

AMELIA.

BY JAMES SHERIDAN KNOWLES.

St. Aubyn was a young man of moderate fortune,—accomplished, unsophisticated, and of quick sensibilities. A student, and fond of retirement, he had selected for his summer residence a small fishing hamlet, on the romantic coast of Devonshire; where, between his books and the sea-shore, along which he loved to ramble, his time passed any thing but heavily. Here he had resided about a month, when the little community received an addition, in a young lady and her mother, who joined it for the purpose of a temporary residence. St. Aubyn stepped back, in surprise, when issuing one morning from the cabin in which he lodged, he beheld two females, in the attire and with the air of fashion—the one leaning upon the arm of the other—approaching the humble portal whence he had just emerged. He bowed, however, and passed on.

He had scarcely more than glanced at the strangers, but transient as was his survey of them, he saw that one of them was an invalid—the younger.

It was broad day before forgetfulness cast her spell over the excited spirits of St. Aubyn, nor was it broken till high noon. He arose, emerged from his chamber, and took an anxious survey of the habitation opposite. The room appeared empty. He partook of a slight repast; and sallying out, made his way to the shore. He had not proceeded far, when, turning a point, he beheld the elder female about a hundred yards in advance of him, standing still, and looking anxiously up towards the cliff. He followed what appeared to be the direction of her eyes, and saw the younger, half way up, reclining on her side. Something appeared to be amiss. He quickened his pace; and, joining the former, learned from her, that her daughter, attempting to reach the top of the cliff, had incautiously turned, and unaccustomed to look from a height, was prevented by terror from proceeding or descending; that, from the same cause, she had slipped down several feet; and that she herself durst not attempt to go to her assistance. St. Aubyn had heard enough; he bounded up the steep. As he approached the fair one, modesty half overcame terror, and she made a slight effort to repair the disorder into which her dress had been thrown by the accident. St. Aubyn assisted to complete what she had effected but imperfectly; he encouraged her, raised her, and propping her fair form with his own, led her, step by step, down to the beach again. Nor, when she was in perfect safety, did he withdraw his assistance—nor did she decline it; though, as apprehension subsided, confusion arose, colouring her pale cheek to crimson, at the recollection of the plight in which she had been found. Her ankle was slightly sprained, she said, having turned under her when she slipped. What was this, if not a warrant for the proffer of an arm? At all events, St. Aubyn construed it as such, and escorted the fair stranger, leaning upon him, back to her lodgings. From that moment, a close intimacy commenced. They were constantly together—sometimes accompanied by the mother—more frequently, and at last wholly, alone. Communing in solitude, between the sexes and in the midst of romantic scenery, where there is no impediment, no distaste on either side, is almost sure to awaken and to foster love.

St. Aubyn loved. The looks, the actions, all but the tongue of Amelia, assured him that his passion was returned. Her health had improved rapidly; the autumn was far advanced, and the evenings and nights were growing chill. The mother and daughter now talked of returning to town; a day was fixed for their departure; and on the evening of that day, St. Aubyn threw himself at the feet of the lovely girl and implored her to bless him with her hand. Yet, though she did not deny that he had interested her—though her eyes and her cheek attested it—and though the hand which was locked in his, locked his as well—though she suffered him to draw her towards him, by the tenure of her graceful waist,—still her reply was, 'I will not marry yet.'

St. Aubyn did not require to ask if his visits would be permitted in town; he was invited to renew them there. An excursion to Paris, however, on matters of pressing necessity, respecting the affairs of a friend, prevented his return for a month. At the expiration of that time, he found himself in London, and with a throbbing heart repaired to the habitation of his mistress, on the very evening of his arrival. The house was lighted up; there was a ball; yet he could not overcome his impatience to behold again the heroine of the little fishing hamlet. He rang at the same moment when a knot of other visitors came to the door, and entering along with them, was ushered into a ball-room, the footman hurriedly announcing the names of the several parties. The dance was proceeding. It was the whirling waltz—

The dance of contact, else

Forbid! abandoning to the free hand
The sacred waist; while face to face—fast breath
Doth kiss with breath, and eye embraceth eye.
Your traced coil relaxing, straighten—round
And round in wavy measure, you entwine
Circle with circle—till the swining brain
And panting heart, in swoony lapse give o'er!

It was the waltz, and the couple consisted of a man of the town and—Amelia!

