

THE WORLD'S CLASSICS



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JANE AUSTEN

NORTHANGER ABBEY

LADY SUSAN, THE WATSONS,
AND SANDITON



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and Sanditon*

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INTRODUCTION

NONE of the work in this volume appeared in print in Jane Austen's lifetime. *Northanger Abbey* was published together with *Persuasion* in four volumes by John Murray in 1818;¹ *Lady Susan* was first printed, rather inaccurately, in the 1871 edition of J. E. Austen-Leigh's *A Memoir of Jane Austen*, which also included *The Watsons*² and an account with some extracts of what he called 'The Last Work' but which has become known as *Sanditon*, and which was not published in full until R. W. Chapman's edition of 1925.

The history of the manuscript of *Northanger Abbey* (which, like those of Jane Austen's other major novels, does not survive)³ gives an interesting insight into the possible problems and hazards facing an unknown novelist seeking publication in the early nineteenth century. The work was probably written in 1798 and 1799: this is the date given in Cassandra Austen's memorandum and, though that memorandum was not itself written until 1817, there is no external evidence to dispute the dating, which accords well with the known composition dates of the other early novels. Some revision of the work took place before it was sold, with the title *Susan*, to the publisher Crosby in 1803 for £10. As Jane Austen wrote in the 'Advertisement', by the Authoress' which appeared in the eventual publication, the book was actually advertised but for some reason did not appear.

¹ This is the date on the title-page. Publication had, however, been announced in the *Morning Chronicle* for 19 and 20 December 1817.

² The titles *Lady Susan* and *The Watsons* were given by J. E. Austen-Leigh: neither manuscript has a title. On the title of *Sanditon* see below p. xviii.

³ With the exception of the manuscript of two cancelled chapters of *Persuasion*, now in the British Library.

She wrote under a pseudonym to Crosby in 1809 in an effort to spur him to publication, indicating that if he did not publish the book, of which she could supply another copy, she would feel free to make arrangements elsewhere. His reply¹ merely threatened to 'take proceedings to stop the sale' in the event of publication by anyone else, and offered to return the manuscript for the original £10. The matter apparently rested there until 1816 when, after four of Jane Austen's novels had been published, Henry Austen bought back the manuscript and the copyright and enjoyed then telling Crosby that the work was by the author of *Pride and Prejudice*. However, publication was further delayed, for in a letter to Fanny Knight, Jane Austen wrote that 'Miss Catherine is put upon the Shelf for the present, and I do not know that she will ever come out'.² (The change of the heroine's name may be due to the publication in 1809 of an anonymous novel entitled *Susan*.) In the event, *Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion* were seen through the press by Henry Austen, who wrote an accompanying Biographical Notice of his sister. He may well also be responsible for naming at least the first novel: *Northanger Abbey* as a title seems to promise the Gothic vein which the book in part satirizes, and perhaps accounts for the *Morning Chronicle's* heralding it as a 'Romance' while describing *Persuasion* as a novel. But it is worth remembering that Jane Austen's other abbey, Donwell in *Emma*, is not intended to give rise to thoughts of terror or even of antiquity, except in so far as it is a place which befits the long-established gentility of the Knightleys.³

The generally accepted details in the foregoing account of the composition of *Northanger Abbey* have been challenged in two articles by Mr. C. S. Emden,⁴ who suggests that Jane Austen wrote 'a light satire of manners comprising occasional

¹ Printed with Jane Austen's letter in *Letters*, pp. 263-4.

² *Letters*, p. 484.

³ *Emma*, ed. David Lodge, World's Classics (1980), p. 323.

⁴ 'Northanger Abbey Re-Dated?', *Notes and Queries*, cxcv (1950), and 'The Composition of *Northanger Abbey*', *The Review of English Studies* xix (1968).

burlesque of the silly sentimental novel' about 1794 and rather clumsily added the Gothic element in 1798, introducing a few passages about *The Mysteries of Udolpho*¹ into the early part of the book as preparation for Henry Tilney's parody of the Gothic novel² and Catherine's adventures at Northanger. Since this argument is based on a critical observation about the novel, it must remain only a hypothesis, suspect in my view because it suggests that Jane Austen here worked in a technically crude way foreign to her usual practice – very different for example from the kind of recasting which she must have done to turn the epistolary *Elinor and Marianne* into *Sense and Sensibility*. But the argument is useful in raising the pertinent critical questions about the book's structure and the role of literary satire and burlesque in it.

