

THE AMARANTH.

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Written for the Amaranth.

ARGIMOU.

A LEGEND OF THE MICMAC.

BY EUGENE.

"I love the Indian. Ere the white-man came
And taught him vice, and infamy, and shame,
His soul was noble. In the sun he saw
His God, and worshipped him with trembling
awe;—

Though rude his life, his bosom never beat
With polished vices, or with dark deceit."

CHAPTER I.

ARGIMOU, the son of Pansaway, was as brave a warrior as ever bounded in the war-path of the Micmacs. The speed of his arrow was like the lightning of the Great Spirit. The eagle of the salt water screamed its death-song as it fell pierced by the strength of his arm. His foot was swifter than the cariboo when it flies from the hunter's approach; and he cried to the blue-eyed pale-faces, "see! a warrior can look at the face of the sun without shedding a tear." His voice in battle was like the storm in the forest; as the trees fall by the blast so were his enemies swept away by the tempest of his wrath. The Mohawk told his name to the tribes of the great Iroquois; and the Peabiscot spread his fame in the land near the setting sun; but the warriors said to their young men, when the women trembled at the sound, "Go! wash away this big thought from our hearts in the blood of our enemies, that our months may not be filled with the praises of a stranger, or our dreams haunted by this Bashla of the Micmacs."

Such is the song which may sometimes be heard in the wigwams of the poor Micmacs, when they gather around the fire in the cold winter evenings, and seek a brief forgetfulness

of their poverty and degradation, in listening to the wild tales and triumphant recollections of the years that are gone. When the narrator pictures forth the secret ambuscade, the midnight attack that rooted out some plant of the invader from their fatherland; when he enters into minute details of the fierce conflict, the unyielding struggle—the number of captives taken—foemen slain, then may dark eyes be seen to flash again with their ancient fire, and heads are thrown back with the haughty bearing of warriors; while the sinewy hand grasps instinctively the knife, and the out-dashed arm plunges the weapon to and fro, as though seeking the heart of an imaginary victim in the maddening bursts of the war-song. Alas! poor remnants of a once mighty nation—ye are like the few remaining leaves on a tree from whence their companions have withered; a little while and the blast will moan a lonely dirge through the naked boughs—the voice of Nature will sigh her last farewell.

Gentle reader—the aborigines of America have always engaged the warmest interest of our hearts; excited as every natural sympathy must be by the melancholy truth, that in a little time all traces of the numerous and powerful nations, once inhabiting the great forests and plains of the New World, will be obliterated for ever from the face of the earth; their characteristic features, the simplicity of their habits, and their extraordinary intelligence, displayed in appropriating to their purposes the resources of those vast solitudes for which they seem to be especially adapted by the Creator, are rendered doubly impressive to the mind of the philosopher. There is an originality, a romantic charm about those "wanderers of the wild," which insensibly leads captive the imagination, and heightens our compassion for their undeserving fate. Then, again, the thought, which sophistry or a guilty conscience would seek to shroud in an impenetrable veil