The party who had entered with St. Aubyn immediately took seats; but he stood transfixed to the spot where his eyes first

caught the form of his mistress in the coil of another. She saw him not. With laughing eyes and cheeks flushed with exertion, she continued the measure of licence, her spirits mounting as the music quickened, until she seemed to round her partner, who freely availed himself of the favorable movement of the step, to draw her towards him in momentary pressure. They at length sat down amidst the applause of the company. St. Aubyn fairly writhed! He retired to a quarter of the room where he thought he should escape observation, and threw himself into a chair.

'Who think you, now, is the happy man?' said one of the group of gentlemen who stood within a few paces of him.

'Why who if not Singleton?' replied another—he waltzed himself into her heart. This is the twentieth time I have seen her waltz with him.'

'Oh! another will waltz him out of her heart,' interposed a third; she is an incorrigible coquette from first to last.'

Here the party separated. St. Aubyn scarcely knowing what he did, after sitting abstracted for a few minutes, rose, and passed out of the ball-room.

He descended the stair-case with the intention of quitting the house; but the supper-room had just been thrown open, and the press carried him in. Nor was he allowed to stop until he reached the head of the table. Every seat but two, close to where he stood, was occupied. 'By your leave, sir!' said a voice behind him. He stepped back; and the waltzer led his mistress to one of them, and placed himself beside her. St. Aubyn would have retreated, but could not without incommencing the company, who thickly hemmed him in. Amelia drew her gloves from the white arms they so little enhanced by the covering; the waltzer assisting her, and transferring them to the custody of his bosom. His eyes explored the table in quest of the most delicate of the viands, which, one after another he recommended to her, until she made a selection. He pressed so close to her, that it would have been the same had both been sitting in one seat. She was either unconscious of the familiar vicinity, or she permitted it. The whispering continued; the word 'marriage' was uttered—repeated—repeated again. St. Aubyn heard her distinctly reply, 'I will not marry yet,' as she rose, and turning, met him face to face!

'St. Aubyn!' she involuntarily exclaimed. St. Aubyn spoke not save with his eyes, which he kept fixed steadfastly upon her.

'When did you join our party?'

'While you were waltzing,' returned St. Aubyn, with a smile.

'And how long have you been standing here?'

'Since supper commenced. I made way for your partner to hand you that seat, and place himself beside you.'

'You have not supped!—sit down and I will help you!'

'No!' said Aubyn shaking his head and smiling again.

'My mother has not seen you yet—come and speak to her.'

'No; I have not a moment to spare. I leave town immediately.'

'When?'

'To-night!—Farewell!' said he, turning to go.

'You surely are not going yet?' earnestly interposed Amelia.

'I must not stay, emphatically rejoined St. Aubyn. 'For one object alone, I came to town. That is disposed of. The necessity for my departure is imperative. Remember me to your mother. Good night!' he added moving toward the door.

'Have you been well?' she inquired, almost tremulously. He continued his progress as fast as the throng permitted him—affecting not to hear her. She followed, laid her hand upon his arm, and stopped him.

'You surely are not well now,' she said in a tone of solicitude.

'No,' he replied, passing on till he reached the door.

'St. Aubyn!' she exclaimed, heedless of those who surrounded her, 'stay a little longer—an hour—half an hour—a quarter of an hour.'

'St. Aubyn stopped; and turning, looked upon her with an expression so tender, yet so stern, that she half shrunk as she met his gaze.

'Not a moment!' he replied; I should be only a clog upon your pastime. I do not waltz!—then snatched her hand—raised it to his lips—kissed it—and dropping it, hurried down the stair-case, and departed.

Amelia at once perceived the awkwardness of her situation, recovered her self-possession, and with well dissembled mirth affected to laugh.

'A poor lunatic,' she exclaimed, 'whom I pity notwithstanding his extravagant aberrations of mind. He is innocent in his madness. But come, let us forget him.'

The dance was resumed. She was the queen of the mirthful hour that shone, surpassing all. She laughed, she rallied, she challenged, she outdid herself—her spirits towering the more, the more the revel waned. Party after party dropped off, still she kept it up till she was left utterly alone; and then she rushed to her chamber, and cast herself upon a couch dissolved in tears.

She loved St. Aubyn. Vanity had been touched before—but never sentiment, till she visited the little fishing hamlet on the coast of Devonshire. At first, she could not but persuade herself that St. Aubyn would not return: but a month put that point at rest. She drooped. Society, amusement, nothing could arouse her into her former self. Her partner in the waltz in vain solicited her to stand up with him again. She declined the honor; his visits were discouraged. Her mother anxiously watched the depression of

spirits that had taken possession of her, and seemed daily to increase. The winter passed without improvement—the spring. Summer set in—bloom and fruit returned—but cheer was a stranger to her heart. Change of scene was recommended to her. She was asked to make a choice of the place whither she would go; she replied with a sigh 'to the little fishing hamlet.'

