

## NEXT CHANGE AT YOUR LIBRARY



ARE you a Jane Austen enthusiast? I certainly am, and I like to think that the filming of *Pride and Prejudice* has probably brought (to mix metaphors), a lot of new fans into the fold. Miss Austen would surely have been extremely amused to trace the renewed interest in her works to Laurence Olivier's sex-appeal.

*Pride and Prejudice* is the Jane Austen novel one should read first. You can't help enjoying it, and then you naturally want to read all the others. The charm of Jane Austen for me lies in the all-pervading calm of her plots and settings. They restore your sense of proportion. I find them particularly efficacious after a day spent in rushing madly from place to place, and getting excited over things that don't really matter. It's such a change to find oneself in a world where the people are all sure of their bread and butter, and where even the cads have perfect manners.

Like me, you probably read *Emma* at school and loathed it. But when you get older, you can be far more tolerant towards Emma's silliness. Even now, however, I feel that Emma escaped rather too easily, considering the harm she so nearly inflicted on both Harriet and Jane Fairfax. Jane Austen herself,

when working on *Emma* said she was writing of a heroine whom she alone would like.

All those who felt, when reading *Emma*, that Jane Fairfax did not get a square deal, will welcome Naomi Royde-Smith's *Jane Fairfax*. Mrs. Royde-Smith always felt that Jane was the real heroine of *Emma*, but that Miss Austen's rigid standards of behaviour stood in the way of making her and her secret engagement the centre of the tale. For the lovely Jane was not, alas, completely straightforward. In building up her heroine's early life as the adopted daughter of the philandering Colonel Campbell, Naomi Royde-Smith has introduced characters from Miss Austen's other novels, and from the works of Thackeray and Fanny Burney. It is rather amusing to find Mrs.

Lydia Wickham as the gay divorcee with designs on Colonel Campbell, and to stumble over little Bingleys playing with their Darcy cousins.

It would have been so easy to introduce jarring notes in a book that covers what is, to so many, sacred ground, but *Jane Fairfax* should not offend even the most bigoted Austen lover. The modern authorship is revealed, however, by its preoccupation with clothes (Miss Austen's heroines never noticed what they wore), and by the interest shown by the characters in events outside their immediate sphere. Jane Fairfax would, I think, have been less concerned with Napoleon's threatened invasion had not Naomi Royde-Smith written her book in 1940.

—M.I.

## End Rheumatism While You Sleep

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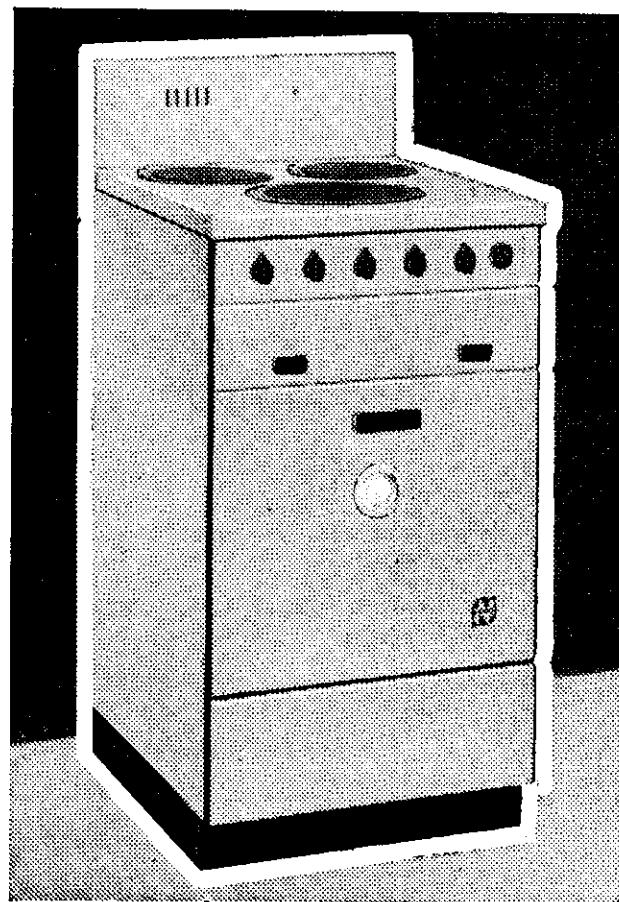
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## WELLINGTON'S "APPLE QUEEN"

"AUCKLAND, then Rotorua," said Miss "Bunnie" Symon, when we asked her where she proposed to spend her fifty-guinea honeymoon. "I've never been to Auckland, and all I know about Rotorua comes from guide-books."

As we reported last week, Miss Symon is one of the four winners of the Apple Bride competition, conducted by the Commercial Broadcasting Service. Barring accidents, by the time this appears she will be Mrs. Arthur McGreevey. She is a typical New Zealand girl. Born in Oamaru, she was educated at Waitaki Girls' High School. But "Bunnie" wanted a wider life than was offered by her home-town, so she came north with a friend, determined to see as much of the North Island as she could by working her way from place to place.

Nursing at Pukeora Sanatorium, serving in a chain store, waitressing in a hotel are some of the jobs she has tackled. Until her marriage she was tending a cigarette machine in a Petone factory. Hers was too bright a personality to hide in a chain production of a big factory, however, and she confesses that she is happier where she can meet people and see fresh faces every day. She met her husband during one of his trips to Wellington. He is a transport driver for a Hastings firm, so after the honeymoon they will live in Hastings. There's a house all ready there for them.



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