Chapter Three

Nursing Necessity, Managing Money: Professional Women and Women with Business Acumen

By the middle of the nineteenth century, educated middle class women gained entry into other male professions by becoming doctors, nurses, actresses, painters, and even professional storytellers. Governessing and teaching were the most common earning options but gradually women began to march their way into these other non-traditional professions. Interestingly, these women do find representation in fiction by major writers like Dickens (nurse, actress), Hardy (actress, storyteller), George Eliot (actress), W. M. Thackeray (actress), Anne Bronte (painter), Gissing (doctor, women with business acumen) and Mrs Gaskell (nurse), among others.

In the Victorian age, Elizabeth Garrett Anderson was the first woman to register as a doctor in Britain in 1866. She had qualified the Hall of Apothecaries Examination held a year earlier. Elizabeth Blackwell was the first woman to become a licensed medical practitioner in the US. She was awarded her medical degree by Geneva College, New York, in 1849. She became one of the founders of the London School of Medicine for Women and she campaigned for the abolition of the Contagious Diseases Act in the 1870s. British Medical Schools, like Oxford and Cambridge Universities, haltingly and warily allowed admission to female students. Initially they were only given access to attend lectures but were not awarded degrees.

Margaret Ward remarks that ‘arguments against accepting women as medical students and then as qualified medical practitioners seem now fairly illogical – they were too emotional; their brains were smaller than a man’s; they could not take the rowdy atmosphere of the dissecting room or the operating room (and the male medical students
were indeed rowdy); they could not be alone with a male patient’ and so on. These objections brought against women aspiring to become doctors harped on women’s physical inferiority, the weakness of their ‘nerves’, that is, their physiological unfitness, their garrulous nature, and even their marital status.

It was presumed that women doctors could not marry as they would not be able to devote time to their husbands and raise children like other housewives. The nature of their duties made them unfit for domesticity. Attending to the needs of the patients and rushing to meet emergencies would not, they argued, be compatible with the patient duties of a wife or even the affectionate agency of the mother. A married woman doctor would then require her husband to take care of the children which was apparently unthinkable and unacceptable. A cross section of society including physicians like Benjamin Ward Richardson, a woman writer who called herself ‘Mater’ (the writer of a letter published in *The Lancet*, entitled ‘A Lady on Lady Doctors’ and a lady doctor herself), and Elizabeth Blackwell, a doctor in real life, opposed the idea of marriage for women doctors. Blackwell insisted on the barrier between a woman doctor and an ‘ordinary marriage’. If this barrier was broken down it would result in dire consequences. These apprehensions notwithstanding, Elizabeth Garret married J. G. Anderson in 1871 and proved that it was possible to bridge the gulf between a woman doctor’s career and her marriage. She authenticates the desire for going beyond domesticity and then embracing it. Her example establishes that it was possible to harmonize both the private and public spheres.

Rachel in Charlotte Yonge’s *The Clever Woman of the Family* (1865) asks her cousin Fanny whether she agrees with her idea that ‘female medical men’ meaning ‘medical women’ would be ‘an infinite boon’ to which Fanny replies in the affirmative.

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with the clause that it would be ‘very nice’ if women doctors would ‘never be nervous’.²

In Victorian and Edwardian England, women were believed to suffer due to their ‘nerves’ leading in severe cases to a ‘nervous breakdown’. Feminists like Elaine Showalter suggest a ‘rebellion hypothesis’, that is, women (consciously and unconsciously) complained of nervous disorders as a strategy to counter patriarchal domination.³ Janet Oppenheim, in her recent study, questions this contention, asserting that nervous collapse posed genuine and severe medical problems for its Victorian victims.⁴

In Gissing’s *Born in Exile* (1892), Janet Moxey is a qualified doctor. She has been awarded her degree from The Women’s Medical School in London. She always had scientific tastes with an interest in Botany, and the ‘skeletons of birds and cats and mice’.⁵ Gissing represents her favourably stating that her voice conveys a ‘habitual self command’, and the idea of a ‘highly cultivated mind’. She had a pleasant face but the narrator claims that she was not ‘handsome or pretty’. Four years of being in medical practice affects her health adversely and she is forced into taking a holiday for a few days. Her cousin Morcella believes that she is a ‘very capable’ Lady Doctor but apprehends that she would not be able to stand the strenuous practice and that there would be another ‘breakdown before long’. Even as a medical practitioner, Janet has not given up her studies. Her presence is described in glowing terms as ‘refreshing’, ‘inspiriting’, with the scent of ‘modern womanhood’ which was markedly different from the ‘merely feminine perfume’. Later, when Christian plans to marry Janet, he decides that she has to give up her professional work after marriage. The reason he gives is that it is too demanding and physically she could not withstand it for long. Interestingly Christian plans to settle in

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Kingsmill after his marriage with Janet as she had her practice and her friends there. Janet’s friendliness with Whitelaw professors and her large circle of friends in Kingsmill confirm her acceptance in intellectual circles as well as in society.

Fears surrounding the idea that a lady doctor, who had not just studied medicine for years but had also practised it for years, would be rendered unfit for love, marriage and domesticity are proven unfounded in Janet’s case. Christian finds her attractive and finds ‘every perfection’ in her. Janet always nurtured a soft corner for him, and years of scientific pursuance do not interfere with her feminine qualities or with her womanly heart. She remains as capable of loving tenderly as ever. Christian’s friend Godwin’s suggestion that Dr. Janet Moxey and Christian were more suited to each other after her qualifying and practising as a doctor than perhaps they would have been had they got married years earlier, comforts Christian when he thinks of the years that he had wasted apart from Janet. In these intervening years Christian gets over his infatuation with Mrs Constance Palmer and Janet gets herself highly educated, qualified and independent.

Years of continued medical practice proves to be detrimental for Janet’s constitution. There is a silence on her hours of work, fees, and conditions of work; we do not see her interacting with her patients but her competence and success are indicated. She is an excellent example of a woman going beyond domesticity, enjoying attention and gaining reputation in the public sphere, and also fulfilling her desire for domesticity by marrying the man she loves.

