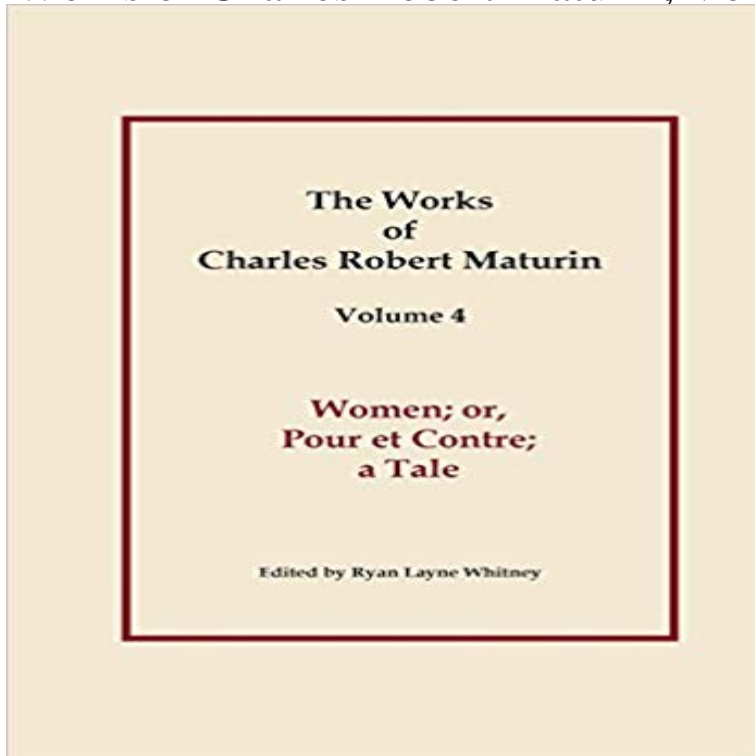


Works of Charles Robert Maturin, Vol. 4: Women



Women; or, Pour et Contre, was Maturin's fourth novel, published in 1818. A work of deep emotional intensity, Maturin wished to concentrate on common life. But he does so with uncommon psychological penetration for its time, while detailing the painful romantic attractions of two fascinating women—Eva, a deeply religious and innocent girl, and the intellectually superior, talented, and popular Zaira—to the same man, De Courcy. While also satirizing evangelical Christianity (with more good humor than he treats Catholicism in his most famous work, *Melmoth the Wanderer*) and the intellectual pretensions of high culture and society, it is, to quote Alaric Watts, its profound and philosophic melancholy, its terrible researches into the deepest abysses of the human heart, and its fine characterization of the two women, that makes *Women; or, Pour et Contre* a novel second only to *Melmoth*, and in many ways superior to it, while demonstrating the wide literary range of this remarkable Irish novelist.

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