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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**

Some hints relating to Wotton, Bentley, and Boyle.

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AND WRITINGS OF DR. SWIFT. 203

Here you see, HORACE assigns to his patron MECÆNAS all the laurels that might accrue from a complete poem upon the wars of AUGUSTUS: and in another place, the poet, with more modesty than justice, says,

*Cupidum, pater optime, vires  
Deficiunt: neque enim quisvis horrentia pilis  
Agmina, nec fracta pereuntes cuspide Gallos,  
Aut labentis equo describat vulnera Parthi.*

These lines are in such a strain, as to demonstrate the powers of the muse much less deficient than the will. It is very probable therefore, that, during the time, while the public expectations were raised in hopes of seeing HORACE undertake some poem entirely formed upon the military plan, VIRGIL might have composed that part of the Æneid from whence I have drawn my quotation, and might very justly have given HORACE the character of CRETEAS, not only in consequence of the odes already written, but under a kind of certainty, of seeing future and more perfect poems in the same strain.

I submit to your judgment, whether these surmises are just. I really think they bear a great resemblance to truth. Positive assertions on such doubtful points, I leave to more established critics: and return from the civil wars in *Italy*, to the civil wars in St JAMES'S library.

The two chief heroes among the modern generals, are WOTTON and BENTLEY. Their figures are displayed in the most disadvantageous attitudes. The former is described,

described, *full of spleen, dulness, and ill manners.* The latter is represented, *tall, without shape or comeliness: large, without strength or proportion.* But, I will not anticipate your future pleasure in reading a performance that you will probably wish longer, and more complete.

The *Battle*, which is maintained by the antients with great superiority of strength, though not of numbers, ends with the demolition of BENTLEY and his friend WOTTON by the lance of your grandfather. And here, my son, it is not possible for me to avoid taking notice of one particular passage relating to my father. “BOYLE, “ says the author, *clad in a suit of armour, WHICH HAD “ BEEN GIVEN HIM BY ALL THE GODS, advanced to- “ wards the trembling foe, who now fled before him.”*

I shall not dispute about the gift of the armour: but thus far I will venture to observe, that the gods never bestowed celestial armour, except upon heroes, whose courage, and superior strength, distinguished them from the rest of mankind; whose merits and abilities were already conspicuous; and who could wield, though young, the sword of MARS, and adorn it with all the virtues of MINERVA: and let me assure you, my dearest HAMILTON, that your grandfather sustained the character, which he had so early acquired, to the last moment of his life, and, on many occasions, exerted his abilities in such a manner, as evidently shewed, that he wanted neither armour, nor extraordinary assistance, to add to his first victory such superior ornaments, as will for ever be repositied among the brightest trophies, in the temple of fame.

But

But before I quit this subject, give me leave to own how sensibly I felt the force of an arrow directed from his hand. The wound, I believe, was not designed to be lasting. It was given in a passion, and upon an extraordinary occasion: but afterwards he was so desirous to heal it, by a return of the greatest degree of friendship and affection, that he had directed the remaining scar to be entirely erased, when his unexpected and too sudden death prevented the completion of his kind intentions, and the perfection of my cure. With difficulty I survived the shock. As it was not in my power to avoid the severe decree, I obeyed: and, by my obedience, have flattered myself, that I submitted to the will of heaven. However, I have since thought, that I could not offer a more grateful sacrifice to his manes, than by exerting those faculties, which he had, at first, cultivated with so much care; and had depressed, at last, perhaps only to raise them higher. Oh my son! how often have I reflected upon the happiness of *ÆNEAS*, in hearing the ghost of *ANCHISES* say,

*Sic equidem ducebam animo reba; que futurum,  
Tempora dinumerans: nec me mea cura fefellit!*

The name of my honoured father has insensibly drawn me into this digression, which, to speak the truth, I look upon as due to his memory, to my own sentiments, and to your filial tenderness.

*The Fragment, or a Discourse concerning the mechanical operation of the Spirit, is a satyr against enthusiasm, and those*