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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 Meditation upon a Broom-stick.

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*A milk white mouse, immortal and unchang'd,  
Fed on soft cheese, and o'er the dairy rang'd.*

But afterwards, upon Mr. MOUNTAGUE's promotion to the chancellorship of the Exchequer, PRIOR, with a good humoured indignation at seeing his friend preferred, and himself neglected, concludes an epistle written in the year 1698, to FLEETWOOD SHEPHERD, Esq; with these three lines,

*My friend CHARLES MOUNTAGUE's prefer'd,  
Nor wou'd I have it long obser'd,  
That one Mouse eats, while t'other's starv'd.* }

You will find the characters of the four impeached lords described under *Athenian* names. PHOCION is the Earl of PORTLAND. ARISTIDES is Lord SOMERS. THEMISTOCLES is the Earl of ORFORD. PERICLES is the Earl of HALLIFAX. In parallels of this sort, it is impossible that every circumstance should tally with the utmost exactness: but the whole treatise is full of historical knowledge, and excellent reflections. It is not mixed with any improper sallies of wit, or any light airs of humour: and in point of style and learning, is equal, if not superior, to any of his political works.

Subsequent to *the discourse concerning Athens and Rome*, is a paper written in the year 1703, in derision of the style and manner of Mr. ROBERT BOYLE. To what a height must the spirit of sarcasm arise in an author, who

who could prevail upon himself to ridicule so good a man as Mr. BOYLE? The sword of wit, like the scythe of time, cuts down friend and foe, and attacks every object that accidentally lies in its way. But, sharp and irresistible as the edge of it may be, Mr. BOYLE will always remain invulnerable.

*The sentiments of a church-of-England-man, with respect to religion and government*, was written in the year 1708. It is adapted to that particular period. The style of the whole pamphlet is nervous, and, except in some few places, impartial. The state of *Holland* is so justly, and, at the same time, so concisely delineated, that I cannot help transcribing it. Speaking of the *Dutch*, the author says, “*They are a commonwealth founded on a sudden, by a desperate attempt on a desperate condition, not formed or digested into a regular system by mature thought and reason, but huddled up under the pressure of sudden exigencies; calculated for no long duration, and hitherto subsisting by accident in the midst of contending powers, who cannot yet agree about sharing it amongst them.*” This tract is very well worth your reading and attention: and it confirms an observation which will perpetually occur, that SWIFT excels in whatever style or manner he assumes. When he is in earnest, his strength of reason carries with it conviction. When in jest, every competitor in the race of wit is left behind him.

*The argument against abolishing Christianity* is carried on with the highest wit and humour. Graver divines threaten the irreaders with future punishments: SWIFT artfully