

**DON JUAN;
CANTOS
XII.-XIII.-AND XIV**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649564460

Don Juan; Cantos XII.-XIII.-and XIV by George Gordon Byron

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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GEORGE GORDON BYRON

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CANTOS
XII.-XIII.-AND XIV**

DON JUAN.

CANTOS XII.—XIII.—AND XIV.

“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.

LONDON, 1823:

PRINTED FOR JOHN HUNT,
28, TAVISTOCK STREET, COVENT GARDEN, AND
26, OLD BOND STREET.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY C. H. REYNELL, BROAD STREET, GOLDEN SQUARE.

DON JUAN.

CANTO XII.



DON JUAN.

CANTO XII.

I.

OF all the barbarous Middle Ages, that
Which is the most barbarous is the middle age
Of man ; it is—I really scarce know what ;
But when we hover between fool and sage,
And don't know justly what we would be at,—
A period something like a printed page,
Black letter upon foolscap, while our hair
Grows grizzled, and we are not what we were,—

II.

Too old for youth,—too young, at thirty-five,
To herd with boys, or hoard with good threescore,—
I wonder people should be left alive ;
But since they are, that epoch is a bore :
Love lingers still, although 'twere late to wive ;
And as for other love, the illusion's o'er ;
And money, that most pure imagination,
Gleams only through the dawn of its creation.

III.

Oh Gold ! Why call we misers miserable ?
Theirs is the pleasure that can never pall ;
Theirs is the best bower-anchor, the chain cable
Which hold fast other pleasures great and small.
Ye who but see the saving man at table,
And scorn his temperate board, as none at all,
And wonder how the wealthy can be sparing,
Know not what visions spring from each cheese-paring.

IV.

Love or lust makes man sick, and wine much sicker;

Ambition rends, and gaming gains a loss;

But making money, slowly first, then quicker,

And adding still a little through each cross

(Which *will* come over things) beats love or liquor,

The gamester's counter, or the statesman's *dross*.

Oh Gold! I still prefer thee unto paper,

Which makes bank credit like a bark of vapour.

V.

Who hold the balance of the world? Who reign

O'er Congress, whether royalist or liberal?

Who rouse the shirtless patriots of Spain?

(That make old Europe's journals squeak and gibber all.)

Who keep the world, both old and new, in pain

Or pleasure? Who make politics run glibber all?

The shade of Bonaparte's noble daring!—

Jew Rothachild, and his fellow Christian Baring.