting: "We had spent the hours since dinner alone together in a cosy little upstairs sitting-room in Josepha's town house" (260) and, on the second occasion, in "Josepha Recounts a Remarkable Experience," it is "an evening *tete-a-tete*" by the fireside accompanied by coffee and cigarettes. In the first story the clock striking midnight creates a suitably atmospheric setting for the telling of a ghostly tale, while in the second, it is the storm outside which heightens the mood of mystery and potential danger.

In "I Can't Explain It – ", the narrator and Josepha have been exchanging reminiscences of "queer occurrences," although the narrator rashly suggests that these things can all be explained rationally. This encourages Josepha to recount an incident from her life, challenging the narrator, and by implication, the reader, to explain it. This has the effect of inviting the reader, in a direct manner, to consider the possible interpretations of Josepha's story.

Josepha has progressed since her first appearance in 1904. She travelled on foot and by train then but by 1922, she is the owner and driver of a car. Her car broke down in an unfamiliar and unspecified old town, and, being an independent and resourceful woman, she explored the town while her car was being repaired. Looking for a retreat out of London, she finds a slightly dilapidated eighteenth-century house to rent in "The Enclosure". Her first sight of "The Enclosure" is telling:

ghost stories "I Can't Explain It - " and "Josepha Recounts a Remarkable Experience" as "Gender and Genre (1): The Gothic."

“I stopped to look in and it was as if I were gazing into by-gone days through an opening in time, so old-world, formal, spacious, satisfying was what I saw; so exactly like the grounds of a mansion in an eighteenth[-]century print, urn and weeping willow, dark cypresses, stone vases, and all” (261).

Again the reader is being removed from the everyday world, by means of “an opening in time,” with the suggestion that this world might not be governed by the same natural laws as that of the present day. Josepha, in likening what she saw to “an eighteenth[-]century print” is doubling this effect of distance. Having effectively set the scene for an inexplicable event, Grand twists the story again by making it the postman, rather than Josepha, who sees a ghostly face at an upstairs window of the neighbouring empty house. When the postman is asked to describe what he saw, he struggles: ““I can’t say wot ’e was like – a sorter w’ite face – and eyes – mostly eyes?”” (262). Josepha dismisses this as a trick of the light but a few weeks later a group of workmen have a similar experience.

Having given the narrator and the reader an unsettling glimpse of the unknown through the eyes of practical men not easily associated with flights of fantasy, and mediated through Josepha’s telling of the incidents, Grand, once more, alters the mood of the story. Josepha digresses to talk of the effect that the balmy heat of summer is having on her:

“Heat is balm to my temperament, rest and refreshment. I thrive on it, especially on warm grey days. Are there anywhere on earth days so mystic-marvellous as our warm grey days in England? Pass me your sun-bright lands for blatant. The sun exposes. Under sunny skies one is a healthy, happy animal, to whom a flower is a passing sensation ... here on a warm grey day a flower is a spiritual experience. On such days my senses, acting without conscious effort on my part as channels of impression, of observation...” (264).

She continues in this vein with her stream-of-consciousness reminiscence until the narrator laughs at her “moments.” Josepha too can see that she is getting carried away. This intensity of feeling seems to have much more in common with modernist, subjective writing than Grand’s writing of the 1890s.

Josepha then returns to the face at the window, seeing it herself for the first time. She is unafraid; in fact she observes ““[m]y feeling for him was indistinct. I neither liked nor disliked him; neither feared nor trusted him. I just took him for granted...”” (265). It is Josepha’s young ward, staying with her during the school holidays, who asks ““what *is* that *horrid* Thing that looks out of the window in the empty house?””

Once the suggestion has been made that the face is horrid, then it becomes clear that it is an evil and seductive force. Josepha becomes aware of its power and that it is something which needs to be resisted.

Harriet Devine Jump suggests, when writing about Vernon Lee's 1890 story "A Wicked Voice," that the author's "chief interest is in the psychology of the narrator and in the nature of the evil to which he is exposed" (4), she could equally well have been writing about Grand's story. In "A Wicked Voice," composer Magnus becomes both fascinated and repelled by the portrait and the voice of "that coxcomb of a singer," the androgynous, eighteenth-century Zaffirino. Magnus both realises and despises his enslavement, recognising that the voice is inherently evil, but finds himself unable to resist the seductive power of something which ultimately destroys his creative faculties. That the voice highlights Magnus's sexual ambivalence and his struggle to find an original creative expression for his musical output when confronted by the weight of an intimidating European heritage, lends a psychological depth to a story which suggests but never makes explicit the nature of this haunting.

Josepha is psychologically more robust than Magnus, and although aware of the power of the appearance of the face, she is more secure in her knowledge of herself and the world around her than Lee's character. Grand stresses the fact that Josepha is an established, respected independent woman, the sort of woman that Ideala, Beth and Angelica would all become. The New Woman of the 1890s has grown up as Josepha in the new century. The "white face," "the horrid Thing," is the ghost of the New Woman's earlier struggle against gendered double standards and sexual impurity. By encoding these sensitive subjects within a supernatural tale, Grand is able to comment freely on woman's progress over the thirty years of her writing and campaigning career and to draw attention to the danger of regressing into earlier, more restrictive attitudes and actions.

There is a parallel here between Emma Frances Brooke's *A Superfluous Woman* (1894) and Grand's "I Can't Explain It – ". In *A Superfluous Woman*, the central character Jessamine's insanity, following marriage to the impure Lord Herriot, is characterised as "The Thing." Edith in *The Heavenly Twins* becomes mad and dies following her marriage to the syphilitic Sir Mosley Menteith. Gail Cunningham

(*The New Woman and the Victorian Novel*, 67) likens Dr Cornerstone in *A Superfluous Woman* to Grand's Dr Galbraith, suggesting that they are both doctors "of feminist persuasion," although of course, as the novels suggest, sympathy is ultimately not enough to bring about social change.

There is also a similarity in language between "I Can't Explain It –" and Lucy Clifford's story "End of Her Journey," published by *Temple Bar* in 1887. In her story Clifford focuses on the marriage of Edward and Mildred Archerson, examining it in detail from the perspective of both husband and wife. The reader is encouraged to feel sympathy for both and not to pass judgement on the inequalities of affection and expectation in their relationship. When Mildred discovers that her husband is a bigamist she commits suicide rather than confront her husband, drowning herself in the sea. Mary, the second wife, says to Edward towards the end of the story: "It is so strange, but in the twilight I can often see her face looking up from a grey sea to a grey sky, a dead white face" (Jump 223). The symbolism of the "dead white face" and its power to haunt and destroy Edward and Mary's happiness is, ostensibly, a case of straightforward retribution. Clifford's real skill, however, is in turning this tale of revenge into a tragedy for all the characters involved through the idea that all are to blame in some way for the failure of the marriage. The "white face" is not just the dead Mildred: it represents the suffering inflicted by marital incompatibility and sexual infidelity, and the "grey" of the sea and the sky reflects the "nothing" beyond death.

Grand is drawing upon uses and depictions of the symbolic ghostly figure in the fiction of her contemporaries to add layers of meaning to her own writing in the same way that she uses literary and biblical allusions to reinforce her own views in her other stories. In using Josepha's young female ward to remark at the end of "I Can't Explain It –": "The horrid Thing has gone and it has taken its window away with it," Grand is reinforcing the idea that there has been a significant advance in the education and perceptions of women and their roles since her days of campaigning for women's education and sexual purity in the 1890s. Women of the twentieth century have different battles to fight.

In the second Josepha story in *Variety*, "Josepha Recounts a Remarkable Experience," we get to know her better, through the eyes of the anonymous narrator:

She is one of those rare people who face life, death, and the hereafter, in a spirit of adventure. To know, to feel – that is what she demands. Her temperament clamours to face the fact, to experience the sensation, whatever it be; and her every nerve responds to the effort. She is, that is to say, splendidly alive (283).

Here is a very modern woman and it is possibly only Beth from *The Beth Book* who has the potential to become such a vibrant, rounded woman.

The role of the narrator is particularly interesting in this story, especially in relation to Josepha. They clearly share a life and a friendship outside the pages of the story, as is apparent on the first page, “We had been engaged together one day in a little business” (283). The fact that this narrator knows Josepha well enough to comment on her “human weakness” suggests a degree of intimacy even, as well as a certain presumption.

The narrator observes Josepha and her surroundings in a perceptive and affectionate way, reminiscent of Lord Dawne, the male narrator of *Ideala* or of Dr Galbreith as he narrates the final part of *The Heavenly Twins*. The narrator encourages Josepha to talk and to reveal things about herself, her past life and her development in addition to prompting a fuller telling of Josepha’s ghost story, the story within a story. Particularly revealing is Josepha’s reference to “a summer of the soul” and a place she had lived, some time in the past. She tells the narrator of the “pleasure” with which she “took possession” of “a London flat, just an ordinary, comfortable, common-place London flat” (285). Josepha goes on, in her own voice, to explain what the flat meant to her, thereby revealing something of her past life:

“To me it was safe anchorage, a sheltered harbour after long buffeting on the open sea. My first night in it, when I went to bed, I fairly hugged myself, I was so thankful to be there – alone – with no one to interfere with me. I could come and go as I chose. My time was my own. I had nothing to fear. I was free! You can’t think what that means to a woman who had known what it was to be always at somebody’s beck and call – the kind of beck and call exercised by power without love!” (285)

Although nothing is made explicit in this passage, the suggestion is there that Josepha had extricated herself from a difficult relationship, possibly marriage. The word “fear” and more than a hint of self-control, reinforced by the breathless, staccato sentences, suggest that even looking back at something so far in the past still has the power to affect her.

There are striking similarities between the presentation of Josepha's experience and the account, in *The Beth Book*, of the first night Beth sleeps alone since her marriage to dissolute doctor Dan Maclure, when she goes to stay with Angelica Kilroy at Ilverthorpe:

When Beth went to her room that night, she experienced a strange sense of satisfaction which she could not account for until she found herself alone, with no fear of being disturbed. It seemed to her then that she had never before known what comfort was, never slept in such a delightful bed, so fresh and cool and sweet (418).

Beth goes on to reflect on "defilements," "the awful oppression of her married life" and "the inevitable degradation of intimate association with such a man as her husband" (418). While Beth is expressing relief about being temporarily free from the demands of marital sex, Josepha is safe from this too but is also enjoying the greater freedom of having left a relationship and a way of life as a married woman.

Josepha goes on to relate her "remarkable experience," an unsettling story about becoming "enslaved" by ghostly footsteps and being tempted to commit suicide. Gillian Kersley alerts us to the fact that there is a strong autobiographical element in this story. (*Darling Madame*, 81) Whether or not Grand is linking herself with Josepha here is interesting but not particularly relevant for the reader's enjoyment of the story or appreciation of the skill with which it is told. Valerie Shaw, in demonstrating that "first- person narrators are indeed a literary convention and not authorial mouthpieces" (*Short Story*, 114) quotes Somerset Maugham's Preface to his *Complete Short Stories*:

"[b]ut the *I* who writes is just as much a character in the story as the other persons with whom it is concerned. He may be the hero or he may be an onlooker or a confidant. But he is a character. ... He must remember that the author is not drawing a faithful portrait of himself, but creating a character for the particular purpose of his story" (114).

The "particular purpose" of "Josepha Recounts a Remarkable Experience" is to demonstrate that however seductive the past can be, with its conventional views about and expectations of women's roles in relation to human relationships and marriage, resistance is the only satisfactory way forward in establishing a new and more satisfactory *modus vivendi*.

Grand's Josepha stories create a strong female character who has emerged from the debates of the 1890s to take her rightful place in society: a woman who is not afraid

to tarnish her reputation, to venture out into London at night, to own property, drive a motorcar and to choose her friends – both male and female. Josepha has banished the “ghosts” of sexual impurity, disease and unsatisfactory marital union, demonstrating that it is possible to be reconciled to a worthwhile life in the city, showing that it is possible to live an interesting life alone and that marriage is not essential for a woman’s wellbeing or financial security. That Josepha is a psychologically complicated woman, prone to changeable moods, depression and occasional uncertainty, reinforces her status as one of Grand’s most successfully-drawn protagonists.

The tone of the fourth Josepha story is quite unlike the three already discussed. In “One of the Olden Time: A Study from Life,” Josepha is not mentioned by name. The central figure in this story is Mallory, the gardener. Josepha narrates this story herself but as soon as she begins, the reader becomes aware that she is describing the precise setting and location of her house in “I Can’t Explain It –”: “[m]y house is in a quiet backwater of the town” (275). The approaches to the house, its garden with hedges, shrubs and trees as well as the buttercup-eating tortoise are identical in both stories. The narrative shift, however, means that the attention is no longer on the psychological reality of Josepha but on her role as an employer and on her social understanding and political views. As Josepha is a declared Liberal amongst Conservative neighbours, the reader glimpses the defiant woman of old, but Grand is going back to the observational, quasi-scientific mode of stories such as “Eugenia,” “Boomellen” and “Janey, a Humble Administrator” in titling the story “A Study from Life.”

Grand rarely gives the reader much information about her usually anonymous narrators, so the effect of knowing that Josepha herself is telling this story is particularly interesting. We have already come to know and respect Josepha as a well-known, independent and resourceful woman and here we see her in essentially a domestic setting, viewing her surroundings from her study window and reflecting on society in the first decade of the twentieth century. This story was first published in *The Pall Mall Magazine* in July 1911, a literary monthly magazine which among others included Thomas Hardy, Grant Allen and Joseph Conrad in its list of contributors.

In this story we are invited, through Josepha's critical gaze, to look not so much at the failings of individuals but at the failings of a state which does not make proper provision for its citizens, particularly the elderly coming to the end of their working lives, even though the Old Age Pension Act was passed in 1908 and an old age pension had been introduced in January 1909. Men over seventy, subject to a means test, were eligible for a payment of 5 shillings a week or 7s6d for a married couple if their income was below £21 per annum.

This is not the first time that Grand has had Josepha engage with topical subjects. In the first paragraph of "The Man in the Scented Coat" there is reference to "merry microbes seeking whom they may devour." This is a reflection of the very strong public concerns about microbes, or bacteria, current in the early part of the twentieth century. These fears gave rise to headlines such as "Death to Microbes"³⁹ and the tone of a re-assuring editorial, penned by a Doctor Bakewell in the *Auckland Star* (24 August 1904): "The fear of the microbe has taken such complete possession both of the medical profession and the public, that it would seem profitable to remind them of a few elementary truths..." As Gareth Williams reminds us: "[t]he first decade of the twentieth century was a boom time for bacteria, genuine and otherwise" (70).

Before Josepha introduces her readers to Mallory, she reflects on the "worn old men" who had been her gardeners, men who should have been able to rest at the end of their lives, "had such a thing been possible for them with credit" (276). At this point, Grand makes a significant addition to the book text, putting in a sentence which does not appear in the magazine: "[in] many instances the old age pension was not enough or began too late to save them." Josepha's political views are apparent in her reference to the "affluent country" which offers "imprisonment in the workhouse" as the alternative to continuing to work until life's end. Sarah Grand had already written a story about the plight of the poor, the double standards of the wealthy and the problems of old age in "The Rector's Bane," published in *Emotional Moments*, but in this story we are given very specific details and insights into the politics of class, the value of money and what it can buy.

³⁹ *Warwick Examiner and Times*, Saturday 6th February 1904, citing the *Vienna Medical Gazette*

Mallory expects four shillings pay for a full day working in the garden at the time the story is set, around election time in 1910. He also refers to his time as a farm worker, with a cottage and twelve shillings a week, his distrust of the increasingly militant Trade Union movement, and the fact that he has just been to the town hall to vote. While not telling Josepha in words which party he has voted for, she rightly deduces that he supports the same party as herself, Liberal. Josepha alerts the reader to the fact that her neighbours are Conservatives and that Mallory would be at risk of losing his work with them if his political affiliation became known. She reassures him: “I am a good liberal, let me tell you, and the liberals are for the rights of humanity. Among the rights of humanity is a man’s right to his own opinion” (278). In the magazine version of the story, another sentence follows this: “It’s the other side of the hedge that stands for its own interests.” It is interesting to speculate about why it has been deleted in the book version. Perhaps it was considered too controversial in 1922, with the Conservatives returning to power.

It is in Josepha’s relationship with Mallory, and the sensitivity with which she analyses his complicated views about class, politics and the reforms of Lloyd George, that we come to a fuller understanding of her character and motivation. She understands that his opposition to Lloyd George’s “People’s Budget” is because he does not trust a man who is by profession a lawyer, and, although his head might tell him otherwise, at heart he has an inherent belief in the traditional class system based on land ownership.

Because, from the earlier stories, we know more about Josepha than Mallory does, her reaction to some of his pronouncements are initially unexpected. Not only is she prepared to go along with his views about women, views the younger Josepha would have openly challenged, but she is prepared to learn how to interact more sensitively with her employee; all signs that she is now a more thoughtful and mature woman. She is prepared to take his advice about the benefit of herbal remedies rather than medicine from a doctor and actually admits “*Culpepper’s Herbal* did me good.” As the story develops, there is the sense of a real bond of affection growing between the two characters. There is a gentle humour, too, in the way Josepha reports Mallory’s misuse of words: “dormouse” for dormant, “rusty” for rustic and “conservatives” for conservatories (277), but it is an affectionate tribute rather than mockery.

It is in relation to Mallory that the reader sees Josepha for the final time. Through the four stories, various aspects of the life, experiences and development of one of Grand's most interesting and independent female characters are revealed. Her reflections on the qualities to be found in an earlier era, namely loyalty, endurance and bravery, do not seem at odds with the woman who believes that modern farming methods are more productive than the old. If, as Teresa Mangum suggests "before women could invent a new world for new women, even in fiction, they would have to map the contours and boundaries of the old world" (61), Grand's Josepha stories have done precisely this.

Ann Heilmann states unequivocally that Sarah Grand's short stories "encapsulated her belief in the need for and achievability of a renovation of the social body politic" and, very importantly, "signalled her capacity to remain receptive to new thought" (*SSPSG*, II, 4). This is in direct opposition to the 1922 *TLS* reviewer's impression of Grand as old fashioned. Her Josepha stories, encompassing adventures, the supernatural and commentary on medical, political and social issues of the day, point towards progress in gender equality and sociological development. Not only are they entertaining and informative reading for contemporary or modern audiences but they also demonstrate a freshness of ideas and fictional approaches which keep them feeling relevant and accessible.

Section iii.

EUGENICS: “Eugenia” and “Boomellen.”

The starting point of this section is the textual analysis of the two versions of Grand’s stories, “Eugenia” and “Boomellen”, both published in *Temple Bar* and subsequently in *Our Manifold Nature*. While critics, such as Richardson, Jusova and Gagnier, have drawn parallels between “Eugenia” and *The Heavenly Twins*, there has been no comparison, to date, between the original version of the story and the volume version in *Our Manifold Nature*. In addition, there has been no examination of the specific ways in which Grand has reinforced and strengthened her arguments through textual revision.

“Eugenia” manifests a greater number of variants between magazine publication and subsequent volume publication than any other of Grand’s stories. The *Temple Bar* version comprises some 14,371 words, while its volume appearance is 18,971 words long - Grand’s additions amounting, then, to 4,600 words. Such textual attention on Grand’s part suggests that it is a story about which she felt particularly strongly. Its chief point of thematic interest lies in its treatment of the eugenic ideas in relation to marriage. The story constitutes a powerful contribution to the contemporary debate about eugenics and highlights Grand’s role as a writer passionately committed to an improvement in the education of women, particularly with regard to sexual relationships.

Grand identifies herself as a eugenic feminist when she writes of her protagonist Eugenia: “She was, in fact, essentially a modern maiden ... With such women for the mothers of men, the English-speaking races should rule the world” (65). For Grand, the “modern maiden” is healthy, beautiful, independent and educated. In addition, her belief in reproduction as primarily a woman’s responsibility and motherhood as an area where a “modern” young woman could make a significant contribution to the health of the nation, and, by implication, the future of the empire, was paramount. It was an intelligent woman’s duty to choose a healthy partner as the father of her children. As she goes on to advise readers in her article “On the Choice of a Husband” for *Young Woman* magazine in 1898: “Not only your own happiness, but

the happiness of countless generations, depends on your discretion in the matter” (qtd in SSPSG, I, 111).

“Boomellen,” Grand’s most frequently re-published story of the 1890s⁴⁰, likewise, contributes to Grand’s analysis of the importance of selecting a healthy marriage partner, but this story is written as a warning which illustrates the consequences of overlooking questions of heredity. “Boomellen” exhibits far fewer textual variants between publications, but those identified are of significance for its interpretation.

In examining the variants between the texts of “Eugenia” and “Boomellen,” as well as engaging with the stories themselves, the intention is to show the extent to which Grand was participating in the eugenics debate of the 1890s and positioning herself in relation to the contemporary preoccupations with the education of women, class, marriage, the sexual double standard, heredity and sexually transmitted disease.

The 1890s was the most important decade for Grand’s development as a writer and literary personality, and the stories collected together in *Our Manifold Nature* are pivotal in her transition from largely unknown writer to a celebrated author of provocative fiction, a social commentator and campaigner for women’s rights. Significantly, *The Heavenly Twins*, the book which established Grand as a leading writer, was published in 1893 between the two versions of “Eugenia.” A number of the questions, particularly those relating to marriage and heredity, which are raised in *The Heavenly Twins* and touched on in 1892 in “Boomellen,” are answered in Grand’s book version of “Eugenia.”

By July 1893, as Grand’s letter to William Blackwood demonstrates, she was planning her next book, *Our Manifold Nature*. It “will be,” she writes “of the study from life description” dealing with “social and moral problems.” She was adamant that “[w]omen are out of their infancy now,” and required reading matter of substance (qtd. in SSPSG, II, 36-7). The fact that she had such a clear view of the new book’s content, so soon after the publication of *The Heavenly Twins*, demonstrates how keen she was to consolidate her position both as an outspoken literary figure and someone in touch with her readers, keen to be influential in matters of taste and opinion.

⁴⁰ It first appeared in *Temple Bar* in March 1892 and then again in *The New York Times* on 3 April and in *Littell’s Living Age* on 23 April 1892.

“Study from life” is a phrase which appears regularly in relation to Grand’s work at this point. Centred under the title “Eugenia, A Modern Maiden and a Man Amazed” in *Temple Bar* are the words “A Study from Life, By Madame Sarah Grand, Author of ‘Ideala, A Study from Life.’” The effect of this emphasis is twofold: Grand is implying that her writing has a dimension beyond fiction, and at the same time she positions herself as a detached observer of the content of her writing. She expands on this idea in her preface to *Our Manifold Nature*: “These stories are simply what they profess to be – studies from life of our manifold nature” (6). It would, however, be a mistake to take Grand too seriously. In the same way that her letter to Blackwood is a combination of humour, gentle teasing and intent, she plays with her readers, using irony and half truth to expose her real purpose in writing: her desire to educate her audience.

“Eugenia”

Four marriages are at the centre of *The Heavenly Twins*: Evadne Frayling’s to Major Colquhoun and later to Dr Galbraith; Edith Beale’s to Sir Mosley Menteith and Angelica Hamilton-Wells’ to Mr Kilroy. None of these marriages are satisfactory, although it is only Evadne’s union with Major Colquhoun and Edith’s with Sir Mosley Menteith that are dangerous, insofar as Colquhoun “had been ‘wild’ in his youth” (77) whereas Menteith was suffering from syphilis and had already passed it on to his French mistress and baby. When Evadne discovers the details about Colquhoun’s past on their wedding day, she is persuaded to stay with him in order to preserve the family’s reputation, but she refuses to consummate the marriage and is eventually driven to a complete mental breakdown through sexual frustration and lack of purpose. Edith and her child die painfully, having contracted Menteith’s incurable illness, but not before she forces her conventional mother to face up to the fact that “[t]he same thing may happen now to any mother – to any daughter – and will happen so long as we refuse to know and resist” (304). Knowledge and resistance are powerful weapons in Grand’s feminist armoury.

Grand does not spare her readers any physical or psychological detail, no matter how unpleasant. While some of her writing is heavy-handed, the educational message is

clear: sexual purity⁴¹ is as important for men as for women. Writing to F.H. Fisher, editor of *The Literary World*, in March 1894, Grand argued that: “[a]ll my little knowledge of the social questions I feel so strongly about I have collected from observation and medical books. I have myself known eight of those dreadful Edith cases. ... The marriage certificate should be a certificate of health” (qtd. in *SSPSG*, II, 40-1). This is strongly reminiscent of a passage in Henry A. Allbutt’s *The Wife’s Handbook* (1887) where he advocates that those contemplating matrimony should “demand a recent certificate of freedom from syphilis from all men proposing marriage” (qtd. in Greenslade, *Degeneration*, 166).

If Grand is dealing with women’s ignorance in *The Heavenly Twins*, then Eugenia has benefitted from the education which Grand views as being absolutely vital for the well being not just of women but for society as a whole. Angelique Richardson writes: “New Woman novels sought to educate their readers in the facts of life, suggesting new and healthier protocols of courtship” (*New Women*, 139). It is these “new and healthier protocols” that Grand is exploring in “Eugenia.” If her novels to date have examined the difficulties of marriage, then this story is looking at life before marriage and the necessity of selecting a suitable and healthy partner.

The title “Eugenia” is manifestly overlaid with eugenic connotations. While today eugenics is inextricably linked with the Nazi atrocities of the 1930s, for Grand it was a wholly desirable movement which addressed many of the problems at the heart of society, such as hereditary degeneration and venereal infection. She was, as Richardson puts it, “a committed exponent of biological determinism and eugenic feminism” (*Eugenics*, 95), with much to say about “the issues of national health and class” (96).

The 1890s saw a great deal of interest in eugenics, the study of which was pioneered by Francis Galton (1822-1911), a cousin of Charles Darwin. Indeed it was Galton who introduced the term “eugenics” in his book *Inquiries into Human Faculty and Its Development* (1883) in which he defined eugenics as “the science of improving stock” (25). As Roy Porter points out, “Diverse nebulous theories of psycho-

⁴¹ The social purity campaign, waged amongst others by the Social Purity Alliance and the Church of England Society, was spearheaded by Josephine Butler. She gave a talk in Cambridge in May 1879, entitled “Social Purity,” and the content was issued in book form by publishers Morgan and Scott in the same year. It was republished in 1881 and 1882.

biological decline were crystallized by Francis Galton (1822-1911), Darwin's cousin, into a eugenics creed which taught that survival lay in selective breeding. Nature counted for more than nurture" (639). Much of his thinking on the subject, however, had been formulated in his earlier work, *Hereditary Genius: An Inquiry into its Laws and Consequences* (1869). Grand, who, like her heroine Evadne was a voracious reader of medical and scientific work, was undoubtedly familiar with this book. She makes this explicit in *The Heavenly Twins* when Evadne, on entering her new home in Malta for the first time, finds that Colonel Colquhoun has purchased as gifts books by Zola, Daudet and George Sand. He assures her that she'll "like them better ... than Herbert Spencer and Francis Galton," although for good measure he has obtained "some more of their books as well – all that you hadn't got" (176).

Grand, of course, was not the only writer of fiction to be exploring eugenic ideas in the mid-1890s: M^énie Muriel Dowie in *Gallia* and Grant Allen in *The Woman Who Did* (both published in 1895) used fiction to participate in these debates. For Grand, the evolutionary ideal of eugenics is inextricably linked with arguments surrounding the desirability of social purity feminism. She writes in the *Fortnightly Review* in March 1898 of "the woman movement as a thing inevitable as well as desirable, an effort of nature to raise the race a step higher in the scale of being" ("Marriage Questions," 378). She develops this idea further in the *Temple Magazine*, stressing the role of healthy motherhood in upholding the country's imperial ambitions:

Strength is one of the coming characteristics of the modern English girl. It is as if nature were fitting her to be the mother of men who will keep us in our proud place as the dominant race. She begins already to show herself superior to the girls of other nations in her courage and the fineness of her physique, in the soundness of her judgement, and in her knowledge of life ("Modern Girl," 323).