Surveying the same medical scenario, we will now shift our gaze from doctors to nurses. The word ‘nurse’ has conventionally been associated with ‘nurturer’ and ‘mother’. Nursing has been viewed as a feminine occupation, a natural part of the woman’s familial and domestic duties. The ideology of nursing suffered from an inherent controversy. Nurse-patient relationship could be reminiscent of the mother-child
relationship as the patient becomes dependent on the nurse. The nurse could become the angelic mother figure. Her starched white uniform symbolises purity and is reminiscent of nuns pledged to chastity. Conversely, the work of nursing involves physical contact and intimacy, a social transgression, where a woman (nurse), unrelated to the man (patient) touches and handles him physically. It could lead to lewd fantasies. According to Anne Hudson Jones, the nurse becomes a metaphor for all women. Several conflicting concepts and images that are associated with nurses include intimacy and eroticism, Madonna and whore, angel and bawd, spirituality and earthiness.⁶

Leslie A. Fiedler points out that ‘Nurse equals Woman’ and on a deeper symbolic level ‘Woman equals Nurse’.⁷ This probably leads us to mistakenly believe that women were readily accepted as nurses. Men (i.e. army officers, doctors, government bureaucrats) could not accept women nursing wounded soldiers in perilous and problematic wartime conditions. They thought that such difficult situations would make women swoon, get hysterical, and flee. Women who served as nurses during war busted these myths and prejudices. Two proficient women, Florence Nightingale and Clara Barton, marched their way into the battlefront (Nightingale in the Crimean War and Barton in the Civil War) and proved their mettle. They changed the perception about nurses and gained social respectability for the profession. Carol Helmstadter states that ‘developing respectability and efficiency in hospital nurses were the two major goals of nineteenth century nursing reformers, and vigilant supervision was to be the major method of achieving them’.⁸

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⁷ Leslie A. Fieldler, ‘Images of the nurse in fiction and popular culture’ published in Jones, ibid, pp.100-12.
Before these reformers like Nightingale, nursing – as a profession – was not highly regarded. No uncommon qualification or experience or training was required to be a nurse. Abel-Smith cites the case of Radcliffe Infirmary where the matron either advertised for a ‘careful woman’ or made use of one of the servants of the house when the need for a nurse arose. Florence Nightingale agonised over the degraded condition of nursing and attributed it to those involved in it. She said that those who were unfit for every other work came into nursing; nurses were ‘too old, too weak, too drunken, too dirty, too stolid’. Dickens presents a caricature of such a drunken, revolting and inhuman nurse in *Martin Chuzzlewit.*

Sairey Gamp in *Martin Chuzzlewit* (1844) is a large, dishevelled, greedy, drunken, endlessly talkative nurse, who combines in her the duties of a midwife, nurse and undertaker. Clearly being uneducated, untrained and unprincipled, she is an amateur but she calls herself a ‘professional’. She is the literary stereotype of the untrained domiciliary nurse, the ‘horror-by-the-bedside’. Dickens employs the term ‘professional’ repeatedly in chapter headings and in the narrative to satirize such a nurse and also to arouse derision for her so-called professionalism. She is simply mercenary and merciless in her handling of patients. She ill treats patients and says that that is all they are entitled to get for ‘half a crown’ per day. Subtly, it made a case for nurses; if the pay was that low, only the worst would be willing to become nurses. In general, educated middle class women shied away from it on account of its disrepute and unfavourable work conditions.

Sairey supposedly works round the clock. For twelve hours she engages in ‘night watching’ for a gentleman and then goes back to another patient Mr Chuffey. Mrs Prig is another day nurse who does night watching elsewhere. Both of them take up both day and night duties and supposedly work all twenty four hours (to make more money). In

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10 Florence Nightingale in a letter to Sir Thomas Watson, in 1865, published in Abel-Smith, ibid., p.5.
actuality, both care for their creature comforts and Sairey Gamp goes off to sleep after a heavy meal, on her night watches; presumably Mrs Prig does the same. Their speech, full of grammatical errors and dialect based pronunciation, betrays their social, educational, and cultural background. They team up often and take turns in nursing a patient. When Mrs Prig hands over charge to Sairey Gamp, she first informs her about the food (that the ‘pickled salmon’ is delicious, cold meat is not, and the drinks ‘is all good’), then about the placing of the medicines, then about the last dose of medicine administered to the patient at seven o’clock. Her final words are about the easy chair not being soft enough. She asks Sairey to make use of the patient’s pillow, ‘you’ll want his piller’,\(^{11}\) indicating that she has used it in a similar manner. This description of the hand-over of charge is an indicator of the callousness of such nurses. It delineates the nurse’s concern about food and comfortable sleep, the only incentives, apart from the money, that drove them into nursing. Being ‘professional’, they believe that self comes before service (quite contrary to Florence Nightingale’s ideology). In fact, Mrs Gamp and Mrs Prig show no familiarity with the idea of service. Nursing was to them an option to earn money, get food, drink and shelter.

After taking charge from Mrs Prig, Sairey first looks out of the window, then tries to test the comfort level of the easy chair, then examines her surroundings – the medicine bottles, jugs, glasses and tea cups – before finally taking a look at her patient. It appears that she takes a cursory look at the patient when she has nothing better to do. She reports for duty in a drunken state, walking with uneven steps, and in the sick room, she takes ‘snuff’. She pins the wandering arms of the patient by his side to see how he would look as a dead body. She ‘solaced’ herself with the thought that ‘he’d make a lovely corpse’.\(^{12}\) This grotesque behaviour disgusts the readers by revealing the insensitivity of nurses like

\(^{12}\)Ibid, p.410.
Mrs Gamp. After a lengthy preparation for tea, she asks for ‘Brighton Tipper’, a kind of ale, citing its utility in keeping awake, and a ‘mix’ of gin and water. Her horrific way of administering medicines is illustrated as she makes the patient gasp by ‘clutching’ his windpipe and then pouring the medicine down his throat. Her preposterous actions include quietening her patient by putting soap in his mouth while she washes him. Similarly, Mrs Prig is brutal in her dealings with her helpless patients. Her combing of a patient’s hair is broadcast in distinctive Dickensian gems: she ‘seized the patient by the chin, and began to rasp his unhappy head with a hair-brush’. Mrs Gamp is full of self-praise and believes that she has been recommended by Mrs Prig as she was one of the ‘soberest’ nurses available and because she is ‘worth her weight and more in goldian guineas’. In reality, Mrs Gamp is seen to be punching her patients, or nearly strangling them while making them swallow medicines, or pushing them dangerously close to the open fire to ‘soothe their minds’, or imagining them as corpses, or chiding them for disturbing her sleep, or eating and drinking like a sponge.