She and her mother arrived there early on a Sunday morning; and re-occupied the identical lodgings which they had taken before. The land-lady, a kind-hearted creature, expressed her surprise and sorrow at the altered appearance of her young lodger.

'Ah, the young gentleman would be sorry to see this; though he has had his turn of sickness too; but he is now quite recovered.'

'Mr. St. Aubyn?' breathlessly enquired Amelia.

'Yes!' replied the landlady, 'that same handsome, kind young gentleman.'

'Merciful Heaven! is he here?' she vehemently demanded.

'He is, my lady,' returned the landlady.

'Mother!' she exclaimed as she turned upon the latter a look of which pleasure was painted for the first time since the momentous night of the ball. 'Where does he lodge?' asked Amelia, turning to the landlady.

'In the same place. He came back about a month after he left,' added the landlady. 'Poor young gentleman!' she continued, 'we all thought he had come to die among us; so pale, so melancholy. He would keep company with no one, would speak to no one, and at last he took fairly to his bed.'

Amelia laid her head upon her hand, covering her eyes; her tears had begun to flow.

'But the daughter of our neighbor who had a rich brother that sent his niece to school, and had determined to adopt her, having completed her time, came upon a visit to her father, shortly after the return of the young gentleman, and her mother made her go to him constantly to divert him; and he grew fond of listening to her, and well he might, for a sweet young creature she is, and at last his health took a turn, and he was able to quit his bed and to walk, as he used with you, my lady, rambling whole hours along the shore with her.'

'The eyes of Amelia were now lifted to the landlady's face. Her tears were gone, all but the traces of them; they seemed as they were glazed. The landlady had paused at the sound of several voices and a kind of bustle without; and now ran to the window.

'Come hither ladies!' she said, 'they are just coming out!'

Amelia, by a convulsive effort, rose, and hastily approached the window with her mother.

'Here they come!' resumed the landlady. 'The young gentleman, at last, fell in love with his sweet young nurse, and offered to marry her. She had already fallen in love with him: she accepted him, and this very morning they are going to church! There they are! look! did you ever see so sweet a sight? What a couple! God bless them! They were made for one another!'

The landlady started and looked around. Amelia had fallen in a swoon upon the floor. With difficulty they recovered her. In an hour her mother was on her way with her from the little fishing ground.

In a month she dressed her in a shroud!

SKETCHES OF MEHEMET ALI.

BY PRINCE PUCKLER MUSKAU.

On the 8th of March last we find the Prince landing at Camaran, up the Nile, to visit the only sugar manufactory in the country, the productions of which are purchased here for three times the price at which the foreign sugar may be had at Cairo. The place selected for this establishment lay unfortunately between the ruins of Hermopolis and Antinoe, and the two celebrated porticoes, lately in perfect preservation, before which Denon fell on his knees in rapture, were blown up with gunpowder that the stones might be made use of to forward the sugar boiling process. To make the matter worse, there is an inexhaustible stone quarry at a short distance, but this would have cost a little more trouble. One must remember the Turkish education and former ignorance of the Viceroy, to pardon him for such a piece of barbarism; but it is evident, notwithstanding the assertions of some journals, that many generations must pass away, before the Egyptians will have a proper idea of their antiquity. The sugar refinery is superintended by a very intelligent Frenchman, who is to receive for his trouble 30,000 francs, besides his expenses.

At his next landing place of importance, (Siout, the capital of Upper Egypt,) he overtakes the Paclia, whose party had started from Alexandria before him:

'The ride to Siout, in a splendid evening, through the luxuriant vegetation which, on three sides, surround the capital of Upper Egypt, was delightful; and most picturesque the appearance of its towers and mosques, illumined by the golden rays of the sun, and standing out from the grand back ground formed by the vast range of white mountains of Lybia, distinguished by their mysterious garlands of immeasurable catacombs.'

'The Viceroy had chosen for his dwelling a white-washed mansion at the entrance of the town, in the courtyard of which we found a company of soldiers in green uniform, who honoured me with a salute. His Highness greeted me in a most cordial manner. He looked remarkably well, in high spirits, and not in the least fatigued by his long land journey from Cairo, during which