

Give a critical account of the members of the I Spectator club:-

The Spectator Club has six members, each representing a particular walk of life. Together, they constitute a cross-section of the English society of Steele's time.

The most important member of the club is Sir Roger de Coverley who is descended from an ancient family in Worcestershire. He is disappointed in love, which makes him sullen and gloomy. However, he overcomes this depression and regains his original cheerfulness soon. But he loses interest in dressing up attractively. He wears only the kind of coat which he wore when he was in love with the widow. Many fashions appeared and disappeared but Sir Roger did not care to follow any of them. He is very optimistic. He is a lover of mankind. He does not stand on any formality. He is very friendly with the servants, calling them by their names and rubbing shoulders with them. He is a capable village magistrate. He presides over quarter-sessions and makes a mark in settling disputes. His interpretations of the Game Act fill the villagers with the surprise. In reality, the Game Act is a simple document and no great intelligence is necessary to analyse it. That the villagers marvel at his analysis only proves their low IQ.

Next in importance to Sir Roger is an unnamed student of law, studying at 9. It is only because of parental pressure he has joined the law college. He is interested in drama than in law. Instead of studying precedents caused by the passions, he studies the passions pictured in dramas. He scorns the experts Littleton and Coke and devotes all his to a study of the epoch-making Greek literary critics, Aristotle and Longinus. His father, wishing to test his legal knowledge, seeks his advice how to solve disputes relating to marriage, leases, tenures, etc... The law student ably solves the situation by employing a qualified attorney to answer the questions raised by his father. The law student is a dandy. Gaily dressed, he goes to taverns or theatres in the evenings. When he is in a theatre, actors perform well to the satisfaction not only of the law student but of the entire audience. The behaviour of the law student shows how it is impossible for parents to arrest the natural tendencies of their children.

Sir Andrew Fairport represents the mercantile community. He is a merchant who as his name indicates, believes in free trade. He says that restrictions should not be imposed on traders. They should be allowed to cross

all seas to establish business contacts with foreign countries. Freeport holds that the best way of expanding the British empire is not war but international trade. England could like an octopus spread its tentacles all over the world by increasing its exports. Wealth could be made to flow into England from foreign countries. Freeport is a business tycoon. His ships carrying British goods ply to all countries. Though fabulously wealthy, he is not wasteful. He believes in conservation of resources. He acts in accordance with the adage 'A penny saved is a penny got'. He is gifted with 'natural unaffected eloquence'. It is a pleasure to listen to him.

Captain Sentry is a representative of the British military. He has proved his prowess by participating in all major battles. Yet, he has not been promoted because he is too modest to cringe before his superiors and ask them to promote him. However, he blames only himself for his lack of push and self-assertion. He resigns from service. Sentry has reconciled himself to his lot. His life shows to what extent nepotism and favoritism have eaten into the vitals of the British army. Like Freeport dillydallying on his business expeditions, Sentry

2

The style of the epic, too, is maintained throughout a sublime level.

Milton's epic belongs to that class of epic known as the literary or the artificial and is distinguished from national epics like Homer's. Milton at one time thought of writing a purely national poem; but he gave up the idea because he felt that its appeal would be limited to the one particular country to which the hero belonged. Therefore he chose the story of the fall of man, being sure that it was a subject of universal appeal. He has made use of all the conventions of epic, as for instance, an invocation for guidance and inspiration at the beginning of the poem and starting the poem in the middle of the story rather than at the beginning.

The speeches that are introduced in Paradise Lost are themselves a sufficient proof of the epic grandeur of the poem. Long speeches of a majestic cast are popularly employed by epic poets, and like them, Milton has taken care to suit the speeches to the characters of the speakers — Satan, Gabriel, Adam, Eve and others. Satan's speeches show him always to be proud, unyielding evil, one who can find joy in destruction. Gabriel is the intelligent, upright and loyal angel that we would expect one of his position and responsibility to be. Adam and Eve are pictured as a loving couple who are distinguished from each other finely in the lines:

For contemplation he and valour formed
For softness she and sweet attractive grace.

The use of long-tailed or elaborate similes where the similes are carried beyond the point of comparison, so that the objects brought in for the sake of comparison are described in great detail, is also a well-known convention in great epics.

Such similes not only serve to illustrate ideas, but also to lend the necessary dignity to the epics. Milton has made an excellent use of such similes. It may even be said that Milton has surpassed Homer in his use of similes. Milton was the greatest scholar of the time and could draw on an immensely rich treasure-house of knowledge - from history as well as literature, ancient and modern. Paradise Lost, Book IV, has a number of such similes to show, notably those where we have references to Asmodeus, the fair field of Enna, the sweet grove of Daphne, the Nyseian isle and Pandora.

The real greatness of Paradise Lost consists in the purpose that it avows in the opening lines of the poem. Milton's object in writing it was "to justify the ways of God to Man". He has succeeded in this object and this places his epic in a unique position. All other epic poets have only tried to glorify some national hero, while Milton is alone in holding up for himself so great an ideal,

2