Coupled with the idea of British racial superiority, is the ideal of good education and physical development for young women and a little later, in the same article she describes the modern girl as being "a slight strong figure, alive, alert, her superabundant vitality, her joy in life and action visible in her whole pose" (324). Iveta Jusova, however, finds Grand's linking of feminism and imperialism problematic, with the outcome ultimately damaging for her feminist agenda. Similarly difficult is Grand's use of whiteness as "a fetishized sign of high social and moral status" (18). But in drawing attention to the fact that Grand introduces the first two volumes of *The Heavenly Twins* with quotations from Charles Darwin,

Jusova concludes that Grand certainly intended that “her work was meant as a contribution to the Victorian evolutionary discourse” (15).

Grand was not alone in championing good health and vitality as being desirable female qualities. Grant Allen was, like Grand, a prolific writer of magazine and newspaper articles and his 1894 essay “The New Hedonism,” published in the *Fortnightly Review*, boldly associates “the ‘sex instinct’ with health, education and emancipation, not to say beauty and happiness” (Greenslade and Rodgers (eds.),11). Allen, however, does not try to contain “the sex instinct” within marriage, and while Grand sometimes does locate the acknowledgement of sexual desire at the centre of healthy, reproductive married life, it is nevertheless seen as a powerful feature of Eugenia’s development as a young woman.

From the outset, marriage appears to be the goal in Eugenia’s story. Her status as a beautiful twenty-one year old orphan descended from a long and noble line, owner of an impressive old hall and a great deal of land, sets the scene for a traditional tale of courtship. As Grand observes, through the eyes of her female narrator, “here were the conventional elements of most romances” (55). Of marriageable age, Eugenia is faced with two possible partners, the “used up” society man Lord Brinkhampton and the good-looking Saxon Wake, descended from yeoman farming stock. Eugenia’s choice appears obvious, but as this choice is filtered through the eyes of the involved and opinionated narrator of the story, an element of uncertainty and suspense is introduced.

While “Eugenia” has courtship at its centre, Sarah Grand is using the story to explore more than just the state of the contemporary marriage market. She is also exploring the nature of the wealthy society in which male interests in choosing a bride are seen as more important than female emotional and physical wellbeing. When the story opens, the narrator is prominent, declaring in the first sentence

“I am a humble artist, studying always in the life-school of the world, blinking nothing that goes to the making or marring of life – more especially to the marring of it, for if we would make it lovely we must know exactly the nature of the diseases that disfigure it, and experiment upon them.” (48)

She goes on to say that her work is “to study human nature” and for this she needs backstage access to the “Theatre of Varieties.” Stephanie Eggermont has commented extensively on the scientific tone of this opening and “Grand’s feminist

appropriation of scientific authority.” She argues that Grand is using scientific language and ideas to lend her feminist agenda objective authority. While there is clearly some truth in this, I would argue that in the opening to “Eugenia,” Grand is much more concerned with positioning her narrator as an involved and outspoken spectator, making informed observations about individuals and society as a whole.

“Every affectation of society was apparent about us” relates the narrator, “coarsened into caricature” and it is at this point that Sarah Grand inserts some additional text into the book version of the story that was not present in the magazine version (Part 2, 49, note 30). In explaining the effects of “tight-lacing,” the distortion of the figure and the inability to breathe properly, Grand is highlighting one of her lifetime concerns, that of healthy and appropriate dress. Even before the Rational Dress Society was formed in 1881, Grand had written *Two Dear Little Feet* (1880) in which Laura, the heroine, is a vain, spoilt young woman who ends up with painful, misshapen feet and amputated toes through her desire to be fashionably shod. Equally shocking is the suggestion that Laura has developed anorexia⁴² too as a result of procuring a tiny waist. Full of medical detail and didactic in tone, this early work nevertheless establishes Grand’s desire to promote physical health and to mock the foolishness of fashionable extremes. Constriction of the female body, whether done in the name of fashion or to arouse male desire, is something actively criticised by Grand in all her writing.

The early pages of “Eugenia” paint London society in a very unfavourable light and the first glimpses of Lord Brinkhampton are equally unappealing. He is seen flirting with Sylvia, a “joyless antique” made to stand for everything vain, vulgar and materialistic in society women. Grand is giving us yet another ‘caricature’ and a point of comparison with the Eugenia we have yet to meet. Brinkhampton, too, is larger than life. He admits to feeling “sick” of society and “used up” and being ready “to reform and marry.” The double standards at work in marriage are highlighted when Brinkhampton says to the narrator of his intention to marry,

⁴² The earliest reference to the medical term anorexia nervosa I have been able to find is in William Osler’s 1892 book *The Principles and Practice of Medicine*, a definitive volume “Designed for the use of practitioners and students of medicine.” It is listed as one of the possible afflictions of the digestive system in hysterical patients, “usually in a young girl, sometimes as early as the eleventh or twelfth, more commonly between the fifteenth and twentieth years” (973).

“I’ve had a good time ... rather too much of a good time if anything, and now I feel it would be better for me to settle, and I want something nice and young and fresh, with money, for a wife, so that I may repair all my errors at once; someone who ... is refreshingly unsophisticated enough to mistake the first man who proposes to her for an unsullied hero of romance” (51).

It could equally well be Major Colquhoun or Sir Mosley Menteith speaking when they contemplated marriage with bookish Evadne and unworldly Edith.

Grand, through her narrator, is quick to point out that Brinkhampton is not unattractive, still a young man and good-looking. He is described as being “of the big coarse-moustached type – a typical guardsman” although the well concealed flabby muscles are “discounted by alcohol” (51). Major Colquhoun, too, is “a big blond man, with a heavy moustache, and a delicate skin that flushed easily” (53). One of the features of Grand’s narrator in “Eugenia” is her open mind. She is slow to judge or take sides, thereby encouraging the reader to initially suspend judgement while the story unfolds. Of Brinkhampton she confesses she likes him “well enough in a way” and yet she has observed his lifestyle closely since they were children together. Nonetheless the narrator goes on to ally herself with “the party of progress,” namely the social purity movement, and to keep silent in the face of Brinkhampton’s desire to be seen as the conventional “hero of romance.”

The reader is being set up to enjoy a storybook romance when circumstances bring the narrator, Brinkhampton and Eugenia together in the north of England, at Eugenia’s country estate near the coast. For Brinkhampton the attraction is immediate: she fits in with his avowed desire for a lovely young girl with money and property, inexperienced in the ways of the world. The narrator refuses to comment on the situation and deliberately tells the reader that she “had determined to be neutral.” She claims not to know what Eugenia’s response to Brinkhampton will be and claims that this “uncertainty was great enough to relieve the story from insipidity” (55). Implicit in this is the idea that Grand and by extension her readers are becoming bored by the formulaic romance plot and require the substance she had alluded to in her letter to William Blackwood, the “social and moral problems.” In addition, an element of suspense has been added to promote engagement with the story.

Neutral she might pretend to be, but Grand’s narrator has a mischievous sense of humour when it comes to exposing weakness or foolishness in the characters she

observes. She questions Brinkhampton about Eugenia, asking him whether he thinks such an unsophisticated girl could have a “mind.” Brinkhampton falls into the trap at once declaring,

“Oh dear, yes ... Quite enough for a woman, especially if she’s to be one’s wife. A clever woman is apt to have ‘views,’ and that sort of thing ... What one wants in a wife is something nice to look at and agreeable to caress when one’s in the mood, with average intelligence of course, but conventional ideas” (56).

Brinkhampton is not intending to alter his outlook or his way of life when he marries and the exaggerated selfishness of his response serves to highlight the gulf Grand perceives between a man’s view of marriage and a woman’s expectation of it. In proposing, even when married, to continue to visit London alone and to pursue the life of drinking and womanising, returning to the country air and Eugenia whenever he felt “used up” and “played out” is not a new idea. In *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* (1848), Anne Brontë had already very movingly explored this gendered double standard in her dissection of the marriage between Helen and Arthur Huntingdon and the picture she creates of alcoholism, infidelity, marital abuse and motherhood might well have served as a clear warning to Grand’s emerging new women.

If Brinkhampton is not promoting Richardson’s “new and healthier protocols of courtship,” then Grand is using Eugenia’s growing awareness not only of her own sexuality but also the power of this sexuality in a bold and interesting way. In section V of the story, the narrator comments on the acquaintanceship between Eugenia and Brinkhampton having “ripened into intimacy” and the “ripening of their acquaintance.” This imagery is deliberately playing on the suggestive overtones of ripening fruit and readiness for sexual union. Grand has added thirty two words of text into the story at this point (see Part 2, note 41) to strengthen the idea of Eugenia’s growing interest in Brinkhampton. While comically denying that she has any insight into Eugenia’s feelings, the narrator nevertheless sets the scene: “[i]t was hot harvest weather ... an ideal love-time.” She goes on to point out that

The morning was deliciously fresh, and so was Eugenia. Brinkhampton could not take his eyes off her, and, although she never glanced at him, I knew by the smile that constantly hovered about her mouth, the brightness of her eyes, the slightly heightened colour on her delicate cheeks, and the buoyancy of her step, that she was aware of his earnest gaze, and animated by his admiration (58).

The implication that the presence of a reasonably attractive possible mate can elicit a sexual response in a young girl is refreshingly modern and is confirmed explicitly

later in the story, within a section added to the book version: “There is no doubt that Brinkhampton had awakened the dormant possibility of passion in the girl, and she was provoked because there was not enough in him to satisfy more than one side of her nature” (79). In this, Sarah Grand is moving close to George Egerton’s more overt investigation of female sexual desire in *Keynotes*, published in 1893 and *Discords*, published the following year.

For Eugenia, her sexual awakening coincides with her quest to find a suitable partner. Brinkhampton has presented himself to her as a possible husband and in order to evaluate his fitness as a mate, he has to be put through a series of tests, both mental and physical. It is precisely to further and expand this eugenic theme that Grand has added so much text to the book version of her story, thereby reinforcing her commitment to the cause of women’s education. Much of the additional text deals with the respective merits of town and country, or as Brinkhampton would view it, Society versus Nature. We have already viewed London society through the narrator’s eyes at the beginning of the story and heard Brinkhampton extolling the virtues of fashion, shopping, jewels, dances and dinners. We have learnt of his inability to enter into the pleasures of country living, the freshness of the air and birdsong: “He glanced upwards and listened, with a furtive recollection of the sort of sensation that thrilled her; but his blunted faculties did not respond. Such refinements of feeling escaped him altogether now” (59). Society, every bit as much as wine for breakfast and tobacco, has destroyed his ability to respond honestly to straightforward physical and mental enjoyment of the unadorned moment.

Through the point of view of the narrator, Grand makes much of physical appearance. In the largest insertion of text into the book version of the story, she has added the episode of the tenants’ ball, where Eugenia is displayed at her eugenic best (Part 2, 63, note 50). In preparing for the ball, she skips along the gallery in the sunlight:

Her summer dress fluttered in the perfumed air. She had never worn a tight or heavy garment in her life, and her figure was perfect. I did not wonder that the young man was fascinated. Anything more radiantly young and strong and healthy it is impossible to imagine. Her splendid vitality seemed inexhaustible (61).

Even in full evening dress, Eugenia is presented by the narrator, who at this point is “remembering that I meant to be neutral,” as a picture of physical perfection, “she

was altogether of a race-horse kind, fine of limb, slender, symmetrical, strong, supple and enduring” (62). Eugenia and Saxon Wake, full of “superabundant vitality and freshness,” are deliberately contrasted with the “used up,” champagne-fuelled Brinkhampton.

Eugenia’s two suitors are deliberately juxtaposed. Saxon Wake “a tall, good-looking young man of distinguished appearance” (59), appropriately named to suggest qualities of strength, solidity, tradition and hope for the future, has been a friend of Eugenia’s since childhood. His family is as old as hers and while hers has been declining, his family has been gaining wealth and status. This reversal of the old order gives Grand’s story a sense of movement into a new social space where people are evaluated on merit rather than perceived class. The fact that Saxon Wake has a first class honours degree in Mathematics from Cambridge University and is an accomplished pianist and singer further destabilises Brinkhampton’s class-bound world view.

The climax of the story comes when Brinkhampton’s physical and mental strength is put to the test in a horse race along the beach to beat the incoming tide. The scene is carefully set, with the narrator, Eugenia, Saxon and Brinkhampton assembled to pit themselves against the natural world.⁴³ Eugenia once again demonstrates her qualities as a “modern maiden” by driving the coach and horses to Greenwood Sound, the starting point for the race; “I don’t believe true womanliness consists in letting a man do badly what a woman can do well, simply because men generally are more accustomed to perform that particular exercise than women are” (64). The narrator continues to make much of Eugenia’s strength and beauty, and her use of the adjective “ripe” in conjunction with “red lips” reminds the reader that Eugenia is seeking a sexual partner. It is at this moment where Grand, through her observant narrator, makes the most important point of the story and makes more explicit her feminist agenda when she writes of Eugenia:

She was, in fact, essentially a modern maiden, richly endowed with all womanly attributes, whose value is further enhanced by the strength which comes of the liberty to think, and of the education out of which is made the material for thought.

⁴³ The coast and the tide are regularly featured in Grand’s writing. Many of the important incidents and emotions in Beth Caldwell’s young life (*The Beth Book*, 1897) take place on the beach. The first time she encounters Alfred, her first serious love, the incoming tide traps them against the cliff face (238-243). The sea also plays an important part in “Boommellen,” the final story in *Our Manifold Nature*.

With such women for the mothers of men, the English-speaking races should rule the world (65).

It is women like Eugenia, healthy, beautiful, well-educated and intelligent who should be responsible for continuing the race and it is through their offspring that the empire will flourish. In order to give birth to impressive children, the “modern maiden” needs to select a suitable mate. Angelique Richardson expands on this idea in her analysis of the verb “mate” when it is used in *The Beth Book*. She quotes from the text: “there comes a time to all healthy young people when Nature says: ‘mate, my children, and be happy,’” stressing the significance of the way the word is used because “cutting through notions of romance and sentiment, it locates the reproductive drive in the (opposing) realm of health and nature” (*Eugenics*, 110). This is equally true for Eugenia’s story where traditional romance is being replaced by eugenic considerations.

Grand is not the only author of this period who is reforming the romance plot. M^énie Muriel Dowie published her novel *Gallia* in 1895, just a year later than *Our Manifold Nature*, and she addresses the eugenic theme even more explicitly than does Grand. Gallia is an unconventional young woman, educated, thoughtful: she has been influenced by the work of John Stuart Mill and Herbert Spencer and has studied at Oxford University.

Helen Small, in her introduction to the Everyman 1995 edition of *Gallia* suggests that “the central and most radical idea” of the novel is the “heroine’s growing conviction that the ‘real advance’ in society will be the careful selection of fathers and mothers” (xxxviii). Gallia’s view of men, “‘in relation to oneself’” is uncompromising: “‘it seems to me most important that they should be well-grown and healthy and sound – in wind, limb, and temper’” (112) could equally be Eugenia’s opinions. For Gallia, propounding her theory of “social reform,” the “real advance” will be “the getting in of fathers and mothers, or rather husbands and wives to be fathers and mothers”. Having shocked her friends Gertrude and Margaret, Gallia goes on to say:

“I was speaking quite seriously; and if you think, you will see that such a scheme would be eminently rational. The outcome of the present health movement must lead that way. People will see the folly of curing all sorts of ailments that should not have been created, and then they will start at the right end, they will make better people’ (113).

There is no mention of emotional attachment here: parenting is to be based on fitness for the task.

Just as Eugenia has a choice of two potential marriage partners, Gallia is divided between the attractive and slightly sinister Dark Essex, for whom she both feels and declares love, and Mark Gurdon, a good looking, upright man, for whom she feels no love but recognises as the man she wants to have children with: “I have wanted the father of my child to be a fine, strong, manly man, full of health and strength” (192). As it turns out, Dark Essex has hereditary heart disease, so Gallia was wise to use her head rather than heart in making her choice of partner. Eugenia never actually declares love for either Brinkhampton or Saxon, but nonetheless she has an important decision to make and so the challenge she sets for Brinkhampton in pitting him and his horse against the elements achieves a symbolic significance as a test of his manhood.

Grand uses her skills as a storyteller to alert the reader that the centre of attention in this part of the narrative has shifted from Eugenia to Brinkhampton. There is a picnic tea before the race and Eugenia commands Brinkhampton to pick up sticks for the fire. The narrator watches Eugenia observing Brinkhampton’s inability to do this easily, and the effect of doubling the force of the judgemental gaze on this hapless “peer of the realm” (66) is to ensure that the reader’s eyes are firmly fixed on him for the duration of the race.

Deliberately the mood is altered and the atmosphere becomes dreamlike for the protagonists and readers alike. The narrator says that “our modern mood slipped from us,” while Eugenia comments on “a strange feeling of remoteness – it is as if my kindred claimed me.” It is in this trance-like state that the story of Eugenia’s ancestors is told, providing an illuminating context for the modern story and an excuse for avoiding a traditional romance plot. Befitting his status as long-standing family friend, Saxon Wake utilises the oral tradition of the ballads to accentuate the power of the curse laid upon Eugenia’s “greatest great-grandmother” (68) and her descendants for murdering an impure and cowardly husband. This priestly curse meant that no male heir would ever succeed, that the women of the family would always inherit and maintain the family estate and Eugenia’s ancestor was doomed “to drive her wild black horses against the rising tide with her cowering bridegroom

crouching at her feet forever” (68). The narrator reappears in the narrative at this point to confirm that she has heard the ghostly horses, and it is while everyone is still in this suggestible state that Eugenia declares the challenge: ““Since then ... it has been the custom for the women of my house to choose their husbands for their courage. ... When a lover presents himself, some occasion is sure to arise which will test him, and if he is found wanting in manliness he must go”” (69). This explicit reference to the test of “manliness” has been added to the book version of the story, thereby strengthening Grand’s eugenicist agenda and highlighting the “new and healthier protocols of courtship” she was so keen to promote in the wake of the sexual purity discussion provoked by *The Heavenly Twins*.

At this point the spell is broken and tea and cakes are served, returning everyone “to the most sceptical mood of our own day” (69). By altering the mood for the historical pre-race scene setting, Grand has encouraged her readers to suspend their judgement about the challenge, and, by implication to enjoy the tension of the race against the tide all the more. The depiction of the gallop along the beach is melodramatic but it is nonetheless an engrossing read, strikingly conveyed by the intermittent use of the present tense. The short incomplete sentences and the ghostly hoof-beats, whether real or simply echoes from the cliff face, all combine to involve the reader in this life or death challenge. Apart from three lines of Shelley, the magazine and the book versions of this episode are very similar.

Once the race is over, there are some 4300 words of text left and of these, 2205 are words which have been added to the book version since its magazine publication. Most of this additional material deals with the reasons Eugenia cannot marry Brinkhampton, contrasting his lifestyle with hers and exposing his lack of real interest in or knowledge of the girl he wants to marry. Saxon Wake, handsome and modest though he is, is allocated very little of this extra text. Grand’s purpose in exposing Brinkhampton’s faults and vices through the extra material is to educate her readers in the wise and healthy choice of marriage partner.

The narrator of the story puts aside any pretence of neutrality from this point on. In fact she derives a “malicious” delight in teasing Brinkhampton about Saxon’s good looks and temperament, causing him to stalk away, like a stage villain, muttering ““I shall put a stop to this tomorrow”” (76). In fact much of this section of “Eugenia” is

exaggerated and comical in tone but this is deliberately done and handled with a deceptive lightness of touch. Where Brinkhampton criticises Eugenia for being “old in ideas already, and, worst of all, *advanced*,” (77) the reader is expected to laugh but also to applaud Grand’s example of advanced womanhood.

It is Eugenia’s clear-sightedness in recognising her own needs, just as much as her ability to see through Brinkhampton’s veneer of good manners, that makes her the perfect example of a “modern maiden.” She is very clear in voicing her dislike of Brinkhampton’s opinions, his inability to recognise and understand her real character, his need for stimulants and sedatives, and his conceit. When she declares “(t)here is a general suspicion of taint in him that I have no word for, but feel, and it repels me. His husk is attractive, I allow, but I’m not going to marry the husk of a man” (79), it can be interpreted by the contemporary reader as a direct rebuke to Edith and Evadne, who made precisely this mistake in *The Heavenly Twins*. Eugenia goes on to say:

“I want a man without unpleasant associations of any kind about him- a whole man ... I mean to begin my life with one who is beginning his with feelings as fresh as my own ... I will have the best of everything, and my man’s physique must be self supporting. Your friend is a neuropath. He would probably bring insanity into the family” (79).

Eugenia is uncompromising in her direct reference to sexually transmitted disease and, by implication, the dangers of parenthood with an unfit partner, but she is very clear about what she is looking for. She does not want a “very old-fashioned kind of hero,” instead she wants “Sir Galahad,” otherwise known as Saxon Wake. Again, in a scene very reminiscent of *The Heavenly Twins* where Angelica Hamilton-Wells unconventionally proposes to Mr Kilroy “Marry me, *and let me do as I like*” (321), Eugenia proposes to Saxon Wake.

As befits the eugenic theme of Grand’s story, the closing scene shows the narrator and Eugenia together with Eugenia’s strong, healthy baby boy. In talking of the curse which has beset her family for so many generations, Eugenia reveals that it is her choice of a husband with “moral courage,” as opposed to “mere animal courage” which has finally removed the curse.

In allying herself so strongly with contemporary interest in the eugenic movement, as well as the social purity movement and campaign for rational dress, Sarah Grand

is capitalising on the continuing success of *The Heavenly Twins* by bringing out her 1894 volume of stories *Our Manifold Nature*. She is firmly positioning herself as a writer of influence and importance with much to say to the reader of the 1890s.

“Boomellen”

Although in *Temple Bar*, “Boomellen” is subtitled “A Study from Life,” the tone of this story is quite unlike “Eugenia.” The didacticism present in “Eugenia” is missing while instead of the scientific, observational opening of “Eugenia,” the beginning of “Boomellen” feels almost elegiac, where “all summer signs recall Boomellen” (110), making it clear that the narrator is looking back on past events. The second sentence with its poetic descriptions of the natural world ends somewhat abruptly, “there was he likely to be seen loitering” (112). The positioning of the word “loitering” at the end of the sentence gives it both impact and prominence and the negative connotations of the word seem at odds with the beauty of nature. This dissonance has the effect of alerting the reader to the fact that the story will not be a straightforward eulogy.

The contrasts continue into the second paragraph where the narrator stresses that in spite of all the summer associations there is nothing “ethereal” (112) in Boomellen’s appearance. On the contrary, he is “a big, broad-shouldered, substantial fellow, six feet high, and of a remarkably healthy aspect” (112). This description is again undermined when the narrator continues, saying his “delicate skin ... never flushed, but was always pinky like that of a sleeping girl” (112). There is something slightly effeminate about the “glossy, light brown curling hair, worn rather long” (112) while the “strange immobility” of his “delicate and handsome” (112) features has the double effect of unsettling the reader’s natural response to a handsome protagonist and betraying the fact that there is something unusual about Boomellen. His face is referred to as an “impervious mask” (112), and it is a mask which remains in place for the entire story.

The narrator, having spent two pages drawing an unsettling picture of Boomellen, then recalls the beginning of the story: “[t]he first time we saw him, I remember” (113). The “remember” draws the reader back into the story in a confidential,

intimate way while the plural “we” indicates that the narrator is part of a group and the fact that the observations are made by more than one person both confirms and validates them. Sitting beside an open window, looking out onto a sea view which accentuates the power and unpredictability of nature, Boomellen’s reaction to the spectacle is muted to the point of indifference.

From the rather enigmatic depiction of Boomellen, where the group is unable to “sum him up,” the narrator then launches into a factual outline of his family circumstances: “Boomellen was of ancient and aristocratic lineage.” This is confirmed and embellished by an elderly female estate worker who adds a touch of humour, “It’s the oulder the seed the warse the crop, it is, och! yes”(113). The narrator continues: “Boomellen had arrived at the weary end of his ancestry, being the last male representative and heir of two used-up races.” His father had been “wild” as a young man and was possibly epileptic while his mother was “neurotic,” the product of an alcoholic father and nervous mother. Grand is heavy-handed and forceful in “Eugenia” when examining the ills of society and the offspring of doubtful parentage. While she is similarly heavy handed in painting a picture of Boomellen’s background and upbringing, she firmly places the responsibility for his failings with his unfit parents. He is observed and commented upon but never overtly condemned.

When William Greenslade writes of Hardy’s contribution to the *New Review’s* 1894 symposium on sex education “The Tree of Knowledge:” “the facts of life had to include the facts of heredity” (*Degeneration*, 173), this could equally well be applied to Grand’s implicit warning about the dangers of defective heredity in “Boomellen.” Grand has made it clear that Boomellen is the product of degenerate stock and she is playing on contemporary fears about degeneration to educate her readers about the need for careful selection of a marriage partner.

The contemporary view of society, that it is acceptable for a man who has been sexually promiscuous in his youth to reform and marry a young and inexperienced woman, is constantly challenged by Grand. In *The Heavenly Twins*, she is explicit about the possible consequences of such a union and nowhere more so than in revealing the reality of Edith’s union with dissolute Mosley Menteith. In the case of Edith, just a year had made a difference, “she had been radiantly healthy and

beautiful” (288) but marriage to Sir Mosley Menteith had not only sapped her youth and good looks but left her fearing for her sanity too. Her baby “was old, old already, and exhausted with suffering, and as his gaze wandered from one to the other it was easy to believe that he was asking each dumbly why had he ever been born?” (289). Angelica, upon realising that it is Menteith who has infected his wife and son with syphilis, throws a Bible at him, breaking his nose and tellingly calls him “you father of a speckled toad” (301). This very obvious call for sexual purity and parenthood undertaken with knowledge and a sense of responsibility is more directly articulated than anything in either “Boomellen” or “Eugenia.” The “suspicious taint” of Brinkhampton and the “impressively handsome husk” (116) of Boomellen are traits which are designed to offer a warning to ladies of a marriageable age to seek other partners.

Nevertheless, Grand, through her narrator in “Boomellen,” offers a stark reminder to her readers: “A man may change his habits when he marries, but his constitution remains the same, and it is the constitution, laden with his predominant propensities, which he most inevitably transmits” (114). We are told that Boomellen is the youngest of a family of four. His three older sisters have all proved flawed and unsatisfactory in a number of ways including divorce and suicide, but these are not elaborated on. Instead, it is Boomellen’s shortcomings, obvious to everyone but his self-obsessed mother, that form the thematic content of this story. He might not be “a speckled toad” but the implication is that it is inherited problems which have made Boomellen unlike other men and ultimately unfitted to lead a worthwhile life.

“He was an incorrigible loiterer,” stresses the narrator, hence his name Boomellen, a corruption of the German verb “bummeln,” meaning to loiter. “He lingered a little in his loitering way” relates Grand’s narrator, with the alliteration and assonance mirroring the protagonist’s total lack of energy and purpose. “Fatal apathy,” diagnoses the narrator’s father, while the narrator herself sees that Boomellen’s habitually melancholic expression could be interpreted as “a symptom of decadence” which often characterises “the last survivors of a worn-out race” (115).

Throughout the story, Boomellen’s expression and his eyes are linked with animals, beginning with a “dumb dog” (113), later making “an ox-like answer, dumbly, with big brown eyes” (115) and later still gazing at his father “with bovine stolidity”

(118). The effect of this juxtaposition calls into question his mental capacity. This, coupled with the emphasis on him as the last male representative of an old family, tainted by alcoholism and licentiousness, makes both the narrator and the reader share a sense of relief at Boomellen's death, perhaps by suicide, at the end of the book. His mother might have deluded herself that this was an honourable, brave and tragic end, but others would agree that it was an "appropriate" (121) and inevitable death.

