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NELSON S. BUSHEWELL

Susan Ferrier's Marriage as Novel of Manners

It is possible that a book bereft of readers deserves its fate; only a fool would rush out in enthusiasm to enlist them. But a neglected work may still shed light on the development of literary art. Susan Ferrier's Marriage, written substantially in 1810 and the years immediately following but not completed till after Waterloo, was first published (anonymously) in April, 1818, and was re-issued periodically thereafter for over a century. Though it still (1967) remains in print, it is probably safe to assume that there exists only a tiny public familiar with it, hence, comment on the book is meaningless without some indication of its contents.

Miss Ferrier's original plan was to introduce "a high-bred English beauty, who thinks she can sacrifice all for love, to an uncomfortable solitary Highland dwelling among tall red-haired sisters and grim-faced aunts. Don't you think this would make a good opening of the piece?" In exploiting this "opening" the novel presents the story, related by a rather detached, impersonal narrator, of three generations in each of two families in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries: one of English aristocrats (the Lindores, Earls of Courtland), the other of Scottish gentry (the Douglases, lairds of Glenfern). At the outset Lady Juliana, daughter of the old Earl of Courtland, rebelling against a proposed match with the Duke of L., elopes with and marries

1 "Marriage, a Novel" is included in the "Monthly List of New Publications," Edinburgh Magazine, and Literary Miscellany, II (i.e. New Series of ... Scots Magazine, LXXXI, April, 1818), 371.

2 In the Nelson Classics edition, 3 vols. in 1 (London, etc., n.d.). Subsequent references to the novel will cite this edition.


a penniless officer, Harry Douglas, younger son of the laird of Glenfern. Having as a result lost his commission and the favor of his benefactor General Cameron, Harry with his bride takes refuge with his family in the Highlands.

Lady Juliana, spoiled product of effete London aristocracy, is unable to cope with the rigors of Highland life or with the household including the old laird, his spinster sisters Grizzy, Jacky, and a third, and his five gangling unmarried daughters. Equally difficult are the neighbors, Sir Sampson and Lady MacLaughlan of Loch Marlie Castle, though Lady Juliana finds some kind understanding in half-English Alicia, wife of Harry's elder brother, of Lochmarlie Cottage. After the birth of twin daughters to Lady Juliana, General Cameron relents and the younger Douglas couple returns to London with the favored infant Adelaide, leaving the sickly Mary for her childless aunt Alicia Douglas to rear. General Cameron's patronage having run dry, Juliana with Adelaide eventually settles in the Courtland house, to which her brother Frederick has succeeded; and Harry Douglas departs for India and death.

Some fifteen years later Mary in Scotland is shocked into a decline by old Glenfern's sudden death, and is sent via Edinburgh (and meetings with old family associates, Bailie Broadfoot and Mrs. MacShake) to her unwilling mother, who has accompanied Lord Courtland to his estate of Beech Park, near Bath. Lady Juliana and Adelaide receive Mary coldly, but she is championed by her cousin, Courtland's outspoken, kindly daughter Lady Emily; and Dr. Redgill vouches for her health.

Sponsored by Lady Emily and by her visiting Aunt Grizzy, Mary makes the acquaintance of an assortment of local types and characters, including Mrs. Fox, Mrs. Pullens, and Mrs. Bluemits; introduced by a letter from Lady MacLaughlan, she has become intimate with a blind widow, Mrs. Lennox of Rose Hall, who tries too obviously to engineer a marriage between her son Colonel Lennox and Mary, and thereby temporarily drives a wedge between them. Mary discourages other suitors: a Mrs. Downe Wright's son; and the Duke of Altamont, who eventually marries Adelaide in spite of the latter's attraction to her cousin, Courtland's son, the younger Lord Lindore. Over Mrs. Lennox's deathbed the colonel and Mary acknowledge a mutual affection; after Adelaide's elopement with young Lindore, divorce from her duke, and marriage to her lover, Lennox and our heroine are kept apart temporarily by Lady Juliana's opposition and by a feud originating in Len-
nax's right to succession to the MacLaughlan estate. But the difficulties are soon resolved, and the lovers marry and inherit Loch Marlie Castle.

