

B. A. II (Hons.) English  
Paper III (Drama)

The Rivals

Topic-Character Appraisal of Captain Jack Absolute:-

Captain Jack Absolute is an exceptionally confident hero of R. B. Sheridan's comedy of manners, The Rivals. His father, Sir Anthony Absolute, is a very prosperous and affluent baronet. Jack Absolute is a captain serving in the British Army. In fact, he is the central character in the play. The main plot of it moves around his character.

Captain Absolute is a highly romantic and sensible lover. He is bold, fashionable and well-mannered youth. As a gallant and dashing man, he has fallen in love with Lydia Languish, the most beautiful and renowned of the rivals. He is inspired and forced by the unique nature, etiquette and behaviour of her to reveal that he is also a poor English gentleman in 'impersonation'. It is a matter of remarkable observation that he forces him to conceal his actual love for Lydia and his deepest introduction and disposition from her above sweet heart, Lydia, whom she loves above his trivial life.

Captain Absolute is a very pragmatic and real character in this play. He is not ready to get in love with Lydia and thus lose her close with Lydia and Mrs. Malaprop's wedding against her aunt Mrs. Malaprop's



Wishes, His <sup>2</sup> originality doesn't agree to the proposal of Lydia for elopement because he wants to keep both Lydia as well as his future. His broad and superb common sense in love is an explicit contrast to that of Faulkland, the hero of the subplot of the Rivals, whose sweet heart is Julia, the cousin of Lydia. Captain Absolute says to Faulkland, "I am not a lover and a romantic one too, yet do I carry everywhere with me such a confounded jarrago of doubts, fears, hopes, wishes, etc."

Captain Absolute is cautious of concealing his real identity from his sweet heart pretending and disguising him to get her enchantment increase more and more in the shape of Beverley than that of Captain Absolute. Thus he throws dust into the eyes of Lydia as well as her aunt, Mrs. Malabrop. She is made believe by Captain Absolute that ~~Eng~~ Ensign Beverley is quite a different man. ~~where~~ Ultimately, he succeeds in deceiving both niece and aunt. And when

the revelation of his real identity comes, he finds himself in a very critical situation while has to face with exceptional mental coolness and unlimited courage.

Captain Absolute is a hero of strange presence of mind in every disposition, and even in his troubles. He is a very shrewd lover. He gives his real introduction to Mrs. Malaprop and to Lydia as poor Ensign Beverley whom she likes and admires. She does not render his love towards ~~Cap~~ the hero as Captain Absolute. As a great romantic lover, he says to Lydia in view of keeping her in pleasant and delightful humour, "Bring no portion to me but thy love. It will be generous in you Lydia, for well you know, it is the only dowry, your poor Beverley can repay."

In the duel, he muffled up his face and changes his voice and also his name as Saunderson to escape his stern father. He becomes successful in the duel with Lucius and Bob Acres. Lydia languish accept him as her real suitor and life-partner when he appears in the duel in the disguised form of Ensign Beverley.

Captain Absolute has unique and strong self-confidence. In a conversation with him, he answers his father that he is the son of Sir Anthony's wife and that he actually believes himself to be his son. He talks with his father like a dare devil.



He says to <sup>4</sup> Mrs. Malaprop that he is her most affectionate and honourable adviser. He will feel very proud and glorious to call himself her affectionate nephew by marrying her niece, Lydia. In my opinion, Captain Absolute is a sound judge of everybody's character. He finds his father affectionate and authoritative. He never looks ~~and~~ ridiculous like Lucie and Bob Acres. He is never avengeful and mischievous.

Captain Absolute has been portrayed in such a way that the father-son relationship appears to be interesting even in the confrontations. It can be concluded that Captain Absolute takes advantage of Lydia's romantic disposition. He tricks ~~to~~ even to his father in romance. He uses charm, artifice and wrong deeds to achieve his motive.