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**S. No 2 B.A.Part-1 English (Hons) Topic: *The Rape of the Lock*:
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The Rape of the Lock as a mock epic

The Rape of the Lock is a masterpiece of mock heroic poem. The mockery of the epic is as old as the epic itself. So Pope was doing nothing new, but he was doing what he had already done before with far greater completeness, proportion, delicacy and wit. Apart from the general mockery of the epic form and substance-its epic manner with its invocation its simile and its subject matter ; and apart from all these there is a mockery of a scene or a detail or a certain comment or speech in the person of the poet.

The epic is usually a long poem but *The Rape of the Lock* is short. The story of the epic covers years that of *The Rape of the Lock* is of hours. The gods of the epic are stupendous creatures, Pope's sylphs are tiny. In this poem, no pains are spared, no profusion of ornament, no splendour of poetic diction to set off , and furthermore, in this poem the little is made great and the great is little. You hardly know whether to laugh or weep. It is the triumph of insignificance, the apotheosis of foppery and folly.

It is remarkable for its display of dazzling wit and fancy. It expresses in the most the sentiments characteristic of the age. Its language is the distilled essence of drawing room conversation. It has the boldness, the brilliance and the rapidity of movement of that conversation. Pope himself has declared that he never showed more skill in the handling of the heroic couplet, or greater perfection or correctness as an artist with words.

Ever since, the poem has remained a classic of the mock-epic, as well as an epitome of the times. A reading of the poem recreate of the dead age of the Augustan. It is undisputedly considered an example of the perfection of the mock heroic poem.