

IDOLS;

OR,

The Secret of the Rue Chaussée d'Antin.

CHAPTER I.

THE POMEREUL HOUSEHOLD.

Two men, who in age and appearance were widely different, sat conversing in a spacious study. The room was luxurious, though somewhat severe in its arrangement. It contained many fine representations in bronze of masterpieces of antique art. Antoine Pomereul, the elder of the two men, seemed upwards of sixty years of age. His hair, which looked as if a gale of wind might have passed through it, fell over his massive temples. His florid complexion, the smile on his lips and the frank expression of the face betokened a straightforward and generous disposition, and much business ability. His grey eye was wonderfully penetrating; the very position of his hand upon the desk marked the energetic man of business.

His companion, on the contrary, was scarcely twenty-five. His broad forehead bore the impress of genius upon it, and genius of a solid and somewhat serious character; his expression was earnest, with a tinge of mingled asceticism and ideality. His figure was lithe and graceful, his hair black, his complexion pale, his whole appearance most attractive. A voice true in tone and