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BEATRIZ

THE FORTY-NINTH OF SUNDAY
TOWN

AND THE FORTY-NINTH OF SUNDAY

"On Sunday I will preach a sermon about her."

(*Beatriz*, page 46)

THE FORTY-NINTH OF SUNDAY

AND THE FORTY-NINTH OF SUNDAY



THE FORTY-NINTH OF SUNDAY

AND THE FORTY-NINTH OF SUNDAY

Library Edition

BÉATRIX

THE JEALOUSIES OF A COUNTRY
TOWN
AND THE COMMISSION IN LUNACY

BY
HONORÉ DE BALZAC
With Introductions by
GEORGE SAINTSBURY



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(*L'Interdiction*; Translator, CLARA BELL)

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BÉATRIX

INTRODUCTION

Béatrix was built up in the odd fashion in which Balzac sometimes did build up his novels, and which may be thought to account for an occasional lack of unity and grasp in them. The original book, written in 1838, and published with the rather flowery dedication "to Sarah" at the end of that year, stopped at the marriage of Calyste and Sabine. The last part, separately entitled *Un Adultère Rétrospectif*, was not added till six years later. It cannot be said to be either very shocking or very unnatural that the young husband should exemplify the truth of that uncomfortable proverb, *Qui a bu boira*; and it is perhaps rather more surprising that Balzac should have allowed him to be "refished" (as the French say) in a finally satisfactory condition by his lawful spouse.

Still, I do not think the addition can be considered on the whole an improvement to the book, of which it is at the best rather an appendix than an integral part. The conception of *Béatrix* herself seems to have changed somewhat, and that not as the conception of her immortal namesake in *Esmond* and *The Virginians* changes, merely to suit the irreparable outrage of years. The end has unsavory details, which have not, as the repetition of them in more tragic form a little later in *La Cousine Bette* has, the justification of a really tragic retribution; and a man must have a great deal of disinterested good nature about him to feel any satisfaction, or indeed to take much interest, in the restoration of the domestic happi-

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