One of the concerns implicit in this story is with the manners of two contrasted cultures, English and Scottish. Both are presented by the narrator and illustrated through the activities of the fictitious characters, but the tone of the presentation is colored by the device of showing the impact of each culture upon a representative of the other. The English representative, Lady Juliana, being an unsympathetic character, the reader tends to reject her adverse criticisms, while he is likely to share the admirable Mary's distaste for aristocratic English social behavior. It should be noted, however, that Mary's own point of view is not as representatively Scottish as, say, that of the Glenfern aunts, for Mary herself is half-English by blood and through her upbringing by the half-English Mrs. Alicia Douglas.

As would be expected from a Susan Ferrier, the picture of Scottish manners is much more inclusive than that of the English. Her Scottish material is derived on the whole from personal familiarity, and covers a variety of classes and local cultures, predominantly Highland but not excluding Lowland and metropolitan (Edinburgh). The novel reveals to us a social structure that is relatively homogeneous, with an easy, frank intercourse between town and country, between lairds and their subordinates. The prevailing social tone, forthright and practical to the verge of coarseness, allows single-sided "humors" characters to flourish.

The novel concerns itself in the Highlands with the higher gentry, the Glenfern Douglases, in their relative isolation in the latter part of the eighteenth century still living in the archaic style. They provide their own entertainment: music in the dining room after dinner; before the ladies withdraw, each is privileged to toast her favorite; the tea table is set up for cards (whist for the elders); and later there is dancing to the music of bagpipes in the drawing room. The ladies' daytime activity is mostly domestic: needle work at the table after breakfast is cleared away. We are informed of the approved style for furnishing formal bedrooms. The domestic relationship between servants and masters is close (and outspoken).

Rituals for family ceremonies are illustrated in the nuptials of a true Highlander "with all the pomp of feudal times; with bagpipes, and bonfires, and gatherings of clans, and roasted sheep, and barrels of

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whiskey," followed by the activities celebrating the birth of an heir, the orthodox practice in choosing its name, and the christening festivities, with the cake or "dreaming bread." The domestic cycle closes with the funeral and "all the paraphernalia of affliction." The costume appropriate to various stages and occasions is indicated: "worsted stockings and quilted petticoats" for married ladies; "the walking costume of Glenfern Castle;" "the impropriety of ... allowing [a] daughter to wear white gowns on Sunday;" and the panoply of a gala visit: "At eleven they re-appeared in all the majesty of sweeping silk-trains, and well powdered toupées. In outward show Miss Becky was not less elaborate; the united strength and skill of her three aunts and four sisters, had evidently been exerted in forcing her hair into every position, but that for which nature had intended it; curls stood on end around her forehead, and tresses were dragged up from the roots, and formed into a club on the crown; her arms had been strapped back till her elbows met, and her respiration seemed suspended, by means of a pink ribbon of no ordinary strength or doubtful hue."

Not surprisingly for an area so celebrated for its traditional breakfasts as the Highlands, details of diet are concerned mostly with that meal. Although the staple foods are such as those recommended for expectant mothers ("barley broth and oatmeal porridge"), and "loaf bread" is dispensable in the presence of "charming barley-meal scones; ... tempting peas hannahs, ... and oat cakes," it is noteworthy that "a smoking steak and plump muirfowl" are readily available.

