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Adoption and Victorian culture

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Abstract

In 1888, evangelical, educator and feminist Constance Maynard adopted Effie Anthon, a six year old girl from a Salvation Army orphanage. Her mother, Rosabianca Fasulo was an unmarried, Italian woman recently "rescued" by the Salvation Army. Maynard anticipated that Effie would one day join her at her college but she met none of the expectations for her. She entered domestic service but fell ill with tuberculosis and died in a workhouse in 1915. This is one particular case history of an adoption when the practice was not yet formalized but small numbers began to adopt children unknown to them. It tentatively opens up the history of adoption in Victorian Britain. It also illuminates some broader questions about family ties, the meanings associated with motherhood, and how the body and character formation were understood.
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The two mothers of Effie Anthon, one by birth, one by adoption, never fully realized the Victorian ideals of motherhood. In 1888, six year old Effie was relinquished by Rosabianca Fasulo, her young, unmarried Italian mother. Constance Maynard, an unmarried, thirty nine year old English educator and evangelical adopted her. Motherhood may have been a woman's greatest achievement but an unmarried twenty year old with no means to support herself or her child was already an unfit mother. A single, middle-aged woman seeking a child with no ties of kinship could not claim to be a natural mother. Neither mother possessed an unambiguous claim to this child. The ties that bound these two women to Effie were difficult to sustain and often difficult to even describe.

Rosabianca Fasulo relinquished her child under pressure and reluctantly. Although she knew her child later experienced great difficulties, she never saw her again. Just before her death at age 32, Effie mourned that she had lost the 'sweetest of worldly loves, that of my mother' (Maynard, vol. 6, p.35). Constance Maynard struggled throughout Effie's life to understand why, despite relentless education, prayer and moral exhortation Effie was friendless and unable to realize any of her ambitions. Constance Maynard lamented how painful their relationship had been and her difficulty assuming the feelings and thoughts of a mother. She was 'a clog around my neck for 27 years.' But she believed, 'a devoted love might have saved her and I could not, could not give it and it was from want of the Spirit of Christ' (Maynard, vol.6, p.48).

This one case is a particular history of two lives. It tentatively opens up the history of adoption in Victorian Britain. It also illuminates some broader questions about family ties, the meanings associated with motherhood, and how the body and character formation were understood. While motherhood has received rich scholarly analysis, historians have scarcely noticed adoptive mothers before the twentieth century, in part because this kind of adoption was rare

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(Davidoff, 2005). Not until 1926 did England recognize legal adoption. In 1888, no parent could relinquish rights and responsibilities for a child nor could another adult assume them (Belmer, 1998). But some women did seek out unrelated children to raise. Suffrage leader Emmeline Pankhurst, Salvation Army co-founder Catherine Booth, and educator Constance Maynard all adopted children, creating quite varied ties with the children. (Bartley, 2002; Ervine, 1934) Maynard's attempt at motherhood was exceptionally well recorded in the many hundreds of pages of her diary and her correspondence. She then provides one point of entry into the intertwined questions about kinship, class, bodies, racial inheritance and character that shaped this relationship. Constance Maynard was an educated woman, aware of and influenced by emerging medical ideas while remaining deeply committed to evangelical Christian principles. Historians have noted the turn to more biological explanations for human behaviour in the later nineteenth century and this case study provides one close view of that shift. Although divine authority and medical authority might seem to contradict each other, Maynard struggled to balance the two in her effort to explain and reform Effie.

Britain had a long history of informal adoption, particularly among labouring families. Family and friends provided for orphan children and those who desired more hands took children into their households when the parents could not provide for them. Historian Anna Davin has documented how often working-class families in the later nineteenth century took children into their households so that the children could remain in their neighbourhoods, close to kin and friends. (Berebitsky, 2000; Carp, 1998; Davin, 1996; Fink & Holden, 1999; Gordon, 1988; Gustafson, 2005; Kunzel, 1993; Nelson, 2003; Rooke & Schnell, 1984; Ross, 1993). This case was different from the start because Effie was not intended for labour nor was she already known by the family that adopted her. She was expected to enter Constance's family circle. From the start, it was anticipated that Effie would cross class and cultural lines and eventually share Constance's education and social life. This meant that ideas about class, character, religious faith and inheritance were intertwined in this endeavour.

Adoption of a stranger's child raised vexed and ambiguous questions about motherhood, sexuality and character. Many Victorians active in the purity movement or rescue homes opposed adoption. Historian Anne Else argues 'Adoption is closely related to sexuality…The operation of power with regard to adoption can be seen as beginning, paradoxically, at the point that society attributes to women a power they do not have: the almost absolute power to control sexual relations with men…[W]omen who became pregnant out of wedlock were condemned for failing to exercise moral power and thereby endangering society' (Else, 1989,p.66). The unmarried mother was 'fallen' even when, like Rosa, it is not at all clear she was a willing participant. Rosa's failure to exercise moral restraint followed her. Not only was she required to seek forgiveness of her sins but Effie was believed to have inherited her legacy of moral weakness and it became a burden she could never shed. Evangelicals, like the Salvation Army officers, who cared for Rosa and Effie, emphasized the mother's need for spiritual regeneration and conversion. Most evangelical rescue homes in Britain did not facilitate separating mother and child until well into the twentieth century. The child would help ensure the mother's redemption and many insisted that no sinner should escape the consequences of sin. (Fairbank, 1983) As the Salvation Army's social services director explained in 1898, 'We endeavour, in every case, to throw the responsibility upon the mother, feeling she is much more likely to persevere in doing right if she carries, in this sense, her own burden' (Higginbotham, 1986).

