

THE AMARANTH.

CONDUCTED BY ROBERT SHIVES.

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[From the Ladies' Book.]

The Condemned of Lucerne.

POVERTY—thou withering curse !
Thou tempter of the soul ! Let no man
boast himself to be honest, till he has
been tried in the consuming furnace
thou canst enkindle !

A famine had spread itself through
the valleys of Switzerland. The rain
fell not to nourish the withering grain,
and the earth yielded not her increase;
while fierce wars that were waged by
surrounding nations, prevented assistance
from abroad. The cattle died in
the pastures of ravaging diseases, and
men's hearts began to quail in fear of
the days to come. When the chamois
hunt was over, and the sun was sinking
behind the ice-bound mountains—when
the cottagers came out before their doors
in holy custom, and blew their horns in
answer to each other, that the hearts of
all the people might be lifted in simultaneous
thanksgiving to Almighty God,
for all his mercies, a silent prayer went
up from many a trusting heart, day after
day, that He would bless his people,
and come, in mercy, to their aid.

Jose Staubach dwelt on the shore of
the beautiful lake of Lucerne, on a road
not greatly frequented, that, branching
off from the main road from Berne, to
the town of the same name as the lake,
passed through two or three little vil-
lages, and, after receiving one or two
other roads from the south, rejoined
again the one it had left. Jose had taken
to his home a sweet and loving wife
from the nearest village, not many
months before the famine of which I

have spoken began to steal over the
land. Her widowed mother had accompanied
her to her new home, upon
her marriage, but had been removed
from earth not long after, by sudden
disease; and Emma was left to the com-
panionship of her husband alone. He
was several years older than herself,
and her love was subdued by a feeling
of respect, such as a considerable dis-
parity of years might be supposed to
engender, enhanced by Jose's natural
sedateness of manner; but it was in-
tense to the last degree. She cared not
that she was removed from her dear
companions—she cast back no longing
thought upon the sports of her native
village—for it was better than compan-
ions and sports, and all, to be with
Jose—although none were near save
he.

Jose had about his cottage a few acres
of tillage land, and as many more of
pasturage. He devoted some of his
time to the rearing of a few cattle, a part
to his little farm, and the rest to fishing
on the lake, from whose waters he de-
rived a portion of his sustenance. In
this last employment he was often ac-
companied and assisted by Emma, and,
at such times, they mingled their tuneful
voices in some of the soul-stirring me-
lodies of their native land. These were
joyful hours, and so long as fortune
blessed him, Jose was supremely happy
and contented. He was never daunted
by toil. His brawny arm was ever
ready for his daily duties, and the sink-
ing sun was the first to witness his relin-
quishment of exertion, as its earliest ray
had greeted its commencement. But he