Grand in "Boomellen" paints a portrait of a young man who should never have been born and, indeed, would not be born again if young women were taught and encouraged to select their mates with caution. Beth Sutton-Ramspeck writes persuasively about Grand's version of eugenics transforming "the private satisfactions of love and marriage into public responsibilities" (70), linking her with other "[f]eminist proponents of eugenics" like Mary Ward and Charlotte Perkins Gilman who "argue that in the interest of human advancement, women should reclaim the female prerogative of sexual selection" (70). She writes of Grand's "cautionary tales," designed to educate her readers about "the causes and manifestations of degeneration" (71) so that they can choose a potential mate wisely. And, of course, Eugenia is one of Grand's best examples of a modern young woman, making sensible and informed choices in relation to sexual selection. If her newborn son at the end of her story represents a family's and, by implication, society's hope for the future, then the death of Boomellen marks the end of an old and discredited way of life.

Section iv.

FICTIONALISING THE ADOLESCENT: “The Yellow Leaf” and “The Turning of the Worm”

For Grand the years between puberty and adulthood were a significant period in the lives of women and it is an important preoccupation of her fiction. Her interest in this topic is very much in tune with contemporary interest in the study of child development, at the turn of the century, which saw the establishment of adolescence as a specific category and the emergence of the term into public discourse.

G. Stanley Hall, in his groundbreaking 1904 study *Adolescence: Its Psychology and Its Relation to Physiology, Anthropology, Sociology, Sex, Crime, Religion, and Education* is credited with being amongst the first to use the term scientifically.⁴⁴ Stanley Hall applies it to a stage of biological development and provides a detailed overview, backed up by numerous surveys, of every aspect of this transitional phase. “Adolescence is a new birth,” he writes, “the higher and more complete human traits are now born” and the “annual rate of growth in height, weight, and strength is increased and often doubled” (xiii). His study does not confine itself to scientific data though, and indeed, in his chapter entitled ‘Adolescence in Literature and Biography’ (513-89), he cites Beth in *The Beth Book* as being an interesting example of female adolescence (551-3). Although in the same chapter, he mentions Louisa M. Alcott and Frances Hodgson Burnett, he does not mention Sarah Grand by name.

Grand, however, uses the term “adolescence” rather more generally than Stanley Hall. It appears twice in her writing and on both occasions it relates disparagingly to young men. She writes about “the conceit of adolescence” and “the discipline it so much requires” in an 1898 article for *Temple Magazine* entitled “The Modern Young Man” (qtd. in *SSPSG*, I, 62), stressing a young man’s need for firm guidance in moving away from the traditional view of acceptable male behaviour embodied in her portrayal of men such as Brinkhampton in “Eugenia.” Older brother Jim is a source of horrified fascination for eleven year old Beth in *The Beth Book* when he

⁴⁴ Margaret Mead, although writing slightly later, was responsible for three influential studies of adolescents in primitive cultures, *Coming of Age in Samoa* (1928), *Growing Up in New Guinea* (1931), and *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies* (1933). She argues that the characteristics of adolescence are the results of cultural pressures.

comes home at the end of summer holidays, filled with “the ideas of his adolescence” (153) which in reality meant his views about the inferiority of women.

Sally Shuttleworth in her interdisciplinary study *The Mind of the Child: Child Development in Literature, Science, and Medicine, 1840-1900* (2010) highlights the growing interest in child development in the latter part of the nineteenth century. She writes about Leonard Guthrie’s⁴⁵ contribution to the emerging discipline of child psychiatry through his lectures in the 1890s where “preoccupations with the ‘mind of the child’ became not only a scientific discipline but also almost a cultural obsession” (16). Her interest in literary representations of childhood where characters are seen to grow both mentally and physically towards adulthood includes a study of aspects of Beth’s development in *The Beth Book*.

Stanley Hall, “the father of adolescence” (Baxter, 44), took the view that adolescence is a biological stage rather than a cultural or social construction, drawing on post-Darwinian biology to argue that “individual development recapitulates the history of the species, wherein the child moves from a savage love of nature through adolescence to a humanistic learning of culture” (Baxter 44). In using the phrase “storm and stress” to highlight an important aspect of this transitory phase, Hall recognised the turbulent nature of adolescence. It was a state to which Grand was imaginatively drawn, to judge from one of her most revealing works about a girl growing up, *Babs the Impossible* (1901) in which Babs is described as being “at a difficult age ... she had her bad days – days of disgust with everything – when everybody irritated her more or less, and she irritated everybody” (162).

The developmental stage between privileged, middle-class girlhood and womanhood is also examined in detail in *The Heavenly Twins*, through her depiction of Edith, Evadne and Angelica, and is foregrounded in two of her short stories, “The Yellow Leaf,” through Adalesa, Evangeline and the nameless narrator, and “The Turning of the Worm” through the figure of Beatrice. In the years immediately before adulthood, these girls manifest great potential through natural intelligence and good health, to become independent and well-rounded young women. Some do so and live up to this promise while others do not.

⁴⁵ Leonard Guthrie (1858-1918), was a neurologist and paediatrician. His book *Functional Nervous Disorders in Childhood* (1907) was widely regarded as a pioneering work.

Grand returns, regularly, to the subject of adolescence examining the circumstances which are most and least conducive to a young person's balanced development. It is in her analysis of the psychological effects of the guidance these girls receive from those in authority where her writing displays the greatest sensitivity and insight, in the novels and stories alike: in most, but not every case, it is the influence of the mother which is singled out. Grand also highlights the environmental and socio-economic factors which are instrumental in determining how these girls' lives are shaped while her interest in the world of medical science is reflected in her attention to the biological development of her characters.

Grand's powerful contribution to literature surrounding the sexual awakening of young girls is highlighted by Sarah Bilston in *The Awkward Age* (2004): "Grand ... works to legitimize a girl's early sexual interest – to describe it as a natural part of the maturational process" (195). While she is writing here specifically about Beth in *The Beth Book*, she could equally well have been referring to a number of Grand's young female protagonists. Beth, Evadne, Adalesa, Eugenia, Babs and Beatrice all experience a youthful and uncomplicated realisation of sexual attraction and this is made to feel both right and natural. It is in the outcome, namely marriage, where Grand raises the most difficult questions for her audience.

There are particularly strong parallels between Edith, Evadne and Angelica in *The Heavenly Twins* and Adalesa, Evangeline and the nameless I of the short story first published in the same year as the novel, both in terms of characterisation and plot development. Edith and Evangeline are the only daughters of indulgent parents, shielded from knowledge of the world, particularly of men, and brought up to be beautiful, fashionably-dressed ornaments. Edith "lived in a state of exquisite feeling. The whole training of her mind had been so directed as to make her existence one long beatific vision"(156), while Evangeline in "The Yellow Leaf" admits "cushions and comfort are my delight, ease is my ambition" (22). Both use their good looks rather than their intellect to ensnare husbands. In contrast, Angelica and Adalesa are precocious, intelligent, disruptive, argumentative young women who thrive on challenging authority and conventional ideas about what is appropriate for girls, whether in matters of appearance, behaviour or education. Outspoken Beatrice in "The Turning of the Worm" has much in common with impetuous Babs in *Babs the Impossible*, both exploring the world around them through an engagement with their

senses rather than their intellect. Babs, has “the face of an angel and a heart full of guile” (7) and is no more to be trusted than devious Beatrice. While Evadne and the nameless narrator of “The Yellow Leaf” superficially have much in common in terms of their reading and the education they have derived from it, the narrator, although constrained by the brevity of the short story, has a more satisfying story to tell, because of her education as a girl enjoying “every advantage” (14) afforded to her brothers, and her adult success as a writer. Evadne’s development, however, is effectively stunted through her disastrous marriage to Colonel Colquhoun, in spite of her adventurous and undisciplined childhood access to a wide variety of books, including medical textbooks. Because her intellectual growth is curtailed and she is denied, albeit through her own agency, a proper expression of sexual feeling, she retreats into depression and mental instability.

The Rebellious Adolescent

The figure of the rebellious girl is something of a convention in literature: the girl who does not conform to an accepted view of femininity, whether through appearance or behaviour. Jo, in Louisa May Alcott’s *Little Women*, first published in 1868⁴⁶, some twelve years before Sarah Grand’s first novel *Two Dear Little Feet* spelt out the dangers of conforming to fashion, is the odd-one-out in a family of four sisters. While Meg, Amy and Beth are conventionally pretty and enjoy the domestic sphere, “bookworm” and “tomboy” are just two of the slightly disparaging descriptions of Jo, who likes ““boys’ games and work and manners”” (4) and is the second of the March sisters. Not only does she use “slang” when speaking but her appearance leaves much to be desired, in the eyes of her traditional sisters:

Fifteen-year-old Jo was very tall, thin, and brown, and reminded one of a colt; for she never seemed to know what to do with her long limbs, which were very much in her way. ... Round shoulders had Jo, big hands and feet, a fly-away look to her clothes, and the uncomfortable appearance of a girl who was rapidly shooting up into a woman, and didn’t like it (6).

When Adalesa catapults herself into the narrator and the reader’s view on a train journey at the beginning of “The Yellow Leaf”, their physical appearance is similar:

I was surprised to see a pair of bright dark eyes just appearing above the back of the seats, at the farther end of the compartment[...]the owner of the eyes, a lanky, dark

⁴⁶ This novel has never been out-of-print, thereby illustrating its appeal to generations of young readers.

girl, got up, fixed a struggling bull pup under her arm, where she held it firmly in spite of its kicks and yells and snaps, clambered clumsily over the backs of the seats from her end of the compartment to mine, regardless of any display she might make of lean legs by the way (9).

The narrator comments on Adalesa's "bright, sharp, slangy" manner of speaking, but recognises that it arises from an adolescent desire to be provocative when Adalesa reveals that she has brought the puppy with her to aggravate her Aunt Marsh by making her believe that "the outcome of Woman's Rights is bull pups" (9).

Both girls are visiting the country to stay with staid relations Sir Henry and Lady Marsh and their daughter Evangeline. Adalesa has already alerted the narrator to the fact that her Aunt Marsh's ideas about the role of girls, their education and upbringing are in direct opposition to theirs and their mothers'. The narrator is the daughter of a working mother and she has been allowed to enjoy the sort of education usually reserved for boys, with emphasis on mathematics and science. Grand is deliberately juxtaposing 'New' and 'Old' womanhood in this story with a great deal of the humour principally supplied by the irreverent Adalesa who coins the term "feather-bedding" to describe the smothering effect of the sweetness and cosseting kindness of her aunt. In the same way that Grand sweetens the "allopathic pill"⁴⁷ of her novel *The Heavenly Twins* through the antics of Angelica and Diavolo, she lightens the effect of her message about the importance of a well-rounded education for young women through Adalesa's infectious clowning.

Equally entertaining are the verbal antics and rebellions of Beatrice in "The Turning of the Worm." Unusually in Grand's fiction, Beatrice is an orphan, and is raised principally by Oscar Wilbraham, friend of her dead parents and a fifty year old bachelor, and to a lesser extent by his mother and sisters. Beatrice is the narrator of her own story, where she examines her childhood from the age of two to twenty-one, as well as her Uncle Oscar's life, through the eyes of an older self: "I can tell the story now consecutively, but I have had to work back from the end to the beginning to piece it together" (222). With the benefit of hindsight, she recognises that spontaneity is a feature of youth, and that impetuous speech and action are a natural extension of this, reflecting that "at twenty-one our spirits clamour for expression,

⁴⁷ In her introduction to the 1923 Heinemann edition of *The Heavenly Twins*, she writes of the reader: "My plan was to compound an allopathic pill for him and gild it so that it would be mistaken for a bonbon and swallowed without a suspicion of its medicinal properties." (xii)

our moods urgently claim a response” (224). She admits that “in those days” she was “irrepressible” and her verbal baiting of her female relations at mealtimes is as amusing as Adalesa’s baiting of Aunt Marsh with the bull pup.

Both Adalesa and Beatrice express criticism of their female relations by appropriating the use of domestic imagery as a sign of their rebellion against the old order of women. If Aunt Marsh is a “feather-bed” woman, then Beatrice’s Aunt Lucretia has the “air of one who is frothing up things in general to take the flatness out of them” (238) as if she is forever plumping cushions. Even the narrator of “The Yellow Leaf” has been influenced by Adalesa when she talks of “the softly smothery effect” of Lady Marsh’s manner in reproving her for using the unladylike medical term “humerus” instead of “long bone of the arm” (23). Certainly there is no trace of rebelliousness in cushion and comfort-loving Evangeline.

The Significance of the Woman as Educator

Grand, during the 1890s and the early 1900s, was widely regarded as being hostile to men. The cartoon image in *Harper’s Weekly*⁴⁸, where a giant Sarah Grand has impaled a diminutive “mere man” on a spike and is subjecting him and his struggle to what Ann Heilmann calls “the feminist writer’s stripping, probing, penetrating gaze” (*New Woman*, 37) is regularly evoked to support this. This is not, however, the whole picture. Writing to F.H. Fisher in January 1907, Grand commented:

[b]ut why, I wonder, do you all accuse me of bitterness against the male sex? It is quite a convention, & I personally cannot make out what gave rise to it. There are thirteen men in *The Heavenly Twins*, and only one of them is an out and out bad lot. I can think of no mere male man’s novel with so low a percentage. Then nobody gets on better with men than I do – as well with men as with women. No there has never been any bitterness in my heart so please get it out of your head (qtd. in *SSPSG*, II, 79).

Although there is almost twenty years between the first publication of “The Yellow Leaf” in 1893 and “The Turning of the Worm” in 1910, in the case of both stories the women characters are the ones who are subjected to “the feminist writer’s ... gaze.” Female relations, especially mothers, are held up to scrutiny as the people who have a far-reaching influence on the development of girls and young women. In her examination of their effectiveness and responsibilities in this area, Grand

⁴⁸ “Sarah Grand and ‘Mere Man,’” 2 November 1901. ‘Mere Man’ was the title of one of Grand’s most successful lectures, delivered in Britain and the USA between 1901 and 1905. Sadly the text does not seem to have survived.

demonstrates no blind loyalty to her sex. It is men such as Sir Henry Marsh and Oscar Wilbraham who are most sympathetically depicted; their prominent role as wise confidants and advisors undermining the narrow and stereotypical view of the Victorian male as oppressor. Sir Henry becomes the mouthpiece for one of Grand's most heartfelt complaints about the education and expectation of contemporary young women:

“There's a great deal of cant rife just now on the subject of women and their education ... most of which ... amounts to a firm conviction that a half-educated girl, a creature who has learnt to live for the pleasure of the moment, to love for the joy of loving, and to marry in order to secure as many of the good things of this world as she can, is in every way a suitable and congenial companion for an educated man, and an admirable specimen of the 'woman's-sphere-is-home' woman. A toy – that's what the creature is, an unreasonable and illogical toy, neither reason nor logic having entered into the curriculum of that kind of 'womanly woman,' it having been supposed that a large establishment is most admirably managed by a mistress whose reasoning powers have never been cultivated, and a young family best brought up on the superstitious practices solemnly confided in mysterious whispers by Mrs Gump—” (16-7).

The telling phrase “toy-woman” was also used in Grand's story “The Undefinable: A Fantasia,” published the following year in October 1894. Here, again, it is invoked by a male artist, once he has been made aware of a woman's power to challenge and inspire a man rather than being the sexual plaything he had previously imagined. It is at this point, just after the successful publication of *The Heavenly Twins*, that Grand was anxious to consolidate her position as an important and influential writer with much to communicate to her readers. In expressing her own beliefs about the dangers of marital incompatibility, in this instance educational incompatibility, through the voice of a man married to the story's most “womanly woman,” she defuses anticipated criticism, from both men and women, about her feminist agenda. Implicit in what Sir Henry Marsh has to say is the idea that if women are properly educated (his use of the word “curriculum” suggests a rigorous timetable to embrace traditionally masculine areas of reason and logic) other equalities will fall into place. Women, he suggests, are largely to blame for their own predicament, while comfortable and stimulating family life will be best provided by educated mothers.

In this story Grand uses exaggeration and humour to contrast Evangeline's education and upbringing with that of the narrator and of Adalesa. Lady Marsh's smothering influences on her daughter and on her home are implicitly and explicitly found fault

with on every level. It is interesting to note that when the narrator returns to the Marsh's house as a married woman she views it as "toy territory" (34).

Lady Marsh becomes a figure of fun when she blames her sister for failing to be a good mother to Adalesa: "She is so sadly what they call 'advanced' – woman's rights, the suffrage, short hair, and all that" (12). Adalesa is adamant that her provocative behaviour is "the reaction from feather-bedasia," but equally convinced that Evangeline "is the consequence of it" (13). Evangeline, who would rather read a novel than study mathematics and French, has the sole ambition in life to marry well and be looked after. In this she is encouraged by her mother who has made it her business to study every aspect of the "marriage-market value" of the three girls in her care. Based on pink, white and blonde good looks, docility and lack of opinions, Evangeline, she is sure will make a brilliant match. Sir Henry clearly has other views.

The tone of most of the first section is light-hearted, with the exception of Evangeline's pursuit and winning of the conventionally handsome hero Mr Perceval who appears to have no virtues but his "romantic" (26) good looks and "exquisite Oriental eyes" (27). The second section, however, is quite different. Set some years after the first part, it begins with another train journey from London, and again the narrator and Adalesa meet by chance on their way to visit Sir Henry and Lady Marsh. The forced intimacy of a shared railway compartment encourages the narrator and Adalesa to share their stories of the intervening years. Adalesa has lived up to the narrator's expectations of becoming "something eccentric," admitting "I am distinguished too in my own way". While she confesses: "I lounge about the world, loving my husband, and longing for the babes that never come" (33), she does not explain the world travel or why she is distinguished. She has proved, in the narrator's words, "to have been her Aunt Marsh's ugly duckling by marrying a duke" (34). Also married, the narrator has nevertheless become a well-known writer whose face is familiar to the public. This gives the only opening for humour in this section when she is shunned by the fashionable ladies staying with the Marsh family and interrogated by the elderly Lady Parkinson about whether or not she puts the full stops in herself, something considered by this grande dame to be too difficult for a mere woman.

It is in Evangeline's story where the real sadness of this section lies. Unlike her two friends, she has failed to develop both emotionally and intellectually as a woman and it is still male admiration for her appearance that she most desires. Marriage to Mr Perceval, time spent living abroad and two children have wrought havoc with her looks, to such an extent that the narrator does not recognise her: "Evangeline was a wreck" (35). Instead of feeling, as the narrator and Adalesa both feel, that every season of life has its value, Evangeline has tried to cling to her youth, wearing inappropriately girlish clothes and behaving as she would have done at eighteen. Even after all this time, Lady Marsh is still colluding with her daughter, encouraging her to spend time at home in claustrophobic comfort, rather than suffering the harsh climate abroad with her husband, performing her duties as wife and mother. Evangeline is kept in a permanent state of girlhood, albeit enhanced latterly with cosmetics, and Adalesa and the narrator fear the outcome of this delusion: "It might have been better had she been less 'a girl' and more fastidious" (40). The narrator states unequivocally: "Lady Marsh aided and abetted Evangeline," when it came to arranging a ball which was to be the double of the ball in the first section. This has the effect of placing the blame for Evangeline's suicide very firmly with her mother.

This is not the first time that Grand has deplored the effect of a restrictive maternal influence on daughters. When Edith Beale dies of the syphilis she caught from her dissolute husband Sir Mosley Menteith, Grand implicates her mother for her role in this tragedy: namely for bringing up a daughter unaware of sexual danger. Although Evadne Fraying has a narrow escape from the possibility of a similar outcome, her mother is justly blamed for bringing her up without sufficient knowledge to make a wise choice of husband. Susceptibility to society's view of the desirability of marrying for wealth and position is likewise condemned. Grand stresses the common nature of this problem when she writes an article entitled "On the Choice of a Husband" (1898): "[o]f men she has no knowledge at all. She is left to choose a husband as she might choose a parrot – for his power to please, his talk and his plumage, so to speak" (qtd. in *SSPSG*, I, 106).

By comparison, George Egerton's story "Virgin Soil", first published in *Discords* (1894) is much more explicit about the dangers of ignorance, although Egerton is not, like Grand, referring to the dangers of sexually transmitted disease. Instead she

is deploring the lack of education about the reality of sex. When the story opens, “the bridegroom” and “a young girl” are on the verge of leaving for the station to begin their honeymoon. “The mother” is offering advice to her tearful daughter: “you must obey” she says “you are married now” (127). This is the extent of the daughter’s education. Egerton has deliberately not given the characters names at this point, to highlight the universality of the situation. The bridegroom is depicted as a middle-aged man with “strong white teeth,” “florid” and “very big.” His seventeen year old bride is in tears, “sobbing with great childish sobs” and is described as “slightly built, scarcely fully developed in her fresh youth.” The contrast between the two could not be more obvious and in referring to the bride’s childishness, freshness and incomplete physical development, the author is alerting the reader to the sexual incompatibility of the couple and the legal rape that is about to take place once the new husband and wife embark on their honeymoon journey in the “engaged carriage” of the train. Tellingly the flowers, spring pinks, are “beaten into the gravel” by the rain. The poignant double symbolism of rain as oppressor and rain as tears is not lost on the bride or the reader.

In the second section of the story, set five years later, the young woman returns home to tell her mother that she has left her husband. This time it is “white chrysanthemums,” the flowers of autumn, which have been beaten into the gravel path by a “sharp shower.” Encouragingly they are struggling “to raise their heads.” There is “no trace of girl-hood” in the now named twenty-two year old Florence. She has become “a hollow-eyed, sullen woman” and has come home to blame her mother for her fate, for failing to educate her about the reality of marriage and motherhood and for deluding herself that social standing and wealth were the most important considerations in selecting a life partner for her daughter: ““I say it is your fault, because you reared me a fool, an idiot, ignorant of everything I ought to have known, everything that concerned me and the life I was bound to lead as a wife; my physical need, my coming passion, the very meaning of my sex, my wifhood and motherhood to follow”” (132).

Even though she has previously dismissed a marriage based on “unequal terms” as “a legal prostitution, a nightly degradation, a hateful yoke,” Florence admits that she as a woman still had her own physical requirements and the right to have them met.

It is not degradation and duty she wants but “a husband who must become a new lover” every time, to preserve the respect, love and mystery in the relationship.

Sarah Bilston points out that Grand is very critical “of the social system that allows girls to enter into marriages with little or no information about the life they will presently lead” (195). It is not just the social system though, she is equally critical of the mothers who are not open with their daughters about all aspects of physical development and sexual relations.

Sexual Development

Grand, like Egerton, acknowledges that young women have healthy sexual appetites which must be acknowledged and taken into consideration in the choice of a marriage partner. Writing on “The Modern Girl” in the *North American Review* in 1894, Grand suggests that the young woman “as she comes to maturity, if she is healthy, she is conscious of inclinations and impulses which alter her whole attitude towards the other sex...” (qtd. in *SSPSG*, I, 40). This makes it all the more important for young women to have a sound education and good advice as they grow from girlhood to womanhood, and to embrace, as Eugenia in the story of the same name does, the opportunity to explore this side of their nature in partnership with a healthy, considerate men.

“The Turning of the Worm” examines the growth of sexual awareness through the story of Beatrice and her attitude towards her Uncle Oscar. For many of Grand’s heroines, adulthood begins with marriage and this is certainly the case with this story. Although ostensibly the title of the story relates to the moment Oscar consciously accepts that his “lap-dog” life, permanently at the beck and call of his selfish, exacting mother and his sisters, is not enough for him and resolves to make changes, I would suggest that the real “Turning of the Worm” is when Oscar perceives that Beatrice is a woman.

Although orphaned at two, Beatrice lacked nothing with Oscar as her devoted guardian, helping her to learn to walk, talk, ride a horse, and nursing her through illness. He had been, she admits, “everything to me that the most devoted father could have been” (222). Very tellingly, though, she has at this point already admitted an almost sexual response to his touch from a very early age:

And when I awoke in the night, and screamed because the room looked strange in the lamplight, he was there beside me, and took my little handie and stroked it and made me feel all nice at once. I always loved his touch (221).

Even though Beatrice is telling the story of her childhood from the vantage point of a mature woman, she has unconsciously slipped into a childish way of talking with the word “handie” and the expression “all nice.” This is deliberately unsettling, with Grand possibly alerting her readers to the unusual quality of the admission.

This is not the first time that Grand has highlighted the precocious sexuality of young girls. It is an eleven year old Beth in *The Beth Book* who becomes infatuated with Sammy Lee, a schoolboy of her own age, not because she likes to talk to him but because the way he looks makes her feel “a strange sensation in herself, a pleasure which shot through her” (165). She finds him “beautiful” exclaiming to herself ““*And I never thought a boy beautiful before*”” (167). It is Grand who italicises these words which reinforces Beth’s sense of shock at the realisation she is seeing someone in an entirely new way.

Beth, at the age of thirteen, finds herself powerfully attracted to Alfred, an attractive “young man of seventeen or eighteen” (237). Sally Shuttleworth gives a detailed analysis of the sexual imagery used by Grand in depicting Beth and Alfred’s first meeting on the beach, using this as an example “of the new-found freedom of the 1890s” in writing about youthful sexuality (210-3). Grand has already alerted the reader a few pages earlier to the fact that a girl like Beth “rich in every healthy possibility, was bound to crave for love early” (233). She is very explicit about a girl’s physical development, about how Beth “promised to mature early” and the way in which “youth and sex already began to hang out their signals” (233). Her physical perfection of face and figure sign-posted “the end of her wintry childhood” and “the beginning of a promising spring” (233): and it is by the linking this natural development to the seasonal calendar that Grand suggests that this progression is both right and inevitable. At the same time, however, the reader is encouraged to be critical of Beth’s mother and “society as it is constituted” for failing to recognise the “needs of nature” and thus neglecting the education of the intellect. Mind and body need to develop in parallel for a girl to have a healthy and balanced approach to life and her own sexuality.

Babs, the protagonist of the novel *Babs the Impossible*, is a perfect example of an emerging young woman whose intellectual education has been completely neglected and whose sensual nature has developed unchecked. This is made clear by the book's narrator:

Babs came of a long line of women who, deprived of the means of intellectual development, had been obliged to live upon their senses ... she courted caresses as instinctively and as innocently as a much loved lap-dog or a comfortable cat (279).

From a very young age, Babs has felt herself to be in love with the enigmatic and studious Cadenhouse, who lives "alone in his old grey tower" (50). When she turns to him for comfort, fearing her beloved brother is dying, it feels natural to her to kiss and be kissed by him. She has no idea why kissing a man on the neck and on the lips might not be the right thing to do, questioning an astonished Cadenhouse "And how can one choose a husband until one knows which man one likes to kiss best?" (263). Cadenhouse, who fears "Bab's innocence threatened to be her undoing" (264) and who has been characterised by Grand as a thoroughly honourable man, would have been doubly shocked in this role had he heard her saying to another middle-aged suitor: "I want you both. I should like to have Cadenhouse for my Sunday lover and you for my everyday one" (303).

By deploying humour to defuse her fierce criticism of the upbringing and education of young women, Grand is once again reinforcing the importance of recognising the fact that sexual feelings are an important part of teenage life. These feelings are not a cause for shame but rather should be acknowledged as a healthy aspect of the developmental process: it is through her openness in ascribing such sensations to her adolescent girls that the readers have the opportunity to examine their attitudes and expectations.

Beatrice, sharing Beth and Babs's appreciation of male beauty, makes much of Oscar's physical appearance, stating that he was an attractive man, "attractive both to men and women" (223). Although he was in height a small man, she emphasises the fact that he was "well made" and always well dressed. In the same sentence she refers to his "virility" and "manliness" (223), perhaps to compensate for the fact that she is taller than him, but certainly to reinforce the nature of his appeal for her.

