

A CANADIAN LEGEND.

BY E. L. C.

For thou that once didst move,
In thy still beauty, through an earthly home,
Thou know'st the grief, the love,
The fear of woman's soul ;—to thee I come.

Many, and sad, and deep,
Were the thoughts folded in thy silent breast ;
Thou too could'st watch and weep—
Hear, gentlest mother ! hear a heart oppress !

MRS. HEMANS.

It is well known that the attempts of the English to obtain possession of the Canadas, were for a long time unavailing, and that when, after repeated efforts, success partially crowned their arms, and they became masters of Quebec, the French still maintained their claim to the unconquered parts of the colony, nor suffered their victorious enemy to remain unmolested, in his newly acquired territory. M. De Levi, the successor of the lamented Montcalm, made an effort, in the spring of 1760, to wrest the capital of Lower Canada from the English ; he was, however, repulsed, and driven back to Montreal, where the Marquis De Vaudreuil, Governor General of the colony, had fixed his head quarters ; and collecting all the military force of the country around him, resolved to make a determined stand against the farther encroachments of the foe. He heard that they were approaching, and conquering as they came—that Isle aux Noix, one of the most important keys to the province, was already theirs—that their ranks were swollen by thousands of American provincials, and that the red children of the forest had lent themselves, with all their horrid array and cruel blood-thirstiness, to assist in the subjugation of New France. Yet, these tidings but strengthened his purpose to sell dearly, if he must sell them, the American possessions of his king ; and, in silent expectation, he awaited the approach of the invaders.

It was a period of great excitement and anxiety, and, like every crisis of importance, gave rise to numerous affecting incidents, that developed the character of individuals, and which lent to that era a tinge of romantic interest, that sheds a mellow lustre over the dry and scanty detail of the historian. Among the traditions which it has been our fortune to collect, we remember none more replete with interest than the one which we now present to the reader. It was related to us one fine summer even-

ing, in view of that singular island which is the principal scene of the narrative,—and the pretty French girl, who repeated the legend, often crossed herself, as she pointed beyond the rapids to this isolated spot, whose shore no human foot invades, and whose slumbering echoes answer only to the music of the birds, or to the hoarser clamour of the elements.

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Towards the close of a warm afternoon in the summer of 1760, a group of gay young men, whose lofty bearing and rich attire bespoke them of the higher order of those who at that time filled the city of Montreal, issued from the church of Notre Dame, and walked leisurely away, leaving one of their number, who voluntarily remained behind, to pursue his way alone. He, who was thus left by his more social companions, looked after them for an instant as they crossed the Place d'Armes, then turned and sauntered slowly up the street, till arriving before the walls of the Recollect, then a community of Jesuits, he paused, and folding his arms, stood gazing in a musing attitude upon the sculptured emblems of mortality which surmounted the door of the chapel. Suddenly his reverie was broken by the unclosing of the gate. A monk, clothed in the long black robes of his order, girt with the cord of discipline, and wearing his cowl drawn closely over his face, issued from the portal, and passed him with the speed of one bound on some mission of importance. By accident he left the gate ajar, and, tempted by the verdure of the spacious court-yard, and the grateful shade of those noble elms which the sacrilegious hand of modern improvement has, within a few years, levelled to the dust—the young man, touching his plumed hat, in sign of reverence to the ecclesiastic, passed on, and entered the precincts of the monastery.

The weather was oppressively warm, and lifting