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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 XIII.

THE day was about breaking when Argimou awoke, suddenly—for something was snuffing and snorting violently above him as he lay. Turning his head softly, he looked up and beheld what, at that moment, made his strong nerves tremble with superstitious fear. He thought, as he afterwards said, that *Mun-doot* was looking at him; but recollection soon came to his aid, and with it returned the wild courage of the warrior.

Directly over him, with starting eyes and nostrils expanded, was the head of a large moose, protruding from the willow branches in which its body was hidden, and apparently under the influence of extreme terror; for its long upper lip was retracted from the glistening teeth, and upon its stretched neck the stiff hairs rose like the bristles of a wild boar. When, to complete this apparition, we add, that the forehead of the animal was furnished with a pair of broad, branching antlers, the first sensation that predominated in the mind of the half-

* Continued from page 209.

† The evil-spirit, Satan. This curious rencontre, with the ludicrous incident to which it gave rise, actually occurred, though at a different period; and it is related as told the author by the Indian hunter to which it happened, some years since.

awakened Indian, may well be excused. When Argimou had regained his self-possession, he sought immediately the gun at his side, which was drawn forward slowly and without noise, though his arm shook with intense excitement. Laying a finger on the trigger, and pointing the barrel among the leaves—as nearly as possible in the direction he imagined the body of the animal to be concealed;—for one second not a fibre of his frame quivered—then a loud explosion rattled sharply over the woods, which was instantaneously followed by a shrill cry. The moose gave a spring forward over the body of his destroyer, and across the startled sleepers, striking Dennis smartly with his hoof, as he fell with a heavy crash among the branches of the thicket beyond.

Now the individual thus unceremoniously treated, was a bit of a practical philosopher, and an "ould campaigner," and being strongly impressed with the necessity of that primal law, denominated self-preservation, he had, with a praiseworthy solicitude for the promotion of science, and its being made applicable to the amelioration of man's condition here, with, also, great thought and self-mortification, as a step in the grand scheme—discovered what he conceived to be the great "element" which interfered most with the comfort of the human system. Nor was he the only wiseacre that regarded Nature as the inveterate enemy of mankind. Plodding, like his betters, in the quagmire of metaphysics, he traced effects to their maternal origin, and, at last, concluded that cold, or, in scientific language, the negation of caloric, was the adversary he had to overcome; for he observed that all life came from heat, which axiom he deduced from many familiar examples, such as the germination of "prates," the hatching of chickens, etc.; and it followed, as a plain inference, that any deprivation of that essential quality, would cause an approximation to the opposite extreme. And