Although the main part of the story takes place when Beatrice is twenty-one, she is looking back at her life with Oscar and interpreting it through her eyes as an older woman, as well as through his version of the same story: “[h]e has told me himself since – everything – many times; so I know” (222). That short assertion “so I know” is intriguing: is a much older man manipulating or exploiting a young and rather unworldly woman, or are they in complete agreement about their shared history? Grand leaves these possibilities unresolved, thereby contributing a further, slightly unsettling component to this story.

Beatrice, even though she is offering an often repeated and well considered narrative, is powerless to prevent a touch of jealousy creeping in when she talks of the female relations who makes claims upon Oscar’s time and attention, so signalling her proprietorial attitude towards him. She admits that “happy healthy” young people are not very observant about those around them but she is acutely aware of Cecily Carey, a widow in her late thirties, whose late husband had appointed Oscar as sole trustee to manage her financial affairs. Although Cecily is a mature woman, she is infantilised through her nickname “Monkey” and “her reputation for monkey tricks.” Because of this, allowances are made for her behaviour, which, in reality amounts to no more than saying what she thought and doing as she pleased – traits which appear to have much in common with Beatrice’s. Beatrice regards her as a companion, friend and confidant but this does not prevent her from subconsciously regarding her as a potential rival, as is evidenced by the lingering description of her pleasing appearance, her face of “flower-like delicacy” and her “steady sapphire eyes” (225).

It is, however, after a chance remark of Cecily’s to Oscar: “[w]hat a loss you are to the married profession” (226) when she becomes perceived as a possible marriage partner for Oscar and is viewed quite differently by his womenfolk, including Beatrice, who become consciously aware of the danger. Instead of being welcome to visit the house whenever she chooses, Cecily is discouraged and made to feel mercenary. Again, Beatrice demonstrates her jealousy when she confesses:

[m]y heart was with Uncle Oscar. I was glad to think that he was happy with Cecily; but that kind of gladness does not cheer one, and my spirits went down and down. Then, suddenly, just as they had dropped to the lowest depths, I heard something and up again they flushed to the zenith. It was Uncle Oscar’s step in the hall (229).

The conflict between her expressed feeling and her real feeling, the slightly breathless exaggerated tone of the observation and the sudden mood swing are all indicative of the state of adolescence, while the word “flushed” suggests an underlying sexual awareness. This awareness is reinforced a few lines later when Beatrice slipped her hand through Oscar’s arm: “[i]t was my wont to do all the caressing ... I loved to hang on his arm and lean my head against his shoulder” (230). Again, this easy physical familiarity is reminiscent of Babs’s relationship with Cadenhouse. Although Oscar and Cadenhouse do nothing to encourage such spontaneous familiarity, they do nothing to suggest that such behaviour might seem unacceptable either.

In another demonstration of her youth and inexperience, Beatrice becomes “deeply depressed” when she realises that Cecily knows more about Oscar than she does, but is powerless to prevent Oscar proposing to Cecily. The glibness of her tone when she relates this part of the story, though, belies the damaging potential for her health or welfare. In the confusion and turmoil that follow her refusal of him, Beatrice leaps in and proposes to him as impetuously as Angelica proposes to Mr Kilroy in *The Heavenly Twins* (321). “You must take me” Beatrice insists, “I cannot live without you” (243). After some token resistance about the twenty-nine year age gap, the story ends with them clinging to each other with genuine physical affection. Beatrice’s admission “I do love to be near you” bodes well for their immediate future. Grand tries to make light of any possible accusation that Oscar is fickle in his affections by having him say of Cecily: “[t]he woman I saw was the woman you were always making her out to be. That woman was not Cecily. That woman was yourself, Beatrice” (244). While this is a neat solution in terms of the ending of the story, it raises questions about Oscar’s judgement in choosing a wife and also about Beatrice’s selfishness. She is, after all, accustomed to getting everything she asked for throughout her young life, from her own sitting room to outings, picnics and clothes. The final image, too, of Oscar standing up and Beatrice kicking off her high-heeled shoes so “that I might not be taller than he was when he kissed me good-night” (244) is disconcerting because the implication is that this union has deception at its heart.

Adolescent Infatuation

“I’m in love. Sometimes I’m sick with love – love-sick” (20), declaims the irrepressible Adalesa, in mock-dramatic tones to the youthful narrator of “The Yellow Leaf.” The narrator admits to being “shy of the subject” but also to having “natural girlish curiosity” about it, and prompts Adalesa to confess that she is secretly engaged. Grand’s writing here is particularly effective and very different in tone from the humour and didacticism of much of the rest of this story. As often happens in Grand’s fiction, a horse ride provides the excuse for characters to reveal more of themselves.⁴⁹ It is as if a close connection with the natural world, both through the act of horse-riding and the surrounding country-side encourage honesty and self-reflection. In writing of two inexperienced adolescent girls, aware of powerful feeling within themselves, Grand captures the mood of the moment beautifully. Symbolically, fertile spring is full of fledglings, lambs, calves, lush greenery, flowers and upstanding firs: “life – superabundant, palpitating, generous – a joyous riot” (20).

The narrator reveals early in the story that at her age “everything was of interest” and, therefore, nothing could have been more calculated to excite her attention than mention of love. At this point, she perceives Adalesa as a fairytale princess “in a land of weird enchantment.” This unknown landscape of love she perceives as “the verdant shadows,” to be explored “in timidly glad anticipation of something to come that would satisfy the hunger at her heart, that strange importunate ache.” The quasi-mystical language, here, with the juxtaposition of “timidly” and “glad” suggesting an unresolved conflict of feeling, reflects her ignorance of the reality of relations between the sexes but at the same time conveys the realisation sexual union is something to enjoy rather than fear.

While Beatrice appears to have missed this stage of adolescence altogether, impetuous Adalesa revels in it; her secret engagement being a source of irrepressible joy:

[s]ince *he* came into my life I have awakened to full consciousness of a curious kinship with all things, animate and inanimate. The gladness in me, the singing in my heart, is all a part of some great whole, some universal plan, something I *know*, but can’t express (21).

⁴⁹ In both “Eugenia” and *The Beth Book* there are vivid accounts of horse riding.

For the impressionable narrator, nature itself seems to hold its breath as she is led into unfamiliar but thrilling territory and when the horses then “carried us off at a gallop”, there is a sense of an almost sexual release as the real world is restored.

When Adalesa’s infatuation ends because the object of her affections marries someone else, the narrator is secretly relieved, perceiving that he was “a commonplace young man in the mood for marriage” and an unworthy suitor for the anything but commonplace Adalesa.

Grand, through the quality of her writing about young women, demonstrates a convincing awareness of what it means to be an adolescent girl who is grappling with a changing body and an altering perspective of the world, particularly the opposite sex. Equally important is her outspokenness when it comes to the need for responsible supervision and education for girls. As a high profile feminist, an ardent supporter of Josephine Butler and a passionate advocate of Woman’s Suffrage, she was likely to have approved when the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1885 brought about the raising of the age of consent for girls from thirteen to sixteen. Her views about sex are exemplified when she writes about the appropriate age for marriage in the *Young Woman* magazine in 1898:

When wives and daughters were mere goods and chattels, and men had the principal say in the matter, little girls were cruelly forced to marry at the beginning instead of the completion of the change from childhood to womanhood; they were made wives, that is to say, while they were still far from being perfectly developed women physically, and were utterly immature mentally (qtd. in *SSPSG*, I, 115).

Such a frank acknowledgement of the biological difficulties for women when sexual relations commence too early is made clear when she goes on to say that things have improved “since we have had women doctors to study the interests of their own sex,” but she is equally concerned in her fiction with the intellectual maturity of women of marriageable age. Parents, particularly mothers, have a fundamentally important role in the education of their daughters and it is this responsibility which is regularly highlighted when her fiction centres on female adolescence.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, when scientists, sociologists, doctors and writers were all viewing childhood development with sustained interest albeit from differing perspectives, Grand took a consistent and thoughtful stance in

her writing. Her representation of the development of her fictional girls was both culturally and biologically informed, as well as unusually frank in acknowledging a strong sexual component. In portraying the emotional, mental and physical growth of her adolescent protagonists, she has given her readers some memorable accounts of young female life at the close of the Victorian period.

Section v.

MARRING A MARRIAGE: “From Dusk Til Daybreak,” “The Condemned Cell” and “When the Door Opened...?”

Sarah Grand’s heroines are rarely satisfied, particularly where matrimony is concerned. Many works of Victorian romantic fiction end with marriage, the easy supposition being that the couple in question will live “happily ever after.” In Grand’s stories and novels, though, marriage is often the beginning, with husbands and wives endeavouring to make adjustments and compromises, or, more often, failing to do this. Romance itself is never Grand’s principal interest: she is much more concerned with an examination of marriage as the basis for well regulated family life. While she never allied herself with writers such as her contemporary Mona Caird who declared marriage to be “a vexatious failure,”⁵⁰ she nevertheless insisted on equality between the sexes as being essential for successful marriage.

The three stories in this section examine marriage from different points of view but all have depression, suspicion and jealousy at their heart. Olivia, the central character of “From Dusk Til Daybreak,” is struggling with the psychological damage done to her by a “wretched” first marriage, and its repercussions for her second. The first sentence of “The Condemned Cell” is factual and hard-hitting: “The prisoner was the Lady Charlotte Templemore, who had been condemned to death for the murder of her husband.” It could be the opening of a newspaper article, reminding the reader that Sarah Grand was a journalist as well as a writer of fiction. The anonymous narrator of “When the Door Opened...?” is the captive audience for a cautionary tale related by a fellow rail traveller married to a much younger wife with whom he has little in common.

In much of Grand’s fiction, marriage is a central concern. Evadne, whose first marriage provides so much of the controversy in *The Heavenly Twins*, is conveniently widowed, giving her a second chance at married happiness when Dr Galbraith takes her as his wife. As a friend of the family and a medical man, he understood that it would not be an easy task to overcome the effects of her disastrous

⁵⁰ Caird, Mona, ‘Marriage’, *Westminster Review* 130, August 1888, 186-201. Quoted in Carolyn Christensen Nelson, *A New Woman Reader*, 195-6.

first marriage to Major Colquhoun, where intellectual frustration and self-inflicted celibacy in equal measure have undermined Evadne's mental health. Ideala, in the 1888 novel of the same name, takes the bold, and for the time, unusual step of leaving an emotionally and physically abusive husband, and seeks medical help from Dr Lorrimer to overcome the mental illness that follows. Both Evadne and Ideala's case histories are related by male narrators. The personal relationships they enjoy, or would like to have, with these women influence their narratives and make them less than objective. A striking feature of Grand's fiction is her experimentation with the narrative voice and the multiple perspectives this evokes. (See Chapter 2, "Relationship with Readers" for a fuller discussion of this point.) In this instance, the use of male narrators endowed with medical authority provides a troubling subtext to this examination of female psychology. Nonetheless, they paint a moving and convincing picture of women's depression and self-doubt; conditions exacerbated, if not actually caused, by unsatisfactory marriages.

Although "From Dusk Till Daybreak" (1894) was first published after these novels, Grand is still demonstrating a preoccupation with the damaging effects of marriage. The story's narrator is a friend who has known the central character Olivia since they were "children together" but as Olivia "married young" they had not seen each other for years. Finding themselves neighbours in an idyllic spot on the coast, they resume their friendship. Grand reveals neither the name nor the gender of the story's narrator, but Olivia's state of mind is revealed through reported direct speech, a conversation between the two of them. And yet there is no feeling of confession or conversation as psychological therapy in the exchange although the narrator describes, in colourful detail, the changing states of the natural world around them as it mirrors the changing emotional states experienced by the protagonist.

The scene is set by friend and narrator commenting: "Her first marriage had been a wretched one, but now she was an idolized woman, leading a life which seemed to the spectator to be a perfect poem of love and luxury" (135). The deceptive simplicity of this sentence conceals some complicated insights. The whole history of her marriage is contained in the one word "wretched," leaving the "spectator" to imagine what had made this marriage so much more than just unhappy, unfulfilling or unsatisfactory. That her life "seemed" to be "a perfect poem" is significant in inferring that the truth about relationships is subject to interpretation and that precise

knowledge of them is not attainable. That Olivia is now, in her second marriage, “an idolized woman” appears, initially, to be rather attractive, but it is in the nature of idols to be worshipped unconditionally whether or not they deserve or want this adulation. There is something unreal, too, about life as a “poem of love and luxury,” and it does not feel purposeful or sustaining. Although Olivia is adored and physically cosseted, her intellectual and spiritual needs are overlooked. Here, perhaps, is the clue to her state of mind: “[s]he was a creature of changeful moods; one never knew from day to day, scarcely from hour to hour, what the mood would be” (135).

Throughout her fiction, whether in novels like *A Domestic Experiment*, *Ideala* or *The Heavenly Twins*, Grand explores the effects of intellectual repression on married women. She makes her views on the subject quite explicit in her contribution to the 1899 feature in *The Lady's Realm*, “Does Marriage Hinder a Woman's Self-Development?":

Tied to a man who, from obtuseness or selfishness or principle, not only does not assist her development, but refuses to recognise either the necessity or the possibility of future development, the married woman finds her intellect shut in a dungeon from which there is no escape (qtd. in *SSPSG*, I, 119).

There is no reason to believe that Olivia's husband is anything but “obtuse,” unlike Agatha Oldham's, *Ideala's* and *Evadne's* who are corrupt as well as selfish, but nonetheless Olivia's psychological state suggests that her marriage is not wholly fulfilling.

Grand is an effective chronicler of depression as a feature of her characters' lives, whether they are married or single. Of the twelve stories in *Emotional Moments*, five highlight the effects of depression on their female protagonists, but manifested in a diversity of ways. Besides Olivia and Lady Charlotte, the playwright in “An Emotional Moment” talks of a “negative state” (128), Lady Flora is aware of “something evil and oppressive” (143) being lifted from her by “the healthy, happy world” (147) of Nature in “A New Sensation,” while Aldah in “She Was Silent” confides that she regularly experiences “a state of numbness, a dull, heavy, hopeless state, without pleasure and without pain” (165). By drawing attention to the varying states of mind of her protagonists, Grand is adding an extra layer of complexity and detail to her characterisation. Through the suggestion that this depression arises from

a variety of causes, including lack of opportunity for fulfilling work, she is able to demonstrate an engagement not only with what it means to be a woman in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, negotiating new territory in relations between the sexes, but also what it means to be an artist through reference to the creative process.⁵¹

In Olivia's case, it is her unpredictability and her mood swings which threaten to destroy her second marriage. When the narrator and Olivia meet, in early evening, the narrator observes "that her own mood resembled that of the day in its oppressive stillness" (135). In likening the black-backed gull circling overhead to an "evil spirit, lying in wait for me," Olivia reveals much to the narrator and the reader about her "morbid" state of mind, and the "peace of mind" which eludes her. She is sufficiently self-aware to recognise that the root of the problem is her inability to reciprocate love and kindness, and her failure to participate in day-to-day tasks such as letter writing or conversation. Her depression has led to a virtual paralysis, which in turn is causing her to neglect her "young true" second husband. Olivia is straightforward in referring to her "old false husband" and her "odious life" with him, which indicates that repressed emotions are not causing her mental state. She says of her second husband: "He found me with every fibre jarred – found me mentally, morally, physically brutalized by that man. And he has been patient!" (137). The reader is left to imagine the mental and physical damage inflicted on the young bride, who, according to the narrator had married for the first time when scarcely out of girlhood.

The fact that Olivia goes on to refer twice to "the other man," her first husband, reminds the reader of the lasting effect of this damage. That at times she could not bear to have her second husband near her, although "he never intruded ... like the other man" (137), and then punished his absence with fits of irrational jealousy, points to barely suppressed pain and anger with its origin in the past. She does, however, recognise her new husband's kindness and consideration and their potential for happiness together. It is her "sick soul" and "evil" moods that are destroying this second marriage.

⁵¹ Both the playwright in "An Emotional Moment" and Aldah, a writer, in "She was Silent" describe periods of depression as coming between two "phases of feeling" (128). Aldah suggests that they "are the reaction, perhaps" (165). The similarity of Grand's description of the states of mind of these two women is worth noting.

The setting for "From Dusk Till Daybreak" is the veranda of the house, overlooking the sea, and the story is contained, as the title suggests, in the episode between evening and the dawn of the next day. This physical and temporal containment has the effect of heightening the intensity of the emotional content of the story; moreover the effect of the storm which breaks offers an objective correlative for the strength and destructiveness of Olivia's mental state.

Driven from the house in the morning by his wife's bad temper, the husband has taken his yacht and gone out for a day sailing. Olivia fears she has finally "worn his patience out" and is full of regret. Even in this state of sorrow, she demonstrates extreme self-absorption. In fourteen lines, and one hundred and nine words of reported direct speech, professing regret, Olivia says "I" eleven times. She does not consider her husband's feelings. If he dies at sea, it is the effect this loss will have on her that she imagines. Such a degree of self-centeredness points again to her unbalanced state of mind.

By the evening, the yacht has not returned; the increasing fury of the storm is reflected in Olivia's restlessness as she spends the night going from room to room in the house, tending the lights that she hopes will act as a beacon for the boat. By daybreak the "cauldron" of the sea has been replaced by "mountainous waves." The narrator likens the gold of the dawn of the new day to "a burst of gladness," and as though it were caught in a stage spotlight, "a little white ship drove into view." The black-backed gull of the first part of the story symbolically becomes the returning ship, and husband, "skimming ... like a belated bird, eager to regain its nest" (140). Olivia's depression, her "evil spirit," manifested in her perception of the gull as a bird of prey eager to "tear the flesh from my bones" has been vanquished by her night of torment and self-reproach, and the story ends with her exclaiming "I know I am cured at last." If, though, as Grand has hinted at the beginning of the story, Olivia's state of mind has been brought about by a variety of causes, then it is up to the reader to decide whether or not a cure is likely. If her life of idleness and luxury is as much a problem as the residual effects of an abusive first marriage, then the safe return of her husband alone will not bring about a miraculous transformation.

"The Condemned Cell" is, like "From Dusk to Daybreak," set in the space between evening and early morning, a time when the stillness and darkness of night can

heighten or distort the emotions. Lady Charlotte tells her own story, almost as a stream of consciousness, alternating between the present, in her prison cell the night before her execution for the murder of her husband, and in a series of flashbacks revealing her motivation for this crime of passion.

Grand explained the background to this story to the publisher, William Blackwood in a letter of September 1892:

Can you kindly tell me if a little story I sent to the magazine some time ago was accepted? I wrote it first of all in the form of a monologue for Genevieve Ward⁵², and she was delighted with it; and afterwards I told the story to Mrs Frederic Harrison⁵³ who thought it too thrilling to be lost as a monologue. I originally called it "The Condemned Cell"⁵⁴ (qtd. in *SSPSG*, II, 30).

That this story had its origins in the theatre certainly accounts for its rather melodramatic tone and subject matter. It is possible that Grand was influenced by the very high profile media coverage of the Maybrick case, where Florence Maybrick, the twenty-six year old wife of a prominent Liverpool merchant, was tried and convicted for his murder in 1889. Public outrage for this hasty sentence resulted in numerous petitions being handed in to Parliament and to Queen Victoria herself, pleading for this decision to be overturned. On 22 August Home Secretary, Henry Matthews⁵⁵, commuted the sentence of capital punishment to that of penal servitude for life. This case continued to fascinate people, giving rise to a number of fictional and non-fictional accounts.⁵⁶ The *Liverpool Mercury*, in January 1913 was still remembering the case, adding graphically and in slightly breathless tones: "The gallows had already been erected in Walton Jail, within hearing distance of Florence Maybrick, when on 22nd of August the Home Secretary's decision was announced."

⁵² Genevieve Ward DBE (1837-1922) was an American born soprano and actress who came to live and work in England in 1873. She was particularly famed for her Shakespearean roles, and counted Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and Oscar Wilde amongst her friends.

⁵³ Ethel Bertha Harrison (1851-1916), wife of historian and philosopher Frederic Harrison, was a friend of Grand's, in spite of her anti-suffragist views. She wrote for a number of prominent periodicals, including *The Positivist Review*, *Cornhill Magazine* and *Temple Bar*, and ran a club for poor girls in London, the Girls' Guild. Grand helped at the Club whenever she was in London and this experience may well have been influential in her writing of "Janey, a Humble Administrator." George Gissing was a tutor to Harrison's sons.

⁵⁴ William Blackwood rejected the story and it was eventually published in the *Norfolk Daily Standard* on 22 December 1894.

⁵⁵ Henry Matthews, Home Secretary from 1886-1892 in Lord Salisbury's second government.

⁵⁶ These include Helen Densmore's 1892 book *The Maybrick Case*, and more recently *Disorder in the Court: Trials and Sexual Conflict at the Turn of the Century*, eds G. Robb and N. Erber, Palgrave Macmillan 1999. Dorothy L. Sayers' 1930 novel *Strong Poison* is said to be based on the Maybrick case.

The similarities between Lady Charlotte and Florence Maybrick's circumstances are apparent when Grand writes; "[p]eople said that her trial had been conducted with indecent haste, and an unfairly early date fixed for her execution, and there was strong feeling about it in the country" (150). When Grand refers to "a most important person to one in her position" as being an enemy, she is almost certainly referring to the Home Secretary; but it is a veiled reference, as is her reference to the Prince of Wales in "The Man in the Scented Coat." These references would have been obvious to a contemporary readership. Later in the story Grand also refers to "Palmer the Poisoner," again a name which would have been familiar to her audience, as he was the mass murderer Dr William Palmer who was hanged outside Stafford Prison in June 1856, in front of thirty-five thousand spectators.

Like Florence Maybrick, Lady Charlotte becomes conscious of the sound of hammering in the distance, realising then that "[t]hey are putting up the scaffold" (153). The psychological state of a prisoner facing imminent execution provides a compelling narrative, particularly when it is a woman convicted of murdering her husband. Unlike Florence Maybrick, Lady Charlotte admits her guilt although the fact that it was a crime of passion provoked by sexual jealousy might be considered an extenuating circumstance. Grand gives her story a twist, however, since her protagonist welcomes approaching death. Her difficulty lies with her inability to forgive her husband; it is this element which is the source of the tension in the story. Whether or not she will be granted a reprieve is unimportant.

Unlike so many of Grand's fictional husbands, Rupert Templemore, was in his wife's recollection "the kindest, tenderest, best..." (151). The fact that she goes on to quote from Tennyson's famous "Break, Break, Break" a poem in commemoration of his dear, dead friend Arthur Hallam, adds weight to the idea that her grief is genuine and profound:

But O for the touch of a vanish'd hand
And the sound of a voice that is still! (165)

Lady Charlotte still loves her husband, remembering the happiness of their early years together, but also their joint grief at losing a baby son. She does not regret killing him: "I thought him true, and all the time his life was a lie" (152).

This lie was the fact that he had a first wife still living and had therefore committed bigamy. When Lady Charlotte discovers, quite by chance and on her way home from Church, her husband walking with another woman, tellingly “an older woman than I am, and handsomer,” she does not wait for explanations. Instead she seizes an ornamental, jewelled dagger and stabs him to death in a moment of jealousy and passionate anger. Grand spares her readers any details of the blood or the arrest. Instead, we are offered a picture of this society lady, the product of “generations of honoured women,” having been reduced to the status of “a common criminal standing in the dock” (152). This juxtaposition demonstrates that while class divides mankind, violent emotion unifies it. In her flashback to her court appearance, she pleads guilty at once, and then when the striking clock outside her prison cell calls her back to her present situation, she reminds herself “he deserved to die” (152). The haste and violence of the deed suggests that it unquestionably constitutes a crime of passion rather than an act designed to avenge her family name.

In contrast, she falls asleep momentarily dreaming of a loving reunion with her husband, until in the dream she realises that she is being strangled by a group of strange men with her husband standing back and watching. This nightmare forces her to face up to the reality of the death sentence, “dragged forth, and tied, and tortured.” She cries out, like Christ on the cross, “God has forsaken me.”⁵⁷ This is the cue for her mood to change again and the anger and bitterness to be replaced by “a flood of tenderer feeling” (154). Again, the earlier quotation from Tennyson is called to mind when Lady Charlotte cries out “Oh, for a kind word, for a loving look – for the touch of a hand...”

Her loneliness and emotional instability are convincingly depicted. When she discovers a letter from her husband’s first wife amongst her possessions in the cell, she explains away the unlikely coincidence of such a timely find by reference to her emotional indifference to everything. The letter makes clear that her husband did not know his first wife was alive when he married for a second time. Lady Charlotte’s response again has echoes of Christ’s crucifixion in her heartfelt plea: “Oh, my God! Forgive me!” (154).⁵⁸ However, she does not plead for forgiveness for her executioners, as Christ did for his; instead she is asking for forgiveness for doubting

⁵⁷ “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” Matthew 27:46

⁵⁸ “Father forgive them for they know not what they do.” Luke 23:34

her husband and for her inability at the height of her jealousy to trust in God. With the return of confidence in her husband, she is once again able to perceive God's mercy, this time quoting directly from the Bible: "[j]ust now I thought myself forsaken, but behold the promise and the pardon. *I will not leave you comfortless.*⁵⁹ The power to pray returns" (155).

That at no time does she express regret for the act of killing itself is psychologically revealing and certainly points to a troubled emotional state. The fact that she is a conventional churchgoer and in moments of extreme tension finds that biblical references provide an outlet for expressing these emotions, make it more surprising that she experiences no feeling of repentance for the murder. In a final melodramatic flourish, dawn brings notice of a reprieve from the Home Secretary. Lady Charlotte has, however, died in the night with her trust in her husband and God restored.

In mixing biblical and poetic references, Grand is adding an extra cultural dimension to her characterisation of Lady Charlotte as well as revealing more fully her states of mind. The reader is encouraged to sympathise with the protagonist and to overlook the severity of the murder itself through an understanding of her jealous state which has led to her temporary madness, occasioned by the marital confusion. Grand requires her audience to suspend their disbelief about the likelihood of a man not knowing of the fate or whereabouts of a former wife. But since her depiction of Lady Charlotte's murderous act is so powerfully rendered as a crime of passion, Rupert's innocent and unrealised bigamy is less problematic for the reader.

A further story which throws light on how Grand explores through her fiction problems which blight even the most caring marriage, is "When the Door Opened...?" First published in *The Idler* in January 1898, it subsequently comprised the seventh story in *Emotional Moments* (1908). *The Idler*, a monthly illustrated magazine, was founded in 1892 by the author Robert Barr and quickly earned a reputation for the quality of its short stories from many of the foremost writers of the day, including Maupassant, Conan Doyle and H.G. Wells.

This is one of the few Grand stories to have attracted recent critical attention, with both Wilson Foster (2008) and Liggins (2011) finding much to praise for its

⁵⁹ "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." John 14:18

contribution to the debates of the early 1890s about marriage and the freedoms and the responsibilities of husbands and wives. Wilson Foster likens it to Grand's novel *A Domestic Experiment*, in "testing the institution" of marriage, although ultimately he finds them both "lightweight" (284). Liggins, however, who calls Grand "a key contributor to debates about marriage" (70) finds its "open-ended" conclusion particularly effective in provoking questions about the institution (72).

Equally accomplished, however, is the structure of the story. The narrator begins with a reflection on the "glimpses of life" that "one" witnesses going about daily life in an urban environment. The use of the word "one" three times in this paragraph has the effect of including the reader into the narrator's experience. The fact that the various methods of transport which make these sightings so easy and so numerous are listed: "from a hansom cab, from the top of an omnibus, from the platform of an underground station in a train that stops for a minute, from the pavement in a carriage blocked in by the stream of traffic" (171) reinforces the feeling of the accelerating pace of life in the late nineteenth-century city where so much experience increasingly feels fragmentary. Deborah Parsons writes persuasively of Amy Levy as "a poet with the city as her muse" (89). She draws parallels between Levy's experiences of the city and those of the Lorimer sisters in *The Romance of a Shop* (1888). Unconventional Gertrude rides "on the top of an omnibus" (99), enjoying her freedom to travel alone, revelling in seeing and being seen.