But if most Victorians active in rescue work believed the mother ought to remain responsible for her child, others challenged that view. Beliefs about the origin of character were one complicating aspect of adoption. Historian Phyllis Mack argues that Protestants after the eighteenth century enhanced the importance of mothers bolstered by Locke's psychology which emphasized the malleability of children and a theology which valued interior spirituality over ritual and focused on the necessity of spiritual rebirth. These ideas made mothers a powerful force in the development of a child's character, insuring society's well being and the child's eternal salvation. (Mack, 1999) By the latter nineteenth century, child labour laws and compulsory education decisively underscored that childhood was a stage requiring growth, development and protection. This made adoption a potentially attractive resolution for a child who would otherwise languish in the care of fallen woman or a profligate man. The adoptive mother could shape and develop strong moral character in the child.

But other questions about the body and character made adoption a disquieting choice. Adoption and race were always intertwined because race is determined by kin and geography. (Haslanger & Witt, 2005 p.13.) Heredity, inheritance, race and eugenics were widely debated in public lectures, books, and the periodical press in this period. (Hasian, 1996; Robb, 1997) Historian Angelique Richardson argues that British eugenics was a 'biologistic discourse on class' which was 'born and bred among the competitive Victorian middle class.' Many prominent women including temperance leaders, birth control advocate Marie Stopes to 'New Woman' author Sarah Grand, argued that since the

defects of character and body were inherited, women must take responsibility for racial regeneration. Some feminists argued that economic independence for women was critical because it would free women to choose a mate to strengthen the race instead of for financial reasons. (Richardson, 2003, p.3,57) Friends and family asked how could a woman like Constance Maynard accept a child born in backward Naples to two morally deficient parents? Effie's 'racial' heritage linked her to her biological mother in ways that made her relationship to her adoptive mother tenuous. Her birth in Naples marked her and that racial heritage came to matter. It was regarded by her caretakers as a regrettable inheritance associated with moral laxity, a propensity to sin, and a lack of intellectual rigor. These traits marked her character but also came to be visible on her body as disease scarred and weakened her (Fehrenbach, 2005; Moe, 2002; O'Connor, 2003; Schneider, 1998).

Adoption sat uneasily in these competing ideas about bodies, moral development, and salvation. If character were inherited, adoption was a dangerous choice. An unmarried mother was either an immoral woman who gave in to her own sinful desires or at best a weak woman more sinned against than sinning. But the inheritance she would provide was hardly desirable. On the other hand, if childhood was a time of growth and a good mother could guide her child to a moral life and eternal salvation, adoption was a desirable resolution for the child and society. Constance Maynard and her associates articulated aspects of all these perspectives at different times and the dangers of any were painfully evident. If a good mother ensured her child's Christian character than failure was a terrible condemnation of her. If inheritance would always predominate, than her efforts would always be in vain, for good or for ill. In either case, adoption was a periless challenge. For historians, this one case provides an unusually rich perspective on later nineteenth century ideas about eugenics, the body, character and evangelical Christianity.

Rosabianca Fasulo was born in Naples in 1862 to a middle-class Protestant family (Maynard, vol. 1, p.163; Rosabianca Holt, Death Notice, 18 September 1930, Union of South Africa). Rosabianca fell ill and the family clergyman, Oscar Cocordia, was asked to sit with her. It is not possible to know what happened between them but it perhaps unlikely that a young woman, so ill she required care through the night, would be seeking romance. When the resulting pregnancy was discovered, the disgraced nineteen-year old was cast out by her family, plunging her into an economic, emotional and spiritual crisis. Cocordia lost his position and it appears he was either unwilling or unable to assist her. She gave birth in 1882 to a daughter she named Stephanie and she kept her child with her. After several difficult years, Rosa was found by the Salvation Army in Rome. She was said to be 'homeless, friendless, and totally unfit to support herself and her child, nearly out of her mind with anxiety, shame and despair' (Maynard vol. 1, p.163). She was sent to a rescue home for fallen women run by the prominent English social purity feminist, Josephine Butler. Her daughter, Effie, was told her mother was dead and she was sent to a Salvation Army orphanage in Paris. Soon after, Rosabianca was sent to work at the same orphanage but her relationship to Effie was not openly acknowledged. In 1888, the Salvation Army determined that the orphanage should be closed. At this time, the Army did not support any widespread adoption program and it is not clear why, in this instance, an adoption was pursued. A Salvation Army officer, Captain Ellen Pash, was charged with finding a suitable home for Effie and she wrote to her friend, Constance Maynard. Captain Pash thought the child was promising and initially sought permission to adopt Effie herself. A coalminer's family wanted to adopt her but Captain Pash worried that those who knew the child agreed she seemed eminently unsuited to the humblest ranks (Maynard vol 1, p.163).