The main unifying force of *Northanger Abbey*, as of all Jane Austen's novels, is its heroine. Catherine Morland is presented initially in such a way that Jane Austen can bring within her own and the reader's easy view most of the conventions of the fiction of the late eighteenth century. Here, in the matter of the character and portrayal of heroines, it would be artificial and mistaken to attempt a rigid distinction between the novel of sensibility and the Gothic novel: Mrs. Radcliffe's Emily is as sensitive and cultivated as any of the tribe of 'Julias and Louisas' of the sentimental novels of the 1770s which Henry Tilney has presumably also read.³ Jane Austen also draws on the theme, familiar to readers of Fanny Burney, of the young lady's entry into society with all the real and felt dangers and rewards involved in that process which the intricacies of etiquette and the ingenuities of plot can supply. In addition to these, the early part of *Northanger Abbey* makes plain its satire on certain clichés of the novel, such as the 'lucky overturn to introduce them to the hero'⁴ which does *not* happen on Catherine's journey to Bath with the Allens. In this way Jane Austen can make intermittent direct or indirect references to the fact that she is presenting Catherine in a novel – a form which, in an often-

¹ By Mrs. Radcliffe; ed. Bonamy Dobrée, Oxford English Novels (1966).

² pp. 124–6.

³ p. 83.

⁴ p. 6.

quoted passage,¹ she seems deliberately to over-extol as a humorous foil to the frequently implied ridicule of extravagant contrivances in the popular novel. This gently mocking preoccupation with the way in which she tells her story is a device which Jane Austen might have learned from Fielding, or even from Sterne, though her tone and manner remain her own. Mischievously but characteristically she uses it to make fun not only of the Gothic or the sentimental novel, but also of the overtly moral narrative of which there were many examples in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries; for at the end of *Northanger Abbey* Jane Austen points to the immediate causes of her happy ending and declares:

I leave it to be settled by whomsoever it may concern, whether the tendency of this work be altogether to recommend parental tyranny, or reward filial disobedience.²

The wide range of Jane Austen's awareness of contemporary fiction in *Northanger Abbey* is what one would expect from a knowledge of her sprightly and often miniature juvenilia; and indeed the book perpetuates some features of those early works such as the use of family jokes³ and the tendency to give an epigrammatic expression of a real state of affairs brought about by actions which the characters themselves would present in a different light, as when Isabella (consciously) and Catherine (unconsciously) 'set off immediately as fast as they could walk, in pursuit of the two young men'.⁴ It is also possible that Jane Austen did some actual reworking from her more ambitious early works: Mrs. Stanley, for example, in 'Catharine, or the Bower' speaks with a kind of ponderous emptiness⁵ which is not unlike some of Mrs. Allen's remarks, and there are other similarities between the same story and some conversations or situations in *Northanger Abbey*.

What was a new venture for Jane Austen in writing *Northanger Abbey* – and it is a characteristic which equally marks the

¹ p. 22. ² p. 205.

³ See the explanatory notes to pp. 1, 83 (n. 2).

⁴ p. 27.

⁵ *Minor Works*, ed. R. W. Chapman, p. 201.

work off from such parody as Barrett's *The Heroine*, which Jane Austen in 1814 found 'a delightful burlesque, particularly on the Radcliffe style'¹ – was the attempt to weave together the literary burlesque and a serious story leading to the marriage of Catherine Morland and Henry Tilney. It is important for the success of this attempt that Catherine's head should not be completely turned for a long, unbroken part of the narrative by her fondness for reading Gothic novels. Indeed, one may remark that the references to Catherine's actually reading Gothic novels are more sparing than might at first be supposed,² and that she mistakes the names of both the Lady Laurentini and M. St. Aubert³ from *The Mysteries of Udolpho*. In any case a girl who has already found *Sir Charles Grandison* 'very entertaining'⁴ is unlikely to have her literary taste vitiated for long: if Catherine is to enjoy Gothic novels it must eventually be, appropriately enough, with something like Henry's ardent suspension of disbelief. As it is, the attractions of the Gothic strike her most forcibly when the circumstances of her rapidly enlarging experience seem at Northanger to resemble the world of the Gothic novel – if not in the abbey's setting,⁵ at least in her room on the first night of her stay⁶ (a ludicrous episode which is a fine set-piece with a possible antecedent in Mrs. Radcliffe's *Romance of the Forest*),⁷ and again in the mystery which appears to surround General Tilney's relationship with his wife.⁸

The suspicions which Catherine weaves around the General's aversion to going to his late wife's room, and around the fact that when Mrs. Tilney died Eleanor was away from home, are of course the very stuff of the sensational novel. Either the General has been responsible for his wife's death, or she is secretly imprisoned, 'receiving from the pitiless hands of her husband a nightly supply of coarse food'⁹ – even the idiom and rhythm of the words prompted by Catherine's imagination here suggest

¹ *Letters*, pp. 376–7.