Grand does not reveal the gender of her narrator "When the Door Opened...?", and this adds a certain frisson to the idea of independent travel in the city where both men and women increasingly have the opportunity to secretly observe each other. This is something that Grand explores further in her 1904 story "The Man in the Scented Coat," where her protagonist Josepha travels around London alone, looking for "occasional adventures" (204).

The narrator's musings lead on to a reflection about the "intervals of intensity" witnessed in this way and how they might be the beginning or end of something "tragic, heroic, amorous, abject" (171). The fragmentary nature of these intervals is, of course, "tantalizing," but the narrator expresses a belief that an open-ended story is much more memorable than a complete one:

they possess a charm which is not in the finished story, and are recollected with vivid interest long after many a tale, begun at the beginning and rounded to a satisfactory conclusion, has lapsed from the mind (171).

The story that then follows is cited as an example of this theory.

In it, the narrator is “coming home alone late one night by train from a distant suburb,” in a carriage with a bad tempered married couple and a pleasant looking man of about forty. Grand’s economy of language in setting the scene is striking and raises a number of questions in the mind of the reader, such as where the travellers have been and for what reason, and why the narrator is alone. As has been seen earlier with the balcony at night in “From Dusk Till Daybreak” and the night long vigil in “The Condemned Cell,” an enclosed space and darkness outside are effective devices for enhancing an atmosphere of drama, eliciting confidences and engaging the reader in the act of storytelling. The railway carriage in this story is not a dangerous place though, but it does impose a certain intimacy on the travelling companions.

When the married couple leave the train and are observed resuming their quarrel, the man and the narrator begin a conversation about marriage. The male passenger comments on the ““wrong-headed”” attitude of the husband who ““watches his wife and keeps her shut up”” (172), only allowing her out with a chaperone. He cannot understand a man wanting a ““bond-slave”” for a wife and states emphatically: ““Personally, I prefer a free woman”” (172). The story that he goes on to tell, however, undermines his statement. It is here that Grand captures many of the contemporary concerns about the terms of marriage and how men and women might negotiate a more equal partnership based on mutual affection and trust.

““The right ordering of married lives”” (172) is difficult, even for those with the best intentions, he insists. He and his wife, although ““fond of each other”” have little in common. He is bookish and prefers a quiet life of literature and art, while she has no time for reading and prefers the gaiety of society life. They have worked out a compromise, and for the most part amicably go their separate ways in order to enjoy the time spent together all the more for having things to talk about.

This arrangement is put to the test one evening when the wife goes alone to a fancy dress ball, thoroughly disguised. Left alone, the husband begins to imagine all sorts

of worrying situations: the “free-and-easy” manners of “the bounders who haunt such places” and the idea of her “dancing with some very undesirable partner”(173). At this point he is focussing on the dangers to his wife but it does not take him long to replace this concern with suspicion and jealousy. Putting on a concealing costume himself, he goes to the ball to spy on his wife and to make an “experiment” (173). His intention is to test her virtue.

Wilson Foster in commenting on the parallel between this story and *A Domestic Experiment*⁶⁰ highlights the importance of “costume and mask” in subjecting “marriage...to trial by experiment” (284). His interest in the idea of “trying out roles” is particularly relevant, as Agatha Oldham is compelled to assume the dress and mannerisms of her rival Dolly in a misguided attempt to secure the affections of her husband, while the suspicious husband in “When the Door Opened...?” assumes the manner of a seducer, or at least someone prepared to purchase a prostitute’s favours in order to test his wife’s loyalty. If it is necessary to assume another identity to assess or sustain a marriage, then it is clearly a flawed relationship.

The husband in the short story is attempting to reconcile his views as a “New Man” who has declared that he wants “a free woman” as his wife, with the conventional assumptions he makes about the woman he believes to be his wife who “danced with the abandonment of a ballet girl” (174). His haste in jumping to conclusions, prompted by his jealousy, he takes the idea of role playing one stage further: “[w]as this the true woman, I wondered, and was that other to whom I was accustomed only an actress earning a living?” (174). By exhibiting his readiness to view sex as a currency to be traded in exchange for marriage and comfort, he reveals himself to be quite insecure in his role as a “New Man.”

The ending of the story, as with so many of Grand’s stories, is inconclusive. The husband takes the woman he believes to be his wife home, orders her to “unmask” and, as she does, hears his real wife returning home, her footsteps on the stairs and her hand on the door handle. It is at this point that the spell is broken as the husband realises the train has reached his station. He jumped off the train, leaving both the

⁶⁰ Published by William Blackwood in 1891, this novel examines the unequal and unhappy marriage of Paul and Agatha Oldham. Teresa Mangum recognises the importance of this early work in helping to establish Grand as an author with a powerful interest in the status of women within marriage, as defined by both law and social practice, in her book *Married, Middlebrow and Militant: Sarah Grand and the New Woman Novel* (39-49).

narrator and the reader “tormented with conjectures as to what happened when the door opened” (176).

Liggins suggests that this ending deliberately leaves “the question of freedom within modern marriage unresolved” (*British Short Story*, 72). In looking at the ambiguities in this story, such as the genderless narrator who complicates “concerns about freedom of movement in public” and men continuing to use prostitutes, she explores the various possible interpretations. Most persuasive is the idea “that men and women don’t communicate or understand each other” (72). Indeed, this is the message that comes across clearly in all three stories considered in this section: that married partners create the flaws in their union through a failure to communicate properly. Poignantly, though, each of these marriages is shown as offering the partners the potential for happiness.

Section vi.

CLASS AND WORK: “Kane, A Soldier Servant,” “Janey, A Humble Administrator,” “The Rector’s Bane,” “Ah Man” and “The Butcher’s Wife.”

The five stories in this section all explore class, work and the links between the two. These were important topics for late Victorian women writers: novelists, journalists and social investigators who were exploring current social and economic conditions as well as the potential for their improvement. Sarah Grand did not immerse herself in the detailed evidence of the social condition, as did female contemporaries such as Beatrice Webb and Clara Collet who both collaborated with Charles Booth by researching sections of his *Life and Labour of the People in London 1889-1903*, or Clementina Black, a pioneering trade unionist, novelist and researcher into work for married women. Her fiction had little in common with that of another contemporary, Margaret Harkness, writing under the male pseudonym John Law; her books depicted the lives of the poor in uncompromisingly bleak detail. Instead Grand was more concerned with a literary depiction of work, or lack of work, for men and women alike and how class influenced the work available.

Grand was interested in providing practical help and support for the poor as is made clear in Jane T. Stoddart’s “Illustrated Interview” in *Woman at Home* in 1895:

“Few people know how warmly Sarah Grand has interested herself in the poor girls of London. She goes every Thursday evening when in town to Mrs Frederic Harrison’s Girls’ Guild at Newton Hall, Fetter Lane, and there she joins like a sister in the amusements and occupations of the members. ‘This summer,’ she told me, ‘we have provided our girls with very pretty uniforms for gymnastics, and many of them look charming in them – you would hardly know them for the pale, pinched-looking London work-girl.’” (Qtd. in *SSPSG*, I, 213-4)

Although this excerpt comes from a rather sycophantic magazine feature, it does nevertheless reveal some interesting insights into Grand’s attitude to the London poor. Her interest is in the “London work-girl” rather than the entire family and it is confined to joining in with their entertainments, “like a sister” in the safe space of Newton Hall, away from their potentially impoverished homes. While she is identifying with “the poor girls” in a familiar way, she is also a provider of flattering clothes for exercise. Very much a benefactress, supplying her time and money to

improve the life of girls already seeking to better themselves by belonging to a “Girls’ Guild,” Grand has something in common with Octavia Hill’s lady visitors.

Diana Maltz has written persuasively about Hill’s mission for reform of the living conditions of the poor through moral reform of the individual in her 2006 book *British Aestheticism and the Urban Working Classes, 1870-1900*, citing the tension between “her artistic leanings and social responsibilities” (47) as a motivating force behind her pioneering social housing projects. In Hill’s appointment of women as rent collectors and managers for the various estates she administered in London, she attributes to them a special influence in her work *Our Common Land* (1877):

You might gladden their homes by bringing them flowers ... you might meet them face to face as friends ... you might collect their savings; you might sing for and with them; you might take them into parks ... or to exhibitions or picture galleries; you might teach and refine and make them cleaner by merely going among them. (Qtd in Maltz, 50).

Maltz highlights the juxtaposition of savings and music; flowers, parks, galleries and cleanliness. Sarah Grand, too, deploys her feminine influence in matters of entertainment, exercise, dress and appearance in her weekly visits to London’s working girls. This attitude is apparent in the analysis of the stories in this section.

Four of the five stories focus on individuals in a servant role and comprise what Grand subtitled “Studies from Life,” while the remaining story, “The Rector’s Bane,” contrasts two couples at opposite ends of the social scale, the unnamed Rector and his wife and retired road-maker, Dick Jordan, and his wife Martha. It is significant that “Ah Man,” “Kane, A Soldier Servant” and “Janey, A Humble Administrator” were all first published between July 1891 and October 1893, suggesting that Grand was particularly interested at this period in using the story form to explore issues of class and work. She does so, however, in a striking way, by deploying a first-person, middle-class, female narrator. These issues are also central to “The Butcher’s Wife,” first published in 1905, and “The Rector’s Bane” (1908), each related by an anonymous, third-person narrator, which endows these stories with a detached perspective, necessarily absent from the other three of this group.

In all five of these stories, Grand explores the class system of the late nineteenth century, both in Britain and abroad. These include issues of poverty and social realism, the employer and servant relationship, as well as marriage and its

inequalities. She employs a variety of techniques to do this, ranging from an almost journalistic exploration of poverty, albeit filtered through her narrators; to farce; romance and an old-fashioned moralising tirade didactically aimed at the readers.

In her preface to *Our Manifold Nature*, Grand writes of fiction being deemed to be at its best “when it was true to life” and how this has led to a contemporary desire in fiction “to go beyond the mere semblance and to grasp the reality of life” (6).

Grasping the “reality of life” for Grand’s contemporary Margaret Harkness, a committed socialist and feminist, was to set her fiction in a known location at a specific point in time, as she did with her 1888 novel *Out of Work*, which opens with: “[i]t was the day after the Queen’s visit to the East End. Whitechapel was gay with flags” (1). The reference here is unmistakably to Queen Victoria’s visit to the Mile End Road on 14 May 1887, to open the People’s Palace, just a month before her Golden Jubilee. Grand, however, avoids such specific detailing of time and place in her fiction. While Harkness positions her characters against a backdrop of historical reality, Grand is more concerned with psychological reality. For both authors, however, fiction is about more than “semblance:” it is about changing the perceptions of their readers and educating them about lives other than their own in a desire to precipitate change.

Grand does not portray poverty in the same way that Harkness does, committed as she is to a naturalistic form of presentation. The glimpses she affords us through her short stories are always modified by the narrator. Not for Grand the unpredictable violence of the mob, the communal bath on being admitted to the casual ward of a workhouse or the degradation of long-term unemployment. Even when, at the end of “Kane, A Soldier Servant,” the narrator had been summoned to Kane’s deathbed, “there was a general air of cleanliness about him, as of discipline and order successfully struggling to the last with poverty and death” (95), concealing the reality of hunger and fear. Of the intervening years between the narrator employing Kane and his death, little is told. Mary, his legal wife of a few hours, relates her story of an abusive first marriage to an alcoholic husband, her struggle to keep her five children fed and clothed, marital violence, bigamy, unemployment and inadequate pension provision, but the reader is not invited to experience these difficulties in any detail. Much more is made of the fact that Kane had not been prepared to ask his

former employer for help until he and Mary were legally married lest he causes offence.

The nameless narrator has a defined role to play as a benefactress and it is a role she relishes:

[t]he snow was falling softly outside, and Kane was very cold, but fortunately we knew only too well what would be wanted when we were sent for in those days, and a servant had followed me with food and fuel and wine and warm blankets (95).

There is no intentional irony in the fact that another servant had carried the provisions to Kane's chilly, sparsely furnished home, or that being "sent for" by those in need was in any way unusual. There may well be more than a hint of smugness in "fortunately we knew only too well" although the effect is to make the reader question a society where poverty is the norm. Although the setting is impoverished, it is not desperate. There is, at least, a "scrap of fire" (95) and Kane is lying propped up on a straw mattress close to the fire, which is made up straight away by the narrator's servant. The room is not dark, dingy and rat infested, like Mary Dillon's in *A Manchester Shirtmaker* (1890), but is instead a large, light garret. And there is no storm raging outside; instead the snow is falling "softly," suggesting peace and acceptance.

If the middle-class narrator of "Kane" acts as a barrier between the reader and the reality of poverty, then this is all the more apparent in "Janey, A Humble Administrator." The story opens with a reference to Charles Dickens, whose novelistic work in creating memorable characters and in portraying the plight of the poor was much admired by Grand and her contemporaries. The suggestion that Janey should have been a character in one of Dickens's novels, had "the master" not been "cut off prematurely" (97), is an acknowledgement of his reputation and also refers to the fact that his untimely death in 1870, at the age of fifty-eight, robbed the world of a fine writer and a powerful campaigner for social justice. There is, however, just a touch of arrogance, too, in the suggestion that Grand is placing her writing abilities alongside those of Dickens.

Janey's innate qualities of dignity, good manners, intelligence, judgement and patience are listed in the first paragraph, as is the narrator's assessment of her as a "true gentlewoman." Grand is very aware of subtle distinctions in the class system;

while, given her many virtues, Janey might be rightly considered a “gentlewoman,” she is definitely not a “lady.” Before the reader can infer that Grand is making a negative comment about Janey’s social standing, the narrator immediately turns the tables and affirms that while pedigree and money can confirm class, they are “fine feathers which cover many contemptible birds” (97). This point echoes Grand’s regular criticism of society’s superficiality, particularly where wealth is the basis for judging personal worth. While “Janey’s position was low in the social scale – she had been a kitchen maid,” (97) her “respectable” and “honest” lineage could have qualified her for the best of any social class, had her “trick of speech” not let her down.

Grand has a finely-tuned ear when it comes to speech as a marker of class but she is always alert to the possibility of dissemblance, as is clear near the beginning of “The Saving Grace,” when the Boer war prisoner is being evaluated by the new captive, the adventurer who is narrating the story: “[b]y his voice I had already gauged him as socially a gentleman; but a man may have the outward stamp without the inward grace of character” (257). The “trick of speech,” however, is an important consideration in all Grand’s stories. Whenever she presents speech in dialect, it is to draw attention to the fact that the speaker is of a lower class than the predominantly middle-class narrators.

Grand’s depiction of social class in relation to her characters is rarely straightforward, and, as with the representations of poverty, it is always mediated through the eyes of the narrator. In “Janey,” the narrator is a young married woman, of a similar age to Janey herself. Grand represents her youth and naivety to great effect in highlighting her limited experience of the world. She tells the reader at the outset: “I made Janey’s acquaintance through our good vicar, to whom I had applied for work to vary the stultifying monotony of my elegant leisure” (98). This deceptively simple sentence is particularly revealing. Opportunities for work, particularly outside the home, were scarce for affluent married women in the 1890s. With servants to perform the majority of the domestic duties, the condition of leisure, for an intelligent woman, could seem a very dull one indeed. That there is no shortage of money available is implicit in the use of the word “elegant” alongside “leisure,” suggesting that good taste is not sufficient to combat the paralysing effect of this young woman’s restrictive routine. That the vicar is un-ironically deemed

“good” is unusual for Grand, as it reinforces the idea of the moral superiority of the man and his calling, thereby making him a safe source of advice for a young woman seeking a worthwhile way of combating boredom.

The meaning of work is the subject of a revealing exchange between narrator and vicar. When asked what sort of work she has in mind, the young lady replies vaguely that she would like to do “something for somebody” (98), but instantly rejects the idea of “district visiting.” Revealing her narrow and protected view about what is suitable philanthropic work for someone of her standing, she insists “You must let me go somewhere I am sure to be welcome,” suggesting that she could be of service to the “sick poor” (98). In this attitude, there is a parallel with Grand’s weekly visits to Mrs Harrison’s Girls’ Guild.

The narrator’s first sight of Janey’s family and home is presented in almost stereotypical terms with the father suffering from a mental disorder brought on by “debauch,”⁶¹ the mother ill and exhausted by “the reckless production of too large a family”⁶² and Janey herself “paralysed from the waist down” (98). At this stage she cannot see beyond alcoholism, the problems of childbearing and disability and the “squalid” two-storey cottage which represents home for the family. She comments on the quantity of human life “swarming” and continues with this insect imagery when she likens the neighbourhood children to “maggots on meat,” using the terms “repulsive” and “dirt” to strengthen the idea that this is all new and shocking for her. She quickly redeems herself though, in case her audience has assumed she lacked sympathy, by pointing out that this was a first impression. Once she began to look more closely, individuals became “handsome” and “sturdy” (98) because the weak have died in infancy. There is a tone of admiration in this Darwinian recognition that, in some social groups, it is only the fittest that survive.

No urban Victorian landscape would be complete without the presence of heavy industry: Grand acknowledges two strands of the industrial revolution by making

⁶¹ Men ruined by sensual over-indulgence are favourite targets for Grand’s condemnation, both in *Our Manifold Nature* and in her novels too. Boomellen’s father ‘had been “wild” in his youth, but his degrading habits were cut short by something which suspiciously resembled epilepsy’ (111), while Brinkhampton, in ‘Eugenia’ has been “deteriorating mentally, morally, and physically, in consequence of his weak-minded self-indulgence” (79).

⁶² Our first sight of Beth’s mother in *The Beth Book* is of her about to produce a seventh child. She is described as “weak and ill and anxious.” “It was a reckless thing for a delicate woman to do,” the narrator affirms (1).

Janey's father a retired lorry driver who worked for a railway company. With a huge iron works with eighteen chimneys positioned behind the houses, it dominates the landscape and the lives of the hundreds of men it employed on six hourly shifts. In likening the works to a "monster whose black breath begrimed the country for miles around" (98), Grand is pointing out, through her inexperienced narrator, that man is insignificant alongside the demands of industry. Again making use of insect imagery, man is to industry what "the coral insect is to the atoll" (98). In juxtaposing the idea of the "monster" as provider of much needed employment and the despoiler of its surroundings, Grand is raising unanswered questions about economic necessity and quality of life.

Although poor and an invalid, Janey is clean, attractive to look at, articulate and grateful. She is uncomplaining about her physical suffering and is an astute manager of money and her family. In the financial details of budgeting for loaves of bread, clothes, boots and eight shillings a week rent, set against the eighteen shillings a week from her father's pensions and the four shillings a week earned each by two of her brothers, there is a convincing material reality⁶³ very similar to that in George Gissing's *The Odd Women* (1893), in which the Madden sisters take an almost unhealthy delight in eking out their insufficient resources (43-4).

Janey's father, whose mental disorders have turned him into a cruel childlike figure, is portrayed with a great deal of insight and sympathy. In her recounting of the story of Janey and her family, there is never a sense of the narrator judging these individuals. The medical professionals who treat Janey at the onset of her "hysterical paralysis" are found wanting, and the dental students who are allowed to practise their skills on the poor as "a kind o' charity" (103) come in for equal condemnation. There is much implied criticism of the treatment of young female servants who endure long hours and a heavy workload, as is made clear when Janey tells her story about the beginning of her illness. The most telling criticism is saved for the false friends who visited Janey when she returned home from hospital but did not maintain these visits. By couching her displeasure in financial terms, the narrator is making a powerful point about the inequalities between rich and poor: "I had been feeling indignant with those people who had only paid Janey attention while they

⁶³ In "The Butcher's Wife" too Grand demonstrates a keen awareness of financial details in the haggling between Mrs Barny and Mrs Durham about the prices for various cuts of meat.

could make capital of her case from which to draw large interest for their conversation” (104). It is only the rich that are in a position to make investments but there is also something exploitative in turning the misfortunes of the poor into the material for drawing-room gossip for the wealthy.

Although Grand is concerned with painting a picture of poverty and the psychological effect on victim and benefactress alike, it is not a static, hopeless picture. The narrator takes a real delight in cataloguing the ways in which the situation of the whole family improves, through her weekly visits and through Janey’s careful management of her family and their finances. The relationship between narrator and subject is carefully negotiated⁶⁴ and shows sensitivity about degrees of need: “[n]either Janey nor any of her family were beggars, and I had always felt great delicacy about offering them money” (102). She gets around this by sending two of her servants to Janey’s home with a Christmas hamper, where it is received with pleasure and gratitude, but not extravagantly so. In addition to the practical help she offers, the narrator, in small ways, makes Janey’s home environment more aesthetically appealing: “I had made her a picture gallery, with coloured prints from the Christmas papers, by this time, and kept her room sweet with flowers, both cut and growing” (102).

The narrator’s confidence in herself is boosted still further by Janey’s positive response to faith healing and music as a way of attempting to reverse some of the worst effects of her paralysis. As part of this process, she challenges Janey’s belief in a vengeful God who punishes His people: instead of reading the Bible to her, she reads her “cheerful secular stories to fill her with a wholesome love of life” (105). This shift by the narrator to a more critical view of the Church than was the case when she applied to the “good vicar” for work, indicates not only her personal development but also hints at a theme which Grand develops, more fully, in “The Rector’s Bane:” namely the Church’s role in the oppression of the poor and in maintaining a gulf between them and the wealthy.

⁶⁴ The narrator of “Janey” is very prominent in this story, and she stresses the amount that she learnt from Janey, about social equality, household management, and personal integrity. Particularly poignant is the narrator’s reflection on her own emotional state, where sitting beside Janey, she felt “my sorely contracted heart expand, and the hard burden of my own coldness melt in the warmth that came glowing with the return of the power to care – to love” (102).

If Janey is initially in a “depressing state of resignation” she had been “preached into” (106), then the plight of Dick and Martha Jordan in “The Rector’s Bane” demonstrates not only the power of the Church but also the hypocrisy present at every level of the institution in its dealings with the poor. There is little evidence that this story was ever published before its inclusion in *Emotional Moments* and this may well have been because of its controversial subject matter. Grand’s choice of title, “The Rector’s Bane,” is interesting insofar as it focuses the reader’s attention on the Rector rather than the elderly couple whose role is summed up in the word “bane.” By alluding to the poor as being the wealthy man’s curse, and playing on the well-known phrase “the bane of his existence,”⁶⁵ Grand is immediately making her agenda clear to those who know her as a subversive social critic. The campaigning Sarah Grand of the 1890s is still present in 1908.

The story opens on the morning of the wedding between the Rector’s only daughter and the only son of “the wealthiest landowner in the neighbourhood” (177). The joyful scene is presided over by the smug Rector, commenting on the sacred nature of marriage and uttering the Biblical quotation ““Those whom God hath joined together, let no man put asunder”” (177). The tranquil scene is undermined by two “toil-worn” women who note the fact that the wedding flowers must have cost at least fifty pounds – enough to ““keep a poor man’s fam’ly in comfort fur a year”” (177). In an almost filmic sequence, the focus moves from the bride getting into her carriage, to the Jordans’ cottage on the opposite side of the church. Grand has set this cottage in the “shadow” of the church to illustrate the two-faced nature of a religious institution which is a source of prosperity for some and penury for others. The fact that she repeats “shadow of the church” three times in this story reinforces the idea that religion, which should be synonymous with goodness, is also tarnished.

Although the cottage is “small” and “poverty-stricken,” it is “clean” and orderly. As with the stories of Kane and Janey, Grand stresses the cleanliness of the individuals and their environment, which makes all the more poignant the words of the workhouse matron to Martha Jordan towards the end of “The Rector’s Bane,” ““You’re jest dirt, that’s what you are, and you’d better know it”” (181). By reducing

⁶⁵ It is also possible that Grand has Book 1 of Milton’s *Paradise Lost* in mind: “Let none admire/That riches grow in Hell; that soil may best/Reserve the precious bane” lines 690-2.

her to “dirt,” not only is Martha losing her individuality but she has also become tainted by the label of pauper.

The contrast between the two couples, the Rector and his wife and Dick and Martha Jordan, is emphasised throughout the story. Although both couples are elderly and both sets of husbands and wives are devoted to each other, their way of life could not be more different. The day that has brought joy to one couple is the day that the Jordans are being turned out of their cottage and placed into the workhouse because they can no longer afford the rent. Even the fire, that symbol of home, comfort and family unity, is out.

The workhouse is seen in the literature of the period as a symbolic loss of autonomy and a last resort for the destitute. The narrator of “The Rector’s Bane” makes explicit Martha’s view of the workhouse, and in doing so, gives voice to the common view: “[d]isgrace and imprisonment – that is what she felt it was; but she had no words to express it” (180). Mary Dillon in Margaret Harkness’s novel *A Manchester Shirtmaker* (1890) kills her baby rather than allowing her to be brought up a “workhouse brat” while Jos Coney in *Out of Work* (1888) would rather starve than spend another night in the casual ward of a workhouse. The cruellest aspect of the workhouse in Grand’s story, alongside the disgrace, is the fact that husbands and wives are not accommodated together and the Jordan’s final night in their home was likely to be the last night “they would ever spend together on earth” (178).

The tale is prevented from becoming too sentimental by the fact that Grand focusses on the double standards of the Rector in relation to his family and his parishioners. The local Bishop, who is aware of the Rector’s failings but will not intervene, is portrayed as a weak man. In her implicit criticism of the Church⁶⁶, both in her use of Biblical quotations and in her portrait of the clergy, there is a political edge which rescues the story from melodrama. Her depiction of Dick Jordan, his thrift and sobriety, his long marriage, his “three soldier sons,” and his working life as a roadmaker where he never takes time off for illness or bad weather, makes a convincing case that it is men like this who are “such as any country should claim for

⁶⁶ Grand is explicit in her criticism of established religion in *The Beth Book*: “There is no cruelty the church has not practised, no sin it has not committed, no ignorance it has not displayed, no inconsistency it has not upheld, from teaching peace and countenancing war, to preaching poverty and piling up riches” (523).

its own with pride” (178). This is a theme Grand develops more fully in *Variety* in “One of the Olden Time.”

Particularly effective in this story, is the final section where we see Dick Jordan reduced from being an individual with a name and an identity, to simply being an old pauper. His decline is movingly portrayed using loss of language to mirror his loss of identity, through Martha’s interaction with him and by the perceptions of the onlookers, including the Rector himself. Martha, on seeing him in the workhouse for the first time a week after they were both admitted, calls out to him ““Dicky, boy, ... my man”” (181), but he does not respond with either a word or gesture. Three times more she calls out to him ““Dicky, ”” but still there is no response. In this total absence of response, the loss of the man and his individuality is as poignant as the fact that the Rector and his wife, who overhear Martha’s agonised realisation that her husband has been taken from her, dismisses her grief as ““unseemly.”” He does not recognise his former tenants; all he sees are ““paupers””. In commenting ““[w]hat a pest these paupers are”” he objectifies them still further, from lowly human life to the level of vermin.

The fact that this story has been related by an anonymous third-person narrator allows the reader the opportunity to form a very different relationship with the characters and subject matter from the relationship with the protagonist, his employer and fellow servants in “Ah Man.” Grand uses an overseas setting for the story, a device which again helps to distance the reader from the characters and location. In 1906, Helen Black in *Notable Women Authors of the Day* refers to Grand’s five year “tour in the East,” saying it gave her “a fine opportunity of making herself thoroughly acquainted with the various types of Oriental character, and their manner of life” (322). This period abroad, where she accompanied her Army doctor husband David McFall, between 1874 and 1879, was undoubtedly a useful source of information for her stories “Ah Man” and “Kane,” but to read them as purely autobiographical, as does Gillian Kersley in *Darling Madame*, is to underestimate their value as a fictional exploration of married women’s lives and opportunities for work.