The visual images of Mrs. Gamp highlight her dishevelled appearance, her love of drink, and her horrific conduct with her ailing patients. She is often portrayed with her team worker, the equally ‘unprofessional’ and inhuman, Mrs. Prig. In an illustration by Fred Barnard, Sairey Gamp is shown to push the patient dangerously close to the fireplace after rousing him with vigorous ‘shakes’ to the utter amazement and horror of the patient’s family. The family does not dare to interfere probably to avoid the risk of offending the ‘professional’ nurse, Sairey Gamp, whose services would be needed for ‘night-watch’. The pitiable condition of nursing in the pre Nightingale era, made it difficult to engage trained or ‘humane’ nurses, forcing families to put up with the likes of Sairey Gamp.

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Mrs. Gamp favours the company with an exhibition of professional skill. (1870s).

Illustration by Fred Barnard for Dickens's *Martin Chuzzlewit* (Chapter XLVI), page 361.

[Convinced that Mrs. Mercy Chuzzlewit is being too permissive with "the old victim," the old clerk Chuffey, Mrs. Gamp shakes her patient into semi-consciousness as a "triumph of her art."]

Scanned image and text by Philip V. Allingham.

Source: <http://www.victorianweb.org/art/illustration/barnard/c52.html>
This might be a shocking representation of a nurse but many believe that such was the real life scenario before Nightingale’s reforms. Fiedler suggests that Dickens had in fact ‘cleaned up’ Sairey by not depicting her as ‘a prostitute and/or bawd, as indeed many such Victorian nurses were’. Instead he portrays her as a celibate widow, keeping in mind the tastes of his Victorian readers. Nonetheless, this portraiture is a scathing comment on nurses and nursing. The recurrent mention of the term ‘professional’ suggests that Dickens supported the cause of ‘humanizing’ nursing instead of professionalising it. Old Martin Chuzzlewit advises Mrs Gamp to drink less, be more humane, show more concern for her patients and less concern for herself, and be more honest. Dickens’ vampish Mrs Gamp is an evil representation of the nurse in fiction. She remains one of the most notorious nurses and subsequent fictional nurses find it challenging to emerge from her shadow.

In sharp contrast to Dickens’ portraiture of Sairey Gamp, comes the refined, soft and gentle Ruth in Mrs Gaskell’s novel of the same name, published in 1853. Ruth’s ‘very delicate touch’, ‘watchful and patient’ nature, and caring concern qualify her for the profession. The Parish doctor, Mr Wynne, suggests it to her. Jemima’s response to Ruth’s becoming a nurse is that Ruth is not ‘fitted’ for it because she is better educated than Jemima herself; so Ruth could opt for a socially higher profession like teaching. A tainted reputation like Ruth’s would not be accepted as a teacher; besides, Ruth feels that her education would be useful in making her a good nurse. Ruth believes that even her knowledge of Latin would help in reading the prescriptions. Jemima’s comment that Ruth’s ‘taste and refinements’ would be unnecessary hindrances in nursing, allude to the perception of drunken, vulgar nurses like Mrs Gamp crowding the profession. Ruth logically argues that any ailing person would prefer a nurse who ‘speaks gently’ and

‘moves quietly’ (like Ruth does) rather than a ‘loud bustling woman’ (like Mrs Gamp). Jemima is shocked as she feels nursing is too low for Ruth, with her education and grooming. Ruth opts for nursing primarily because she wants some employment and nursing offers her an opportunity; also because she likes to take care of the invalid and the helpless. Ruth goes to nurse the invalids in the town. Tending to the paupers’ diseases was ‘disagreeable and painful’ work but Ruth bore it with patience. The patients benefitted greatly from her soothing manner, voice and behaviour. She is readily accepted as an efficient nurse and she in turn quietly accepts whatever remuneration is offered to her. Very generously, Ruth attends to the poorest of the poor, even taking money from the Bensons to help her impoverished patients financially. Her ‘gentle quietness’ lent a ‘beautiful power’ to the words she spoke. Ruth, as a nurse, gains respect even among the low and the unrefined: they make way for her as she walks down the streets.

When the typhus fever epidemic grips the town, one of the attending physicians succumbs to it, the matrons and nurses refuse to go near those afflicted, fearing death, but Ruth volunteers as a matron to the fever ward. Mr Benson asks her to reconsider her decision as ‘malignant cases’ had ‘poisoned’ the very air of these wards. She almost works miracles there and when the panic regarding the fever begins to subside, and patients become fewer, other nurses take her place, and she returns to Mr Benson’s home after medically purifying herself in accordance with the physician’s instructions. Her services are greatly appreciated and the Secretary of the Infirmary sends her a formal note of thanks.

On hearing of Mr Bellingham – the man she had loved, and who had betrayed her, and ruined her character – suffering from typhus fever, she determines to nurse him. Dr Davis escorts her to his home and praises her competence greatly, even mentioning that her care would be better than any that he could provide. He tells Bellingham’s servant
that such an excellent nurse as Ruth could not be found ‘in three countries’. Ruth nurses him diligently for three days and nights, and then gets infected by the fever herself and dies. The fact that Bellingham survives proves Ruth’s competence and devotedness as a nurse. Ruth is presented as a paragon of virtue who is made to suffer all her life for her one initial ‘fall’. She seems to practice the Nightingale school of desirable nursing rules and her own sweet, selfless, and meek nature makes her ‘an-angel-by-the-bedside’.

Sairey Gamp and Ruth thus offer contrasted representations of fictional nurses. They seem to be positioned at the two extreme ends of the spectrum of nurses, one utterly selfish, the other completely selfless; one for whom nursing means only money, food and drink, the other for whom nursing means service and care for mankind. The first type derives sadistic pleasure from ill treating her patients, the second type derives comfort from easing the pains of the patient; the former is coarse, drunken, low and crude, while the latter is refined, educated, calm and soothing.

