

The footman shrank.

"Yessir, yessir," he said confusedly, and signalled.

The other footman came down, and made as if to take the bridle. Gaston waved him back. None too soon, for the horse lunged at him.

"A rub down, a pint of beer, and water and feed in an hour, and I'll come to see him myself late to-night."

Jacques had loosened the saddle-bags and taken them off. Gaston spoke to the horse, patted his neck, and gave him to the groom. Then he went up the steps, followed by Jacques. He turned at the door to see the groom leading both horses off, and eyeing Saracen suspiciously. He laughed noiselessly.

"Saracen 'll teach him things," he said. "I might warn him, but it's best for the horses to make their own impressions."

"What name, sir?" asked a footman.

"You are—?"

"Falby, sir."

"Falby, look after my man Brillon here, and take me to Sir William."

"What name, sir?"

Gaston, as if with sudden thought, stepped into the light of the candles, and said in a low voice:

"Falby, don't you know me?"

The footman turned a little pale, as his eyes, in spite of themselves, clung to Gaston's. A kind of fright came, and then they steadied.

"Oh yes, sir," he said mechanically.

"Where have you seen me?"

"In the picture on the wall, sir."

"Whose picture, Falby?"

"Sir Gaston Belward, sir."

A smile lurked at the corners of Gaston's mouth.