The tone is authoritative right from the beginning of “Ah Man.” Here Grand gives us a narrator who understands the difference between managing a household with

servants in England and abroad. From the start the narrator sets herself up as superior to “ordinary Europeans” (83) in her understanding of Chinese servants and the methodical way in which they perform their duties. Nevertheless there is some inconsistency in this opening, since her reference to the inevitability of “natural law” is not followed up either philosophically or in relation to the servants. Having highlighted the possibility that Chinese servants operate according to some sort of universal moral code, she goes on to claim that she has never had the opportunity to decide on the “precise human nature of him ... wherein ... he resembles or differs from us” (83). Resorting to a scientific stance, she proceeds to tell the story of Ah Man, the Chinese butler she employed against the advice of her European friends. Ah Man, right from the start, is represented as “a profoundly interesting specimen” (83) and an “enigma,” which has the effect of distancing him still further from the reader.

The narrator goes on to reinforce the strangeness and the difference of Ah Man by referring to his face as a “mask,” where normal emotional indicators are unreadable. She also calls it a “sinister visage” (85) and comments that in the half light “he looked grotesque as a bronze demon” (88). Nevertheless, she is grateful for his tender care of her when she suffers such a serious bout of depression that it might easily have killed her.⁶⁷ She appreciates how smoothly and efficiently the household runs with Ah Man in charge and is intrigued by his attitude to her writing and the rejuvenating effect of a good book, “as if he would fain decipher the signs he could not comprehend” (87). Not only are the narrator and Ah Man separated by their status as employer and servant, by nationality, gender and language, but also something less easy to define, namely cultural signs and markers that transcend all of these factors but still represent an unknowable gap between east and west.

For all that Grand’s narrator has initially professed herself to be more discerning than most when it comes to understanding racial difference and human nature, the reader is invited to question this when she describes Ah Man’s demeanour towards her:

⁶⁷ Depression, particularly as a feature of women’s lives, is something Grand writes about frequently, particularly in *Emotional Moments*, and to a lesser extent in “Janey, A Humble Administrator.”

[t]here was never a smile on his face, never a sign of any emotion; only his eyes showed the intelligence within, but even they said no more than we see in the eyes of animals when they are watchful (87).

There is an echo of Grand's preoccupation with eugenics and evolution here which undermines her narrator's claim. Similarly, in "Kane, A Soldier Servant," Kane is described as "dog-like" in his "dumb fidelity" (92) and a "worthless old dog" (94). In affiliating these two servants with animals, she appears to be implying that they are to be placed lower down the evolutionary scale than their solidly middle-class, British employers. The tension between the text and its meaning for the reader and author is particularly interesting when evaluated from a twenty-first century perspective where ideas about racial equality are very unlike those of the 1890s when the British Empire was still regarded as a source of pride.

"The Butcher's Wife" is quite unlike the four other stories in this section. While it engages with both class, women's work, poverty and the fallibility of both men and women, its tone is markedly different. In its humour and extravagant characterisation it has more in common with "The Baby's Tragedy," although its narrative framework resembles "The Rector's Bane." When it was first published in *The London Magazine* in October 1905, it appeared with the title "The Triumph of Mrs Trapp" but in altering the title for publication in *Emotional Moments*, Grand has given it a more generic appeal: by removing the word "Triumph," she leaves more open the interpretation of the story's ending.

Set within the context of the powerful debates about women's suffrage in the late 1890s and early 1900s, the butcher's wife, Mrs Durham is an excellent example of someone redefining the balance of power for women from within a marriage rather than through the external pressure of words and ideas. As the narrator says, hers "was not the face of a woman who would waste words in futile discussion if there were anything else to be done" (192). The butcher himself, having watched his wife scrubbing the floor and then serving a customer, addresses the customer with an enquiry about her husband, saying "I 'eard 'e wos at the poll, woting fur the member fur Woman's Suffrage" (191). This would make 1895 the setting for the story, when George Lansbury, a prominent supporter of votes for women, fought two parliamentary elections for the Social Democratic Foundation in Walworth, south

London. The first was a by-election in May 1895, followed by the general election two months later.

Henry Durham, “a large, bland man, with a fat voice,” is adamant that he “‘don’t ’old wi’ no women’s rights – no, nor any on ’em new-fangled ideas’” (191). While professing that he believes a woman’s sphere to be the home, caring for her husband and children, he is content to watch his wife doing all the work in the shop, doing the accounts and looking after the family, while he spends the hard-earned money in the pub. His wife, however, is not to be provoked into words. It is Mrs Barny, the customer, who does the arguing for a fair deal for women, while the butcher’s wife “kept on scrubbing.” The scrubbing becomes a refrain in this story rather in the manner of folk tales and fairy stories, grounded in the oral tradition of storytelling in which repetition for emphasis and humour is a common feature.

Mrs Barny is the catalyst and *agent provocateur* in this tale, with the narrator firmly staying in the background, allowing the characters’ actions and words to do the work. While the butcher “‘don’t ’old wi’ no woman making ’erself the laughing-stock o’ the place wi’ these ’ere women’s rights trash’” (191), Mrs Barny observes that she knows there are women who want to do men’s work but there are more women who have to be both breadwinners and family carers because “‘men ain’t man enough to do it theirselves’” (191). While the framework is comical, the message is serious.

When finally provoked to words by her husband’s laziness and drunkenness, the butcher’s wife retaliates in gendered language: “‘I may be summat of a woman, as you say, but if you don’t mend yer ways, you’ll find I can be summat of a man too’” (192). Here is a woman, trapped in an unequal marriage by economic necessity and family commitments, with opportunities, limited by law and custom, to retaliate or to negotiate a fairer balance of work and responsibility. Within these constraints, however, she makes one final defiant bid to reform her husband. Even after her warning, “day after day the butcher’s wife did all the work, while the butcher did all the play” (193). He continued to disparage “the monstrous pretension of the women of the present day” in claiming equality. Driven to action by Mrs Barny’s taunts, the butcher’s wife dresses up in her “Sunday clothes,” purchases a dog-whip and confronts her husband in the showy bar of the “King and Country.” In front of an

amazed and admiring, mostly male audience, she proceeds to thrash him, in a final attempt to make a man of him, a man who will “get up mornin’s, an’ set to work, an’ earn by industry and thrift all the respect yew’ve lost by idleness an’ extravagance. *If yer a man, that’s wot yew’ll do.*” (197).

In turning the tables on her husband, challenging his manhood and behaving in a violent and conventionally masculine way herself, the butcher’s wife succeeds in reforming her husband, to such an extent that he became a model citizen and was made “mayor of the town twice running” (197). There are echoes here of Thomas Hardy’s *Mayor of Casterbridge*. Hardy’s Michael Henchard raises himself from the drunken hay-trusser who sells his wife and child to a successful businessman who becomes mayor of Casterbridge, precipitated by his pledge to abstain from alcohol for twenty years. But whereas Henchard is mostly responsible for the changes in his fortunes, in Grand’s story it is the butcher’s wife who is the critical influence on her husband.

Grand, whose work is sprinkled with literary and biblical references, might well have assumed her audience would be familiar with Hardy’s work, published in book form in 1886, and that this knowledge would encourage them to question the story’s ostensibly happy ending. Grand herself counted Hardy amongst her circle of literary friends, and made specific reference to the serialisation of *Far from the Madding Crowd* in the *Cornhill Magazine* in “Ah Man.”

There are similarities, too, with Arthur Morrison’s story “That Brute Simmons” from *Tales of Mean Streets*, a series of fourteen short stories first published in the *National Observer* in 1893 and then republished in book form in 1894. Again, the humorously stylised tale centres on an unequal married relationship, but this time reveals the disparity between public and private perceptions of a marriage where the man is ostensibly fortunate in his choice of wife. That she makes his life intolerable is not apparent to the onlooker who can only see a virtuous wife, “a wonderful manager,” and a “brute” of a husband. As with “The Butcher’s Wife,” the setting for this story is amongst the industrious poor, with no hint of the real poverty which Margaret Harkness represents in her work.

While Grand has not set herself up as a social investigator like Margaret Harkness or Clementina Black, she is nonetheless demonstrating a preoccupation with some of

their concerns about poverty and social injustice. Along with other middle-class writers, novelists, short story writers, journalists and social critics, she is very much engaged in the contemporary debates on these subjects.

In his book *Slumming* (2006) Seth Koven draws attention to the importance of “women slum explorers and journalists” (141) (of whom Harkness is a prominent example) who were active in the late-Victorian period where journalism was beginning to be seen as a possible profession for women. Such middle-class social explorers and reporters appropriated “the largely masculine tradition of cross-class incognito social exploration into the lives and labours of the London poor” (Koven 141). Harkness was a radical socialist, who blurred the boundaries between fiction and journalism, while Grand distanced herself from the plight of the poor by her use of the middle-class female narrator. Harkness deliberately engaged with “exposing ... the abuses of capitalism,” particularly “the ruthless commodification of women’s labour” (Koven 169), but Grand was more concerned with representing the individual experience of members of “the decent poor” (“The Rector’s Bane,” 171). While Koven does not mention Grand in his study, his interest in Harkness, Clementina Black and the American journalist Elizabeth Banks who had captured the public imagination in November 1893⁶⁸ with a series of articles for the *Weekly Sun*⁶⁹ is illuminating in providing a wider context for Grand’s stories.

In filtering her material through middle-class narrators, Grand was arguably not only attempting to make her material acceptable for the general reading public but was also writing within the confines of her own experience. There is a contrast here with the uncompromising Harkness of *Out of Work* who was less inclined to make such concessions about acceptability. This novel was initially rejected by publisher William Swan Sonnenschein in 1888 who wrote “it is marred by passages which are according to our views distinctly dangerous to place before the people.”⁷⁰ Harkness, a cousin of Beatrice Webb, then moved away from London in 1889, in order to live for a time in Manchester, to research the lives of the poor in the north of England. In

⁶⁸ Grand’s bestselling novel *The Heavenly Twins* was published in October 1893.

⁶⁹ “In Cap and Apron: Two Weeks in Service,” published in the *Weekly Sun* (1893-1901), on 5th, 12th and 19th November 1893, is reproduced in *Secret Commissions: An Anthology of Victorian Investigative Journalism*, eds Stephen Donovan and Matthew Rubery, Broadview Press, 2012.

⁷⁰ From a letter dated 14 March 1888, quoted in Trefor Thomas’s introduction to *A Manchester Shirtmaker: A Realistic Story of Today* (Brighouse: Northern Herald Books, 2002) by John Law (Margaret Harkness) (p.x)

her novel, *A Manchester Shirtmaker*, which derived from this experience, she made her protagonist a beautiful, respectable, tragic young widow with a baby, presumably to encourage public sympathy for the acceptable picture of destitution the novel evokes, demonstrating that she was beginning to consider the taste of her readership.

If Victorian middle-class women seem so keen to write about class and work, it is because this is one of the areas where they could command a voice and a platform to encourage social change. Grand was a tireless campaigner for equality in all aspects of life and her stories allowed her the opportunity to explore accounts of class and work as they affected individual characters. This enabled her to examine additional but related concerns such as poverty, cultural difference, religion and gender - issues not only important to her but also for many other female writers of her generation.

Her recurring preoccupation with the provision of adequate pensions for the elderly at the end of their working lives surfaces first in the 1891 publication of "Kane, a Soldier Servant" and again in the 1908 story "The Rector's Bane," while votes for women is a central concern of "The Butcher's Wife." While "Ah Man" examines the meaning of work in a cross cultural environment, "Janey, a Humble Administrator" considers the effect of the lack of opportunity for work for a wealthy young married woman. It is arguably in this story that Grand's writing is at its most convincing. In juxtaposing two young women of a similar age, Janey and the narrator, Grand sympathetically highlights the gulf between the experiences and expectations of the working and the middle class.

Section vii

DANGEROUS SOCIETY: “The Baby’s Tragedy,” “A Thorough Change” and “Vanity and Vexation.”

Society features prominently in Sarah Grand’s writing, whether she is writing of London society in the preface to *Emotional Moments*, explaining that the “social atmosphere” affects the author’s “outlook upon life” and determines the “character” of the prose at that point (123), or whether she is examining society as a “dense mass – a mass in which the more attractive attributes of human nature were obliterated” (125). For Grand, society represents a way of life based on material success with an emphasis on fashionable entertainments and attire. Within society some of her male characters find purpose in their work, whether as doctors or politicians, while others such as Boomellen and Brinkhampton have no need to work; family money provides ease and leisure and the opportunity to over-indulge in alcohol and loose living. For many of her wealthy female characters too much leisure is seen as undesirable, sometimes leading to depression or the need to seek new sensations. Lady Flora de Vigne lives to “trifle with men,” bored by “the monotony of wealth.” Social success for its own sake is something Grand despises.

In her journalistic writing, such as her 1894 article in *The North American Review*, “The Modern Girl,” she examines the worst aspects of society. Here she is particularly critical of mothers who raise their daughters to believe that “a good place in society” is the main objective of the “marriage market” (qtd. in *SSPSG*, I, 41) while in her fiction, the problems of society are extensively explored through a variety of characters and situations. The young wife who narrates Janey’s story in “Janey, A Humble Administrator” is particularly scathing about fashionable society and contrasts her way of life with that of someone lower down the social scale:

[m]y fellow sheep in society ... would have stared as at an imbecility had they heard it asserted that mine was the petty existence with its dinners, dances, dresses, and all the stultifying round of accustomed inanities, and Janey’s was the larger life; but that was the fact. Janey was the human being, purposeful and versatile; I was the society machine, doing just what was expected of me exactly as the other machines did, without happiness and without heart in it (101).

In robbing the individual of an identity, implied in the use of the word “sheep,” the suggestion is that the quality of life is destroyed. In order to live a worthwhile life, there has to be a sense of purpose greater than that generated by entertainment and new clothes. The phrase “society machine” suggests someone stripped of humanity and performing as an automaton.

Human nature as distorted by the need to conform to society’s expectations is a recurring theme in Grand’s stories. “There is nothing that brutalizes a lady like Society” (156) Grand has her central character, an old north-country nurse, declare as an opening sentence in “The Baby’s Tragedy,” before looking at motherhood as an area potentially compromised by social conformity. “Vanity and Vexation,” too, looks at human nature in relation to the perceived social rules of self-presentation, and the gap between private and public manners, whereas “A Thorough Change” is all about the opportunities presented for immoral behaviour in a pleasure-seeking social setting.

If, as Grand tells us in the Preface to *Emotional Moments*, her experience of society had an impact on her view of life and coloured her writing, then 1897 and 1909 were years when her opinions and reactions to the “dense mass” were particularly pessimistic. “The Baby’s Tragedy,” published in *Lady’s Realm* in November 1897 and “Vanity and Vexation,” included in the October 1909 edition of *Nash’s Magazine*, are concerned with individuals influenced by a desire to shine in society and Grand, in both stories, is as scathing in her criticism of women as she is of men. Focussing on types, rather than society as a whole, her aim is to expose human weakness, to reveal “the sores of Society in order to diagnose its diseases, and find a remedy for them” (“The New Woman and the Old,” qtd. in *SSPSG*, I, 71). The imagery here is reminiscent of that used by Max Nordau in his “Symptoms” and “Diagnosis” of the ills besetting fin-de-siècle Europe in *Degeneration*, published in translation by Heinemann in 1895. Nordau writes of “the aesthetic needs of elegant society” being satisfied by “novel sensations alone” (14), but he goes much further than Grand in diagnosing the diseases of “fashionable society” (15).

Grand has regularly been accused by critics of allowing her didacticism to dominate her fiction, to its detriment. Several contemporary reviewers dismissed her stories as “tracts” (see Chapter 1) and her attacks on society are certainly less convincingly

handled than her arguments for sexual health and for equality of educational opportunities for girls and boys. In the three stories featured in this section, Grand is certainly portraying “the sores of Society” through her depiction of characters of irredeemable selfishness but she proposes no remedies.

“The Baby’s Tragedy” is told as a cautionary tale to the nameless narrator by an old nurse. They are sitting together in the late afternoon, the nurse engaged in some sewing. That the narrator knows her quite well is made evident in the conversational exchange which opens the story. Following the nurse’s provocative opening statement about Society, the narrator comments on her manners which, “when she was angry or indignant, were also apt to be – north-country” (156). There is an element of humour here, centring on the reputation of northerners for being both blunt and direct, and this is designed to deflect from the potential for pain provided by the word “tragedy” in the title. The narrator teases her gently about her “sweeping” pronouncement, clearly in the hope of encouraging the nurse to tell the story. After waiting for the story “to come to the boil and bubble up into words,” the nurse looks “shrewdly” over her spectacles and begins (156). This shrewd look indicates that she is evaluating her audience and it is a word used again at the conclusion of the story when “the old lady” adds her final sentence “with a twinkle in her shrewd, bright eyes” (163). Framing the story like this has the effect of calling into question the truthfulness or at least the emphasis of the nurse’s version.

Grand regularly uses strong, working-class figures to question contemporary ideas about social justice, inherited wealth, the class system and politics and she often endows them with admirable values such as loyalty, hard work, honesty and integrity. Her north-country nurse, for all her evident delight in telling a good story, has similarities with characters like Mallory the gardener, who gives the title to one of Grand’s final short stories “One of the Olden Time.” He speaks his mind, has no false respect for his employers, is politically aware and does a fair day’s work for a fair wage. The elderly couple Dick and Martha Jordan, with their three soldier sons, in “The Rector’s Bane” have led exemplary lives of hard work and thrift. Mary Durham, the butcher’s wife in the story of the same title, works, brings up a family and turns her feckless husband into a model citizen, while Barkins, the coachman in “The Yellow Leaf,” keeps watch over his employers, their friends and family over the years and clearly knows the true worth of each. It is through Adalesa’s

refreshingly unconventional attitude towards him, treating him as a friend, that the reader glimpses something of the real man beyond the servant role. In addition, this provides an insight into what makes her one of Grand's most interesting female characters⁷¹.

Although the nurse emerges as a figure of great worth and her priority is always the babies she cares for, she has fun at the expense of her wealthy employers and modern medical men, secure in the knowledge and self-belief that her approaches and methods are not only tried and tested but are the best. If she is exaggerating her story and painting her society characters in the worst possible light, then it is only to make the tale more memorable, more shocking and more of a lesson for the audience.

Her working relationship with traditional Dr Coleburn is longstanding: after all, “we'd brought many and many an apparently hopeless case safe through together” (157), she tells the narrator. It is in the small interactions between characters, for example here where the doctor tells her to keep her opinions to herself and get on with her job, and then can leave the house laughing at her spirited, sarcastic rejoinder, that Grand brings her stories so vividly to life.

The responsibilities and ties of parenthood are prominent in this story, where the baby is the first child of young, fashionable parents. When he is born both nurse and doctor ask the question: “[w]as such a specimen worth preserving?” (156). But before the narrator and Grand's readers can begin to engage with the debate about who or what has the right to dictate in matters of life and death, the nurse says reassuringly “our business is to keep them here, whether for joy or sorrow.” The precarious state of the baby has nothing to do with the birth itself or disease; as the nurse points out, “he had the frame of a fine child.” The problem is that his fashionable young mother had been living on a diet of black tea and dry toast in order to keep her figure, thereby effectively starving her unborn child. And to make matters worse, she refuses to breastfeed him because it would tie her to home and child for months, excluding her from society.

⁷¹ For additional discussion of Adelesa, please see Chapter 3, section iv.

Sarah Grand is on familiar territory here in writing about punishing the body in a quest for social conformity. Her first published novel, probably written when she was in her early twenties, and entitled *Two Dear Little Feet* is about Laura, a foolish girl who wears ill-fitting shoes in order to make her feet look fashionably small and who restricts her diet to maintain an unreasonably small waist, and who, in the process cripples herself and ruins her health. Although this cautionary tale is more heavy-handed and didactic than “The Baby’s Tragedy,” Grand nevertheless demonstrated a passionate interest in health and rational dress throughout her working life.

The young mother in “The Baby’s Tragedy” is seen to care more about her figure than about the welfare of her newborn child, protesting that her waist ““is only nineteen inches.”” The nurse, with her wicked sense of humour, suggests to her charge: ““you might pad, though. When folks are deformed, I’d always recommend them to hide it”” (158). Grand’s own enthusiasm for medical detail shows through when the nurse points out that for a woman of her height and build, her waist measurement should be twenty-seven inches. Very tellingly, the society mother’s only answer is ““my husband admires a small waist,”” reinforcing the view that a woman’s body is not her own but rather can be moulded and sacrificed for the pleasure of men. Of course, this story is taking the idea even further in implying that it is not just women, but their children too, who are subservient to male desires and must accept the consequences.

Through the eyes and opinions of the nurse, the society mother comes in for scathing criticism, but the father is equally blameworthy. The scene where the young father is getting ready to go to church is almost comical. Church, in his view, is not a place for quiet religious worship, but is rather a venue for display and public worship of self. The public performance of church-going is something that the young couple are keen on, but always fashionably dressed, perfumed, and as supposedly High Church devotees, attired in the appropriate colour according to the religious calendar. When the young husband presents himself for his wife’s inspection, his initial affected gestures are to “shake out his shirt cuffs, and perk up his collar, and look complacent” (158). Having criticised his out-of-date “*violette*”⁷² perfume and his

⁷² Grand puts this word in italics to stress the affected French pronunciation.

choice of tie, his wife allows him to leave the house once he has made himself late by changing both cologne and clothes. The nurse's contempt for such superficial display is obvious when she relates that he did not even spare a glance at his new baby son but instead enjoyed a final look at himself in the mirror.

The theme of society's preoccupation with outward display is reinforced when she portrays the young couple as being more interested in their son's appearance than his physical wellbeing. The baby's fragile hold on life is represented by the nurse as a flame and she says that when he was born: "I didn't dare to dress him, for the life in him was flickering all the while like a fire when it's near upon out, and the less you stir it the better"(157). His mother's priority is why the nurse is not dressing her son in all the fashionable baby clothes she has for him while his father's only concern is that such a sickly child is not fit to be seen by his society friends, represented by the grand sounding Duchess of Pierrepoint. His suggested remedy is to feed the baby on "strong beef-tea" and "cream," so revealing a complete ignorance of and lack of interest in the practical details of child rearing.

The old nurse's disdain for fashionable display is evident in the contempt with which she treats these ideas. When the young couple bring in a new doctor for advice, as fashionable as his name Dr Towny-Bing suggests, traditional Dr Coleburn resigns at the affront. The nurse describes the new doctor as being "a youngish, flashy sort of man, much in request by Society people, and quite the fashionable doctor just then" (160). In her forthright way, she perceives that he is much more interested in "the smart young mother" than "the suffering babe," and his patients judge his veneer of manners rather than his ability as a medical practitioner. She points to the double standards at work here in contrasting his rude, offhand communication with her where he demonstrates a fundamental lack of knowledge about child nutrition, with his approach to the parents. His insincerity is obvious when having told her to hold her tongue and obey his instructions, "he put his other manner on and went back to the parents, and talked to them for half an hour about Lord this and Lady that" (160). In likening the putting on of manners to putting on a different item of clothing, she effectively undermines the social pretensions at work here: by adopting society's own terms she further mocks the artificiality of the way of life and class she is criticising.

If the nurse is uncompromising in her contempt for the society family and all they stand for, her genuine care and concern for the baby is moving. Any charge of sentimentality or melodrama in relating the inevitable decline and death of the child has already been refuted by Grand's portrayal of the nurse as a character who enjoys telling a good story in colourful language. The details of the hasty christening are uncompromisingly judgemental, focusing on "the whole paraphernalia ... for a fashionable christening" (162) and although the young mother was unable to dress her baby in an elaborate family christening robe, "she got some comfort out of changing her own dress."

There is also much sly humour present in the nurse's description of the baby's grandmother "tight in her clothes as a gooseberry in its skin" she observes, "I never felt they were safe to contain her for long" (161). By likening her to an over-ripe fruit that might split its skin at any moment, the nurse suggests that she is past her prime and inappropriately dressed for her age. In contrasting her superabundant flesh with her grandson's wasted frame, the nurse is making a point about her lack of restraint. This, in her view, is almost as reprehensible as a woman who neglects her own physical wellbeing, putting her unborn child at risk, simply in order to please a man by maintaining her slim figure.

Grand's views in this 1897 story are still as strong as those she expressed in the *Humanitarian* in 1893:

For vulgarity, for boldness, for folly, ignorance, want of principle, petty weakness, intrigue, and positive vice, you must go to the average society woman. Her one motive is self-seeking. She is a bad wife, a bad mother, and a false friend. ("The Morals of Manner and Appearance," qtd. in *SSPSG*, I, 27)

The tone of this writing is humourless and provocative although its agenda is very similar to that of "The Baby's Tragedy." While the magazine article is blunt in its critique of the average society woman, Grand's narrative techniques in framing her story make it more palatable for the reader through the mediation of the distinctly-drawn nurse's perspective. She is equally successful in one of her later stories where she makes a man the central focus for her disapproval of society's distorted values.

Although "The Saving Grace" was first published in *Printers' Pie* in 1913, there is no evidence that "A Thorough Change" was published before its appearance in Grand's third and final collection of short stories, *Variety*, in 1922. These stories are

number three and five in her book and form an interesting pair as both have male narrators whose function is to bring to life and comment on the central characters in the stories. As with “The Baby’s Tragedy,” the passive narrator provides the protagonist with an opportunity to tell his or her story from a very personal perspective.

“A Thorough Change” attracts the reader’s attention through the arresting quality of the opening paragraph, which indicates adventure in an exotic overseas location, where the narrator is clearly on a hunting expedition:

An awful looking ragamuffin, he was, the first time I saw him. I was out in the wilds shooting, and he staggered into my camp one night in a state of exhaustion. He stared at me across the fire with hollow, bloodshot eyes, and exclaimed: “White man, thank God! I thought it was Indians” (270).

No explanation is ever offered for the state of the “ragamuffin,” the implausible sounding Florion de Tailleux, or what adventures and dangers had beset him, and indeed we never discover where the camp is.

The camp is clearly well-established and provides a setting where the two men can get to know each other. The narrator justifies his interest in de Tailleux by telling the reader that he is “a student of human nature” and that de Tailleux is “an interesting specimen” of “the gentleman blackguard” (270). From the first few words of the story, it is clear that appearance is important in making a first impression, but the man who was initially judged as a “ragamuffin” by the narrator could pass for anything “once he was washed and trimmed up in a suit of my clothes.” Grand is deliberately highlighting the gap between reality and illusion, the insubstantial nature of appearance and the flimsy basis it provides for making character judgements here at the beginning of the story, in order to set the scene for what follows.

De Tailleux poses as a man of noble birth who can trace his ancestors back to William the Conqueror, although he then undermines this by saying light-heartedly that these ancestors were stable hands. From the outset, the reader is invited to question everything that is said. His hereditary trait of “acquisitiveness” provides a new slant on Grand’s regular references to hereditary mental and physical weakness, which render a number of characters unfit for morally worthwhile lives. As is the case with “The Saving Grace,” this story has the flavour of a yarn, a tall story, where the truth is not allowed to get in the way of an amusing anecdote. The reason for the

protagonist's prolonged travelling abroad is hinted at when he mentions "difficulties of sorts" (271), clearly financial, and the fact that his family is not pleased with him. This, however, is only mentioned light-heartedly and in passing.

When de Tailleux finally gets round to telling his story, which he deems to be about "thought-transference," he asks the narrator whether he has ever had any experience of this. "Only second-hand," (270) the narrator jokingly replies, indicating that he is taking his "specimen" less than seriously. As becomes obvious very quickly, the story is less about thought-transference and more a story about the protagonist himself, in the unconscious way he reveals himself through his speech, actions and relationships. In locating the main action of the story in Switzerland, albeit amongst British citizens, Grand is extending the scope of her investigation of society and her interest in the values of those who are, or like to think they are prominent in a society defined by privilege of birth and wealth.

