

**ENGLISH BARDS, AND
SCOTCH
REVIEWERS: A SATIRE**

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English Bards, and Scotch Reviewers: A Satire by George Gordon Byron

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GEORGE GORDON BYRON

**ENGLISH BARDS, AND
SCOTCH
REVIEWERS: A SATIRE**

ENGLISH BARDS,

AND

Scotch Reviewers,

ENGLISH BARDS,
AND
SCOTCH REVIEWERS;
A Satire.

BY
LORD BYRON.

I had rather be a kitten, and cry, mew!
Than one of these same metre ballad-mongers,
SHAKESPEARE.

Such shameless Bards we have; and yet 'tis true,
There are as mad, abandon'd Critics too,
POPE.

SECOND EDITION,
WITH
CONSIDERABLE ADDITIONS AND ALTERATIONS.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR JAMES CAWTHORN, BRITISH LIBRARY, No. 24,
COCKSPUR STREET.

1809.

PREFACE

TO THE

SECOND EDITION.

ALL my friends, learned and unlearned, have urged me not to publish this Satire with my name. If I were to be "turn'd from the career of my humour by quibbles quick, and paper bullets of the brain," I should have complied with their counsel. But I am not to be terrified by abuse, or bullied by reviewers, with or without arms. I can safely say that I have attacked none personally who did not commence on the offensive. An Author's works are public property: he who purchases may judge, and publish his opinion if he pleases; and the Authors I have endeavoured to commemorate may do by me as I have done by them: I dare say they will succeed better in condemning my scribblings, than in mending their own. But my object is not to prove that I can write well, but, if possible, to make others write better.

As the Poem has met with far more success than I expected, I have endeavoured in this Edition to make some

additions and alterations to render it more worthy of public perusal.

In the First Edition of this Satire, published anonymously, fourteen lines on the subject of Bowler's Pope were written and inserted at the request of an ingenious friend of mine, who has now in the press a volume of Poetry. In the present Edition they are erased, and some of my own substituted in their stead; my only reason for this being that which I conceive would operate with any other person in the same manner: a determination not to publish with my name any production which was not entirely and exclusively my own composition.

With regard to the real talents of many of the poetical persons whose performances are mentioned, or alluded to, in the following pages, it is presumed by the Author that there can be little difference of opinion in the Public at large; though, like other sectaries, each has his separate tabernacle of proselytes, by whom his abilities are overrated, his faults overlooked, and his metrical canons received without scruple and without consideration. But the unquestionable possession of considerable genius by several of the writers here censured, renders their mental prostitution more to be regretted. Imbecility may be pitied, or, at worst, laughed at and forgotten; perverted powers demand the most decided reprehension. No one can wish more than the Author, that some known and able writer had undertaken their exposure, but Mr. GIFFORD has devoted him-

self to Massinger, and in the absence of the regular physician, a country practitioner may, in cases of absolute necessity, be allowed to prescribe his nostrum to prevent the extension of so deplorable an epidemic, provided there be no quackery in his treatment of the malady. A caustic is here offered, as it is to be feared nothing short of actual cautery can recover the numerous patients afflicted with the present prevalent and distressing rabies for rhyming.—As to the Edinburgh Reviewers; it would, indeed, require a Hercules to crush the Hydra; but if the Author succeeds in merely “bruising one of the heads of the serpent,” though his own hand should suffer in the encounter, he will be amply satisfied.

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ENGLISH BARDS,
AND
SCOTCH REVIEWERS.

STILL must I hear?—shall hoarse *FITZGERALD
bawl

His creaking couplets in a tavern hall,
And I not sing, lest, haply, Scotch Reviews

To Should dub me scribbler, and denounce my Muse?

* IMITATION.

“ Semper ego auditor tantum? nunquamne reponam

“ Vexatus toties ranci Theseide Codri?

Juvenal, Satire 1.

Mr. FITZGERALD, facetiously termed by CORNERT the “ Small Beer Poet,” inflicts his annual tribute of verse on the “ Literary Fund;” not content with writing, he spouts in person after the company have imbibed a reasonable quantity of bad port, to enable them to sustain the operation.