² Though in retrospect Catherine does blame her Bath reading for her delusion (p. 160).

³ See pp. 23, 25, 26, 62.

⁴ p. 25.

⁵ p. 127.

⁶ pp. 133–6.

⁷ See *Persuasion*, ed. R. W. Chapman, pp. 307–12.

⁸ pp. 143–4.

⁹ p. 150.

Gothic cliché. (What she suspects is no more melodramatic than Mr. Rochester's secret in *Jane Eyre*, which shows how long the Gothic element endured in English fiction.) In Henry's absence from Northanger, Catherine allows her mind to become feverishly possessed by her wild speculations – she tacitly leaps to the conclusion that all the General's children must have been away from home when Mrs. Tilney died or was imprisoned, and in mistakenly treating this assumption as fact she finds her theory further supported. She is eventually driven by her excitement to explore the fateful apartments on her own, so committing the only breach of etiquette of which she was really (as opposed to apparently) guilty in the novel. (In Bath the decent common sense of Catherine's upbringing had made her more sensitive to such matters than were the guardian Allens.) Her previous adventures with the chest and the laundry bill had ended only in bathos and the reflection 'Heaven forbid that Henry Tilney should ever know her folly!'¹ This of course is the kind of unobtrusive proleptic irony which Jane Austen habitually uses and which makes the rereading of her novels so rich in discovery. The scene in which Henry discovers her greater, her culpable folly is at once the climax of the literary burlesque – Henry's 'swift steps' on the stairs could in Radcliffian fashion so easily have been those of the General or of a menacing stranger – and of the courtship story. The scene which follows, as R. W. Chapman pointed out, 'vibrates with passion',² largely because of Jane Austen's unfailingly dramatic sense of dialogue. It also leads into the culmination of Henry's role as the mentor-hero of the novel; for he, now and in the succeeding chapter in which she receives her brother's letter, not merely (as he had done in Bath) shows Catherine a far greater knowledge of the world than she herself possesses, but, moderating his high-spirited address with something of Eleanor's tact, leads her to a greater understanding of herself. Jane Austen may have taken over the mentor-hero figure from Fanny Burney, who used him in *Evelina*, *Cecilia*, and *Camilla*, but in Henry Tilney she improves on her predecessor in several ways. His instruction is witty, whereas in

¹ p. 137.² *Jane Austen: Facts and Problems* (1948), p. 193.

Fanny Burney wit (of different kinds) is possessed only by the heroines and the vulgar; he acts from a feeling curiosity about Catherine's developing personality at least as much as from any dutiful chivalry, and is therefore a much more satisfactory and credible lover; he influences the character and not merely the circumstances of the heroine. Most significantly of all, he changes without inconsistency, his development as a character being intimately linked in Jane Austen's characteristic and skilful manner to Catherine's perception of him which (another improvement on Fanny Burney) grows as she discovers her love.

The core of the book, the relationship between Catherine and Henry, is thus surely executed and neatly integrated with the pattern of literary burlesque, and if the novel as a whole were on the same artistic level it would command even greater critical esteem. Jane Austen is less successful in the narrative structure, since, with the brilliant exception of Isabella's letter,¹ there is a loss of immediacy in the treatment of events concerning the Thorpes once Bath has been left behind. Less successful too is the handling of certain characters in relation to each other and to the plot: it is hard to accept that John Thorpe could seriously influence General Tilney, and even that Isabella should captivate the colourless and rather conventional James. The friendship between Catherine and Eleanor is well contrasted with that between Catherine and Isabella, the latter being the kind of sentimental acquaintance, a contract of mutual folly, which courtesy-book writers such as Hester Chapone and Hannah More warned against; it is, then, the more unsatisfactory to find Eleanor so lightly given in marriage to the noble writer of the laundry bill.² We appreciate the mockery of the over-tidy denouement; but Eleanor is not a figure for burlesque, and when Jane Austen goes on to attribute the General's consent to Henry's marriage to his satisfaction at Eleanor's, she comes perilously close to undermining her serious characters with the kind of contrivance she elsewhere parodies.

