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Question: - Briefly discuss the style of 'Lycidas'.

Answer: - 'Lycidas' is an important poem of the early period of Milton's poetic career. It therefore illustrates some of the characteristics of his early poetry. But at the same time it supplies us with instances of those features which are characteristic of Milton's style in general. Generally, Milton has got two kinds of style: (i) the classical style and (ii) the simple and beautiful style. 'Lycidas' is a fine illustration of both kinds of style. In the words of Prof. Caramian, it is "an example of supreme perfection of style, imagery and versification." There are lines in which Milton's classical style is reflected. There are allusions both classical and Biblical. References have been made to the seat of Jove 'Sister of the Sacred Well' and rough Satyrs and fauns. Milton alludes to the

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Thomas Gray (1716 - 1771)

" The curfew tolls the
Knell of parting day;
The lowing herd wind
slowly o'er the sea;
The plowman home ward
plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to
darkness and to me.
Now fades the glimm-
ering landscape on the
sight,
And all the air a sole-
mn stillness holds,
save where the beetle
wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings
lull the distant falds."

So begins "the best known poem in the English language", a poem full of the gentle melancholy which marks all early romantic poetry. It should be read entire, as a perfect model of its kind. Life of Gray - The author of the famous "Elegy" is the most scholarly and well-

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'nuptial song' at the marriage of the Lamb as given in 'Revelation'. References to the stories 'my 'Hybrides', 'Alpheus' and 'fountain Arethuse' reflect the learning of the poet. But there are lines in the poem where Milton rivals even the Romantic poets. He has got a rich evocative imagination and with the help of the melody and magic of words he can make things appealing. He is good at the use of poetic devices like a literati- on, personification, similes and metaphors. Alliteration can be noted in expressions like 'swart star sparsely looks' and 'flames in the forehead'. The cowslips are personified and described as flowers drooping their heads in a pens- ive mood. A living image should be noted in the lines: "The air was calm, and on the level brine sleek Penope with all

names as in the line:

"LOOKS toward Hamanias
and Bayona's hold!"
The result is, to quote from
Cazemian, "a marvel of
liquid blended harmony, wh-
ence monotony has been
expelled!"

Milton's style is thus the
vehicle of a cultured and
cultivated mind. It is the
expression of the loftiest tho-
ughts and the sublimest sen-
timents. "His name", says
Peleish, "has become the
mark, not of a biography or
theme, but of a style, the
most distinguished in poetry."
Three qualities distinguish
Milton's style - opulent all-
usiveness, intense evocative
power and wonderful melody.

The end. //

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