Constance Maynard (1849–1935) was a graduate of Girton College, Cambridge and Headmistress of Westfield College from 1882. She founded Westfield to provide women with a higher education infused with an evangelical ethos. Constance's father had made a considerable fortune in the diamond mines of South Africa. This allowed Constance a generous allowance that supported her intellectual pursuits and a comfortable life. The life she had chosen required that she remain unmarried. She did establish intimate relationships with other female teachers at the college but the restrictions imposed on same-sex relationships limited their scope. The additional burden of living and working together as head-mistress and employee proved difficult to sustain. She enjoyed close ties to her siblings and counted many students as friends. (Firth, 1949; Vicinus, 1985). Still, she mourned her solitary life and longed to have a child. Shortly after her father's death in 1888 she told her sisters she was considering adopting a child, preferably a child of six, leaving 'the trouble of babyhood' to someone else. She told them 'I do want a child, but I shall not tell anyone whatever, or look in an orphanage, or take the least step towards it, only (I give you warning!) if one is thrown at my head I will catch it' (Maynard vol 1, p.157). When her old friend Ellen Pash's letter arrived, it seemed a clear call. She responded with a request to see the child and she began to record the events of her child's life in a detailed diary. It would eventually total hundreds of pages in seven volumes of her own thoughts, correspondence from her, her child and her caretakers. Constance's perspective predominates in this story but it is possible to glimpse Effie's point of view in her letters and in conversations Constance recorded.

When the child was brought to Maynard's home, she did not think this small, poorly dressed, French speaking child was at all suitable. But as the day wore on, Maynard decided to begin to consider if she might adopt her. She began by seeking a place for the child to board and inquired if an acquaintance who kept several children at her home might take the child during the school term. After some negotiations, it was settled and Maynard began to move forward.

Constance Maynard was keenly aware that her choice seemed rash to some and destined to fail while others admired her Christian purpose. Still, she proceeded with alacrity because the Salvation Army made it clear that others also sought to adopt this child. Constance's education and wealth enabled her to control the way the adoption would proceed. With the advice of a lawyer a contract was written and the lawyer assured Constance that 'it is not likely [Rosa] will know her legal rights with sufficient clearness to enable her to annoy by interference' (Maynard vol. 1, p.255). Maynard would agree to support the child until she was eighteen. Maynard promised she would 'so train the child that she should serve in that holy war against sin and Satan, which I, the adopting parent, am already labouring to the best of my powers.' The lawyer, Captain Pash, and Rosa Fasulo met Maynard and Effie in the lawyer's office in November 1888. When Maynard told Effie that the woman she was supposed to know only as a worker in the orphanage in Paris would be there, Effie was pleased (Maynard vol. 1, p.222). When Maynard and the child entered the room, Maynard thought she saw the mother start. Maynard observed her. 'Her nose was slightly Roman and her lips full, nobly curved and rather pale, but the slight projection of the whole part of her face made her beauty of the unintellectual and animal type to my mind.' Rosa signed the papers 'very slowly and I heard a sob as she went back to her seat.' Constance tried to comfort her with a promise that she would see her child in heaven. When they left, Effie asked why Rosa wept so much. Maynard asked her what she thought. She said, 'I do not know but I believe she must have lost something very precious' (Maynard vol 1, p.223, 226). Maynard recorded no surprise at this knowing comment nor did any one involved in these proceedings wonder what effect they might have on Effie.

Rosa was working as a hospital nurse at that time. In 1891, Constance's brother, Harry Maynard, put forward Rosa's name to the Cape General Mission. The Maynard family ties to South Africa were strong and they also took an interest in its mission work. This nondenominational Christian mission was founded in London in 1889 to evangelize the growing population in South Africa. He sat on the board of this organization and his word certainly would have helped her secure a position as a nurse. With Harry's recommendation, Rosa was engaged in 1892 to go to South Africa for four years. It also effectively removed any possibility that Rose would be able to 'annoy' or 'interfere' with Constance's plans for Effie. She received £30 a year and a uniform. She commenced work in South Africa where she would remain for the rest of her life (Memorandum, 1892; Council Minutes 13 June 1891, 18 April 1892, South African Pioneer January 1893).

In London, Effie settled into her new life with a new language, new expectations, and a new mother. Constance was confident she could provide an enriching environment for Effie and she took great pleasure in anticipating Effie's future accomplishments. She hoped Effie would one day study at Westfield and perhaps even attain the position of Headmistress. Effie quickly proved herself a difficult charge and Constance employed different bodies of knowledge to account for these difficulties. Effie was first sent to live with a family where she was to be educated and cared for in the company of several other children. She was, not surprisingly, behind in her education but her behaviour was most troubling. Her teachers reported that,

> The poor child seems to have no sense of honour, it is not a failure now and then, it is a failure always and without one single success… She makes hundreds of promises and never keeps any of them…Then again she is rude…not to those who promptly punish; rude to her equals, slapping, calling names, and making faces, and still more rude to servants. …And she is inordinately boastful (Maynard vol 2, p.69).

