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For The Amaranth.

MADELINE ST. CLAIR.

BY MRS. B.—N.

THE rosy light of eve had faded into the dark rich blue of midnight, when Madeline St. Clair parted from her lover, and yet their parting was to be but short, for to-morrow's sun was to rise on their bridal day. Many a vision of happiness glowing in the purple light of love spread its fairy vistas before their imagination, but alas! for human foresight—that hour was their last of joy for many a weary day.

Madeline St. Clair was an orphan, her parents died when she could do little more than lip their names—she had no living relations and Father Auboine, the good priest of Chamont, took the friendless girl to his home and adopted her as his own; every villager loved and pitied the little orphan, and the welfare of "*notre petite Madeline*," or La Mignione of Chamont, was dear to them as their own. But Madeline was no longer "*la petite*," for she was now fifteen; the French girl of fifteen is the same being as the English one of twenty. She had long been deeply and fondly in love and loved with all the fervent affection and holy truth which hallows the bright dream of early youth. Alphonse de Berri, who had won the heart of Madeline, was a young peasant of the village. Alphonse possessed little of this world's wealth—for the labour of his hands was all his widowed mother had to look forward to for the support of her declining years; but nature had been lavish in her gifts to him, his person was perfect in manly beauty, and his head and heart glowed with feeling and intelligence far beyond his sphere. A pair so well matched as Madeline and Alphonse, could not be found, and their "bridal" was looked forward to as a "*jour de fete*," by the whole village. About a month previous to Madeline's wedding day, the Count de Clair-

ville, owner of the estate of Chamont, had arrived at his "*chateau*," with his young bride. During the bloodiest period of the revolution the Count was too young to be minded and his estates were untouched. Since his manhood he had mingled neither in war nor politics, but spent his time in all the gay frivolities of the capital, till he became the most accomplished "*roue*" of the age; yet his vices were more the result of circumstances than of any natural depravity, for the Count truly possessed a warm and generous heart, and a noble spirit far removed above the actions he seemed to glory in. Early thrown on the world without restraint or a judicious adviser; with abundant wealth, and without sufficient strength of mind to withstand temptation—he fell into the whirlpool of dissipation—and love of excitement led him deeper into its giddy stream till he saw Rosalie St. Aubin, and then the hidden gleams of virtue began to dawn on his heart—his love for her was like a vision from another world—it was all pureness and truth, such as he had never before experienced in his love for woman, it partook more of idolatry than of human passion. The gallant Count de Clairville was not likely to be an unsuccessful suitor, and the gentle Rosalie trembled as she gave her hand where she had already placed her heart. Already he was half won to virtue, when the beauty of Madeline attracted his attention as she walked in the procession of the villagers, who came to welcome the young Countess.—Every art of flattery was tried to win her, but there was a purity and dignity of unsuspecting innocence in Madeline that daunted the purpose of even the Count de Clairville; he seemed to have given up his attempts when an opportunity presented itself which gave him encouragement. The night before Madeline's bridal, a party of soldiers had arrived in the village to collect conscripts for the army. The Count saw their commander, and at his