Turning to somewhat broader concerns of domestic society, we find that in female education the emphasis is all on the practical: "If a woman can nurse her bairns, mak their claes, and manage her hooss, what mair need she do?" There is a grudging admission of the need for graceful accomplishments (not without solid value in the marriage market); these include fancy needlework—"a filigree tea-caddy," sketching, "learning to read and write in the worst manner; occasionally wearing [an iron] collar, and learning the notes on the spinet." But the spinster aunts of Glenfern recognize, like Fanny Burney's Evelina, that there is need for a further "code of instructions for a young woman upon her entrance into life" (i.e. the world of urban society). For travel, a young lady had need of no very elaborate equipment, except provender to substitute for the grim fare supplied at wayside inns. Fortunately, in the Highlands travelers could usually find hospitable entertainment under the roofs of the country gentry.
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The pre-requisites to a self-sufficient agricultural landlordism determined the pattern of home management, with no false modesty veiling the compost heap, the laird himself taking an active part in the feeding and breeding of stock, and the cultivation of land. The ladies' first task was "the incessant carding of wool and knitting of stockings, and spinning and reeling, and winding and pining," though this very activity deprived the local poor women of their one means to gain bread. In general, the ladies "found occupation congenial to their nature in the little departments of life: dressing crape; reviving black silk; converting narrow hems into broad hems... Their walk lay amongst tapes and pickles; their sphere extended from the garret to the pantry; and often as they sought to diverge from it, their instinct always led them to return to it, as the tract in which they were destined to move."

Such a way of life, ingrown and narrow, inevitably begot set attitudes and interests. It was a society intoxicated with superstitions as to second sight, ghosts, monsters, and the death-watch; and with the supernatural implications of dreams and deaths. Pride of race engendered an obsession with genealogy and the "many ramifications upon the different branches of the county tree." Related to this concern is the assumption of the eldest sister's right to be married first. For the capture of a husband, England was recognized as the happiest hunting ground.

Descending from Highlands to Lowlands, the novel gives only one picture—but that in detail—of the deplorable way of life on a rundown gentleman's farm. However, as the proprietor's menage is the product of an ill-advised elopement, the author may well have intended it to drive home the theme of her novel rather than to illustrate prevalent Lowland manners. Miss Ferrier is somewhat more detailed and more sympathetic in her picture of the urban manners of "Scotia's darling seat," Edinburgh. The glimpses introduced by Bailie Broadfoot are inconsequential, but the interview with Mrs. MacShake, a remote relative and "the last remaining branch of the noble race of Girmachgow," is full of lively detail, some of it derived almost verbatim from the written reminiscences of Elizabeth Mure of Caldwell, the aunt of a friend of Miss Ferrier's.

Before Marriage was published, this material appeared in print, to the consternation of the novelist, who was in continual terror lest the originals of her satirical portraits penetrate her anonymity. Her friend

*Marriage, II, xi, 253-64.
writes to a common confidante: "You remember the thing I had of my aunt's writing on the change of manners. Mr. Mackenzie* once asked my leave to copy it, which I permitted, and it was a few days ago printed in a New Edinburgh Magazine, published by Constable. I don't think it was the thing to do it without my consent [sic]. I told Susan; she was like to go into a fit, as all Mrs. [Mac]Shake's character and conversation turns on that theme. She advised me to prosecute him for damages and hire Mr. Jeffrey for my lawyer." Susan need not have been in fact so close to a fit, as most of the information she acquired from the Mure manuscripts was there ascribed to a "M" Barclays relation of the most memorable things that past in his father's house from the beginning of the century till the 13, in which year he died" (see note 10 below).

Mrs. MacShake's concern with manners is very much to our purpose; she takes a dim view of up-to-date manners in Edinburgh and the decline in the authority of heads-of-families:

"Mainars!" repeated she, with a contemptuous laugh, "what caw ye mainars noo, for I dinna ken; ilk ane gangs bang in till their neebors hooss, an' bang oot o't as it war a chyne hooss; an' as for the maister o't, he's no o sae muckle vaalu as the flunky ahint his chyre. 'I' my grandfather's time, as I hae heard him tell, ilk maister o a faamily had his ain sate in his ane hooss aye, an' sat wi his hat on his heed afore the best o the land, an' had his ain dish, an' was aye helpit first; an' keepit up his owhith in a man sude du. Paurents war paurents than—baiths daurna set up their gabs afore them than as they du noo. They ne'er presumed to say their heels war their ain i' thae days—wife an' servants—reteeners an' childer, aw trummet i' the presence o their heed."