In discharging her duty, a nurse was supposedly extending her domestic and feminine duties as a care-giver. Her artistic representation expressed a complex duality: she could be the caring mother figure or angelic healer, or she could be satirised or fantasised about. A nurse, in stepping beyond her familial space of home, disturbed the ‘separate spheres’ ideology. Submissive female nurses who patiently carried out the orders of male doctors reinforced male hegemony; yet, it appears that doctors did not always take kindly to nurses. Clara Barton (1821-1912) recounts how as a wartime nurse she faced opposition from army officials, government servants and even male doctors. It irked male doctors to have women helping men in critical situations. Only the wounded soldiers whose lives she saved were grateful to her and thought of her as a blessing. The nature of a nurse’s duties dictated that she come into close contact with men and their bodies which was considered a social taboo. Combat nurses like Miss Nightingale and
Miss Barton suffered from the strenuous and demanding nature of their offices. Both had to endure years of ill health in their later lives. Nurses had to go beyond the narrow confines of domesticity to discharge their duties. It was required that they cross a few social boundaries as well. Nurses like Mrs Gamp, who was a widow, had experienced domesticity and had then turned to this profession as a means of subsistence. Interestingly, Ruth, an unwed mother, and thus a social outcast, gains acceptability and respectability through her commitment and achievement as a nurse. Nursing allows her to express repentance, undergo purgation and even experience domesticity to some extent (if we consider the view that caring was a part of a woman’s sphere), apart from allowing her economic independence and dignity.

From the morbid world of disease, sickness and death, we now proceed to the exotic world of women storytellers. Traditionally, women have been associated with storytelling and their art of storytelling has been powerful, magical, natural, inclusive, energising, persuasive and inspirational. For instance, key figures in Irish Literary Revival like Yeats and Lady Gregory have made several references to women storytellers, linking them with tales about fairies and the supernatural. Generally speaking, most children have experience of bedtime stories recounted by their mother/grandmothers.

In fiction, Hardy’s Ethelberta, the famed poetess, turns to writing a ‘prose story’ when she discovers that her creative poetic powers have grown ‘utterly inane’. On reading about professional storytellers of Eastern countries, she decides to become one. Ethelberta explores the option of earning a livelihood through this ancient art of storytelling. Hers is not simply the re-telling of age-old fairy tales or folktales, but stories of her own composition. Ethelberta intuitively feels that her story would gain more acceptability if she ‘tells’ or reads it animatedly to her audience than if readers were to
consume it by themselves. It occurs to her that stories of the ‘weird kind’ were made to be ‘told, not written’, which would enable the teller to ‘give due effect’ to their rendition.

Ethelberta thinks of reading novels at home alone as ‘unsocial’ and less preferable to the ‘professed romancer’s’ art where people ‘meet together cordially’ to listen with rapt attention to the storyteller. She gets encouraged by the reminiscence of her childhood ability to arrest the attention of other children by narrating imaginary tales of adventure. Ethelberta’s intelligence was appreciated in her school, her brother calls her a ‘quick child’, and her teachers had a notion of Ethelberta becoming a governess (because she had working class parents, yet was intelligent). She was so good in arithmetic that she had got a teacher’s assignment and there she developed a fascination for ‘foreign tongues’ and became a voracious reader. Her intelligence, independent spirit, book learning, innate literary aptitude and elocutionary skills enable her to take up storytelling as a profession. To attract a decent and exclusive audience, a storyteller had to maintain a ‘dignified social position’. Her mother warns her that if and when the fact of her parentage is disclosed, Ethelberta would be forced to quit this profession. In a highly class conscious society, the select gathering that flocked to hear her would not be accepting of a woman whose parents belonged to the working class. Ethelberta tries to experiment with storytelling, and continues in a similar manner with the ‘reading’ of her ‘ballads and poems’, and ‘lectures on the art of versification’ and so on. \(^\text{16}\) She is excited about her plans as its success would help her family in their financial distress but her mother finds her plans preposterous. Her mother, Mrs Chickerel, labels storytelling ‘an impossible castle-in-the-air sort of a trade’ because for her it is ‘such an unheard-of thing’. \(^\text{17}\)

Before her public appearance, Ethelberta practices at home, with her siblings as her audience, to ‘become accustomed to’ her own voice in the presence of listeners. She

^{17} Ibid, p.178.
has styled her prose after Defoe’s as she realises that Defoe’s colloquialisms would have succeeded remarkably in the oral tradition and would have made the ‘narrative seem real’. The attractive announcement which proclaims: ‘Mrs Petherwin, Professed Story-Teller, would devote an evening to that ancient form of the romancer’s art, at a well known fashionable hall in London’\textsuperscript{18} conveys the social dignity, wealth and class of the storyteller (as she can afford a ‘fashionable’ hall to narrate her tale). Besides, she had already made a name for herself as a poetess.

Her first audience is lured in by the novelty of the profession as well as by the prospect of seeing the famed poetess in person. Even those who had not read her volume of poems had been sufficiently intrigued by the interest they had generated, to wish to see her personally. The ‘freshness of curiosity’ in listening to a storyteller drew in her audience. The success that attends her storytelling sessions depends more on her manner of narrating the story than on the merit of the tale. She speaks in a ‘charmingly colloquial manner’ and wins her audience over with the verisimilitude of her narration. Her personal charisma helps to perpetuate the effect of her story and her audience is charmed by her ‘clear, living voice, animated action, and the brilliant and expressive eye of a handsome woman’.\textsuperscript{19}

The influence of the storyteller might be greater than the author’s as it engages the eyes, ears, mind and soul. It is more endearing as the audience can hear and see the storyteller. It creates a sense of sharing, as all who are present hear the same words in the same voice at the same time and presumably undergo similar emotions and reactions. As a woman storyteller, Ethelberta faces some customary obstacles. Men may have come to view her rather than hear her. Her lover Julian resents this public appearance: ‘If I were a woman I would rather go donkey driving than stick myself up there, for gaping fops to

\textsuperscript{18} Ibid, p.104.
\textsuperscript{19} Ibid, p.121.
quiz and say what they like about!"\(^{20}\) despite Julian’s objection to Ethelberta making a spectacle of herself, the curiosity generated by the enigmatic poetess is whetted by the appealing looks of the storyteller.

The morning papers criticised her and a weekly review mentioned her. It praised her undoubtedly ‘remarkable narrative powers’ but questioned the purpose and benefit of such thrilling and eerie tales which made the flesh ‘creep upon its bones’. The novelty of the Novel-Teller, as different from the ‘novel-reader’ (one who reads out aloud from some famous novel) and the ‘novel-writer’, is applauded in such reviews.

Speculations were rife on the reasons behind her story telling: some believed it was to nourish her desire for fame, but others disagreed as she was already celebrated. Her early surge of success didn’t guarantee a steady income or pave her path to prosperity. No one could imagine her pressing need for money because she looked comfortably placed in her domesticity. She was also driven, in part, by family concerns, as she struggled to keep up an establishment where her working class siblings were employed by her so that they could live together and not have to serve others. Even her early success in storytelling is clouded by apprehensions as she cannot choose to overlook the role of ‘fortune’ in her achievement.

