CLASSICS LIBRARY · STORY MAP

Eugene Onegin

Alexander Pushkin · *1825–1832 (complete 1833; this English, 1881) · Henry Spalding*

My uncle's goodness is extreme, if seriously he hath disease; he hath acquired the world's esteem, and nothing more important sees; a paragon of virtue he! So Canto the First begins, in Henry Spalding's 1881 English, Project Gutenberg #23997, printed under the title Eugene Onéguine. Keep that spelling in the title as this file prints it. For grades 9–12. Quote the poem, not only Spalding's preface. A novel in verse; later, a fatal duel—gravity, no spectacle. One map cannot teach all eight cantos.

THE CENTRAL QUESTION

How should a school read this file as Spalding's Eugene Onéguine—opened by Canto I, "My uncle's goodness is extreme"—rather than as the translator's preface only, or as a later film?

"goodness is extreme, If"
Canto the First

The hosted file is Alexander Pushkin's Eugene Onegin in Henry Spalding's 1881 English, Project Gutenberg #23997, printed under the title Eugene Onéguine. Keep that spelling when you name this edition. A preface by Spalding stands first in the file; quote the poem, not only the preface. Canto the First begins: My uncle's goodness is extreme, if seriously he hath disease; he hath acquired the world's esteem, and nothing more important sees; a paragon of virtue he! But what a nuisance it will be, chained to his bedside night and day. Teach that opening, for grades 9–12. This is a novel in verse, in eight cantos; one map cannot teach them all. Later there is a fatal duel; teach it with gravity, not as a spectacle. Quote Spalding, not a later film. If typographic apostrophes in "uncle's" or "world's" fail between texts, start a quotation at "goodness is extreme."

KEY CHARACTERS

The uncle of the first stanza
Whose goodness is extreme, if seriously he hath disease, a paragon of virtue in the nephew's telling

The speaker of Canto I
Who will find it a nuisance to be chained to that bedside night and day

Henry Spalding
The translator of this 1881 English, printed as Eugene Onéguine; name him

HOW TO BEGIN THIS ONÉGUINE

> *"goodness is extreme, If"*
> Canto I

> *"If seriously he hath disease; He"*
> Canto I

Grades 9–12
Read the full text free at classicslaunch.org.

01
Goodness Is Extreme
CANTO THE FIRST

My uncle's goodness is extreme. The poem begins with an uncle, and a goodness named as extreme, before the joke turns.

- Keep "goodness is extreme." If an apostrophe in "uncle's" fails, start at these three words.
- 9–12.
- Quote the poem, not only the preface.
- Spalding, 1881; title as printed: Onéguine.

> *"goodness is extreme, If"*
> Canto the First

02
If Seriously He Hath Disease
CANTO THE FIRST

If seriously he hath disease. The first condition is already a sickness, named in this wording.

- Keep "if seriously he hath disease."
- 9–12.
- Quote Spalding.
- The later cantos have their own openings.

> *"If seriously he hath disease; He"*
> Canto the First

03
The World's Esteem
CANTO THE FIRST

He hath acquired the world's esteem, and nothing more important sees. The uncle is already a public man, in the nephew's telling.

- Keep "world's esteem" if the apostrophe holds; otherwise start at "hath acquired."
- 9–12.
- Quote this English.
- Not a later film.

> *"He hath acquired the"*
> Canto the First

04
A Paragon of Virtue
CANTO THE FIRST

A paragon of virtue he! The praise is already almost too complete, before the nuisance of the bedside is named.

- Keep "paragon of virtue he."
- 9–12.
- A first stanza, not all eight cantos.
- Later, a fatal duel: gravity, no spectacle.

> *"A paragon of virtue he!"*
> Canto the First

05
Spalding, 1881, Eugene Onéguine
THE EDITION

Henry Spalding, 1881, PG #23997, titled Eugene Onéguine in this file. Keep that spelling. Quote the poem, not only the preface. For grades 9–12. Eight cantos; one map cannot teach them all. A later fatal duel: gravity, no spectacle. Quote this English, not a later film.

- Name Spalding, and Onéguine as printed.
- 9–12.
- The poem first, not the preface only.
- A novel in verse.

> *"goodness is extreme, If"*
> Canto the First

An extreme goodness, and a disease | The world's esteem | A paragon, and a bedside | A novel in verse, eight cantos | Gravity later, no spectacle

What to watch for as you read

GRADES 9–12

1. Canto I opens: "My uncle's goodness is extreme, if seriously he hath disease; he hath acquired the world's esteem… a paragon of virtue he!" Quote the poem, not only Spalding's preface.
2. Henry Spalding, 1881, PG #23997, titled Eugene Onéguine in this file. Keep that spelling. For grades 9–12.
3. A novel in verse, in eight cantos. One map cannot teach them all. Quote this English, not a later film.
4. Later, a fatal duel: gravity, no spectacle. If typographic apostrophes fail, start a quotation at "goodness is extreme."

Quotations are verbatim from the Henry Spalding, Project Gutenberg #23997, the public-domain text hosted at classicslaunch.org/works/pushkin-eugene-onegin/. Citations give book and chapter (or canto and line) so every line can be checked.