*"Mr. Mackenzie" was Henry, the Man of Feeling, whose family was intimate with Miss Ferrier. It appears likely that he edited Miss Mure's "writing" with considerable freedom. He later unconsciously expiated his breach of trust by praising the anonymous manuscript of Marriage to its prospective publisher; see Doyle, p. 141.

†Constable's "New" magazine was in fact the old Scots Magazine, beginning with Vol. LXXX a "New Series" under the title The Edinburgh Magazine, and Literary Miscellany in August, 1817. The Mure memoirs appear on pp. 10-14 of the first number, and pp. 111-14 of the second (Sept. 1817) as a "View of the Change of Manners in Scotland during the Course of the Last Century, ..., written by a lady of an ancient family in Renfrewshire, ..., now first printed from the original manuscript." This material twice reappeared as "Some remarks on the change of manners in my own time, 1700-1790," Selections from the Family Papers preserved at Caldwell [ed. William Mure of Caldwell], The Maitland Club [No. 77], (Glasgow, 1854), Part First, No. xcv; reprinted practically in facsimile with trifling corrections of spelling and grammar [The New Club Series], (Paisley, 1885). Quotations

*Doyle, pp. 137 f.

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and references in the text are to the 1854 version as probably closest to "the thing I had of my aunt's writing."

Miss Ferrier followed her source closely, allowing for her translation into Scots: "My observation [cannot go much farther back than the 30, which period I reckon verged on the age of my Grandfather...]. Their manners was peculiar to themselves. Every master was revered by his family, honour'd by his tenants, and awful to his domestics. He kept his own sete by the fire or at table, with his hat on his head; & often particular dishes served up for himself, that nobody else shared off. Their children aproach'd them with awe, and never spock with any degree of freedom before them."\(^9\)

In the MacShake episode we see, to begin with, how a lady of the old school lives in contemporary Edinburgh, in her "airy dwelling" with "an ancient, sour-visaged, long-waisted female" attendant and "a bare sufficiency of small-legged dining tables, and lank haircloth chairs." Mrs. MacShake is no unique original or one-faceted humors character like either MacLaughlan (and is even less involved in the story than they); she represents a distinctive segment of Edinburgh society. Her preoccupation with the older manners "i' my time," and her distaste for English influence and for the encroachments of the New Town on the rusticity of the old Edinburgh suburbs, culminate in her vivid sketch of eighteenth-century Scottish manners in their heyday, particularly as exhibited in the wedding and christening scenes actually derived from "Mr. Barclay" via Mure.\(^10\)

When in the middle of the novel the plot takes Mary Douglas, the new heroine, to England and the environs of Bath, the emphasis shifts to the manners of the English, already touched upon in the character of Lady Juliana. Miss Ferrier’s view of English society is limited almost entirely to the aristocracy, of which she had observed examples among guests at Inveraray Castle, but for which, one is tempted to believe, she borrowed a considerable amount from the pages of Fanny Burney. Her survey includes family behavior on formal occasions, such as weddings, with the details of appropriate costume, preparations, and attendant ceremonies; formal balls and their domestic after-effects; and the conventions of mourning (a spate of sympathy calls, and withdrawal from formal society). English breakfasts are presented,

\(^9\) Selections from the Family Papers preserved at Caldwell, pp. 259-260.

\(^10\) Mr. Barclay was Miss Mure's "uncle; a younger son of Sir Jas. Stewart, Lord-Advocate, who took the name of Barclay." Selections from the Family Papers preserved at Caldwell, pp. 263-265.
and always (to their great disadvantage) in comparison with Scotch. The pastimes of the aristocracy likewise seemed distinguished by their insipidity: "great dull dinners," riding and driving in the park, and miscellaneous entertainments: "balls, and concerts, and masquerades."

