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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

His sister disobliges him by marrying a tradesman.

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However, during the government of the Earls of BERKLEY and GALWAY, who were jointly Lords Justices of *Ireland*, two livings, *Laracor* and *Rathbeggan*, were bestowed upon Mr. SWIFT. The first of these rectories was worth about two hundred, and the latter about sixty pounds a year, and they were the only church preferments that he enjoyed 'till he was appointed Dean of *St. Patrick's*, in the year seventeen hundred and thirteen.

As soon as he had taken possession of his two livings, he went to reside at *Laracor*, and gave public notice to his parishioners, that he would read prayers on every Wednesday and Friday. Upon the subsequent Wednesday the bell was rung, and the Rector attended in his desk, when after having sat some time, and finding the congregation to consist only of himself, and his clerk ROGER, he began with great composure and gravity, but with a turn peculiar to himself, "Dearly beloved ROGER, the scripture moveth you and me in sundry places." And then proceeded regularly through the whole service. I mention this trifling circumstance only to shew you, that he could not resist a vein of humour whenever he had an opportunity of exerting it.

As I have given you a particular example of his humour, let me give you a particular instance of his pride: especially as it comes in properly enough in point of time.

Whilst SWIFT was chaplain to Lord BERKLEY, his only sister, by the consent and approbation of her uncles

cles and relations, was married to a man in trade, whose fortune, character, and situation, were esteemed, by all her friends, suitable for her in every respect. But, the marriage was entirely disagreeable to her brother. It seemed to interrupt those ambitious views, which he had long since formed: He grew outrageous at the thoughts of being brother-in-law to a tradesman. He utterly refused all reconciliation with his sister, nor would he even listen to the entreaties of his mother, who came over to *Ireland*, under the strongest hopes of pacifying his anger, having, in every other instance found him a dutiful, and an obedient son: but his pride was not to be conquered, and Mrs. SWIFT finding her son inflexible, hastened back to *Leicester*, where she continued till her death.

During his mother's life time, he scarce ever failed to pay her an annual visit. But his manner of travelling was as singular as any other of his actions. He often went in a waggon, but more frequently walked from *Holyhead* to *Leicester*, *London*, or any other part of *England*. He generally chose to dine with waggoners, hostlers, and persons of that rank; and he used to lye at night in houses where he found written over the door *Lodgings for a penny*. He delighted in scenes of low life. The vulgar dialect was not only a fund of humour for him, but I verily believe was acceptable to his nature; otherwise I know not how to account for the many filthy ideas, and indecent expressions (I mean indecent in point of cleanliness and delicacy) that will be found throughout his works.