When Constance took her on holiday to France in 1892, she disappointed her terribly. Her comments on Effie's character reveal a combination of racial, medical and religious explanations. Constance wrote in her diary that, 'her excessive dislike of being one moment alone' made her especially difficult. She constantly needed an audience. If Maynard made a sand castle with her, she could create something splendid but left alone she would do nothing. 'Oh, I could not help feeling the pain of genuine contempt for so feeble and vain a character.' Constance judged her to be an intelligent child but the 'reverse of all these attributes in the moral and practical world is too painful.' Constance worried that Effie had traces of a 'moral idiot'. She lamented, 'It is the overwhelming interest in herself, it is the hardness of conceit that will not be found wrong, that is the root of evil I think, not a shrinking deceitfulness.' She believed it was the 'vain, untrustworthy Italian' that showed in Effie. She was unable to behave or find her expected place. On morning over breakfast at a hotel, another visitor asked Effie how she liked France. She replied that she liked it, but 'Auntie likes England better and I think I do too.' The man replied that she was a fortunate girl to be visiting

France with her aunt and she 'leaned forward as if she was saying something everyone ought not to hear. `At least I call her Auntie, you know, but she is my Mother, really' (Maynard, vol 2, p3, p.4, p.8, p 10 and p.20; vol 4, p.8). This comment certainly highlighted Effie's ambiguous status. Constance's comments also reveal her own ambiguity about how to explain this child's failures. Was Effie biologically defective, a moral idiot, or did her racial heritage condemn her? Was she rather a sinner in need of Christ? There was no clear answer to these questions. Constance found no dominant theory or supporting intellectual or social framework that could either explain Effie or improve her.

Over the next few years, Constance devised various plans to teach Effie humility, respect and truthfulness. One summer holiday, she was sent to work as a servant. Constance's own class status allowed her to use service as a punishment and a threat. If Effie failed to improve, she would be excluded from the pleasures of holidays and instead of the comforts allowed by a domestic servant's labours, she would be serving. Her employer reported that she was 'idle and untrustworthy' but Constance was just as troubled that after only two weeks 'her greeting and every sentence was in some way tinged with a cockney accent. She enjoyed the domestic work and the small pleasures allowed to her.' Constance was appalled to learn that Effie called her employer 'Dad–dad' (Maynard vol. 2, p. 95). She wondered whether these 'shades of feeling can be taught. I suppose they can but it seems to insult me to be forced to explain!' (Maynard, vol. 2, p.99) Constance also doubted herself, lamenting that a 'real mother loves her child through everything, but alas my love goes up and down' (Maynard vol. 2, p.99).

At the same time, Constance used prayer and exhortation to reform Effie's character. One December 31, 1891, Constance took the opportunity to impress on Effie the consequences of her sins. She took out a fine handkerchief that Effie had stained with ink and lied about soiling. Constance proposed that they burn it. After praying together, she placed it in the fire.

> I rolled it together and laid it in the glowing fire, where it blazed up. I said quietly, Now it's gone, gone forever. E. whispered, There's a little bit, Auntie, all red hot, and I answered, But see, it is not a handkerchief and ink anymore! No one can ever find it again, darling, and say Effie did that, no one. Now the last bit is gone into little light ashes, and no one can ever make it up again. That is the way Jesus takes away sins, darling, is it not lovely to think of? It is quite true, isn't it? She clung to me whispering, It is quite true, Auntie. He does take our sins away. And then I laid her down in her little bed and we had a happy half hour, I saying her (sic) the Man at the Gate and then her great favourite The Midnight Bells, while she lay there sweet and peaceful, her soft cheek reposing on my hand (Maynard, vol. 2, p.48).

Though Constance invoked both the fires of hell and Christ's forgiveness, little changed. Perhaps for a child so young, the metaphors were over-shadowed by the suggestion that she would escape punishment if no evidence remained of her misdeeds.

Finally, in 1892, Constance determined that she could no longer keep Effie in her school. Her behaviour was unruly and her scholarly work was poor. She consulted with friends and her sisters and all agreed 'Effie has not the making in her of what you want.' Her sister confided that she dreaded the 'years to come with always Effie.' Her close friend Ralph reminded her that the college was her real work and that Effie had provided no good result in three years of steady work (Maynard, vol. 2, p.66). Again, Constance's class position shaped her behaviour. Once she had determined the child was not destined to fulfill her expectations, she seemed confident she could be returned to Rosa no matter what disruption that might cause. She wrote to Rosa in South Africa expressing her desire to terminate her relationship with Effie and proposing she be sent out to live with Rosa. Her duties with the Cape General Mission certainly precluded the care of a child and it is doubtful that she informed anyone that she had a ten year old daughter living in England. Constance recorded no reply to her letter (Maynard, vol. 2, p.118).

Instead she found an orphanage, run by Mrs. Sharman located in West Square, Southwark. The home took over two hundred girls and trained most for domestic service.(Census, 1891; Cox, 2003) The most promising girls trained as nurses and board school teachers. The girls were all dressed alike and wore their hair cropped short, workhouse style. Effie quietly accepted this change. Constance wondered, 'After the wealth of love, petting, talking in bed, that E. has had, it is a strange accommodation to this new, unindividual phase of life' (Maynard, vol. 2, p.173). Constance visited her every few months, took her to tea and listened to her stories of life there but regretted that Effie infrequently expressed remorse or a desire to see Constance more often. The punishment Constance devised for Effie's recalcitrance and misbehaviour pushed her to a lower class position and increased the social distance between them, making them a peculiar mother–daughter pair.