Her mother, Mrs Chickerel’s, fears that this success would not last once the novelty had worn off, proves to be true. Ethelberta witnesses a reduction in numbers in the audience which could be due to many reasons. Too many public appearances may have surfeited her audience, as some felt that a ‘beautiful woman on a platform revealing tender airs of domesticity’\(^{21}\) first attracted the same people who subsequently lost interest. They had sympathetically thought of her as belonging to her ‘quiet drawing room’, her proper sphere, but later her image got transformed to that of an ‘utter impersonator’ and a

\(^{21}\) Ibid, p.181.
'poetess out of her sphere'. In a professional (woman) storyteller, the public cannot excuse her going beyond domesticity and overstepping her proper private sphere.

When Ethelberta exercises her skill in ‘telling’ her story, the audience is enrapt and under her sway. Julian’s sister Faith comments on the stillness of the audience and how an old fat lady seemed ‘absolutely unconscious’, with a dazed look and parted lips like ‘a little child of six’. The willing suspension of disbelief that she commands is readily granted but when people ‘move away’ from her ‘magic influence’, they improbability of the events strike them and they feel ‘angry’ with themselves for being ‘victims of such utter illusion’. The male gaze approves of her good looks and attributes her power of persuasion to her ‘form and feature’. These responses reflect the transience of her initial advancement and indicate that the befooled and ‘angry’ audience would not come repeatedly to fall a prey to illusions.

Ethelberta realises the ‘chimeral’ quality of her ‘adventure’ and decides to give up this profession. Real concerns enjoin her to reject her sister Picotee’s suggestion of travelling to ‘country towns’ and telling her story. Society would judge a single woman like Ethelberta severely for travelling to different places unescorted. Her reputation would get irreparably damaged. In her helplessness, Ethelberta fervently wishes that she were a man. The gender bias is glaring in the acceptance of a wandering male storyteller and ostracism of a woman in similar circumstances.

In tracing the rise and fall of the woman storyteller, we find her fate closely linked to another woman who appeared in public, the actress. Of course acting had no novelty attached to it and had a decidedly low reputation. In the early part of the nineteenth century, the upper classes withdrew their patronage of the stage causing a lowering of the status of acting as a profession. Its image received a moral and social advancement in the

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23 Ibid, p.123.
1840s with the visits of the royalty to the theatre. Actresses were applauded but were also viewed as ‘public’ women due to their appearance in public. A distinction needs to be made between traditional actresses, ‘for whom acting was above all a livelihood into which they were born’ and those actresses who opted for the stage for social or financial betterment, or for artistic gratification, or for individual independence. Dickens has portrayed traditional actresses hailing from theatrical families who were born and grew up on the stage. These families were held in low esteem by society and placed in the ‘rogues and vagabonds’ category due to their bohemian lifestyle. The mother would perform different parts while raising her children, who would appear on stage as ‘child players’ even before the age of ten. Traditional actresses gained an early exposure to the world of theatre which worked in their favour as their career was shorter than that of their male counterparts. Girls were preferred for playing both male and female child roles. Little girls appeared as fairies in pantomimes put up at Christmas. These fairies were sometimes used as stage props and fastened to the frames or made to descend from above by being supported by wires. Sometimes, speaking and singing roles were also offered. Children were popularly accepted by the audience, so parents tried to supplement their incomes by pushing their children on to the stage.

The qualifications required for actresses ranged from their looks, to their ability to learn and articulate their lines, to their singing and dancing capabilities. Hailing from a theatrical family was the surest way to gain entry to the stage. Stage managers provided little or no training and actresses had to perform from their intuitive sense and inherent talent.

Raising the ticket prices, disciplined entry into theatres, dissolution of the ‘pit’ were some measures which contributed to the stage acquiring a better reputation. With the

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growing respectability of the theatre, ‘outsiders’, that is women not born into theatrical families, opted for the profession. The entry of educated, middle class girls hailing from respectable families, like the daughters of clergymen and businessmen, aided in polishing the image of actresses. The stage offered a platform to showcase artistic skills as well as to earn money. A travelling actress, that is one who went with her acting troupe to perform in different towns, had to face the ‘relentless grind’ of ‘the travel, the search for temporary lodging in a succession of strange towns, the desperate race to learn the next day’s lines, the constant preparation, repair and changing of costumes, the morning rehearsals – all this in addition to five hours of attendance every night at a theatre that was often dirty and cold’. Another stumbling block for serious career actresses was stagnation. After a certain level of success, an actress could not expect challenging and artistically meaningful roles unless she gained enough money to invest in a theatre of her own. Traditional actresses could marry into another theatrical family to benefit from ‘protection of respectability’ and a secure family income. Usually married actresses continued to be presented as ‘Miss’ to show their ‘availability’ to the masses. Marriage outside the acting community generally meant giving up her profession. Late Victorian actresses exercised considerable influence over intellectuals, dramatists and eminent members of the audience. The earlier reputation of feather brained actresses made way for the influential one, with the emergence of powerful and mystifying actresses like Ellen Terry. She was called ‘the Queen of Every Woman’ by her biographer.

Dickens presents a theatrical family in his depiction of the Crummles in Nicholas Nickleby (1839). Mr Crummles, his wife and his children all perform on the stage. When he hears of Nicholas’ pressing need for an occupation, he offers him the stage. His theatrical eye can spot ‘genteel comedy’ in Nicholas’ gait, ‘juvenile tragedy’ in his eyes,

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and light hearted ‘farce’ in his laugh. He entices Nicolas with varied jobs like the writing of ‘bills’ or announcements of the plays, or writing ‘pieces’ or short plays that they could perform and a ‘hundred’ similar chores. His assurance of earning a pound a week makes Nicholas agree to join them. Nicholas meets Mrs Crummles and her daughter Miss Ninetta Crummles, supposedly a girl of ten, whom he calls a ‘natural genius’. An actor, Mr Folair, calls her ‘infant humbug’ and attributes her success to her being born a ‘manager’s daughter’. The exploitation of children in such theatrical families is evident from the fact that the child had been given regular doses of gin-and-water to make her growth stunted, so that she could be presented as an ‘infant phenomenon’.