The treatment of English manners is consistently unsympathetic and satirical, and nowhere more forcefully than in the exhibition of the hobbies and preoccupations of fine ladies: the quest for clothes of conspicuous style, for livery and upholstery of newest fashion and uncommon elegance, and for footmen of exalted physique; the collecting of curios: for example, "a frog of Turkish agate for burning pastilles in. . . . Here it opens at the tail, where you put in the pastilles, and closing it up, the vapour issues beautifully through the nostrils, eyes, ears, and mouth, all at once." Lady Juliana’s obsession with lap-dogs and pets is presumably typical, and her tastes are reflected on a slightly lower social level in Mrs. Fox’s "little collection" of bibelots and her devious ways of assembling and getting rid of them.

Aristocratic methods of rearing children "in state; accustomed to the most obsequious attention" have borne fruit in the character of Lady Juliana, and re-assert themselves in the system of education she imposes (for three days) on her child and on her brother’s: two governesses and a shelfful of modern treatises on education. The sole purpose of a young lady’s education, to form a brilliant establishment by marriage, is central to the theme of the novel. At the very outset the irrelevance of love is insisted upon: "love was now entirely confined to the canaille; . . . for a young woman of rank to think of such a thing was plebian in the extreme." What she should think of was how "to procure . . . a most excessive good establishment."

More modest, practical accomplishments were despised. Lady Juliana is proud rather than ashamed to admit, "I can’t dress myself. I never did such a thing in my life; and I’m sure it’s impossible that I can;" and her besotted bridegroom is delighted to offer his assistance. Time, it seems, was made for slaves only: "It was all their ways, not to keep to their appointed time." The Scottish respect for such pedestrian virtues as promptness and practicality may be partially responsible for the highborn English contempt of Scottish "coarseness and vulgarity."

At the other extreme from practicality, sensibility is equally to be deplored. The emotion displayed by Scottish-bred Mary, on the occasion of her reunion with her mother and sister after many years’ separation,
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is distasteful to them equally: “You must really get the better of this foolish weakness; these scenes are too much for me.” Churchgoing is frowned upon, for it suggests a leaning toward Methodism and its attendant enthusiasm. The ideal of conduct is a “nigh-bred esse,” an indifference that avoids any commitment and ignores any responsibility to common facts or feelings.

Miss Ferrier virtually ignores English manners outside the aristocracy—except for Mary’s idyllic glimpse of church-bound villagers (in a second-hand “literary” manner), and Lady Emily’s contemptuous allusion to elopement as a popular fad: “Green Green might have been advisable; ... but it is become too vulgar an exploit. I read of a hatter’s apprentice having carried off a grocer’s heiress to other day.”

Obviously, this manners material contributes breadth and depth to the background upon which the story of the Douglasses and the Courtlands is projected; and it constantly nourishes the illusion of reality. But the question now arises: how else does this manners material function in the novel? Is it vital in the development of the action? Is it organic in the structure? Does it contribute to the creation of persons? Does it suggest any theme?

So far as concerns the narrative of what happened next, the manners are relevant as constituting something of value to the persons for whose fate we care, or as a threat to their well-being. When the manners are jeopardized, suspense is aroused. The domestic manners of the Douglasses, and the narrow, self-satisfied, crotchety way of life in which they have their being, are subject to various dangers throughout the novel, not only the built-in dangers implicit in their own petrified society, but also the intrusion (by marriage) of a hostile member into the family group, the aggressive contempt of the English aristocracy, and the economic pressures, changing fashions, and urban expansion which are products of the inevitable passage of time. But there are no out-and-out villains or impostors plotting against the Douglas way of life, and Juliana’s selfishness never poses any real threat to the embattled family that she has joined, though her extravagance in performing her role as fine lady does contribute to the withdrawal of General Cameron’s support and the eventual collapse of her marriage. Never, however, does the author choose to exploit any threat of class conflict, as, writing at a time well into the nineteenth century, she might readily have done.