Even the "gentleman blackguard" confessed to tiring of his European life of gambling, women and luxury and felt himself "as far down morally in the social scale as it is possible for a man to be" (271), at least for a man of means. But, as he has already admitted in his throw-away remark about having alienated his family, the reader already knows about his financial difficulties and takes less than seriously his claim to have won substantial amounts at the casino. His current beautiful female companion, by his own admission, "a peccadillo" but the envy of "the chaps," had "the air of a great lady," but this illusion was soon shattered by her manners, speech and attitude. The atmosphere conjured up in this recounted narrative is one of idleness, boredom and disappointment, where nothing is as it seems, while the language used by the protagonist suggests a bar room boast.

In a quest for adventure, a change of scene and moral regeneration, de Tailleux left Monte Carlo alone, and headed to Switzerland and the Hotel Byron. He tells the narrator he was seeking "a change of mind, of attitude towards life" (271), and he perceived his salvation to be with an elderly gentleman in the company of two young, female relations: "[t]o be respected by the respectable is an excellent tonic" (272). Ignoring those who sought his attention because of his "rotten little honorary title" he instead decided to get to know the family who were clearly "something in their own right" and unimpressed by social trappings.

This new phase of his life is the “thorough change” of the story’s title, where de Tailleux exchanged the superficial world of social amusements and shallow fashion for companionship, friendship, reading, religious observance, music and healthy exercise. In an unusual authorial interjection (the only example in all of her fiction) Grand interrupts the narrative with a parenthetical aside: “(What more thorough change for such a man than to be good for a bit?)”(272).

For a man of his temperament, being “good” could not last. With very little money and having exhausted the “credit” of his noble name, de Tailleux’s need to move on is precipitated by word from his erstwhile lady companion that she is leaving Monte Carlo and wishes to join him in Switzerland. It is in his response to this news that it is possible to see that de Tailleux, for all that he is a scoundrel and liar, has the redeeming quality of being able to discern that his behaviour and way of life is in error. In comparing the “halcyon days” of time spent with the elderly gentleman and his nieces Aileen and Kathleen, “the one golden experience of what it is to live nobly,” and also admitting that this phase of his life has generated happiness, he acknowledges that his habitual attitude and lifestyle is reprehensible.

Such a realisation shows a degree of psychological insight and possibility for redemption that is not present in “The Baby’s Tragedy,” where the society parents appear to have learned nothing from the death of their child. Of course the slightly extravagant terms – “halcyon” and “golden experience” and “blissful episode”- alert the reader to the possibility that his reaction is not wholly plausible, yet the fact that such emotions occur to him at all is, in itself, a form of atonement.

De Tailleux’s story within a story continues with his admission that his lack of money prompted him to steal four rings that he happened to see lying on a table in an unoccupied bedroom in the hotel when he glanced through the open door. The emphasis is that this was an opportunistic act, a product of his hereditary acquisitive streak. On encountering Kathleen, once the loss had been discovered and reported, she accused him of being the thief. This is the “thought-transference” highlighted at the beginning of the story. Of course, de Tailleux denied Kathleen’s accusation and left the hotel nonchalantly with the rings in his trouser hems. Nevertheless, he tried partially to shift the blame from himself and his criminal act to Kathleen’s psychic

abilities, demonstrating that at heart he has been unchanged by the positive influences of his recent friendships.

Likewise, Grand uses this device of shifting the blame in “The Baby’s Tragedy,” where at the end of the story the fashionable couple find it easier to tell themselves and their friends that their ““darling babe”” died as a result of the nurse’s and doctor’s treatment, rather than admitting their own guilt. Hypocrisy, deceit and self-delusion are added to society’s sins through this distortion of perspective.

A difference of interpretation is added to “A Thorough Change” when the narrator tells de Tailleux that there is a similar story in his own family about a plausible rogue and the theft of jewellery. His version came from Kathleen herself, he relates, and although many of the details tally, there are essential differences: just one ring is stolen but it has not been an impulsive theft. Rather it has been as the result of ““sneaking about”” looking for valuables, in the lady’s bedroom. When confronted by Kathleen, he returned the ring and fled from the hotel immediately, while the narrator reveals that de Tailleux is not a hereditary nobleman but rather ““the reprobate son of a respectable Jew banker at Hamburg”” (274). Although his story is exposed as a fabrication, every bit as much as his life, De Tailleux feels no shame having been caught lying and is still able to look the narrator in the eye acknowledging that it is ““Your score, old man,”” as if it is simply a casual bet that has been won.

This human product of a sick society is, by implication, irredeemable. The story involves many layers of deception and self-deception, but nevertheless, the central character, for all his flaws is not unlikable. His zest for life, his energy and cunning, as well as his appetite for culture, have a certain charm. He is, above all, a survivor. And yet, by exposing one facet of the nature of a society which bases its judgements of people and their worth on superficial evidence, Grand is making an effective case against a society which values appearance more than reality.

“Vanity and Vexation” is a less successful story than either “The Baby’s Tragedy” or “A Thorough Change,” perhaps because there is no humour present either in Grand’s depiction of the central character, Eustacia Jobb, or in the woman herself. In *Variety* she has subtitled the story “A Pre-War Study,” in response to the potential criticism that this type of woman is not as common in post-war society as she was before the

First World War. The story purports to be written as a “study” and it is not clear whether Grand herself is the narrator or whether it is another anonymous figure. The word “study” suggests that the reader is intended to experience an objective account, with the writer having no agenda, being able to present an honest picture of a character possessed of both flaws and virtues. This is, of course, a device to make what is a cruel portrait palatable to the reader.

The superficiality of social manners in this story is exposed through ridicule. The opening paragraph offers a strong parallel to “The Baby’s Tragedy” in which fashionable Dr Towny-Bing puts his society manners on and takes them off like an item of clothing. Here the parvenu, Eustacia, “put on graciousness with her gloves,” the reader is told, “she was lady-like enough in her manners – her manners in society, that is to say” (245). From the outset, she is described in financial terms, with manners being “an important part of her stock in trade, of the wares upon which she expected to reap a large profit in social success.” Manners for her are not an innate sign of class and good breeding, but rather are something to be learnt, like a dance, with the details varying with the tempo. Because her breeding is imperfect, she is perpetually nervous and in fear of making a mistake; “she committed sundry social sins unwittingly” (245). Even the fact that she was an American by birth and upbringing was not enough to save her from becoming a figure of fun.

With her commercial world view, Eustacia has nothing to recommend her but family money and youthful beauty: her life is measured in “a commercial estimate of profit and loss” (247) and this includes her dealings with her husband. Their marriage is a business transaction, with Eustacia supplying cash and good looks and Mr Fitzalbin, an English gentleman, providing an impressive family name and pedigree together with a “fine old country mansion.” His redeeming feature is that he genuinely loves his wife and blames her faults entirely on her upbringing. Eustacia appears to have no such redeeming qualities.

At her behest he enters the world of politics, “arduous post in the Government of the day,” “on the conservative side, of course” (247), not because he is suited for this role but because it endows her with social distinction and access to grand parties and balls. Although Mr Fitzalbin was intellectually capable of sustaining this position, his mental ability is “discounted by physical unfitness.” Again the reader sees

Grand's eugenic interests at work (here a preoccupation with hereditary weakness) when she goes on to write that "[h]e came of a degenerate stock and was heavily handicapped by chronic debility" (248). She has of course drawn on a similar discourse to describe Brinkhampton in "Eugenia" and Boomellen in the story of the same name. Where she is treading new ground here is in her discussion of perceived masculine and feminine roles and how certain types of women manipulate these roles for their own ends. Eustacia only sees her husband in relation to herself: his responsibility is "to minister to her necessities, to conform to her wishes." She feels no need to reciprocate, in common with most of her acquaintances, "particularly the husbands," who share the same view. In women of Eustacia's "type," Grand suggests, there is a strong instinct for self-preservation, their identity protected "by assuming the masculine means of defence" (247). As a definition of extreme selfishness, this perspective on behaviour works well, but it would have been interesting to have seen Grand develop her theme more fully.

"Vanity and Vexation" paints a very unappealing picture of a woman who has made getting on in society her *raison d'être*: when society turns on her, the expectation might be that she would attract a measure of sympathy from the teller of her story and from the reader. This, however, is not the case. Although Eustacia's desire for social success is not unusual and could be overlooked, her treatment of her husband is unforgivable. Grand has often been accused of depicting men as monsters and taking the woman's part, but in this story the opposite is true. Fitzalbin might be physically feeble but he is a loving husband who would go out of his way to give his wife regular tokens of his affection in the form of flowers and outings, not for any selfish motive but purely for love. Although overworked and banished from the marital bedroom, he does not complain. Somewhat melodramatically, he dies with dignity from illness and overwork, all the time trying not to disturb his wife's rest. Grand is rather heavy-handed in making her point, just as she is in showing Eustacia's selfish reaction to her husband's death where it is not the man she mourns but the loss of her privileged way of life.

This story is a cold-hearted exposure of self-serving egoism and there are few signs of Grand's finesse in developing characters. The details of Eustacia's selfishness are piled up without relief. There is one moment, in the central part of the story when she cannot sleep, where there is the suggestion that she might not be "irretrievably

doomed” when the phrase ““Vanity and vexation of spirit”” recurs three times in her conscious mind, like the tolling of a bell. Even the short, emphatic sentences reinforce this Biblical warning that no amount of material possessions can bring about happiness but this passes her by. Instead she finds the repetition “wearisome” rather than instructive and makes herself a cup of tea rather than attending, in any way, to the message.

This unrelenting layering of information about Eustacia’s failures means that when the reader is plunged into the social whirl of the State Ball, there is a sense of justice in witnessing society at its cruellest. Eustacia overhears fellow guests condemning her as ““faked from head to foot, that woman, body and soul”” (252). But instead of feeling sympathy for her, the reader is placed in the position of siding with the society Grand professes to despise.

As the narrator of this “Pre-War Study” points out on the final page, the fickle society that has deserted Eustacia once she was widowed is not her enemy. She is her own enemy. Like the young married couple in “The Baby’s Tragedy” and de Tailleux in “A Thorough Change,” she is incapable of learning lessons from her experience. All these characters are the products of a flawed society that sets personal gain and self-regard higher than consideration for the lives and feelings of others.

Section viii.

GENDER AND WAR: “The Saving Grace” and “The Commandant”

Sarah Grand’s final short story collection, *Variety*, contains the only two stories she wrote with war as a central theme. “The Saving Grace” has a male intelligence officer as protagonist while “The Commandant” showcases the work of a woman in charge of a hospital for wounded soldiers of World War I.

Although Grand’s final novel, *The Winged Victory* had been published in 1916, she was still writing short stories in the 1920s, as is demonstrated in a letter she wrote to Mr J.B. Pinker, her literary agent, in July 1921:

I was abroad when you returned the two short stories you had been unable to place, or I would have written at once to thank you for them and for what you had done for them. It is rather a shock to me to have anything rejected, though on looking at *The Lady Commandant* again I find that it wants pulling together, and I am glad now that it was not accepted.⁷³

There is nothing to show why the stories were rejected but Grand’s surprise is evident. Equally interesting, however, is the fact that she is still subjecting her work to critical scrutiny, agreeing that “The Lady Commandant” still needed attention to make it worthy of publication.

The second story Grand is referring to in the letter is “I Can’t Explain It,” which also made its first appearance in *Variety*, although she protests that this one is “good”⁷⁴. Certainly in the second decade of the twentieth century Grand was in far less demand as a writer than she had been in the preceding twenty years, turning her attention from exposing “the injustice with which women were treated” (*The Heavenly Twins*, xii) in matters of sexual health to campaigning for women’s suffrage instead, so it is not surprising to find that some of her later stories were unpublished before being included in this volume.

“The Saving Grace,” at just under two thousand words in length, is Grand’s shortest short story. In its economy of language and tight construction, it has much in common with her 1898 story “When the Door Opened...?”. The opening sentence is arresting: “Adventuring beyond the lines one night on the veldt I was nabbed by a

⁷³ This letter is part of the Berg Collection, held by the New York Public Library. I had access to this, and the other Grand correspondence in this collection, during a research visit in May 2013.

⁷⁴ See previous footnote.

reconnoitring party of the Boer⁷⁵ enemy and carried off in the dark” (256). The setting is made clear at the outset: a battlefield in the Boer War, at night-time, with enemy soldiers patrolling. In using the Afrikaans word “veldt” rather than more English description of the open country, Grand is emphasising the narrator’s ease with being overseas. Unlike Hodge in Thomas Hardy’s 1899 poem “Drummer Hodge,”⁷⁶ the protagonist does not feel a stranger on the plains of South Africa. He is an adventurer, who can talk in a casual, colloquial way of being “ nabbed” and “carried off,” with no sense of fear or danger; it is merely one of the risks of his way of life, “adventuring” denoting a sense of fun and recklessness. This is no inexperienced boy talking; rather it is a mature man who has made his own decision to embrace the military way of life albeit with a casual attitude to the rules.

Given the extent of Britain’s imperial commitments at the end of the nineteenth century, it is not surprising that overseas wars feature frequently in the literature of the period. Amy Levy has one of the central male characters of her 1888 novel *The Romance of a Shop*, Frank Jermyn, sent overseas as a war artist for the fictional publication *The Woodcut*, to cover the Khartoum Relief Expedition. His capture and fears for his life provide an element of suspense in the novel while the exotic location and “wretched little war” (Levy, 98)⁷⁷ provide a contrast to London’s Baker Street, where most of the novel is set. Adventurous young British soldiers travel to India for active service in Margaret Oliphant’s *Kirsteen* (1888), where Colonel Ronald Drummond, a veteran of the Peninsula Wars and Kirsteen’s suitor, dies a hero.

As author, Grand makes no judgements – implicit or explicit – about war in her story. Instead she reserves her implicit questioning for her protagonist and whether or not his way of life is justifiable. He arrives, an exhausted captive, at his farmstead

⁷⁵ The first Anglo Boer War was fought by the British Army and the Dutch settlers in the Transvaal in South Africa between 1880 and 1881 and the second, larger, conflict between October 1899 and May 1902.

⁷⁶ “Drummer Hodge” by Thomas Hardy (1840-1928) was first published in *Literature* on 23rd November 1899 with the title “The Dead Drummer.” It later appeared as “Drummer Hodge” in Hardy’s 1901 collection *Poems of the Past and Present*. Hardy’s use of Afrikaans words in this poem, such as “kopje,” “veldt” and “Karoo” strengthen the sense of the foreignness of the country, the landscape and meaning of the war for an inexperienced young soldier who has left his English West Country home for the first time.

⁷⁷ It is likely that Jermyn is referring to the first Mahdist War (1883-1885), otherwise known as the Soudan Campaign, fought between a radical group of Moslems under the leadership of Mahommed Ahmed and British and Egyptian forces. The British forces were lead by General Charles Gordon.

outhouse prison. As he sinks into a bed of straw, he tells the reader: “[g]roaning and complaining, I wallowed in the straw, making a nest for myself” (256). This way of life has temporarily reduced him to the level of an animal whose only requirement is rest, and after sleep, food. In spite of this, though, and perhaps because there is no trace of self-pity in this recollection, he is not an unsympathetic character.

The story is narrated in the first person by the protagonist himself, giving it an immediacy and energy which the second story, “The Commandant,” does not have. It is not clear whether the narrator, or perhaps more accurately, the reporter, is male or female in this second story but this is unimportant. The Commandant’s work is closely observed, while her speech and that of her patients is reported verbatim. Her actions and appearance, and the attitude of those around her are sympathetically reported by the “me” who shadows her during the course of a working day. The Commandant has time to reflect philosophically and rather pessimistically on the results of war: “‘Don’t you flatter yourself,’ she warned me, ‘that the trouble and horror of these times is bound to change character in the ruck of mankind’” (293). Instead, she argues, war will give “‘opportunity’” either for “‘licence’” or “‘noble vocation’” (293), according to the disposition of the individuals involved.

Grand’s likeable adventurer in the Crimean War is obviously engaged on his military career with profit in mind rather than from any sense of “noble vocation.” He accepts his imprisonment with equanimity, never betraying any fear of captivity or death. His companion in the outhouse prison, also nameless, is a volunteer in the Imperial Yeomanry regiment “‘nabbed out scouting’” (256); the use of the colloquial “nabbed” rather than “captured” has the effect of diminishing the seriousness of the predicament, giving the tale the flavour of a *Boy’s Own*⁷⁸ adventure.

Surprising, and possibly inconsistent with the tone of the storytelling, is the reaction of the new captive on hearing that his cellmate tried to escape while on parole. “‘Serve him right. Beastly cad,’ I exclaimed, with all the contempt I could express” (257). And yet a few hours later, the two of them are talking animatedly about escape plans. Whether the narrator sees breaking parole as a breach of honour and a straightforward escape as wholly honourable is not made clear, but he does admit

⁷⁸ *Boy’s Own Magazine* was published in Britain from 1855-1890. It contained stories of heroism, action and enterprise.

that while his companion is a “brilliant raconteur,” he is also a “shameless scamp” (257), a term which in minimising the seriousness of their predicament, helps to convey the sense of the story as an entertaining yarn.

There is a great deal of implicit games playing and posturing between the two prisoners, with each trying to gain the upper hand; Grand’s lightness of touch and economy of language, here, makes this funny and believable. No question is ever answered in a straightforward way. “How long have you been here?” the narrator asks, only to be told “A hundred years” (256).

As a woman writer, Grand regularly and confidently enters into the psychological and emotional terrain of her female characters, but her treatment of male protagonists suggests that she is less comfortable with the masculine perspective. Although “The Saving Grace” is her only story with a male narrator telling his own story, we are shown little of the emotional or psychological reality of the two men imprisoned by enemy soldiers, facing likely execution. In fact when his fellow prisoner wants to shake hands with the narrator, we are told: “I thought him a sickly sentimental loon to waste time on such foolishness” (258). While this seems a surprising reaction, it is in keeping with the masculine code of honour, this same code which earlier dictated that it is dishonourable to escape during parole. This lack of emotion in face of death is quite unlike the treatment of the female prisoner in “The Condemned Cell” where every fluctuation of feeling is revealed. Although “A Thorough Change” has a male narrator too, he professes himself to be “a student of human nature” (270) and in this guise facilitates the telling of “Florion de Tailleux’s” story. The reader is only allowed tantalising glimpses of the narrator’s life and no insights into either his or de Tailleux’s psychological state.

While the reader is not given access to the emotional interiority of the male characters in “The Saving Grace,” the enemy troops are portrayed sympathetically. The soldiers are “more or less ragged” and share food generously with their prisoners. Although the narrator does not understand their language, his comrade does and he is shown having regular and lengthy conversations with the guards. The war itself feels remote and unimportant while the focus is on individual men and their experience in an unusual but not particularly threatening environment. The

narrator refers in passing to “the business I was up to when I got caught” but no details are offered about the war time “mission” itself.

Throughout this story there is a feeling of understatement, and this is unusual in Grand’s writing. As an author who regularly appears to be hectoring her readers with her very real sense of injustice about society and relations between men and women, her restraint in her treatment of war in this story is noteworthy. Far less restraint is evident in “The Commandant,” where the horrors of the consequences of war, the inadequacies of officialdom, red tape, lack of money and the problems of human nature all come in for passionate discussion. The economical nature of “The Saving Grace” requires the reader to work harder to imaginatively supply an interpretation of characters, actions and consequences than is the case in any other story of Grand’s apart from “When the Door Opened...?”.

The title “The Saving Grace” is deliberately ambiguous. While clearly referring to the “gentleman scamp,” it is not clear whether his “saving grace” is the fact that he sacrificed his life for his prisoner companion, helping him to escape and eliminating any possible means of escape for himself, or whether it is a reference to his prayer book “[t]he gift of Kathleen –” (259), from which he had never been parted. Self-sacrifice or religious devotion could both be considered redeeming qualities. The fact that his parting words were “[s]hriven, forgiven, at peace ... Awaiting my release, tranquilly” (259) points towards his religious faith being his “saving grace;” that he has confessed his sins, received absolution and is calmly welcoming approaching death. And death, indeed, is the outcome, confirmed in the short, factual concluding sentence of the story: “[t]he rescue party arrived in time to bury him.” As with the opening sentence of the story, this is skilful writing, with a sense of hope inspired by the first six words, “the rescue party arrived in time” only to have the denouement shatter this illusion in three words: “to bury him.” An anonymous *Times* reviewer of *Variety* in September 1922 calls this story “a little ironic episode of the Boer War,” effectively undermining the insight offered into the way soldiers sometimes treat each other in the context of war. The accomplished nature of the storytelling has been completely overlooked in the review.

If Grand’s perception of a male, military code of honour explains the silences in “The Saving Grace,” the lack of emotional engagement with the nature of war itself,

the difficulty of men communicating with each other even in times of life-threatening difficulty and the retreat into bluff, clichéd banter, then the expectations of a woman writer engaging with a female protagonist in a war-related environment might well be different. “The Commandant” is indeed “so different in mood and manner that it might almost be by another writer,” as the unnamed *Times* writer noted in his⁷⁹ review.

Not only is it four times as long as “The Saving Grace,” but the style is much more digressive while the tone is that of combined sadness, pity and anger at the waste of young manhood. The anger, too, is directed against social hypocrisy every bit as much as at the War Office and incompetent doctors. Grand is clearly using her own observations of the suffering of the war wounded in this story, written a few years after the end of the First World War. This is demonstrated in a letter she wrote to her friend and publisher William Heinemann in August 1917⁸⁰, where she noted her own and her grand-daughter’s war-time experiences:

Beth⁸¹ sends her love. She never “grouses”⁸² but she grows thin and is overworking. I shall be glad to have her taken out of herself. She does not express any anxiety about her “boy,”⁸³ but he is in the thick of the “push”⁸⁴ and she has an imagination.

I have just returned from xxxx⁸⁵ Hospital where I have been using my gift of the gab (you didn’t know I had it, perhaps), to amuse 200 wounded soldiers, all stretcher cases – a shocking experience for me, but an object lesson in how to grin and bear it.

Grand has subtitled her story “A Study from Life” and it opens with forty soldiers being discharged from hospital, possibly a hospital very similar to the one where she addressed the “wounded soldiers.” The opening two sentences are short and factual: “[s]he stood in the hall. The boys just discharged from hospital were filing by” (290). The Commandant is not named, either here or at any other point in the story,

⁷⁹ I have assumed that the anonymous reviewer was a man simply because the majority of book reviews in the national press at this time were written by men.

⁸⁰ This letter is held by the Mortimer Rare Book Room, Nielson Library, Smith College, Northampton, USA and was accessed during my research visit there in May 2013.

⁸¹ Beth is Sarah Grand’s step-granddaughter, Elizabeth Haldane Mc Fall.

⁸² “Grouse” is a colloquial word for complain or grumble. Grand uses this word again in “The Commandant” when she writes of the Commandant “she came to the huts and stopped ‘grouching’ in thirty beds with one happy hit” (291).

⁸³ Beth’s fiancé was in the army. Little is known of him other than that his surname was Robbins and that they married in 1918 and had a daughter and two sons.

⁸⁴ The “push” is a slang term for the Battle of Passchendaele which took place on the Western Front between July and November 1917.

⁸⁵ It is impossible to decipher the name of the hospital in Grand’s letter.

while the soldiers are referred to as “boys,” a term which accentuates their youth, vulnerability, and highlights the maternal qualities of the Commandant. Her authority is absolute in the hospital: she knows each of her patients by name, and indeed, has appropriate nicknames for most of them.

From the outset, there is a reserve and restraint present not only in the telling of the story but in the speech and actions of each of the characters too. The narrator, observing the procession of departing soldiers with an attempt at objective detachment, tells the reader: “[i]t was interesting to note how each differed in manner,” in keeping with the “A Study from Life” subtitle. The soldiers suppress their emotions, which the narrator speculates is either due to a lack of “the courage to show feeling probably” or is possibly the product of an English reserve in expressing gratitude, regret and affection: “[t]here was a suppressed feeling in his voice, he got the words out like an Englishman, that is to say, with an effort, and shamefacedly” (290).

In the first paragraph, the Commandant’s face is likened to that of “a *mater dolorosa*” (grieving mother) who could still smile but who “would never smile gaily again” (290). Underneath the religious symbolism suggested by the suffering mother of Christ, is the powerful idea that the effect of witnessing the outcome of warfare will change a person forever. This is typical of the understatement which characterises the whole story, and the Commandant’s habit of encapsulating a man’s good points in a nickname is an effective way of maintaining an emotional distance from his suffering.

Grand’s heartfelt observation in her letter to William Heinemann about her own experience of visiting the war-wounded being a “lesson in how to grin and bear it” is reinforced in her writing about the injuries suffered by the soldiers in her story and their own attitude to these misfortunes:

[t]o be alive at all was luck – as witness the lad, who, ripped open, an arm blown off, a foot shattered, and an eye knocked out, when the doctor remarked, “You’ve had a narrow squeak of it, my boy,” answered, “Yes, sir,” complacently; “it might have been serious” (291).

The reality of the injuries, the pain and consequences for the future are deftly concealed behind this show of patriotism and bravado. Again the youthfulness of the soldiers is emphasised in the narrator’s use of the word “lad” and the doctor’s “my

boy,” while the wounded young man, in calling the doctor “sir,” is demonstrating an ingrained military deference to authority.

The Commandant is complicit in encouraging a stoical attitude towards the suffering: “[a]re we down-hearted, boys?” She rallies herself and her patients, evoking a resounding “No!” The narrator and the Commandant make much of the psychological impact of attitude on physical wellbeing in caring for the badly wounded. The Commandant felt the need to maintain a cheerful presence in front of her patients at all times, at whatever cost to herself, mirroring Grand’s own experience in face of the suffering endured by the injured soldiers. In her letter to Heinemann, she described seeing the war wounded “a shocking experience” for her, and her use of the word “shocking” is all the more powerful because she rarely allows her feelings and emotions to show through in her correspondence. She used her skills as a speaker though to “amuse” the soldiers, just as the Commandant’s way with words is stressed as being vitally important in keeping up morale in the hospital: “[d]epression meant a set-back in most cases; death in some.” (291)

Coupled with the need to care for the psychological and physical wellbeing of her patients, the Commandant is shown grappling with inadequate financial resources and the difficulties of recruiting good nurses and doctors. The need for additional beds meant that the houses which formed the main body of the hospital were no longer adequate for the number of wounded sent to her for treatment: wooden huts have to be erected in the gardens. These huts, however, were not sturdy enough to cope with the effects of bad weather: “[t]he damp had made great maps of Europe in patches on the wooden walls; the rafters were frilled with lively drops,” the narrator recounts so vividly, juxtaposing images of the European battlefields with a light-hearted reference to lace in the word “frilled.” That the incoming rain is “lively” has the effect of lessening the seriousness of the situation, while the Commandant, in likening the beleaguered hut to “Noah’s Ark,” immediately transformed the atmosphere in the ward from “hopeless endurance” to a mood of laughter and jokiness, with all the soldiers joining in. As the narrator tells us, it is only a small example but it exemplifies the Commandant’s commitment to her vocation and innate understanding of the needs of her patients.

Her gifts are not just confined to improving the mental state of her charges; she is also portrayed as having a knowledge of the most up-to-date and experimental methods of treatment. The condition of shellshock was only just being recognised as a diagnosis of the causes of mental suffering experienced by returning soldiers, during the First World War, but Grand has the Commandant deploy the term, speaking of soldiers as “unwounded but doddering like old men with the palsy” (297). Moreover she asserts that the men need to come to terms with the horror of the experiences they have endured and witnessed before they can begin to recover, and is endlessly patient with her charges, allowing them to relive the atrocities that triggered the breakdown, whether “haunted by the shriek of a man he bayoneted” or seeing a comrade running fifty yards with “his head taken off” (297).