Effie's time there ended just days before her twelfth birthday. Mrs. Sharman informed Constance she had discovered Effie in bed with other girls, teaching them 'filthy and disgusting tricks' (Maynard, vol. 3, p.181). Scholars have

intensely debated what Victorians believed about sexuality and what dangers it was thought to present. (Mort, 1996) But in this case, Constance, a university educated feminist, Mrs. Sharman, the matron of an orphanage, and the social welfare activists like Dr. Barnardo whose advice Constance sought, were unanimous. Effie's actions were a sign of a dreadful flaw that, if not checked immediately, could spread to others. The condemnation of 'self-abuse' was, according to historian Lesley Hall, particularly strong in the late-Victorian and Edwardian period and anxiety about its ill effects widespread. (Hall, 1992) Effie's punishment was swift and would change the course of her life. Effie was immediately taken away to impress the severity of her transgression on the others. She was then sent to Brighton to work as a domestic servant and companion to an elderly woman, reducing again her opportunities and expectations from a school that would prepare her to be board school teacher or nurse to this position as a general servant. Even her name changed to Annie which all her employers seemed to prefer and she later used it as often as Effie in her letters to Constance. She was only twelve years old so she had to attend the local Board School. Maynard despaired over the changes this wrought in Effie. Her speech became more like that of the people around her. 'When I hear the slow, slovenly accent, I feel as if she had cut the last strings that bound the course of her life to mine' (Maynard, vol. 7, p.19). The social distance between them was now so great that no pretence of a maternal relationship remained. Maynard told Effie that she must now stop saying Auntie, 'that she was no real relation…I told her to speak of me as Miss Maynard and to address me as Godmother' (Maynard, vol. 7, p.19).

Effie was not an especially successful domestic servant. It was surely a struggle to accept the relentless work, poor food and submissive attitude of a general servant when she had so recently enjoyed all the privileges of a middle-class life. She was immediately sent away from her first situation because of her influence on their young daughter. Her next situation came to an end in September 1896 after Effie repeatedly stole money. Although Constance always had the upper hand, she never could completely control Effie and it is possible to read in Effie's behaviour a kind of frustrated resistance to the relentless battle to subdue and control her.

Maynard approached the Salvation Army. The Salvation Army was an evangelical, holiness denomination. Its theology stressed that conversion must begin with faith and be followed by a direct, personal encounter with the Holy Spirit. A convert's mind, will and body would be infused with God's presence, enabling the believer to act on God's will in all things. The Salvation Army also ran an active, growing social service wing that included programs for 'fallen women.' Its soldiers (members of congregations) were primarily working class. Its officers (clergy and full-time workers) included many working-class men and women as well as some middle class. Maynard believed the Army would succeed with Effie because of its simple theology and clear, unequivocal demands. (Walker, 2001) On October 23, 1896 Effie entered the Clock House, a home for a fallen women not unlike the one her mother had entered some years earlier. Effie would live in this all female world where they helped to secure her conversion and fit her for a respectable future. Salvationists believed that a woman's reclamation could not begin until she was converted. On October 28, Effie wrote that she had been converted and 'I am so happy and so glad to be able to give you joy.' The Army's holiness theology taught that true conversion enabled an individual to know and act on God's will. Effie's conversion therefore would be judged against her subsequent behaviour. When Effie stole 2s 6d from Major Bennett, she commented, 'Of course this very plainly shows there is no real conversion about the girl' (Maynard, vol. 4, p.48–49, p.53).

A few weeks later Major Bennett wrote Maynard. 'I do not think you knew she was a fallen girl? but this is so. It happened when she was living at Brighton through a young man lodging in the same house.' Constance did not record the precise details of this 'fall' and later questions about the event raise doubts about what occurred. But the ambiguity and confusion did not change the fact that Effie was now tainted by what others believed had occurred. Like many other 'fallen girls', she was both a victim and a threat to others. (Jackson, 2000) Maynard lamented that she 'would she had died rather than this…. Even as quite a child, she had no natural modesty, no shame, but that it should come to this when she was only just 13 seems incredible' (Maynard, vol 4, p.54). Maynard visited that day with Effie and told her that this sin could not be undone and for some time she had hoped Effie would come and live with her again but that must now be given up. 'She had raised a barrier between us that was insurmountable.' After they prayed together, Maynard embraced her and thought 'My Effie, still mine, though defiled, worse than murdered' (Maynard, vol. 4, p.60). She later reflected on the great gulf that had opened between them. She reflected, 'I do not want to act as a disciple of Christ should not, but then there is surely a human side as well as a divine side to such thing as this, and I am of the one sort and she of the other, and women are only of two sorts' (Maynard, vol. 4, p.55–56; Jackson, 2000).

Effie continued to prepare for a career in the Salvation Army's offices. She did not enjoy it and found the sedentary life it required very difficult. Effie complained to Maynard of near constant headaches and a pain in her side that she could not account for but this did not seem to raise any serious concern among the officers at the Clock House. The

officers were alarmed that she continued to engage in the 'wicked habit' of 'self-abuse'. Her hands were tied up, the officers pleaded with her but all to no avail. Constance believed, 'it is evident that in their opinion everything, spiritual and moral progress, courtesy, intellect, physical health, even her very eyesight, depended on this one secret habit' (Maynard, vol. 4, p.69). Thus her fallen character was visible on her weakened body for all to see.

