



The Novels and Dramas Volume 31

Honore de Balzac



This historic book may have numerous typos and missing text. Purchasers can download a free scanned copy of the original book (without typos) from the publisher. Not indexed. Not illustrated. 1905 Excerpt: ... INTRODUCTION Le DSpute dArcis, like the still leas generally known Les Petits Bourgeois, stands on a rather different footing from the rest of Balzacs work. Both were posthumous, and both, having been left unfinished, were completed by the authors friend, Charles Rabou. Babou is not much known nowadays as a man of letters he must not be confused with the writer Hippolyte Babou, the friend of Baudelaire, the reputed inventor of the title Fleurs du Mai, and the author of some very acute articles in the great collection of Crepef s Poetes Franqais. But he figures pretty frequently in association of one kind or another with Balzac, and would appear to have been thoroughly imbued with the scheme and spirit of the Comedie. At the same time, it does not appear that even ths indefatigable and most competent M. de Lovenjoul is perfectly certain where Balzacs labors end and those of Babou begin. It would seem, however (and certainly internal evidence has nothing to say on the other side), that the severance, or rather the junction, must have taken place somewhere about the point where, after the introduction of Maxime de Trailles, the interest suddenly shifts altogether from the folk of Arcis and the conduct of their election to the hitherto unknown Comte de Sallenaue. It would, no doubt, be possible, and even easy, to discover in Balzacs undoubted work--for instance, in Le Cure de Village and Illusions Perdues--instances of shiftings of interest nearly as abrupt and of (k) changes in the main centre of the story nearly as decided. Nor is it possible, considering the weakness of constructive finish which always marked Balzac, to rule out offhand the substitution, after an unusually lively and business-like beginning, of the nearly always frigid scheme of lett...

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