

**DON JUAN,  
CANTOS  
XV AND XVI**

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Don Juan, Cantos XV and XVI by George Gordon Byron

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**GEORGE GORDON BYRON**

**DON JUAN,  
CANTOS  
XV AND XVI**



# DON JUAN.

CANTOS XV. AND XVI.

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"Dost thou think, because thou art virtuous, there shall be no more  
Cakes and Ale?"—"Yes, by St. Anne; and Ginger shall be hot i' the  
mouth too!"—*Twelfth Night, or What you Will.*

SHAKESPEARE.

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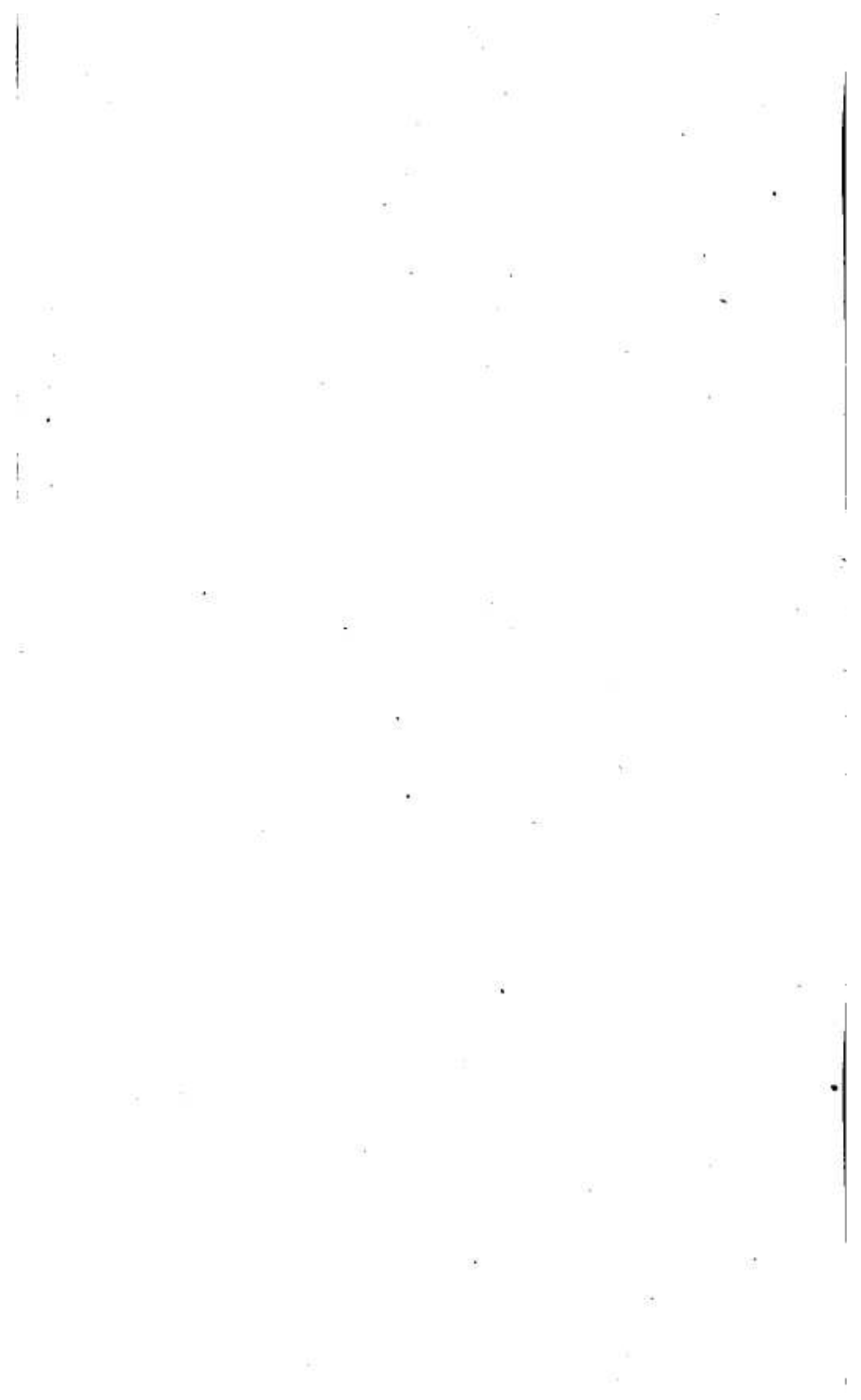


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**DON JUAN.**

**CANTO XV.**





## DON JUAN.

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### CANTO XV.

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#### I.

AN!—What should follow slips from my reflection:

Whatever follows ne'ertheless may be

As àpropos of hope or retrospection,

As though the lurking thought had follow'd free.

All present life is but an Interjection,

An "Oh!" or "Ah!" of joy or misery,

Or a "Ha! ha!" or "Bah!"—a yawn, or "Pooh!"

Of which perhaps the latter is most true.

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## II.

But, more or less, the whole's a syncope  
Or a singultus—emblems of Emotion,  
The grand Antithesis to great Ennui,  
Wherewith we break our bubbles on the ocean,  
That Watery Outline of Eternity,  
Or miniature at least, as is my notion,  
Which ministers unto the soul's delight,  
In seeing matters which are out of sight.

## III.

But all are better than the sigh suppress,  
Corroding in the cavern of the heart,  
Making the countenance a masque of rest,  
And turning human nature to an art.  
Few men dare show their thoughts of worst or best;  
Dissimulation always sets apart  
A corner for herself; and therefore Fiction  
Is that which passes with least contradiction.

## IV.

Ah! who can tell? Or rather, who can not  
Remember, without telling, passion's errors?  
The drainer of oblivion, even the sot,  
Hath got blue devils for his morning mirrors:  
What though on Lethe's stream he seem to float,  
He cannot sink his tremors or his terrors;  
The ruby glass that shakes within his hand,  
Leaves a sad sediment of Time's worst sand.

## V.

And as for Love—Oh, Love!—We will proceed.  
The Lady Adeline Amundeville,  
A pretty name as one would wish to read,  
Must perch harmonious on my tuneful quill.  
There's music in the sighing of a reed;  
There's music in the gushing of a rill;  
There's music in all things, if men had ears:  
Their Earth is but an echo of the spheres.