She also confessed to Maynard that 'I do worry now about my own father and mother, and lay awake sometimes wondering and worrying about them. I long to know what they were like in feature and character and I want to know all about myself and them before I was six' (Maynard, vol. 4, p.97).

Soon after, Effie was dismissed from the Army home for theft and disobedience. She went into service and then she was forgiven and allowed to return to the Army. For the next several years, Effie continued to train for work in the Salvation Army but she was regularly dismissed. She stole money from the collection plate, ran away, and was insolent. She worked intermittently as a domestic servant but her health was poor. Her feet collapsed and she could barely walk. She was anemic and fainted easily. A growth on Effie's neck required an operation. For Maynard and the Salvationists and perhaps even Effie herself, all of these debilities were related to her secret vice.

In 1896, Constance sailed for South Africa. She planned to visit friends and to see the work of mission groups particularly the South Africa General Mission (SAGM) which was directed by her friend Dudley Kidd and also employed Rosa Fasulo. In 1894, Rosa had married Samuel Holt. The couple worked first in Cape Town then settled at a mission station in Mount Packard, near Umtata, Tembuland (South Africa Pioneer, Oct 1895, p.8; Nov. 1895, p.8; January 1898, p.188). While she was in South Africa, Constance attempted to contact Rosa. She composed a letter and asked her friend to mention her name to Rosa. Constance believed 'if she is truly changed, she will ask to see me' and he could give her the letter. Constance wondered if her 'motherly affections' remained or if Rosa would scream and betray herself when she heard Constance's name. However, Rosa seemed to take no notice when her name was said and he returned with the letter. Constance concluded, 'I leave her among the kafir kraals, fat stupid women. She has found her place' (Maynard, vol. 4, p.86–87). Rosa would have been reminded of her visit when Constance published a report of her visit to the SAGM titled, 'A Nation of Children' in the South Africa Pioneer, illustrated with her own drawings and photographs.

On January 20, 1903 Effie turned 21 and Maynard told 'her who she was.' Effie listened and took great interest in the news that her mother had recently given birth to a son, as was reported in the *South African Pioneer*. She proposed to Constance that they meet when her mother had a furlough in England. Maynard replied if her husband and friends were to discover that she had a grown daughter, 'the poor thing would be covered in shame and disgrace and no one knows what she might do.' Effie did not reply and Constance wrote in her diary, 'I had written with all my heart and it gives me a sense of shallowness. She cannot distinguish great things from small' (Maynard, vol. 5, p.47). Effie never met her mother again.

Finally Effie was dismissed from the Salvation Army for the last time and she wrote Maynard,

> I always have been a failure and I suppose always will be. I don't care now what happens to me. I shall never again try to be good, it is all rubbish. I shall just please myself and go my own road. I don't care what becomes of me now. Your wretched, Annie (Maynard, vol. 5, p.86).

Effie's illness was a constant difficulty. She was told she must have meat because she was anemic and milk and eggs to make her strong, none of which were provided to her in the homes where she worked. The tumor on her neck continued to grow and to cause her pain. Maynard chided her that the Salvation Army authorities told her 'she always could have been well had she tried, that all her weakness and illness was due to her own wickedness….If she persevered in right for some 2 or 3 years more I believed that after all I should see her fresh and strong and bright as she ought to be' (Maynard, vol. 5, p.148). Effie replied, 'do you always think of the wickedness when you think of the ill health? If my poor suffering body always reminds you of a depraved heart, I feel as I should never again want to tell you of my health, for oh I want you to forget all that' (Maynard, vol. 5, p.149). This exchange suggests that for Constance and the Salvation Army officers, the body reflected an individual's character plainly. Some medical professions might have endorsed this view but these evangelicals were shaped by holiness theology far more than any medical science. They believed a consecrated Christian would express God's will in all things, including through the body. Effie's body was thus just one reflection of her sinful state.

Over the next several years, she moved from situation to situation, unable to satisfy either her employers or herself. Her health grew worse. In February 1904, she was diagnosed with tuberculosis. She had more surgeries on her neck but she remained in pain. Maynard's relationship to Effie increasingly suggested that she was a dependent social inferior. For example, on Effie's birthday one year Maynard sent her nightdresses, 'which have shrunk very much but are still

sound' and on another occasion she sent a parcel of old clothes, including a cashmere dress shiny from wear but Maynard wrote that it might get years of use if 'altered by clever fingers' (Maynard, vol. 5, p.116, p.151). She was disappointed at the indifferent thanks she received. She continued to send Effie a small monthly allowance and paid her medical expenses but she was disappointed by Effie's unwillingness to express gratitude. Historian Anne Summers has argued that 'embedded in discourses of the maternal were the social relations and disciplines of middle and upper-class households' that always included the supervision of servants. It is perhaps not surprising that Constance Maynard did not distinguish greatly between a dependent child and a dependent servant. As their relationship deteriorated, she adopted the role of mistress to Effie who was in fact working as a general servant. Effie may have chafed against this but she had little choice (Summers, 1998, p.371).

