

tention on the part of Omphale to stupid Hercules, who, on a wet afternoon, may be supposed to prefer a turn with these instruments on the landing to the choice literature down stairs? The boudoir is tapestried in dark gray; and solid furniture of black wood is laid with ivory. The dressing-room adjoining the boudoir has a toilet service in solid silver that might serve for the ablutions of a giant. There are innumerable knick-knacks in this and the room beyond—cabinets filled with a store of needle-cases, paper-knives, pin-cushions, ink-stands, boxes that might hold wafers and boxes that certainly could hold nothing at all—made in both the precious metals, with a free use of every device known to Parisian ingenuity for increasing their cost, if not their beauty, with precious stones. In one of the many miniature frames we have a photograph of a thoroughly commonplace person whose essential vulgarity of

aspect is enhanced by her Tudor costume, and particularly by a ruff which forms a sort of second frame for the hard, fierce face. It is probably a memorial of the time when the noble owner, thinking there was no limit to the indulgence of the Parisians, tried to charm them on the stage—only to find that she had for once reckoned without her host by being incontinently hissed off.

There is now nothing left to do but to retrace our steps. Before leaving, though, we may take a glance at the stables and coach-house, with the *coupe* and the three other carriages, and the horses Dandy, Arnold, Plimco, Rainbow and Queen, so well known to every frequenter of the Bois. The hammer-cloths bear the device of a horse's head, inclosed in four half-moons, each of which also forms the letter C, with this beneath them: "Parcere subjectis et debellare superbos." "It is Madame's motto," grins the stable boy.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE COST OF A FALSE STEP.

In one of the wards of the Insane Asylum on Blackwell's Island might be seen a few years ago, seated in a low rocking chair, gazing steadily at the floor with bowed head, a woman apparently about thirty-five years of age. All through the long day she sat there, never moving, never speaking, evidently communing with herself and brooding over some idea which had taken complete possession of her.

At night she was led to her room, and in the morning returned to her chair to go over the same performance as that of the day before.

The name of this pitiful wreck of humanity was Polly Walton, at one time the most beautiful harlot in New York.

Her history is a peculiar one. Her parents were considered one of the wealthiest couples in San Francisco. Her father had gone from the East during the gold fever while a young man, and by one or two lucky speculations amassed a large fortune. His wife was an heiress, and their possessions combined placed them in position where want could never come. Polly was the only child, and every luxury that one could desire or wealth pur-

chase was given her. She was reared in an atmosphere of social refinement far above that accorded to the average *debutante* upon the stage of life, and as she neared the period of maturity occupied a shrine at which a large number of the butterfly-fies of fashion worshipped most devoutly. She grew to be a beautiful, voluptuous woman, and being possessed of an ardent, impulsive nature, she was inclined to favor those young men whose social position gave them the *entree* to fashionable society, but who were what is termed "fast" rather than those who were sedate and matter-of-fact. Under proper influence this nature might have been moulded into pure and chaste womanhood.

But her parents were too indulgent to place a single obstacle in the way of their daughter's happiness. They let her choose her own company, their love blinding their eyes to the true character of the young men with whom their daughter associated.

Admiration, the glitter of wealth and the unrestrained indulgence in the follies of the upper station of fashionable life led her astray from the path of virtue.