

How familiar and natural it sounds! It is as a real girl would be likely to talk, not as the orthodox heroine ought to talk. When you finish the book you feel not only a regret that it is finished, but even, perhaps, a regret that so much sweetness and charm are very possibly to be thrown away upon the somewhat unsympathetic nature of Darcy.

The novels of Sir Walter Scott were in part a reversion to the old Romance, and his heroines are likewise a reversion to the earlier type. The Rowenas, the Minna Troils, the Catherine Glovers, are duly marked with their characteristics and sent on their journey through the book. There is a passage in "Waverly," where Flora MacIvor receives the proposal of Waverly, that while, no doubt, extreme, yet illustrates fairly enough the woodenness of most of Scott's heroines. This is her answer: "Permit me, then, to rearrange my ideas upon so unexpected a topic, and in less than an hour I will be ready to give you such reason for the resolution I shall express as may be satisfactory at least, if not pleasing to you." So saying, she withdraws, leaving the youth "to meditate"—not unnaturally—"upon the manner in which she had received his addresses." Her answer would have come with equal appropriateness from the lips of a minister of state dismissing a troublesome deputation. It is hardly fair, perhaps, to take so glaring an example; Scott has given us a Jeanie Deans and Lucy Ashton as well as a Flora MacIvor. But the natural heroines are the exception, not the rule.

Diana Vernon, in "Rob Roy, is one of Scott's heroines who is important, not so much for herself, as for the fact that she seems to be the prototype of a class of heroines of which the recent outbreak of historical novels has given us not a few examples. Diana will be remembered as a high-spirited girl with a taste for masculine pastimes. Among recent novels, "Dorothy Vernon of Haddon Hall," and Crockett's "Joan of the Sword-Hand" are more or less reminiscent of the Diana Vernon type. There are occasional variations where the emphasis seems to be specially upon the high spirit. Mademoiselle de la Vire, in Stanley Weyman's "Gentleman of France," is rescued at great risk by the hero, and with him rides some sixty leagues to safety. She accomplishes his complete subjugation by the somewhat surprising method of never opening her lips during the whole course of the journey except to insult him.