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Date: 22.01.22 "The Rivals"

Question: Discuss the title of the play.

Answer: 'The Rivals' is a comedy of situation and intrigue far excellence because the action of the play is developed through a number of striking situations, revealing character and because it seeks to rouse interests of the audience in secret amour for the love of a woman among several sets of lovers who consider themselves as rivals which is the central theme of the play. It is a comedy because its main business is to expose the follies and foibles of its characters and to hold them up to ridicule. It is also farcical in its aim, that is, to excite laughter of audience by exaggerations of the whims and traits of characters to an absurd degree.

The central theme of the play is that there is quadrangular rivalry among four sets of

dedged master of what Matthew Arnold calls 'the grand style'. In sustained ~~and~~ majesty of thought and diction he is unrivalled. His descriptive power, too, is astonishing, as we can learn for ourselves by turning for example to the scenes in Hell in the opening books of 'Paradise Lost' and while he was entirely lacking in the true dramatic sense, the magnificent debate in the Council of the fallen angels and the whole conduct of the temptation of Eve, show an extraordinary insight into motive and character. Though in theory an epic poem is supposed to be quite impersonal, Milton's epic is throughout instinct with the spirit of the man himself. Harrow he often is, he is often hard and austere. But there is an intensity of individuality

in everything he writes which is singularly impressive and the loftiness of his temper and passionate moral earnestness make us feel as we read that we are indeed in the presence of one 'whose soul was like a star, and dwelt apart'.

The end.

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