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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

Cyrano De Bergerac's voyage to the sun and moon.

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where he was walking, I said something to him very insignificant, I know not what; but instead of making any kind of answer to it, he said, "Go, go," pointing with his hand to the door, and immediately afterwards, raising his hand to his head, he said, "My best understanding," and so broke off abruptly, and walked away. I am, my Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient,

and most humble servant,

DEANE SWIFT.

These two letters will not probably occasion in you very chearful speculations. Let us return back therefore to the *Lilliputians*, and the *Brobdingnaggians*; where you will find many ridiculous adventures, even such as must have excited mirth from HERACLITUS. Where indelicacies do not intervene, the narrative is very entertaining and humorous. Several just strokes of satyr are scattered up and down upon political errors in government. In some parts, GULLIVER seems to have had particular incidents, if not particular persons, in his view. His observations on education are useful: and so are his improvements on the institutions of LYCURGUS. Upon reading over the two first parts of these travels, I think that I can discover a very great resemblance between certain passages in GULLIVER'S voyage to *Lilliput*, and the voyage of CYRANO DE BERGERAC to the sun and moon.

CYRANO DE BERGERAC is a French author of a singular character, who had a very peculiar turn of wit and humour, in many respects resembling that of SWIFT.

He wanted the advantages of learning, and a regular education: his imagination was less guarded, and correct, but more agreeably extravagant. He has introduced into his philosophical romance, the system of DESCARTES (which was then much admired) intermixt with several fine strokes of just satyr on the wild, and immechanical enquiries of the philosophers, and astronomers of that age: and in many parts he has evidently directed the plan, which the Dean of St. PATRICK'S has pursued.

I am sorry, and yet, in candour, I ought to observe, that GULLIVER, in his voyage to *Lilliput*, dares even to exert his vein of humour so liberally, as to place the resurrection (one of the most encouraging principles of the Christian religion) in a ridiculous, and contemptible light^a. Why should that appointment be denied to man, or appear so very extraordinary in the human kind, which the Author of nature has illustrated in the vegetable species, where the seed dies and corrupts, before it can rise again to new beauty and glory? But I am writing out of my province; and that I may be tempted no farther, here let me end the criticism upon the two first parts of GULLIVER'S travels, the conclusion of which, I mean GULLIVER'S escape from BROB-DINGNAG, is humorous, satyrical, and decent. I am, my dearest HAM, by duty and inclination,

Your best Friend,

and most affectionate Father,

^a Page 55.

O R R E R Y.