Effie struggled to sustain relationships. She befriended another young Salvationist and the two took domestic service positions in nearby households. But Effie embarrassed the girl's family when she took to calling her parents Mother and Father in public. She was dismissed from one situation after she became very close to the mistress but she realized that the woman did not want a social equal. She corresponded with Constance at various times about marriage. Constance insisted this was utterly unthinkable.

> Don't I know, my old Eff, how one longs for love and a dear little home of one's own. I know all about it dear and you are just at the age when one feels it most….But there are cases when God (not man) says No. Your case is one, dear, indeed it is. I was frightened about it long ago, because the tendency to vice is strongly inherited. You got yours doubtless from your poor wicked mother and I trembled to think of children being brought into the world with this black stamp upon them. …The Tuberculosis made the case simple. Doctors say it is simply wicked to marry when this disease has even once laid hold of you and yours is three times. Rickets, hip disease, consumption, all these things come out of the poor innocent children (Maynard, vol. 6, p.32–33).

Effie replied:

> That is what I want, to be loved for what I am, not for what my parents have been. It is altogether out of the question to compare your position and case with mine. It is not parallel. You have all you wish for, comforts, money, people who study your comfort, your own dear brothers and sisters who love you and are loved by you, all these things help to make up for a single life, but mine is different. I have only you, whom I love and God knows how much, but when I cannot hope to have you always near me… I cannot bring myself to face the fact of remaining a servant all my life with nothing but drudge, drudge, drudge, from morning til night and speaking of other people's children, they are not like one's own, are they? Have I been to you? (Maynard, vol. 6, p.36–38).

Still determined to deter Effie from marriage, Constance put aside the language of evangelicalism and turned to scientific reasoning to make Effie understand that 'good English stock is ruined by miserable people having babies.' She reminded Effie that she had not 'read a single book or heard even one lecture on the great subject of Inheritance.' She asserted that 'only an ignorant man' would ever want Effie as his wife. (Maynard, vol. 6, p.39–44) Again, Effie's bodily infirmaries and her inheritance predominated and excluded her from ties of kinship that others might enjoy. Effie's response expressed a keen loneliness and longing for the comfort and family ties she had never enjoyed. That loneliness was also a rebuke when she used Constance's own confidence in blood ties to point to her maternal failures.

During this exchange of letters, Constance referred to Effie's fall and Effie responded that her 'heart had nearly broken with sorrow and sadness' to learn that Constance believed this. She recalled being asked questions years earlier by the Salvationists but 'never realized that was taken for granted.' When Constance asked why she had not explained herself, Effie asked, 'why did you not speak to me on the subject?…No wonder you so hated and repulsed me.' She explained that she had thought everyone referred to 'that other sin that overtakes me.' Constance recorded, 'I for one believe this letter.' (Maynard, vol. 6, p.48, p.60–62). But if this marked any change in Effie's status, it made little difference.

As Effie's health deteriorated, it was impossible for her to remain in service. Tuberculosis was at the time incurable through medical intervention and it killed more people under the age of thirty than any other disease. It was particularly wide-spread among the poor in crowded, urban areas. It was a slow moving disease. Many medical professionals believed that tuberculosis was a hereditary disease and some attributed it to sexual excess and over stimulation. Whether her own sinfulness or her inheritance doomed Effie to this dreadful disease, those who cared for her believed her body displayed her intractable ties to sin. Most doctors prescribed sunlight, sea air and cod liver oil for patients and some did recover if they had proper rest and nourishment (Cronje, 1984; Mason, 1994; Smith, 1988; p.205–206).

In 1912, Constance made one last effort to heal Effie and sent her to Italy where the climate might improve her. She arranged to work a few hours a day for an elderly pair of English sisters. (Maynard, vol. 6, p.171–172) At first, Effie wrote of her great pleasure in the beautiful surroundings and the kindness of her employers but her health worsened and she could do no domestic work. She returned to England.

She declined. By 1914, she was in a hospital and Constance was paying the fees. She then determined Effie must be moved to a workhouse infirmary. After some discussion about where she had resided the longest after her peripetic life, Effie was settled at Thanet Union Infirmary at Minster. (Death Certificate, 1915) In November 1915 Maynard wrote to suggest she visit in the coming weeks and the staff replied that Effie was near death, conscious only at intervals. Maynard went to her immediately. Although she was beyond speaking, Maynard recited poems Effie had loved as a child and she silently reflected on Effie's life.

> My Effie, dying in the Workhouse! I thought of the child of 9 or 10, with life springing out all over her, I thought of the rich colour that put English children to shame, with the old-gold dress and the dark ruby ribbon to tie her hair, the snow white teeth, and the pure pigeon's egg oval of her little face. And the brilliant mind too within, unlike any other I have known. Such she was, Is it my fault she is dying in the Workhouse? I have tried, indeed I have tried…I have loved her truly, but now and then I have almost hated her… I spoke a text now and then, but it seemed no use.

On November 15, Maynard received a telegram, 'Stephanie Anthon, 4-30 this morning.' Constance allowed the Poor Law authorities to deal with Effie's burial. For Victorians, a proper funeral and burial were absolutely essential. A pauper burial 'stigmatised both the deceased and the bereaved.' (Strange, 2005, p.131) Even the poorest family would incur debt sooner than dishonour the deceased with a pauper burial. (Ross, 1993 p.193) Nothing could more clearly demonstrate that she had relinquished any family ties that had once joined them.