The list of other actresses in the Crummles company reads something like this: Miss Snevellicci ‘who could do anything, from a medley dance to Lady Macbeth’, Miss Ledrook, Miss Belvawney, the beautiful Miss Bravassa, Mrs Lenville, Miss Gazingi and Mrs Grudden, revealing that both married and unmarried women acted on the stage. Most married actresses hailed from theatrical families and worked with their husbands like Mrs Lenville and Mrs Crummles, who was the manager’s wife. Mrs Grudden helped in myriad ways: from domestic duties, to collecting money, to dressing ladies, to sweeping the house, to prompting actors on stage, to acting ‘any part on an emergency without ever learning it’ and she was not even particular about her name, so the manager could choose any name that suited his fancy and put it down in the ‘bills’.

Miss Snevellicci’s interest in Nicholas and her flirtation with him, harp on the assumed ‘loose’ morality of actresses and perhaps even the corrupting influence of life on the stage. Though Nicholas is impressed by her performance on stage and finds it ‘uncommonly good’ and Mr Crummles calls her a ‘genius’, Nicholas initially refuses to be part of a ‘canvassing’ party which would promote her and enable her to have a grand

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28 Ibid, p.299.
‘bespeak’ i.e. a requested performance. Gifted actresses were appreciated but they would still need to ask people to support them by way of a ‘bespeak’. Miss Snevellicci shares a rented apartment with a fellow actress, and her open scrapbook, full of paper clippings singing her praise, is a testimony of her popularity. Her smile, her tears and her eyes are appreciated as well as her artistic and histrionic abilities. When Nicholas and she go from house to house looking for patrons, or people who would pay for the ‘bespeak’, they are met with varied demands from the prospective audience. ‘Some wanted tragedies, and others comedies; some objected to dancing; some wanted scarcely anything else.’

It registers the vulnerability of the actresses who had to concede to the expectations and demands of the patrons. While canvassing for support and during the staging of the play, it becomes obvious that Miss Snevellicci and the ‘infant phenomenon’ were most popular.

The manager asks Nicholas to translate a French play into English, and act in it. His first stage appearance is a grand success and the play wins accolades mainly for his performance and Miss Snevellicci’s. The achievement prompts the manager to invite a sensation from Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, the ‘unrivalled Miss Petowker’ to perform for their company. Mr Lillyvick, a collector of water rates, considers Henrietta Petowker a ‘divinity’ and is so besotted with her that he decides to marry her. He does not expect her to give up her maiden name and take his name as he knows that actresses ‘always keep their maiden names—that’s the regular thing’. Retaining their maiden names was necessary to sustain their popularity. It is obvious that he would like Henrietta to continue acting after marriage, possibly due to economic considerations. They do get married and she bosses him around. Miss Snevellicci too gets married to ‘an affluent young wax-

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chandler who had supplied the theatre with candles\textsuperscript{31} but she presumably leaves the dramatic company.

In Hardy’s \textit{The Woodlanders} (1887), Mrs Charmond, a former actress, is presented as a ‘charmer’, one who ‘has smiled where she has not loved, and loved where she has not married’.\textsuperscript{32} Mr Melbury’s severe judgment of Mrs Charmond is due to her association with ‘that unstable tribe’ (of actresses). Again the suspicion with which actresses were viewed is apparent. For people like him, an actress and a husband stealer were complementary ideas.

George Eliot’s \textit{Daniel Deronda} (1876) offers an interesting perspective on actresses. Gwendolyn Harleth is an ‘outsider’ to this profession, that is, she is not born in a theatrical family, but she prefers the life and vibrancy of acting to ‘the dead level of being a governess’.\textsuperscript{33} When forced into the necessity of earning her own bread and providing for her mother, she thinks of the stage, because she likes acting. The stage offers her the freedom to decide whether she needs to get married or not, whether she can ‘know gratified ambition without bondage’.\textsuperscript{34} Klesmer, knowing that she has been brought up in the pampered manner of a lady, warns her of the trials and tribulations of an artist’s life, with ‘arduous, unceasing work’ and ‘uncertain praise’. His implicit contrast of a lady, whom it is an ‘impoliteness to find fault with’,\textsuperscript{35} with an actress, who can be criticised severely or praised haltingly, is not meant to belittle the actress but only to point out the circumstances that Gwendolyn might face. Klesmer’s pertinent comment on the honourable life of an artist – ‘the honour comes from the inward vocation and the hard-won achievement: there is no honour in donning the life as a livery’\textsuperscript{36} – i.e. reveals his

\textsuperscript{31} Ibid, p.620.
\textsuperscript{34} Ibid, p.209
\textsuperscript{35} Ibid, p.211.
\textsuperscript{36} Ibid, p.211.
serious commitment to art. He advises her to undergo proper professional – musical, theatrical or dramatic – training, whatever she wanted to excel at, and shocks her by asking her to unlearn her drawing room musical training. According to him, at twenty one, the first stirrings of being an artist are quite late. He quips that her desire and training for an artist’s life should have begun much earlier. For the stage, he pits her two advantages, ‘her personal charm’ and her ‘intelligence’, against her three disadvantages: her ‘inexperience’, her ‘lack of discipline’ and her ‘lack of instruction’.

Klesmer dismisses the notion of her acquiring an engagement at a theatre and studying simultaneously by pointing out her unpreparedness for the stage. His example of a horse (no matter how beautiful, it must undergo training before being presented in a circus), attempts to clarify to her the necessity of learning the dramatic art. His treatise on serious art ends by telling her that the stage can be accepting of actresses who have only beauty to offer and no technical expertise. Such actresses’ careers are not taken seriously, for they may even end by way of marriage, and he cannot consider them as artists. He tells her in a matter-of-fact way that even after her training, he could only envision mediocrity in her, nothing more. He tells her of his marriage prospects and proposes to finance her study with his wife’s money, a proposal which she finds too humiliating to accept and she decides against pursuing her desire for acting.

