

ANTIJACOBIN REVIEW

The ANTIJACOBIN REVIEW AND MAGAZINE (1798-1821), the monthly successor of the more famous Anti-Jacobin; or Weekly Examiner (1797-1798), was edited at first by John Gifford (1758-1818, DNB; not to be confused with William Gifford of the Anti-Jacobin and the Quarterly Review). The politics of the Antijacobin Review, as suggested by its name (which with volume XXXVI became the Antijacobin Review and True Churchman's Magazine), were conservative and its religion high church. Though it apparently received little direct financial support from any political

group, lack of writers of talent made it seem merely a party-line mouthpiece for the Tory establishment. The reviews of Byron's poems show the complete subservience of the journal to political party-spirit. They praise the anonymous author of English Bards and Scotch Reviewers as a second William Gifford for his attacks on Jeffrey, the Edinburgh Review, Lord Holland, and other Whigs and Whig institutions, but they judge Byron's subsequent productions harshly because he espoused liberal principles and cultivated Whig friends.

December 1807

Byron, *Hours of Idleness* (1807); *Antijacobin Review*, XXVIII (Dec. 1807), 407-408.

Hours of Idleness; a Series of Poems, original and translated. By George Gordon, Lord Byron, a Minor. 12mo. Pp. 188. 6s. Ridge, Newark; Crosby and Co. London. 1807.

IN a modest and sensible preface, this noble young Lord informs his readers that these productions are the fruits of the lighter hours of a young man, who has lately completed his nineteenth year. Be that as it may, they exhibit strong proofs of genius, accompanied by a lively but chastened imagination, a classical taste, and a benevolent heart. The subjects of the poems are various, but the greater part of them are *amatory*. Of these, "The First Kiss of Love" may be classed among the best. The lines on leaving Newstead Ab-

bey, the residence of his Lordship's ancestors, and the Elogy on the same place, have very great merit. The sentiments and train of thinking which they display are as honourable to his feelings, as the composition itself is to his taste and talents. Some of the "Translations" are at once spirited and chaste, though, on the whole, we greatly prefer the original poems. In translating the beautiful episode of Nisus and Euryalus, from the 9th book of the Æneid, which we have ever regarded as the master-piece of the Mantuan bard, his Lordship has shewn a perfect knowledge of his author, and has preserved some of his beauties, which is no small merit, considering, as we do, that no other language is capable of conveying the spirit of the original. After giving this general character of the volume before us, we shall extract one specimen, for the gratification of our readers.

" EPITAPH ON A FRIEND.

" Oh, friend ! for ever lov'd, for ever dear !
 What fruitless tears have bath'd thy honour'd bier !
 What sighs re-echoed to thy parting breath,
 Whilst thou wast struggling in the pangs of death !
 Could tears retard the tyrant in his course,
 Could right avert his dart's relentless force,
 Could youth and virtue claim a short delay,
 Or beauty charm the spectre from his prey,
 Thou still hadst liv'd, to bless my aching sight,
 Thy comrade's honour, and thy friend's delight.
 If, yet, thy gentle spirit hover nigh
 The spot where now thy mould'ring ashes lie,
 Here wilt thou read, recorded on my heart,
 A grief too deep to trust the sculptor's art,
 No marble marks thy couch of lowly sleep,
 But living statues, there, are seen to weep ;
 Affliction's *semblance* bends not o'er thy tomb,
 Affliction's *self* deplores thy youthful doom.
 What though thy sire lament his failing line,
 A father's sorrows cannot equal mine !
 Though none, like thee, his dying hour will cheer,
 Yet other offspring soothe his anguish here :
 But who, with me, shall hold thy former place ?
 Thine image, what new friendship can efface ?
 Ah ! none ; a father's tears will cease to flow,
 Time will assuage an infant brother's woe :
 To all, save one, is consolation known,
 While solitary friendship sighs alone."

March 1809

[Byron] *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* (1809); *Anti-jacobin Review*, XXXII (March 1809), 301-306.

English Bards and Scotch Reviewers. A Satire. 12mo. pp. 54. Cawthorn, Cockspur-street. 1809.

THE writer of this satire laments, in common with every friend to genius and literature, that the estimable author of the *Boviad* and *Mæviad*, a writer exceeded by no poet ancient or modern, in taste, talents, integrity, and every amiable quality of heart and mind, should have devoted his attention to subjects which prevent him from pursuing his satirical career, the beginning of which was productive of so much advantage to the public.