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classmate
Date _____
Page _____

B.A. Part II Hons Eng.
Paper II.

Q. Consider the justice of Dr. Johnson's criticism of Lycidas' "Passion runs not after remote allusions and obscure opinions".

Ans. Dr. Johnson contends that elegy should not embody the genuine feeling of sorrow which should be its keynote. Lycidas fails as an elegy because of its obvious insincerity of feeling - its lack of true passion of sorrow. Besides, it is full of remote allusion and obscure opinions. "Where there is leisure for fiction there is little grief."

It is true that the poet does not give expression to the genuine expression of sorrow.

(2). 9.2.24

classmate

Date _____

Page _____

✓ This was not possible because Lycidas was only a junior contemporary of Milton at college and degree of intimacy between them was admittedly not of this kind felt by Tennyson at the death of Arthur. The real reason for the composition of ~~Arthur~~ Lycidas was the death of the aspiring brotherpoet and the poet (Milton) anxiety to write some ~~poem~~ elegy. Besides, it is essential that an elegy should be invariably the expression of some great personal grief, and that Milton did not intend Lycidas to be so! (Goggin). The expression of feeling in an elegy need not be of intense sorrow.