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Consider Emma as a domestic and social novel
or, comedy or, fiction.

Or,

Bring out the basic feature of the novel Emma.

Introduction — Emma is Jane Austen's best and most misunderstood work. Here in, the scholar novelist had reached high perfection in workmanship. About Emma, she has herself written, "I am very strongly haunted with the idea that to those readers, who have preferred Pride and Prejudice, it will appear inferior in wit and to those who have preferred Mansfield Park very inferior in good sense." The novels of Jane Austen provide interesting

social history of the country life among the upper middle classes in southern England by the end of the 18th century. When we read her novels, Emma is very interesting and instructive. It reflects the manner of the country gentry in England by the end of 18th century. She never gives us a full picture of even the narrow segment of society to which her novels are confined.

Emma as a social novel —

Emma written between 1814 and 1815, was published in 1815. The art which makes common place, characters and incidents, interesting and felicity of expression, which gives a keen edge to her wit and humour are among the great gifts of Jane Austen and these are obviously revealed in Emma. There are certain things about the social life of Miss Austen's day which we wish to revive. For instance there was the old practice of the mourning which compelled Miss Anne Elliot to wear black for a second cousin's wife whom she had never seen. There was a sense of social contempt for sport commons in the 18th century. Her remarks about the sporting activities of Sir John Meddleton and others are by no means complimentary. One other ~~feature~~ feature of contemporary social life reflected in Emma is the significance given to Bath as the popular resort of the fashionable and pleasure seeking world. Mrs. Elton eloquent in recounting the pleasures of Bath and is

presumptuous enough to offer to introduce to the contemporary fashionable society.

All that is related in Austen's novels is of the ordinary social intercourse of the gentry with the emphasize of the part play by woman. In Emma, a peaceful story of village folk has been quittedly narrated. We find the greatest excitement in the peaceful life of Highburg has been taken up by the novelist and there is the description of receiving visits, having dinner parties or, card parties at home etc. A ball dance at the village-in and picnics like the one-two box-hill are beautifully described in Emma.

In Emma, we are told of people calling at the parsonage and of significant since taking place in parsonage parlours like the one at Hunsford. Mr. Elton is described as preaching sermons, attending Parish meeting and visiting a poor man cottage. Her clergy man in general are village clergy men.

Emma as a domestic novel —

Jane Austen's object in writing her novel was to paint pictures of domestic life in country - villages. She considered three or four families in a country - village as a very thing to work on. Selecting a village or ~~cont~~ country house as the scene of her story, she set out to paint for us her pictures

of domestic life. In doing so, she has succeeded in giving us some idea of social and domestic life of the country people of her times. Austen found it suitable to take her heroine Emma Woodhouse or other heroines of her different novels to Bath or London occasionally but the rural background is always preserved. The motive of Emma like that of her other novels is to get people engaged and married. Every body in Emma is busy about this important business and everybody blunders. Emma supposes Mr. Elton to be in love with Harriet, Harriet to be in love with Frank Churchill, and Jane Fairfax to be in love with Dixon, and Mr. Knightley to have some interest in Jane. Jane Austen watched the comedy of human life without ever getting out of her parlour, found it amusing as well as moving, and she has succeeded in painting it as seen through the eyes of a keenly observant woman.

Conclusion — Thus, Emma is considered as more than a didactic treatise in which sense is exalted and sensibility is denounced. There is the narration of self-deception in which Emma is finally awakened to self-recognition. With self-realisation comes the realisation that she is in love with Mr. Knightley and it brings her tremendous happiness.