Mirah, in the same novel, first appears on the stage as a child artist before the age of nine. Her father takes her to America, away from his wife and son, apparently to benefit from her earning. He is less of an actor than a man engaged to the stage – he ‘managed the stage’ and wrote and translated plays. He had been a teacher and knew many languages. Together with his live-in partner, an Italian singer, he tutors Mirah for the stage. Even as a child, Mirah perceives the artificiality of the life on the stage and finds the clapping and other sounds of the theatre ‘hateful’.
Mirah’s father’s mistress, the Italian singer, predicts that Mirah would never be an artist as ‘she has no notion of being anybody but herself’. It hints at the requirement that an artist must willingly get into the roles s/he plays and get involved in the character’s life without being judgemental about its superficiality; but Mirah did not desire to be an artist, her happiness lies in thinking of the childhood days she had spent with her mother. Mirah decides to run away when she realises her father’s plan of selling her. The dark side of the life offered by the stage is shown, as well as its possible evil ramification. It logically follows that the morally upright Mirah shuns the stage and escapes its disreputable consequences.

The term ‘public woman’ was used both for the actress and for the prostitute, symbolising their availability to and dependence on the public. Auerbach believes that acting was one of the few professions whereby a woman could transcend her prescribed social function of self negating service to live out her own myth: to an intelligent, passionate woman the stage offered authority and fame, wealth, glamour, emotional and sexual freedom, and even, in the ‘Ibsenized’ theatre of the 1880s and 1890s, a network of feminist thought and activity.

Another profession taken up by women in straitened circumstances was painting. Well brought up Victorian ladies were taught painting as an accomplishment as they were expected to paint, to read, or to embroider to fill up their time. Women forced to fend for themselves could transform this self-indulgent hobby into a means of earning money by selling their paintings. Governessing, teaching, writing and painting were considered somewhat respectable for middle class women with slender means. Like literary women, women painters could work in the privacy of their homes and show fidelity to their

private sphere. Then again, they could conceal their identity and sign their work using fictitious names, much like writers. Problems arose with the subject matter of their paintings; women were not supposed to paint nudes as ‘female sensuality was repugnant to accepted taste’ and yet a criticism levelled at their work was that they were ‘not sensual enough’. 39 Another conflicting demand was that women painters were expected to sacrifice everything to art, but they also had to prove that they were real, ‘natural’, loving, ‘maternal women’.

Life for an unmarried female artist was difficult as she could rarely afford a servant, so she had to do all mundane daily chores, like cooking and washing, which were quite time consuming in the Victorian era, and then the painter had to ‘keep up appearances’ in her respective ‘cheap, shabby studio[s]’. Male critics and artists challenged women painters and, professionally speaking, complicated matters by flattering women’s work in a condescending manner, assuming a vantage position of male superiority.

In Anne Bronte’s The Tenant of Wildfell Hall (1848), we meet Helen Huntingdon, who takes on the name of Helen Gardner, and pretends to be a widow, as she has fled from her depraved and drunken husband, with her son. She sells her paintings (she mostly paints landscapes and figures) to sustain herself and her son. Arthur, her son, explains that she sends all her paintings to London, where a picture dealer sells them and sends her the money. Helen specifies that she cannot afford to paint for her ‘amusement’, that is, painting has become a necessity to her. At home, in Wildfell Hall, she keeps herself engrossed in her work. She receives visitors in her studio as there is ‘no fire’ in the sitting room, a possible sign of her struggles to make ends meet. Even in the presence of visitors, her attention seems to be focused on her work, revealing her dedication to it.

Helen’s portrait of Wildfell Hall, her home, bears a false signature and a false name to keep her identity and her place of residence a secret from her husband and his circle. She laments the ‘sad dearth’ of subjects for her paintings. Even when she paints out of doors, she prefers to be alone and undisturbed and, only at times, wishes to consult someone else on some detail of her work. The technical expertise in her recent paintings is appreciated by the narrator Gilbert as he comments on her ‘freshness of colouring’ and her ‘freedom of handling’ her subjects.

When she decides to flee from her abusive and drunken husband with her son, she knows that she would have to provide for both of them. It makes her think of her ‘palette and the easel’ which were her ‘darling playmates’ in the past, but perforce they must be rendered into her ‘sober toil-fellows’. Like Gwendolen, she wonders whether she is sufficiently skilled as an artist to make a living from painting. The absence of both contacts and ‘recommendation’ compels her to think again about her situation. She decides to wait till she improves upon her talent to make it worthy of a professional painter or an instructress in painting. Thinking in a realistic framework, she cannot hope for ‘brilliant success’ but she aspires to a certain safeguard against ‘positive failure’. She plans thoughtfully and begins to paint in her husband’s house to keep a few paintings handy and ready to give away to a ‘picture dealer’ when she eventually leaves his house. She chooses the library as her ‘studio’ where she could paint uninterrupted from ‘daylight till dusk’.

In the proper confines of her domestic walls, a woman could easily paint/work without inviting censure and without the necessity of announcing to the world that she was ‘working’ for money. It would be accepted as an idle housewife’s proper hobby.

In Hawthorne’s *The Marble Faun* (1860) Miriam distinguishes between a sculptor’s ‘fossilizing process’ and a painter’s ‘scope and freedom’. She believes in the superiority of a painting which can be utilized to tell a story more fully. Miriam is a ‘painter in oils’ which displays her ‘very considerable talent’ though her ‘fellow professors’ had criticized her works as they felt it lacked both ‘practice’ and ‘trained skill’. In Rome her portraits are readily accepted as they exude a certain warmth and passion. The other woman painter, Hilda, is remarkably perceptive of ‘form and expression’. Miriam’s arresting and radiant beauty captivates the heart of Donatello, a young Italian sculptor. He is even more charmed by Miriam when he sees her, in her room, her proper sphere, mending her glove (which perhaps pleases him more than seeing her at her easel, doing her usual work of painting), emphasizing her femininity and hence her domesticity. Miriam’s impressive looks give rise to rumours of her rich antecedents. People assume that her painting could not be out of necessity to support herself but purely voluntary and recreational. It advances the assumption that a woman blessed with good looks should be happily married and settled in the private sphere of domesticity. Such a woman would not need to go beyond domesticity and move into the patriarchal male sphere. If a ravishing woman like Miriam undertook such a pursuit, it was supposed to be for reasons like revolting against family, or class, or societal norms, or even accidental misfortune, or a rebellion for love.

Leaving the artistic world of women painters, we now look at women who worked in offices. Educated middle class women began to be recruited in offices from the 1880s onwards. The first women clerks were ‘pioneers’ in the sense that they dared to invade an ‘almost exclusively male dominated labour market’. The invention of the typewriter in the 1880s in Britain led to the demand for cheap and skilled typists. Anderson cites

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42 Ibid, p.3.
that men were wary of being labelled ‘short hand typists’ and of being rendered into ‘mere letter writing machines’, and consequently they shied away thus creating vacancies for women who ‘flocked into typewriting’. So enormous were the latter in number that ‘typewriter’ came to signify the ‘female operator’ and the profession became feminised. Women, who could acquire a machine of their own, could hire out their services like Juliet Appleton does in Olive P. Rayner’s *The Typewriter Girl* (1897).

