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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 inclinations to settle in England.

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AND WRITINGS OF DR. SWIFT. 27

October 1709. In a poem written in the year 1713, he says,

*'Tis (let me see) three years and more
(October next it will be four)
Since HARLEY bid me first attend,
And chose me for an humble friend.*

And again in another poem written in the same year,

*My Lord would carry on the jest,
And down to Windsor take his guest.
SWIFT much admires the place and air,
And longs to be a Canon there.
A Canon! that's a place too mean,
No, Doctor, you shall be a Dean.*

By this last quotation, and by numberless other instances in his works, it seems undeniable that a settlement in *England* was the unvaried object of Dr. SWIFT's ambition: so that his promotion to a deanery in *Ireland*, was rather a disappointment than a reward. In a letter to Mr. GAY, he says, "*The best, and greatest part of my life, until these last eight years, I spent in England. There I made my friendships, and there I left my desires. I am condemned for ever to another country:*"^a and in answer to a letter from Mr. POPE, who had offered incense to him, as to a tutelary saint in a state of

^a Letter 5. Vol. 7.

separation,

separation, he writes thus. "*You are an ill catholic,*
or a worse geographer, for I can assure you, Ireland is
not paradise, and I appeal even to a Spanish divine,
whether addresses were ever made to a friend in hell or
purgatory?"^a I shall cite no other quotations; but
 you will find in his letters, many expressions to the same
 purport.

Among the various branches, into which SWIFT'S
 expansive genius spread itself, those peculiar talents of
 levelling his writings to the lowest, and sustaining their
 dignity, to the highest capacity, were probably the ori-
 ginal motives that attracted the Earl of OXFORD'S friend-
 ship to him. In the year 1709, the character of Dr.
 SWIFT, as an author, was perfectly established: he
 had shewn abilities equal to those attributed by HO-
 MER to ULYSSES: he could appear a beggar among
 beggars, and a king among kings.

From the year 1710, to the latest period of Queen
 ANN, we find him fighting on the side of the ministers,
 and maintaining their cause in pamphlets, poems, and
 weekly papers. In one of his letters to Mr. POPE, he
 has this expression, "*I have conversed in some freedom*
with more ministers of state, of all parties, than usually
happens to men of my level; and I confess, in their capacity
as ministers, I look upon them as a race of people whose
acquaintance no man would court otherwise than on the
score of vanity, or ambition."^b Lord OXFORD, as
 a gentleman, and a scholar, might be open and un-
 reserved to Dr. SWIFT, as far as his Lordship's

^a Letter 4. Vol. 7.

^b Letter 4. Vol. 7.