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¹ pp. 174-5.

² p. 204.

Jane Austen's readers have never wished that she had written less. Those who are familiar only with the six completed full-length novels are likely, therefore, to turn to her minor works with eager curiosity. Collectively, *Lady Susan*, *The Watsons*, and *Sanditon* tell us a good deal about the development of her art, confirming some of our impressions from the major novels, but hinting also of other possibilities in both techniques and themes; individually, each has its own points of particular interest.

The manuscript of *Lady Susan* exists in a fair copy, containing few alterations, made on paper with a watermark of 1805, but on the evidence (both internal and external) convincingly marshalled by Mr. B. C. Southam,¹ the actual composition – except perhaps for the Conclusion – was much earlier, probably in 1793–4. The maturity of conception, style, and narrative control are remarkable in an author merely eighteen or nineteen years old, but not more remarkable than familiarity with Jane Austen's even earlier work would have led one to expect.² And in two ways at least *Lady Susan* is paradoxically both characteristic of Jane Austen and yet unique in her work as we can now see it. She is interested in the consciousness of a guilty and dangerous woman elsewhere, but only in the creation of Lady Susan does she show us so complete a self-revelation of so complete a villain – a self-revelation indeed which forms the pitiless heart of the story. She experimented elsewhere too in writing epistolary fiction, but *Lady Susan* is the only example which has survived of her serious and completed attempts at the form.

Epistolary novels are capable of a curious effect, which can be experienced in reading *Lady Susan*. Correspondence in fiction, as in real life, combines intimacy with distance – a disconcerting pairing, and one which affects our response to Lady Susan herself. On the one hand we are given a clear insight into her ruthlessness, more memorably through her own letters than in the conventionally worded protests of Mrs. Vernon; on the

¹ *Jane Austen's Literary Manuscripts* (1964) pp. 45–7.

² See R. W. Chapman ed., *Minor Works*, (1954), rev. B. C. Southam (1975).

other hand, we can never be required to make the more complex acts of judgement when witnessing conduct that are required of us, for example, when considering Mary Crawford in *Mansfield Park*. This intrinsic limitation in the form, cutting Jane Austen off from what was to become one of her greatest and most distinctive strengths as a novelist, may well have played its part in her evident decision to round off the narrative rather peremptorily. The tone of her entry as narrator in the Conclusion mingles irony, impatience, and a sense of release.

There are other weaknesses. Those characters whose business is to receive letters rather than send them inevitably remain rather shadowy, or stock types of eighteenth-century satire. The fact that Frederica, Lady Susan's ill-used daughter, can write only one desperate letter provides pathos at the cost of precluding significant development or exploration of her interesting situation. But it would be unjust to dwell on shortcomings in *Lady Susan* when these are outweighed by strengths. The characterization of the brilliantly deceptive Lady Susan is subtle enough for her to add at least one twentieth-century critic to the specially pleading advocates she attracts within the story.¹ More remarkable still is the technical advance made by Jane Austen's handling of the epistolary form over that of many of her eighteenth-century predecessors. Whereas they often allow the epistolary novel to become much more like a diary-novel, in which the bulk of the letters are the confessional outpouring of a central character, Jane Austen uses the web-like nature of correspondence to reinforce the reader's interest in the timing and manœuvrings of the plot, and to heighten both suspense and irony. In short, *Lady Susan* shows great skill in construction. I think, though this admittedly is the kind of assertion which it is almost impossible to prove, that this deftness of construction is in part at least the result of Jane Austen's successful adaptation for the novel of what she had learned from eighteenth-century drama.

¹ Marvin Mudrick, *Jane Austen. Irony as Defense and Discovery* (1952), p. 138.

Finally, as always in Jane Austen, there is the quiet triumph of her realism. Each reader will have his own sense of what this entails, but, in keeping with what has been said about the authenticity of the handling of correspondence in *Lady Susan*, one may point to the range of styles (from Frederica's artlessness tinged with melodrama to Sir Reginald De Courcy's remonstrance with his son in tones echoed from Lord Chesterfield) and also to the sparing use of direct speech except in the climactic Letter 24. In her later fiction, Jane Austen avoids the limitations imposed by a complete commitment to the epistolary form while retaining to excellent effect the occasional use of self-revealing letters from the pen of a Lucy Steele or a Frank Churchill.