For efficient typists, good education up to the secondary level was required, but merely elementary education was considered inadequate qualification. Employers also paid attention to the social and family background of the women clerks. In 1890, Prudential Insurance Company demanded that all (women) clerks had to be the daughters of ‘professional men’. Gender discrimination was practiced in offices where women were denied yearly increment and were not entitled to a pension unlike their male colleagues.

Enterprising women who were fortunate enough to have money in their hands could invest in some venture and reap the benefits. These women with business acumen find representation in Victorian fiction. Gissing’s Mary Barfoot runs a training centre for clerical and intellectual work with her small inheritance. Miss Barfoot teaches typewriting to young girls aspiring for jobs in offices. She does not desire to make any profit from it but only to equip girls to become clerks and to provide alternatives to the overstocked traditional ‘feminine’ occupations like governessing, teaching, nursing and so on.

Gissing represents a young and energetic Rhoda Nunn, with feministic ideas and a desire not only to be independent herself but also to make other young girls self-sufficient. At the tender age of fifteen, she displayed an acute interest in ‘intellectual talk’, she knew that she would have to be financially self-supporting, so she would devote most of the day to study in order to qualify examinations and become a school teacher.

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Later she does get an appointment as a school teacher but she quits her job due to her strong dislike for it and because she felt unsuited for it. She labels half her teaching as a ‘sham’ as she had to pretend to know what she did not have knowledge of and neither did she care for such knowledge. She goes to Bristol to learn shorthand, book-keeping, commercial correspondence and after a year she works as a cashier, then she moves to London and works as a shorthand writer for the secretary of a company. When her boss requires a typist, she decides to learn typing. She learns from Miss Barfoot and stays on in that training institute as her assistant.

Rhoda, functioning as Mary Barfoot’s partner (though Rhoda thinks of herself as a ‘subordinate’), explains that it takes, on an average, about six months training to acquire a speed of fifty words per minute, though a few pupils excel at it with hundred words a minute. Rhoda undertakes to train ‘superfluous’ or ‘odd’ women, that is, women who cannot get married (as marriageable women outnumbered marriageable men by ‘half a million’), who were considered ‘useless, lost, futile’ by society but Rhoda considers them to be a ‘reserve’ workforce. Both Mary Barfoot and Rhoda Nunn do not pretend to work with a ‘missionary enterprise’; they deal only with educated ladies of their class, and not with ‘poorer’ or ‘lower class’ uneducated women. This seems practical as employers wanted only educated and respectable girls from the middle classes. Mary Barfoot, being in ‘possession of a modest fortune’, had the potential of managing ‘a large and complicated’ business, becoming a member of a ‘board of directors’, or even taking ‘an active part in municipal government’.44 She believed in the equality of women in the male dominated ‘public sphere’, in the maxim that ‘whatever man could do, woman could do

equally well’. She had assisted two girls in becoming ‘pharmaceutical chemists’, two others in opening a bookshop, and many others in ‘obtaining clerkships’.

The training institute run by Mary Barfoot and Rhoda Nunn was open from nine in the morning to five in the evening. The two rooms on the first floor were meant for teaching typing, and two rooms above them were used as dressing rooms. One first floor office room dealt with typing and other clerical and intellectual works (like business correspondence) which were supervised by Rhoda Nunn. In the other office room, Mary Barfoot imparted instructions to a select number of girls. Her pupils were given access to books on the Woman Question. Both the dynamic and enthusiastic women addressed their trainees once a month through an hour long lecture on a particular topic. The institution was not aimed at making a profit (some pupils paid for the training, and some did not if they could not afford it) and its success was visible in the gradual increase in student strength and a promise of ‘larger staff’ from the ‘working department’.

These ladies inspire the elder Madden sisters to think of opening a school of their own. Mary Barfoot is aware of the patriarchal assumption that women desperately in need of subsistence could become governesses or nurses as it would keep them in their ‘proper world’ but she firmly believes that intellectual office work is not masculine, and women may execute it efficiently. She makes a case against the ideology of the ‘proper sphere’ by reinstating: ‘Our proper world is the world of intelligence, of honest effort, of moral strength.’ At the end of the novel, we find their work to be flourishing: they are to move to larger premises, and publish a journal, which is a clear indicator of their success.

Urban entrepreneurial success can be matched by rural entreprenial skills, as in the case of Bathsheba Everdene in Hardy’s Far from the Madding Crowd (1874) who manages a large farm in Weatherbury. Her dismissal of her bailiff Pennyways and her

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46 Ibid, p.152.
decision to maintain the farm herself exhibit her independence of mind. Bathsheba’s aunt prophetically says of her that she has the required skills of a manageress with which she can ‘control and direct’ policies which she had made and administered. She is an able mistress of a farm and can, like Rhoda Nunn and Mary Barfoot, be grouped with women with business acumen. She shocks her neighbours by her decision to manage the farm on her own without submitting to the requirement of a male bailiff. This choice is her movement beyond the private sphere of domesticity into the male stronghold of the public sphere.

Doctors, nurses, painters, actresses, and entrepreneurs like Mary Barfoot and Rhoda Nunn have something in common – they all go beyond domesticity, they storm the male citadel, enter and challenge the male dominated public sphere of work. All were accepted grudgingly and haltingly (with perhaps the exception of actresses, who were not initially regarded as reputable), but theses professional women and entrepreneurs managed to carve out a niche for themselves. Their fictional representation suggests that they could bestride both their proper private sphere and the other public sphere. They could choose to marry (instances of married women doctors, actresses, and painters corroborate this) or could choose to stay away from marriage (Mary Barfoot and Rhoda Nunn being suitable examples). They did not have to conform to the restricted idea of domesticity; they could lead an independent meaningful life and engage with a domesticity that they chose to redefine.

Governesses, companions, teachers, literary women, professional women and entrepreneurs can all be classed as educated, groomed middle class women employed in comparatively respectable occupations. From them we turn to the lower middle class or poorer working class women and look at their lives and working conditions. The plight of the seamstress or the dressmaker will be discussed in the next section.