Grand demonstrates her own knowledge of medicine when she shows the Commandant proposing a new treatment for burns to a doctor who is unable to suggest an appropriate course of action for such a badly wounded man. She wants to use ambrine, which the doctor dismisses as ““a new quack thing”” (295), possibly a slightly sexist reaction, as it is something she has seen used with excellent results in a hospital outside Paris. In fact, the ambrine treatment was a pioneering method of treating severe burns, using a mixture of paraffin and oil of amber, developed by Dr Barthe de Sanfort at the Hospital St. Nicholas, on the outskirts of Paris. This treatment was written up by Lieutenant-Colonel A.J. Hull F.R.C.S., Royal Army Medical Corps, in the *British Medical Journal* on 13th January 1917 where he states, “Severe burns of the third degree, accompanied by sloughing, and in a very septic condition, have cleaned and taken on healthy repair ... after a trial of the ambrine treatment” (37). In demonstrating her detailed knowledge of contemporary, pioneering treatments, Grand is reinforcing the believability of her story and its power for a readership so recently acquainted with the trauma of war.

So successful was the ambrine, the Commandant tells the narrator, that she did not have to employ her last resort, which she calls “my own peculiar” – namely summoning a parent “particularly mother – or wife, or sweetheart” (295) to the bedside. She recognises the value of the female touch in caring for the wounded, particularly when conventional, male doctor-led approaches have failed.

“Sympathetic insight” and “a woman’s intuition” are two phrases Grand employs in this story to help analyse and explain the Commandant’s special qualities as both a carer and administrator. The narrator calls her “subtler knowledge” a “sympathetic insight” on the first page of the story and defines it in the middle section: “[a] nurse without sympathetic insight may have technical skill, but she is blind of the eye which would perfect her work. The finishing touch is psychological, and the heart is the lamp which enlightens the head” (296). Again it is the psychological understanding of the needs of the sick and wounded that is being stressed as vital to their recovery. It is interesting to note that those without it are described in terms of having a medical condition of their own, “blind of the eye,” while it is the heart, likened to a lamp, which in turn illuminates the mental processes.

By placing “lamp” between the two nouns “heart” and “head,” which have both assonance and alliteration, she gives it further emphasis, and is an unmistakable allusion to what was by now the legendary figure of Florence Nightingale. Widely known as “The Lady with the Lamp” from her work in the Crimean War, she continued to be regarded as a national heroine. Florence Nightingale died in London, at the age of ninety, on 13th August 1910; her funeral procession was a public spectacle widely covered by the press. Grand might well have had this revered figure in mind when writing of her own war heroine, the Commandant. Earlier in *Babs the Impossible* (1901), Grand has one of the characters cite Nightingale as “the newest of New Women in her own day... plentifully bespattered with mud on that account; but now we are ready to canonize her” (284).

In his study of Florence Nightingale, Mark Bostridge quotes from a letter of November 1854 to William Bowman, of King’s College Hospital, in writing of Nightingale’s

sense of purposefulness at the realization that they were doing some good in the midst “of this appalling horror.” On her nightly rounds amongst the newly wounded she described how moved she had been by the way in which “these poor fellows” bore pain and mutilation “with unshrinking heroism, and die or are cut up without a complaint.” In the entire Barrack Hospital, she doubted whether there was as much as an average of three limbs per man (227).

Although there is inevitably a tragic similarity in the injuries received by soldiers in warfare, the Commandant, like Florence Nightingale, praises the long-suffering bravery and self-restraint of the wounded. Both relish the contribution that they can

make in terms of improving the lot of their patients in hospital and beyond, making more likely their eventual rehabilitation into civilian life.

Bostridge also quotes from a letter of 1855 from Peter Benson Maxwell, a member of the Hospitals Commission, describing Florence Nightingale:

A fine specimen of humanity, all the softness & gentleness of her sex, all the cold clear-headedness of the Mathematician, a capital head for devising the ten thousand little details of administration ... a resolute boldness in action that quails before no obstacle. The cool steady way in which she does everything not withstanding occasional sour looks from officials is perfect (229-30).

This could equally well be a description of the Commandant, whose serenity and tenderness is praised throughout, as are her conventionally womanly qualities of empathy and forgiveness. She is strong and tenacious, does not suffer incompetence or selfishness silently and is more than a match for the “Red Cross, Army Medical Department, and War Office, ‘the whole boiling in a bunch’” (295) who are, of course, exclusively male.

Much is made of her physical appearance and presence, from her “clear blue Irish eyes” (290) to her glossy, dark hair covered with a white veil. Her “tall, graceful, blue-clad figure glided” while her “pretty voice” (291) was powerful enough to make itself heard from one end of a ward to the other. Her “magnetism” is stressed and also her irreverent sense of humour. She has an almost nun-like quality, reinforced by the allusion to “the face of a *mater dolorosa*” (290) and the relief felt by the sister and nurses when she cheers up a ward full of depressed patients. ‘One saw in their faces, “For this relief much thanks’” (292). There is an almost religious intonation in the word order of this phrase, although it is a quotation from Act One, Scene One of *Hamlet*, where the guard Francisco thanks Barnardo for taking over the night watch at midnight, adding:

’Tis bitter cold

And I am sick at heart (9-10)

These words are overlaid with the additional implications that all is not well with the world order and that Francisco is also, at this point, in despair at the state of the royal court. This is an appropriate sentiment for wartime, and Grand would have been confident that her readers would have known the quotation and its context.

There are occasional glimpses of the woman behind the nurse in this story, moments when she is portrayed as being vulnerable, prone to grief and bad temper, albeit never displayed in front of her patients. And as though Grand was aware that her character was becoming too idealised, she shifts the mood and pace in the final part of the story. An unexpected telephone call from Head Quarters alerts the Commandant to the arrival of a new batch of stretcher-bound soldiers arriving imminently at the local station, fifteen miles away. This prompts an outbreak of feverish preparation, with the Commandant, “the naturally impatient, combative woman ousting the nurse the moment she was free of restraint outside the wards” (298) at the centre of the storm, shouting for her car and necessary supplies. The reader is rushed along by the “headlong speed” (299) of the journey, the change of location and the energy of the protagonist. The drive itself, against the clock, involves floods, a changing landscape of meadows and farmland, and then crowds delaying entrance to the city, before, at last, the station yard is reached just before the train arrives. The Commandant is “in her element” (299) organising stretchers and ambulances.

In another skilful change of pace and focus, the plight of the wounded then takes centre stage. Once again, Grand employs the technique she has used throughout the story, to highlight individual soldiers, their plights and personalities so as to make the wider point that each of the sacrificed soldiers is an individual and is loved, and has suffered, in a unique way. The wounded are never allowed to be seen as mere war statistics; the personal tragedy behind each experience is indicated. Through the Commandant’s care for all her charges, the reader is encouraged to engage with the reality of war: not the reality of the battlefield, however, since as women, it is outside the knowledge of author and protagonist, alike. It is rather the cost to the men themselves, their families and friends which Grand is concerned with conveying in this story.

“The Commandant,” the final story in Grand’s third volume of short stories, is likely to have been the last story she wrote. Even at the end of her writing career, Grand was a writer who was still engaging, in a challenging way, with topical subjects and questioning society’s values. Written in the aftermath of the First World War, this

subject matter would have been particularly close to the hearts of her readers, people for whom life had altered beyond recognition.

The story opened with the discharge of forty soldiers from the Commandant's hospital and closes with the arrival of a Red Cross train carrying the next consignment of wounded to the local station for transport to the same hospital. The symmetry here is indicative of the nature of humankind, where, Grand appears to be suggesting, some lessons are never learnt. In the last sentence, the Commandant covers the face of another shockingly young dead soldier, "reverently," making this final gesture into a form of blessing. By completing this story, and indeed the book, with the pitiful spectacle of human suffering, she leaves her readers with unanswered questions about the morality of war.

CONCLUSION

Sarah Grand's stepson Haldane McFall, writing in *Biographist & Review* in 1902, states categorically that his stepmother was of the opinion that *Our Manifold Nature* "contains some of her best work" (qtd in *SSPSG*, I, 303). While he makes no mention of why she felt this to be the case, it is nonetheless significant that a writer who is remembered best for her novels *The Heavenly Twins* and *The Beth Book*, should consider her short stories to be so important.

In the view of Arlene Young "periodicals are a forum for debate, for the presentation of contestable positions on issues of current interest or for more or less didactic expositions that are clearly meant to persuade" (3). In the case of Sarah Grand, the immediacy of magazine publication unquestionably facilitated a powerful contribution to contemporary discussions and provided an opportunity to influence public opinion. Grand wrote in the Forward to the 1923 edition of *The Heavenly Twins* of her intention to "expose the injustice with which women were treated" (xii), and I suggest that she was doing just that with the stories in *Our Manifold Nature*, particularly as they are concerned with marriage, sexually transmitted disease, education, poverty, the role of the mother and eugenics. As all the stories had been published in magazines before being collected together to form a book, Grand was reinforcing her position as a author with much to impress upon women, young and old, who were learning what it meant to be 'New' women in the 1890s.

Many of these concerns were revisited again in her next collection of stories, *Emotional Moments*. More impressionistic and hence modernistic in tone, these stories, which also included reflections upon the single woman, depression and social injustice, had been published first in magazines between 1894 and 1905. Grand's commitment to topical concerns and influencing opinion is still present in the story volume *Variety*, brought out by Heinemann in 1922 and containing material published in magazines from 1909 to 1915 as well some previously unpublished material. Here she intervenes in debates about war and social reform, as well as experimenting with two ghost stories.

In publishing short fiction between 1891 and 1922, Grand was unusual amongst her contemporaries. Throughout this time she contributed to debates about the concerns

of the day and kept her writing style fresh and relevant, particularly in her sensitivity to women's subjectivity.

In writing this thesis, it has always been my intention to promote a greater awareness of Sarah Grand as an important feminist writer and to give her short fiction increased prominence. My intention is to continue my work on these stories and to publish a critical edition which will have value for future generations of Grand scholars and readers. Since submitting the thesis, additional archival material has surfaced which may well throw light on some of the stories where first publication details have yet to be discovered. In parallel with this work, I intend to make available a volume of selected Grand stories, aimed at a general readership. One only has to look at the work done by Virago Press and Persephone Books, for example, to see that there is a contemporary appetite for overlooked women's writing of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This is reinforced by the encouraging response I have had from meeting local groups to discuss selections of Grand's short fiction.

In all her writing in the 1890s, Grand was attacking the sexual double standard which allowed diseased men to marry young women who were ignorant about the consequences. When *The Heavenly Twins* was published in 1893, this topic was considered taboo, as indeed was any reference to the physical side of marriage. Yet, just over ten years later, Gordon Stables, M.D. contributed a feature "To Girls in Their Teens" in *The Girl's Own Paper* which demonstrated not only a new openness about sexually transmitted disease and marriage but also an honest engagement with the educational requirements of a young female audience: "Both husband and wife must be healthy. If they lack strength or have seeds of disease in their bodies, to marry were a crime." (Vol 26, 5 Nov, 1904, 107). Sarah Grand must largely take the credit with changing the cultural climate on matters of sex and education in late Victorian England. In her short fiction, she ranged fearlessly over topics, in popular periodicals, which were both bold and controversial.

APPENDIX

PUBLISHING HISTORY WITH WILLIAM HEINEMANN

Sarah Grand was unique as an author in having both a professional and personal connection with publisher William Heinemann for almost thirty years. He published her books at intervals from almost the beginning of the formation of his Company until his untimely death in 1920, and the fluctuations in the reputations and prosperity of both can be interpreted through a close study of Grand's books as physical objects, supported by reference to their extensive correspondence.

In *William Heinemann: A Century of Publishing 1890-1990*, biographer John St John credits *The Heavenly Twins* (1893) with making a "particular contribution to the rapid establishment of the new publisher" (10). It certainly established its author as a best-selling novelist and set her on the path to literary fame. As 'W.R.' writing in *The Sketch* put it: "The book has been a little gold-mine to the authoress, and the publisher has reaped his own share of the material advantages which a successful book brings to both parties" ("Some London Publishers," *IX-Mr. William Heinemann*, 25 September 1895, 479).

Heinemann's regular reader, Daniel Conner, was as enthusiastic about the book as the publisher himself, calling it "daring and original" and when it was published, as St John writes, it was "a sensational success with record-breaking sales" (10). He speculates about the reasons for this, concluding that it "made an impact on the more progressive thinking of the age". Apart from *The Beth Book*, the "six other books" of Grand's published by Heinemann are not mentioned by name in the centenary biography, which is somewhat surprising as the literary fortunes of Grand and Heinemann are so closely linked between 1893 and 1923.

Although William Heinemann had originally bought the copyright for *The Heavenly Twins* for just £100, he tore up the contract after publication and presented Grand with a cheque for £1,200, based on sales, assuring her that she would receive "the most favoured authors' royalties."⁸⁶ The book was published on 7 February 1893 in

⁸⁶ Whyte, Frederic, *William Heinemann: A Memoir*, New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company, 1929, 104.

three volumes, priced at a guinea and a half, and reprinted in this format in April, May, July, August and October. It came out in one volume on 15th January the following year and was reprinted in February, May and November, in Heinemann's "Six Shilling Novels" series.

In order to capitalise on the success of this novel, Heinemann bought the rights to *Ideala: A Study from Life*, which had been privately printed in 1888, then published by E.W. Allen in 1888 and by Richard Bentley in 1889. The author had remained anonymous during this time, but when the book was published by Heinemann at the end of 1893, the title page proclaimed the author's identity: "By Sarah Grand, Author of 'The Heavenly Twins,' 'Our Manifold Nature' etc." On the facing page there is a listing of "New Six Shilling Novels." *The Heavenly Twins* and *Our Manifold Nature* head the list, which includes, amongst others, *A Superfluous Woman* (Anon.), *The Story of a Modern Woman* by Ella Hepworth Dixon, *From the Five Rivers* by Flora Annie Steel, *The Tower of Taddeo* by Ouida, *Children of the Ghetto* by I. Zangwill and *The Naulahka* by Rudyard Kipling and Walcott Balestier. Ever the consummate marketing man, Heinemann has bound into the back of the book a section comprising some forty pages of advertising for his back list and forthcoming titles. This section provides a snapshot of the early years of the publishing company and Heinemann's prowess in attracting established authors as well as authors on the verge of making important names for themselves. In addition the prices of all the titles are clearly highlighted, giving readers a choice of "Popular 3s. 6d. Novels;" volumes from "Heinemann's International Library," edited by Edmund Gosse, "in paper covers, 2s.6d. each, or cloth, 3s.6d.;" or even "Popular Shilling Books." *The Heavenly Twins*, *Our Manifold Nature* and *Ideala* are each allocated a page entitled "Some Press Opinions," where excerpts from favourable reviews are quoted. During the 1890s Heinemann's "Six Shilling Volumes" are handsomely bound in cloth covered boards with gilt lettering on the spine and on the front cover.

Our Manifold Nature was published alongside reprints of *Ideala* and *The Heavenly Twins* in 1894, to cement Grand's reputation as a popular and provocative writer with much to say about women, their rights and responsibilities. Comprising six stories previously published in *Temple Bar Magazine*, *The Pall Mall Magazine* and *Woman at Home*, this book was a key element in positioning Heinemann's exciting

new authoress as a definitive New Woman. He was conscious of the need to secure rights to the stories and to get Grand to revise them and write a Preface with all possible haste. The agreement between Richard Bentley and Son, proprietors of *Temple Bar Magazine*, has survived. Dated 20 January 1894, it makes provision “to sell ... their right in the said Articles for the term of three (3) years and on condition that no edition shall be issued by the said Mr Heinemann at a lower price than two shillings and sixpence (2/6) per copy, for the sum of twenty guineas (£21).” This was accompanied by a handwritten note from Richard Bentley (30 January 1894), agreeing to amend the three years and increase it to “the legal term of copyright,” ending with the wish “I hope that the reprint with the other tales will be a success.”

No evidence has survived of the correspondence with *Pall Mall Magazine* or *Woman at Home*, although there is a receipt from the studio of well-known photographer Mr Mendelssohn for the sum of one guinea for permission to reproduce the signed portrait of Madam Sarah Grand which appears, protected by tissue paper, opposite the title page. The inclusion of a photograph of the author was a very rare occurrence and indicates the seriousness with which Heinemann was promoting his newest literary celebrity.

The volume itself is attractively and sturdily bound in olive green cloth covered boards and with gilt lettering on the spine, giving title first, author second and publisher at the base of the spine. The front cover has the title repeated in the bottom right hand quarter while on the left hand side there is a full length illustration of a flower, outlined in gilt. The uniform appearance of Grand’s books at this point makes them collectible as much for their appearance on bookshelves as for their content.

Heinemann has bound a twenty page section into the back of *Our Manifold Nature* which appears after full page advertisements for *The Heavenly Twins* and *Ideala*. Here the names of all one hundred and forty-eight authors published by Heinemann in March 1894 are listed as well as his latest ventures into “Dramatic Literature,” “Poetry” and “Scientific Handbooks.” The fact that these departments have appeared since the publication of *The Heavenly Twins* and *Ideala* a few months earlier are evidence of Heinemann’s energy and entrepreneurial skills in establishing his company.

Our Manifold Nature was also published by Bernhard Tauchnitz in 1894. It is volume 2983 in the “Collection of British Authors” series and is a pocket-sized edition which would have been printed as a paperback. The inscription on the inside front cover of my copy is “J.R. Randolph 1894” and it has been bound in dark cloth boards with a red leather spine and corners. Because the name Tauchnitz does not appear on the cover it would suggest that Mr Randolph had the paperback volume rebound by a local bookbinder, perhaps to be consistent with other volumes in his library. This is the only one of Grand’s books to appear as a Tauchnitz edition, again confirming that she was at the height of her literary fame in 1894.

Heinemann had to wait until 1897 for a new work from Grand. In spite of telling her agent F.H. Fisher on 14 November 1895, “I have finished the first volume, and have the second and third blocked out so that, if only I can work on at it now steadily, I ought to have it out in March” (qtd. in *SSPSG*, II, 53), it was a year later in March 1897 that she was working on the revisions, assuring Heinemann that she hoped “to have the book in your hands by June” (qtd. in *SSPSG*, II, 59).

The Beth Book was eventually published in November 1897. In appearance, it is similar to the first three Heinemann volumes, bound in olive green cloth covered boards, with gilt lettering on the spine and cover and the trademark gilt flower illustration. All four volumes of Grand’s fiction so far were printed by Ballantyne, Hanson & Co., the Edinburgh based printing company, with offices in London, founded in 1796 and closely associated with Sir Walter Scott.

Facing the title page, in alphabetical order, is a list of Heinemann’s best-known fiction writers and their books in the “Popular Six Shilling Novels” series. As well as Grand, fourteen authors are named, including Hall Caine, M. Hamilton, Robert Hichens, Annie E. Holdsworth, Henry James, W.E. Norris, Flora Annie Steel and Robert Louis Stevenson. There is an eight page section bound into the back of the book, with two pages devoted to Sarah Grand, another two to Flora Annie Steel, and one each to Hall Caine, Robert Louis Stevenson, E.L. Voynich and Richard Harding Davis. There is also a further sixteen page section entitled “Mr. William Heinemann’s Autumn Announcements mdcccxcvii,” and significantly, below this, the famous windmill colophon, taken from a woodcut made by William Nicholson who gave it to Heinemann as a present in 1897. Below this is the declaration that

“the books mentioned in this list may be obtained through any bookseller,” confirming Heinemann’s legendary support for the book trade.⁸⁷ The “Autumn Announcements” illustrate the continuing growth of the Company, with lists such as “History and Biography,” “Educational,” “Literatures of the World” and “Travel” having been added since the publication of *Our Manifold Nature* three years earlier.

Of the years between 1898 and 1920, a small but significant amount of the correspondence between Grand and Heinemann has survived. In a letter she wrote to him on 10 September 1898, she intriguingly writes:

It is kind of you to offer to come down for a day if there is anything special to discuss. There is nothing, however, for the moment, thanks. The publisher of whom I told you has renewed his offer for my next book. He writes: ‘I now want to know whether you will be prepared to sell me all the copyrights, English, American, Colonial and Continental in your next novel for a period of five years from the day of publication for four thousand pounds to be paid on the day of publication.’ When we meet I should like to discuss the proposal with you, but there is no hurry for that.

My new book is progressing – I am at chapter six – and like the idea of it (qtd. in *SSPSG*, II, 67-8).

The new book was, in fact, *Babs the Impossible*. The correspondence with Heinemann suggests that at this point in her life, Grand was experiencing some financial problems, and that the publisher Hutchinson, founded in 1887, was prepared to offer more than the £1000 Heinemann’s partner Sidney Pawling deemed prudent. In addition, Hutchinson owned the magazine *The Lady’s Realm*, and the proposal was for the book to be serialised in the magazine before being published in book form. Grand had previously contributed the daring short story “She Was Silent” to the launch edition of the magazine in November 1896, following it up with “The Baby’s Tragedy” in 1897. Securing a novel by Sarah Grand was clearly something of a coup for Hutchinson, whose Six Shilling fiction list was nowhere near as impressive as Heinemann’s. *Babs the Impossible* was published in book form in 1901.

There is evidence that from 1899 sales of Grand’s books were slowing down considerably. In an effort to stimulate sales, Heinemann published *The Tenor and the Boy*, the central section from *The Heavenly Twins*, as a one-and-sixpenny paperback

⁸⁷ William Heinemann was a founder member of the Publishers’ Association which was formed in 1896 and in 1900 announced the signing of the Net Book Agreement. In 1909, he was elected President of the Association.

in his “Heinemann’s Popular Novels” series. On 4 December 1903 he wrote to Grand to say that “we have got a very heavy stock of ‘The Beth Book,’ and a pretty good number also of ‘Our Manifold Nature,’ which I fear will hardly sell out at 6s. Will you let me do them up at 2s. And publish them uniform with Hall Caine’s two-shilling novels?”⁸⁸ Grand replied that she was “quite willing.”

In 1907 Heinemann turned down the opportunity to publish *Emotional Moments*, leaving it to Grand’s agent Mr Colles to negotiate publication with Hurst and Blackett in 1908. It was sold as part of their “6s. Novels” series but the book production is not of the same quality as the Heinemann volumes, being printed with lighter paper and boards. Whereas Grand’s previous books, including *Babs the Impossible*, all had several printings, including overseas editions, *Emotional Moments* was only printed once.

On 28 November 1908,⁸⁹ Heinemann wrote to Grand:

My stock-keeper complains that we have very large supplies of some of your books at 6/-, which do not seem to tempt the British public just now in their present form. I want to put them into picture covers for next Summer’s sales and sell them at 1/-.

Grand accepted this offer, and the accompanying ten percent royalty terms by return of post, even though she was used to receiving fifteen percent. In the same letter⁹⁰ Grand suggests that “another book from me might set the old ones going again” and reveals that she is getting on well with a new one which “won’t be ready for at least eighteen months, and never at all if I have to return to the terrible lecture mill.”

In fact, it was 1912 before Heinemann published this book, *Adnam’s Orchard*, the first part of a proposed trilogy. When the *Times Literary Supplement* reviewed it on 25 October that year, the anonymous reviewer shows a certain ambivalence of response, enjoying the quality of much of the writing but suggesting that Grand has not moved with the times: “All the modern problems flourish here – one or two of them a little damaged by long service, all the cries and causes” (qtd. in *SSPSG*, I, 538). The style and format of the book is very similar to the Heinemann volumes from the 1890s, with olive green cloth covered boards and gilt lettering on the spine. The increasing sophistication of the printing process meant that instead of the book

⁸⁸ Heinemann Archive, Rushden, Northamptonshire.

⁸⁹ As above.

⁹⁰ As above.

being issued with uncut pages, as in the 1890s, all the pages were trimmed before binding. The title page credits Grand with being the “Author of ‘The Heavenly Twins,’ ‘The Beth Book etc.’” In a sixteen page section bound into the back of the book there is “A List of Current Fiction,” giving details of Heinemann’s “Six Shilling” series. Hall Caine’s novels are still appearing, alongside work by John Galsworthy, E.F. Benson, Mrs. Hodgson Burnett, Violet Hunt, Amber Reeves and D.H. Lawrence. The final page draws the readers’ attention to the novels of Tolstoy, Dostoevsky and Turgenev, translated from the Russian by Constance Garnett. In spite of *Adnam’s Orchard* being published by Appleton in New York in 1913, it was never reprinted by Heinemann.

The same fate was to befall the second, and last, volume of the proposed trilogy, *The Winged Victory*. Although Heinemann had suggested bringing out a 2/- edition of *Adnam’s Orchard*, with a picture wrapper, to coincide with the publication of the 6/- edition of *The Winged Victory*,⁹¹ this did not happen. Published in 1916, in the middle of the First World War, it is a more cheaply produced volume using an inferior paper, due to paper prices having doubled, and black ink rather than gilt for the lettering on the spine. On the first page of the sixteen page advertising section bound into the back of the book, the reader is alerted to a new mailing service, whereby ‘Mr Heinemann will always be pleased to send periodically particulars of his forthcoming publications to any reader who desires them’. This volume was also published by Appleton in New York during the same year. The *Times Literary Supplement* called it “a preposterous story, preposterously related”⁹² and it was never reprinted either in Britain or the USA.

No record remains of Grand’s reaction to the sudden death of William Heinemann on 5 October 1920. Judging by the affectionate tone of much of their correspondence, it must have been a blow. Her connection with the Company continued, however, with Sydney Pawling becoming her main point of contact.

The financial viability of the Company became a cause for concern following Heinemann’s death. Pawling, who already owned forty five percent of the equity, could not afford to purchase Heinemann’s controlling share and eventually it was

⁹¹ Correspondence between Heinemann and Grand, dated 13 January 1916 and 16 January 1916 respectively, and held by the Heinemann Archive.

⁹² *TLS*, 24 August 1916, p.404. Quoted in SSPSG, I, p.544

sold to the American publisher Frank Nelson Doubleday. Pawling continued to run the London side of the business until he died in December 1922 and his shares too were bought by Doubleday.

As part of Pawling's attempt to establish the Company on a sounder financial footing, he agreed to publish a new collection of stories by Sarah Grand entitled *Variety* as well as a new edition of *The Heavenly Twins* to commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of the original publication. In the event, he lived to see the publication of *Variety* in 1922, but not of the reprint of *The Heavenly Twins*, with a specially commissioned 'Forward' by Grand, which came out in 1923.

The post-war book trade had seen a dramatic increase in production costs with these running at approaching three times pre-war levels. Paper, binding and wages accounted for the cost of sales increases and this was certainly reflected in the appearance of *Variety* as well as the drop in royalties for Grand on *The Heavenly Twins*. Pawling wrote to her on 29 March 1922: "On the figures of the cost of manufacture, ten percent royalty is the utmost we can pay on the number we think we can sell."⁹³

Variety was published on a cheap, rough paper with light blue, cloth covered, light-weight boards, overprinted with black ink on the spine and front cover. Its appearance does not reflect Grand's position as a best-selling writer although all her previous books published by Heinemann are listed on the title page. No advertisements for other authors and their works are included in this volume other than a mention of seven obscure titles and authors under the heading "Recent Fiction" opposite the title page. The anniversary edition of *The Heavenly Twins* is rather more attractive and is very similar in appearance to the original 1893 edition. In spite of Grand's January 1923 "Forward," providing a fascinating retrospective view of the history of its "exhilaratingly stormy reception" (v), the book did not sell and was out of print for the next seventy years. *Variety* has never been reprinted.

⁹³ Heinemann Archive.

APPENDIX II: PHOTOGRAPHS OF SARAH GRAND

This studio photograph of Sarah Grand, taken by Mendelssohn photography, appears opposite the title page of *Our Manifold Nature* (1894).

Sarah Grand in her Study at Grove Hill, Tunbridge Wells.

Copyright of "The Tatler"

This full-page photograph of Sarah Grand is featured in *The Tatler*, February 17, 1904.



Sarah Grand found cycling a very beneficial form of exercise. She was regularly photographed with her bicycle and these pictures were used in celebrity interviews during the 1890s. This photograph was taken in approximately 1895.

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