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### **Remarks On The Life and Writings Of Dr. Jonathan Swift, Dean of St. Patrick's, Dublin**

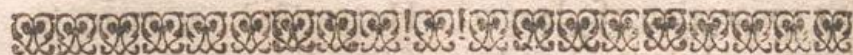
**Orrery, John Boyle of**

**London, 1752**

A character of the Earl of Peterborough.

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## LETTER XVIII.

SUCH a confusion, such a mixture of verse, prose, politics, letters, similes, wit, trifles, and *polite conversation*, are thrown into the sixth volume, that I know not in what manner to treat it, or what particular part to recommend to your perusal. The poetry, the similes, and the trifles are not worth your attention. Of the letters, the two from the earl of PETERBOROUGH to Mr. POPE are short, but excellent in their kind. The others, I mean those of the Dean, and of Mr. POPE, have much less merit, or at least are much less agreeable. Lord PETERBOROUGH'S wit is easy and unaffected. At the time when he wrote those two letters, he had hung up his helmet, and his buckler, and was retired to his plough, and his wheelbarrow, wearied of courts, and disgusted with statesmen. He had made a most considerable figure in his day. His character was amiable and uncommon. His life was a continued series of variety. In his public and private conduct he differed from most men. He had visited all climates, but had staid in none. He was a citizen of the world. He conquered and maintained armies without money. His actions and expressions were peculiar to himself. He was of a vivacity  
superiour



superiour to all fatigue, and his courage was beyond any conception of danger. He verified, in many instances, whatever has been said of romantic heroes. He seems to have been fixed only in his friendships and moral principles. He had a true regard and affection for SWIFT and POPE. The Dean, in a short copy of verses \*, has described him in a very particular manner, but so justly, that the four last stanzas will give a most perfect, and compleat idea of Lord PETERBOROUGH's person and military virtues,

" A *skeleton* in outward figure,  
 " His meagre corps, though full of vigour,  
 " Would halt behind him were it bigger.

" So wonderful his expedition,  
 " When you have not the least suspicion,  
 " He's with you like an apparition.

" Shines in all climates like a star,  
 " In senates bold, and fierce in war,  
 " A land commander, and a tar.

" Heroic actions early bred in,  
 " Ne'er to be match'd in modern reading,  
 " But by his name-sake CHARLES of Sweden.

\* Vol. II. Page 222.

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## 138 REMARKS ON THE LIFE

The *Publick Spirit of the Whigs* is a pamphlet in answer to the *Crisis* written by Sir RICHARD STEELE, but it contains such acute satyr against the nobility of Scotland, that in an advertisement printed before it, we are told, "All the Scotch lords then in London went in a body to complain against the author, and the consequence of that complaint was a proclamation offering a reward of three hundred pounds to discover him." It was written in the year 1712, by the consent, if not the encouragement of the ministers of that æra. In the style and conduct, it is one of the boldest, as well as one of the most masterly tracts that SWIFT everwrote. And I cannot help again observing, that on whatever topic he employs his pen, the subject which he treats of, is always so excellently managed, as to seem to have been the whole study, and application of his life: so that he appears, the greatest master through a greater variety of materials, than perhaps have been discussed by any other author.

The *Bishop of Salisbury* [Dr. BURNET] is the next antagonist whom SWIFT attacks in single combat. I can give you no better idea of this work, than by a quotation from the tract itself, which is called, *A Preface to the Bishop of Salisbury's introduction to the third volume of the History of the Reformation of the Church of England*. Towards the latter end of the Pamphlet \* SWIFT says,

"However he [THE BISHOP] thanks GOD, there are many among us who stand in the breach: I believe there

\* Page 89.

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