If *Lady Susan* was brought somewhat artificially to an end, *The Watsons* and *Sanditon* were both set aside, though for different reasons, while still incomplete. The former was begun in 1804 and abandoned apparently in the low period following the death of Jane Austen's father in January 1805; her own final illness compelled her to stop work on *Sanditon* in March 1817 after just two months of fairly rapid composition.

The Watsons, with its heroine called Emma and her ailing father, has sometimes been seen as a kind of prototype for *Emma*. But it is nearer the mark to say that it has rather obvious points of similarity with all of Jane Austen's completed novels: the work is so characteristic that if the manuscript had simply appeared from nowhere there would have been no doubt of its authorship.

Like all of Jane Austen's heroines at some stage or another, Emma Watson is both surrounded by people and yet in a sense very much alone. Her separateness does not come from any introspective insecurities, however; she is quite free from any private need to fashion a change in perspective of herself or the world. In the sentence with which the fragment breaks off we are told that 'Emma was of course un-influenced' by an argument put to her in her own interest, and this is the keynote of her character. Unlike almost all the other figures in the novel, she is consistently uninfluenced by considerations of selfishness or snobbery or habit or predetermined motive. In other words

she is one of those good people in Jane Austen's world who are not miserable even when their circumstances are pitiable, who exist – though without priggishness – as a force for the improvement of others, and who are destined to be led through the dance of the plot to a deservedly happy fulfilment.

So much might in principle have been said of the heroines created by many novelists who were roughly contemporary with Jane Austen. In practice, Jane Austen typically excels in her ability to transmit such ideals through memorable little incidents or exchanges of dialogue. *The Watsons* has its share of these, for example in the scene in which Emma offers to dance with the ten-year-old Charles Blake,¹ or the conversation in which she tells Lord Osborne that 'Female Economy will do a great deal my Lord, but it cannot turn a small income into a large one' and incidentally improves his manner by the sober justice of her remarks.² In both instances Emma is promptly guided by her honest assessment of things as they really are – a principle simple to understand but difficult to follow, and almost a definition of the way of life to which Jane Austen's heroines aspire.

Jane Austen's sister Cassandra told her nieces something of the intended outcome of *The Watsons*: Emma was 'to decline an offer of marriage from Lord Osborne, and much of the interest of the tale was to arise from Lady Osborne's love for Mr. Howard, and his counter affection for Emma, whom he was finally to marry.'³ Readers have often assumed that 'Lady Osborne' here means Miss Osborne, and this would fit the usual pattern of Jane Austen's plots very well, leaving the middle-aged Lady Osborne perhaps to play an interfering role like that of Lady Catherine de Bourgh in *Pride and Prejudice*. But it is possible that the names are not confused and that the 'very handsome' Lady Osborne was to use 'all the Dignity of Rank'⁴ to attempt to secure the semi-dependent Mr. Howard. The recent completion of *The Watsons* by 'Another' follows this assumption, though without attempting to bring it to the foreground of the novel.

¹ pp. 289–90

² p. 303.

³ *Minor Works* p. 363.

⁴ p. 288.

In style, as well as in plot and characterization, it seems likely that *The Watsons* would have stood comparison with Jane Austen's other novels if she had finished it. It is true that there are some passages of rather tired writing between the high points of incident and dialogue, but the manuscript shows that the work was being thoroughly revised and improved during composition, and there are examples of the happiest kind of conjunction between Jane Austen's powers of observation and phrasing. Most readers will recall Nanny's bustling preparations for the Watsons' unfashionably early dinner, and will delight in such gently satiric touches as Tom Musgrave's prospect of being 'famously snug' with a 'Barrel of Oysters' and the old mare's halting the carriage by force of habit at the milliner's.¹

That *The Watsons* is unfinished is at least a loss to Jane Austen's admirers, but that *Sanditon* is unfinished is a major loss to English fiction as a whole. Its destination seems as mysterious as that of *The Watsons* seems settled, but what are unmistakable and exciting are the signs of fresh developments in Jane Austen's work. E. M. Forster was perhaps the first to point out a new kind of focus when he wrote that 'Sanditon gives out an atmosphere, and also exists as a geographic and economic force'.² Our sense of this has been sharpened by the adoption of *Sanditon* as the title - an accidental sharpening in one way, because the family tradition is that Jane Austen was going to call the novel *The Brothers*, but not so accidental if you take the view that it was clearly the stress on the resort and its development which suggested *Sanditon* as an appropriate title to later members of the Austen family.

