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Revised Edition

LOST ILLUSIONS

BY WILLIAM SEWARD WALLACE  
OF PARIS

"Hey! Papa Sechard, what are you doing there?"  
(*Lost Illusions*, page 235)



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They! Papa Richard, what are you doing there?  
(From "The Story of the Little Boy Who Was Afraid of the Dark", page 187)



Library Edition

LOST ILLUSIONS

A DISTINGUISHED PROVINCIAL  
AT PARIS

BY  
HONORÉ DE BALZAC  
With Introductions by  
GEORGE SAINTSBURY



THE THOMPSON PUBLISHING COMPANY  
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LOST ILLUSIONS





## INTRODUCTION

THE longest, without exception, of Balzac's books, and one which contains hardly any passage that is not very nearly of his best, *Illusions Perdues* suffers, I think, a little in point of composition from the mixture of the Angouleme scenes of its first and third parts with the purely Parisian interest of *Un Grand Homme de Province*. It is hardly possible to exaggerate the gain in distinctness and lucidity of arrangement derived from putting *Les Deux Poètes* and *Eve et David* (a much better title than that which has been preferred in the *Edition Définitive*) together in one volume, and reserving the greatness and decadence of Lucien de Rubempré for another. It is distinctly awkward that this should be divided, as it is itself an enormous episode, a sort of Herodotean parenthesis, rather than an integral part of the story. And, as a matter of fact, it joins on much more to the *Splendeurs et Misères des Courtisanes* than to its actual companions. In fact, it is an instance of the somewhat haphazard and arbitrary way in which the actual division of the *Comédie* has worked, that it should, dealing as it does wholly and solely with Parisian life, be put in the *Scènes de la Vie de Province*, and should be separated from its natural conclusion not merely as a matter of volumes, but as a matter of divisions. In making the arrangement, however, it is necessary to remember Balzac's own scheme, especially as the connection of the three parts in other ways is too close to permit the wrenching of them asunder altogether and finally. This caution given, all that is necessary can be done by devoting

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