Just a year after Effie died, Constance published a book titled *A True Mother*. She extolled the selfless labour and love of mothers, reminding mother,

> Tis only thyself can achieve this greatest of labours, making not things but men, immortal souls in all their glory. Such is mother instinct…Deep in the roots of creation runs this ancestral love and we can not trace its inception' (Maynard, 1916).

These words are poignant when contrasted with Constance's own experience with motherhood. What was a true Mother for Constance? She was often dismayed at her inability to feel maternal love for Effie. At times, Constance seems to suggest that had Effie lived as redeemed Christian, all might have been well. At other times, she pointed to Effie's Italian heritage or her fall as barriers she could not surmount. And yet, in 1888 she adopted Effie with complete confidence that she would assume the role of Mother and nurture Effie as her own child. Similarly, Effie so often ardently longed for family relations she never knew but certainly witnessed among Constance and her siblings or in the households where she worked as a domestic.

This is a story about failure. Constance failed to mother Effie in the ways she strived to achieve. The Salvation Army failed to guide Effie to a conversion they would regard as meaningful. Effie failed to establish a work life or sustaining personal relationships. As Effie tumbled down the class ladder, Constance tried to reconcile what she believed to be Effie's true abilities and talents with each new, diminished status. Neither Constance nor the Salvationists and others who cared for Effie understood childhood as a 'repository of the self' nor was she seen as a product of her own history. (Steedman, 1990; Steedman, 1995) As significant as these ideas were for others, this life was understood within the constraints and contradictions of evangelical, racial and eugenic ideas about character. Although these ideas did not easily work together and as often as not, were at odds, Constance Maynard, the Salvation Army officers and others involved in Effie's care all employed these ideas in their attempts to account for, to explain and to reform Effie. Their understanding of selfhood and character required that Effie willingly surrender to God to enable her to overcome her sins but her inheritance could also overshadow her efforts and condemn her to a fallen life. Her soul and body were in constant conflict. She might chose conversion and find the strength to withstand sin. But her body overwhelmed her and she gave in to its demands. When Constance was informed of Effie's fall, she believed the thirteen year old was worse off than had she been murdered. Her 'secret vice' was hardly secret; it weakened her eyesight, made her a thief, and finally destroyed her body with tuberculosis. Her racial taint and inherited vice were the bodily weakness that neither prayer nor religious instruction could vanquish.

The improbable success in this story was Rosa Holt. She and her husband remained at Mount Packard until December 1927 when her health demanded that she retire. The SAGM recorded the regret shared by all at her departure and the gratitude for her decades of missionary labour. Her only son, Basil Fenelon Holt, had a distinguished career as a clergyman, scholar, and a member of the South African Institute on Race Relations, a body opposed to apartheid. No doubt Rosa was pleased by her son's achievements and surely he would have impressed all his sister's associates as well.

This is one example of a difficult relationship but it illuminates a wider set of questions about Victorian culture. This story was shaped by Victorian ideas about race and empire. Race was one way in which Effie was categorized and explained. Her Italian heritage was clearly marked in her character and seemed a flaw she could not overcome. Race in Victorian England is most often understood to operate on a metropole–empire axis when English Protestants categorized racialized foreigners. But in this case, the troubled vision of southern Italy was critical. Naples was imagined as the source of a racial taint associated with moral laxity and a crude intellect.

Both Constance and Rosa had ties to the empire and for both it offered particular kinds of freedom. Constance's family wealth came from South Africa and it allowed her to live a life devoted to intellectual pursuits and travel. Rosa was sent to South Africa with the help of the Maynard family where they trusted she would find a respectable position and have no opportunity to interfere with Constance's plans. Once arrived, she joined a missionary organization associated with the holiness movement where she did find respectable work, a husband, and a new life. Still, Constance imagined her to be well-suited to her life among an inferior people.

Class relations also shaped Effie's life. Constance was able to punish Effie in particular ways because her own class status gave her the means to do so and the confidence that her actions were justified. When Effie failed to meet her expectations, her education and subsequent opportunities were diminished which further distanced her from her adoptive mother. Her speech was one distinguishing mark of class making it unlikely any stranger would imagine them to be mother and daughter. Eventually, Effie came to be a dependent servant not only in her employment but also in her relations with the only kin she knew.

Effie was subjected to a range of practices, religious, moral and medical, that were intended to reform and cure her of her defects. But at the same time, those defects were seen to be lodged in her body, her inheritance, her racial character. Both the eugenic and evangelical theories that were used to explain her paid great attention to her bodily infirmities. Her body demonstrated truths about her that could not be overcome. In this case, evangelical holiness and eugenics were two sides of the same coin, sharing a belief that the body expressed truths about an individual's character and inheritance. She was seen as impervious to salvation, social or spiritual, and her life was constrained by the ways others sought to change her. This story then suggests how complex ideas about class, race, religion, the body and kinship could be handled and deployed by individuals. While concepts like 'class', 'race' and 'the body' might appear to be abstract formulations, they were also utilized and lived out in very particular intimate relationships.

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