The promotion of seaside resorts, especially on grounds of health, gathered momentum during the eighteenth century, but development on the south coast ('Sanditon' is in Sussex) reached a new and feverish peak in Regency England. Jane Austen perfectly catches the complex of attitudes and activities involved in this - the financial speculation, the aesthetics of property

¹ pp. 302-4, 294, 281.

² In a review of *Sanditon* in *Nation*, xxxvi (1925), reprinted in *Abinger Harvest* (1936).

development, the spirited patriotism engendered by the defeat of Napoleon, the zeal for the organization of leisure, the language and strategy of advertising. If *Sanditon* had been finished, the English novel might not have had to wait until the early Victorian period for a significant extension of the work begun in *Mansfield Park* of diagnosing major forces and movements in society as it reflected the spirit of the age.

Yet the signs too are that Jane Austen was achieving this without abandoning the tried and known strengths of her work. There would have been – there already is – a highly skilful grafting of the new on to the old. The carriage accident with which the novel opens, for example, is consistent with Jane Austen's habitual verisimilitude, but provides an impulsive headlong start to the narrative which fits the brisk mood of the enthusiastic Mr. Parker and which invests the scene with at least the potential of being seen as a symbol for his risk-taking in the development of Sanditon.¹ Financially as well as physically, he might be expected to sustain injuries but to survive.

There is Jane Austen's customary use of distinctive idiom to indicate character, most obviously in Sir Edward Denham with his sensibility paraded in the latest extravagant inkhorn terms,² but present too in Lady Denham's curiously starched informality and in the fussing of the little clutch of hypochondriac Parkers.

There is characteristically ample ground for moral reflection and debate, notably between the claims of the traditional rural way of life of the Heywoods and the modern commercial spirit of Mr. Parker. This spirit may or (more probably) may not be able to join forces successfully with the financial world of the Denhams, more conscious of inheritance than of investment. Finally there is the satisfying way in which the domestic and social side of the novel is linked with the theme of Sanditon's

¹ It is suggestive that the first sentence of the manuscript shows that Jane Austen replaced the colourless 'on quitting' with 'being induced by Business to quit'.

² Though further revision may have toned down Sir Edward's speech. It would be uncharacteristic of Jane Austen, for example, to retain two uses of the phrase 'illimitable ardour' in such proximity (pp. 352, 357).

development: Mrs. Parker, like George Eliot's Mrs. Tulliver in *The Mill on the Floss*, is clearly a hostage to the outcome of her husband's financial dealings, and there is a neat irony whereby the Parkers' status in society is dependent on the operations of business while these in turn are dependent on the operations of society, with its network for recommendations of Sanditon and its lodgings.

Some of the characters seem immutably fixed, in Jane Austen's best early caricature manner, though the roles in the plot of, say, Sir Edward Denham and Arthur Parker remain open. But other characters are more complex and have ample potential for further development and revelation. Clara Brereton is potentially at least as interesting as Jane Fairfax in *Emma*, and as with Jane Fairfax the reader could be kept guessing for many more chapters yet about what kind of explicable whole could bind together the puzzling fragments of our glimpses of her. And Charlotte Heywood seems admirably fitted to be one of Jane Austen's heroines: we do not learn enough to feel sure of the precise course of her future, but we can see that she has a many-sided receptivity to experience and a compulsion to interiorize it in a way which involves making and remaking judgments about both her world and herself. Taken together, these qualities guarantee that her further development by Jane Austen would have been of absorbing interest.

Then there is the style of *Sanditon*, bracing and impressionistic, with new accents to sound. It is true that the effect of this partly depends on some idiosyncrasies in Jane Austen's manuscript, especially in her punctuation and her use of contractions, and that many of these would presumably have disappeared in a final printed version; but even after allowance has been made for this, one is left with the sense of a new adventurousness in Jane Austen's style which is bent on exploring the possibilities of giving features of syntax, rhythm and image a telling and dramatic appropriateness to characterization and theme.¹

¹ For some detailed analysis of the style of *Sanditon*, see R. W. Chapman, *Jane Austen: Facts and Problems* (1948) p. 209 and B. C. Southam, *Jane Austen's Literary Manuscripts* (1964) pp. 124-9.