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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 Drapier's Letters gain universal applause.

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AND WRITINGS OF DR. SWIFT. 45

of people, into the right tract at the beginning, but will be sufficient to keep them in it, when experience has pointed out the road. The pamphlet, proposing the universal use of *Irish* manufactures *within the kingdom*, had captivated all hearts. *Some little pieces of poetry to the same purpose*, were no less acceptable and engaging. The attachment which the Dean bore to the true interest of *Ireland*, was no longer doubted. His patriotism was as manifest as his wit. He was looked upon with pleasure and respect, as he passed through the streets: and he had attained so high a degree of popularity, as to become an arbitrator in the disputes of property among his neighbours: nor did any man dare to appeal from his opinion, or to murmur at his decrees.

But the popular affection, which the Dean had hitherto acquired, may be said not to have been universal, till the publication of the DRAPIER'S *letters*, which made all ranks, and all professions unanimous in his applause. The occasion of those letters was a scarcity of copper coin in *Ireland*, to so great a degree, that for some time past the chief manufacturers throughout the kingdom, were obliged to pay their workmen in pieces of tin, or in other tokens of supposititious value. Such a method was very disadvantageous to the lower parts of traffic, and was in general an impediment to the commerce of the state. To remedy this evil, the late King granted a patent to WILLIAM WOOD, to coin, during the term of fourteen years, farthings and halfpence in *England* for the use of *Ireland*, to the value of a certain

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sum specified. These halfpence and farthings were to be received by those persons, who would voluntarily accept them. But the patent was thought to be of such dangerous consequence to the public, and of such exorbitant advantage to the patentee, that the DEAN, under the character of M. B. DRAPIER, wrote a letter to the people, warning them not to accept WOOD's halfpence and farthings as current coin. This first letter was succeeded by several others to the same purpose, all which are inserted in his works.

At the found of the DRAPIER's trumpet, a spirit arose among the people, that, in the eastern phrase, was *like unto a tempest in the day of the whirlwind*. Every person of every rank, party, and denomination, was convinced, that the admission of WOOD's copper must prove fatal to the commonwealth. The Papist, the Fanatic, the Tory, the Whig, all lifted themselves volunteers under the banner of M. B. DRAPIER, and were all equally zealous to serve the common cause. Much heat, and many fiery speeches against the administration, were the consequence of this union: nor had the flames been allayed, notwithstanding threats and proclamations, had not the coin been totally suppressed, and had not WOOD withdrawn his patent.

This is the most succinct account that can be given of an affair, which alarmed the whole *Irish* nation to a degree that in a less loyal kingdom must have fomented a rebellion: but the stedfast loyalty of the *Irish*, and their true devotion to the present royal family is immoveable: and although this unfortunate nation

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