The manners represented by the Courtland family, on the other hand, from beginning to end of the novel flourish, in their native habitat, like ivy in a burial ground. To be sure, the English relatives
never succeed in denting the defenses of the Highland stronghold, but only Mary's quiet stubbornness forestalls their designs upon her; in abandoning the conflict they may be frustrated, but they survive undiminished.

The structure, such as it is, of *Marriage* is not so much strengthened as it is determined by the manners material. The bipartite design presents in the first volume the Highland scene under the impact of Lady Juliana's intrusion, and in the remaining two volumes, after a lapse of some seventeen years, Mary's gentler but no less antipathetic contact with the Courlanders and their circle near Bath. Volume III is distinguished from Volume II by the added attention to the Lennox family at Rose Hall, introduced late in Volume II.

Within these major divisions the structure is episodic, the successive episodes being arranged to provide contrast, or to display examples of manners unrelated to the central story. The first major episode, Lady Juliana's sojourn at Glenfern, is prolonged to exploit the clash of cultures within it; then the scene shifts to a very different sort of Highland life, at Lochmarlie Cottage; and after the birth of twin girls Lady Juliana is restored to England, in preparation for an entirely new set of interests in Volumes II and III. Volume II opens with alternate scenes in Scotland and England, to bridge the lapse of time; then Mary's journey to join her mother and sister permits the introduction of Lowland and Edinburgh manners. The remainder of Volume II deals with Mary's life at the Courlanders' Beech Park, and introduces brief visits to Rose Hall (parallel to the Glenfern-Lochmarlie Cottage contrasts in I), in preparation for Volume III. The final volume moves back and forth between the Courlanders and Lennox menages, with periodic side-trips to exhibit other varieties of manners: the condolence call; Aunt Jacky's letter; Aunt Grizzy's letter, and arrival at Bath; lunch with Mrs. Pullens (domestic economy in the upper middle class); and tea with Mrs. Bluemits (the Blue-stockings); Adelaide as duchess in London and at Norwood Abbey; with a return to the Highlands at the very end.

The author seems to have sensed a casualness of design in this story and has made a few half-hearted attempts at coherence, introducing the Scottish volume with an English scene, returning to England in the interpolated history of Mrs. Alicia Douglas (which was in fact contributed by the author's confidante, Miss Charlotte Clavering), and interlarding the English volumes with news from Scotland. Furthermore, Volume I introduces a prophecy that Glenfern will some day support Loch Marlie (realized though not recalled in the denouement);
and at least one of the interpolated episodes, the condolence call, relates itself to the central story by introducing two characters, Mrs. Downe Wright and the Duke of Altamont, who will complicate Mary's progress toward matrimony. On the other hand, the final complication, the Lennox-MacLauglan feud, by the tardiness of its introduction calls attention to a wasted opportunity to enhance coherence.

A more powerful and basic coherence is achieved by the persistence of certain types of character: Glenfern's in Sir Sampson; the old Earl of Courtland's in Frederick and the younger Lindore; Juliana's and Alicia's in Adelaide and Mary respectively; the Duke of L.'s in Altamont. A related use of character is the juxtaposition of the complementary Lady Emily and Mary; their mutual affection engages the reader's, and he is tempted to conjecture that together they approximate a projection of the author's own contradictory nature. It is in this field of characterization that the manners become powerfully functional in *Marriage*, and we are faced at the outset with the anomalous situation that the manners of the period not only permitted but even encouraged the development of individual, one-faceted originals; in Scotland, the eccentric is the typical. Glenfern, his sisters, his daughters, Sir Sampson, Lady MacLauglan, each is a peculiar product of the older Highland manners lingering at the turn of the century, each has his own special involvement in the pressing concerns of everyday life. Correspondingly, the languid nonchalance cultivated by the English aristocracy not only produces representative types like the Courtland men, like the Dukes of L. and Altamont, like Juliana and Adelaide, but also permits the burgeoning of its own eccentrics: the sycophantic gourmand Dr. Redgill, the suggested guests for the ball, and the naturalized Englishwomen Mrs. Pullens, and Mrs. Bluumits with her entourage. (Contemporary Scotland was not lacking in its own aristocracy of the intellect, but an outspoken commonsense north of the Border discouraged the development of blue-stocking coteries.)

