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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

The introduction.

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LETTER I.

To the Honourable

HAMILTON BOYLE,

Student of *Christ-Church* College
in OXFORD.

My dear HAMILTON,

I Want no motive to gratify your request of hearing often from me, especially as your letters always give me a particular pleasure. I read them over not only with the fondness of a father, but with the affection of a friend. They revive in my mind, the agreeable hours which attend a studious life, in that elegant seat of the muses, from whence they are dated. In such a situation, amidst the best authors, and in a free conversation with men of letters, you will be able to adorn your mind, and give it a serene and a just way of thinking: And I shall have the happiness not only of seeing you forming yourself every day for public life, but rendered more capable of exerting your faculties,

B

with

REMARKS ON THE LIFE

with dignity and advantage to your country, and with a rising reputation to yourself.

For my own part, early disappointments, the perplexed state of my affairs, indifferent health, and many other untoward incidents, all contributed to make me, even in my earliest part of life, too fond of retirement. Years have encreased the inclination, and time rather confirms, than corrects the error; however, I have not suffered my mind to be totally inactive: but by holding as little connection as possible with the living, I have employed myself in conversing, and forming an acquaintance with the dead: and have from thence received more real satisfaction and improvement, than probably might have attended me, had I been directed in the pursuit of fame, fortune, or ambition.

I am much pleased that you approve of my observations on PLINY's letters. I engaged in that work, with a design of pointing out, to your brother Lord BOYLE, the amiable qualities of that elegant Roman. But I cannot rest satisfied unless I offer to you also, some public token of my paternal affection: and therefore, I have lately been examining the works of Dr. SWIFT, with an intention of gathering materials for my future correspondence with you: and here, my dear HAMILTON, I dedicate to you, those criticisms which have occurred to me; and shall mix with them such particulars of his life and character, as I flatter myself, may tend at least to your entertainment, if not to your improvement.

Let me begin by giving you a short but general view of SWIFT's character.

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