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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 Presbyterians Plea of Merit in order to take off the Test, impartially
examined.

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“ But lastly, THEY LIE IN THE DUST, MOURN-
 “ ING BEFORE HIM. Hang me if I believe that, unless
 “ it be figuratively spoken. But, suppose it to be true, why
 “ do THEY LIE IN THE DUST? because they love to
 “ raise it; for what do they mourn? why for power,
 “ wealth, and places. There let the enemies of the Queen,
 “ Monarchy, and the Church lie, and mourn, and lick the
 “ DUST like SERPENTS, till they are truly sensible of
 “ their ingratitude, falsehood, disobedience, slander, blas-
 “ phemy, sedition, and every evil work.”

I must follow the same method in forming your idea of the next pamphlet, by a quotation out of it, which happens to be the first paragraph. The title is, *The Presbyterians Plea of Merit in order to take off the Test, impartially examined*: and the author begins in the true vein of wit and spirit, by saying, “ We have been told in
 “ the common news papers, that all attempts are to be made
 “ this sessions by the presbyterians and their abettors, for
 “ taking off the test; as a kind of preparatory step to make
 “ it go down smoother in England. For, if once THEIR
 “ LIGHT WOULD SO SHINE, the papists, delighted with
 “ the blaze, would all come in, and dance about it. This I
 “ take to be a prudent method, like that of a discreet phy-
 “ sician, who first gives a new medicine to a dog, before he
 “ prescribes it to a HUMAN CREATURE.” I have quoted this short passage for the style, as well as the matter; and I dare say, even from hence, you will be confirmed in one general observation, that SWIFT maintains and conducts his metaphors and allusions, with a justness particularly delicate and exact, and without the least stiffness,

stiffness, or affectation. In some of my former letters, I have mentioned in what degree of contempt and hatred he held the dissenters, especially the presbyterians: and I need only add, that as this pamphlet was written for the meridian of *Ireland*, it ought to have been placed with the other tracts on the same subject.

The subsequent pamphlet is, *Advice offered to the Members of the October Club*. It was written in the year 1711, and is so applicable to that particular time, that I shall not make any animadversions upon it. From political tracts, the true history of *England* is to be deduced: and if foreigners were to enter into that branch of reading, they might frame a more distinct notion of our legislature, and of our manners, than from more laboured, and connected accounts of our constitution. In such a view, I am apt to think, that, at first sight, they must behold us a disunited, discontented, and seemingly an unsteady people: but I am certain, that, upon a more minute disquisition, they must find in us a fixed, and, I may say, an innate love of liberty, variegated, and perhaps sometimes erroneous in its progress, but constant, and unwearied in the pursuit of that glorious end. What people upon earth can desire a more exalted, or a more distinguished character? To speak in the dialect of the heathen world, our errors are the errors of men, our principles are the principles of gods.

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