These manners-born characters do occasionally affect the course of the story. The old Earl of Courtland and the Duke of L. precipitate Lady Juliana's elopement, and all the Glenfern Douglases in effect collaborate to drive her back to London, after she herself has consigned her daughter Mary to Mrs. Alicia Douglas of Lochmarie Cottage. Thereafter Lady Juliana forms the character of Adelaide and furthers her marriage to the Duke of Altamont; while at the same time it is Lady MacLauglan who introduces Mary to the Lennox family. Finally, Adelaide's elopement and marriage with the younger Lindore opens the way for Mary's marriage to Colonel Lennox.
Speaking in her own person, Susan Ferrier has made clear her serious concern with the ethical responsibilities of the novel as a literary type; some commentators have insisted that this concern became dominant only in the author's later life, as evidenced in a "Preface" she wrote for an 1841 edition of The Inheritance: "The author can only wish it had been her province to have raised plants of nobler growth in the wide field of Christian literature." But an intimate letter written ca. 1809 makes it clear that throughout her entire writing career she considered the moral obligation to be paramount: "Part of your plot I like much, some not quite so well—for example, it wants a moral... As the only good purpose of a book is to inculcate morality, and convey some lesson of instruction as well as delight, I do not see that what is called a good moral can be dispensed with in a work of fiction." The very title of her first published specimen, Marriage, suggests a focus of moral interest. Critics have been tempted (not without color of justification) to compare Susan Ferrier with Jane Austen, but a common characteristic (common likewise among their contemporaries) of announcing at the outset a general or abstract concept central to the ensuing novel in fact highlights a basic contrast in their interests. Jane Austen's stated themes: pride, sensibility, persuasion, are all psychological qualities; marriage on the other hand is a social institution, and in a book on marriage, manners must be an end in themselves, and not merely the begetters, or the outward signs, of traits of personality. In exploring the theme and the institution of marriage through some fifteen or sixteen examples, as well as in frequent discussions of the topic (for example, in III, xi), the author appears to suggest that love-matches (unsupported by common sense and self-restraint), such as Juliana's with Harry Douglas, and marriages of convenience (unleavened by love, or at least respect), such as Adelaide's with Altamont, are equally doomed to disaster. Only such a marriage as serves a rational purpose and is founded upon mutual love or respect can truly succeed (as Fanny Burney had suggested in Camilla, two decades earlier.)

An examination of the novel Marriage leaves the final impression that the chief impetus which it reflects is a delight in comically extravagant characters; it is likely that the challenge of identifying their originals in Scottish society was partly responsible for the initial popularity of the book. Further sources of delight were the affectionate amusement generated by archaic Highland manners, and the comic con-

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*Doyle, p. 280.

*Doyle, p. 75.
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tempt aroused by English aristocratic behavior. As these manners contribute to the flowering of ridiculous characters, and to their active concerns and mutual pressures, the function of manners in the novel extends itself. The need of carrying its load of manners helps to determine the structure of the narrative. And finally, manners are central to the exploration of the theme. Quite clearly, then, Susan Ferrier's first novel confirms and augments a current in the development of prose fiction, a current released by her predecessor Fanny Burney, and reaching maximum depth and force in the novel of manners as it issued from the contemporary pens of Maria Edgeworth, Walter Scott, and Jane Austen.

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