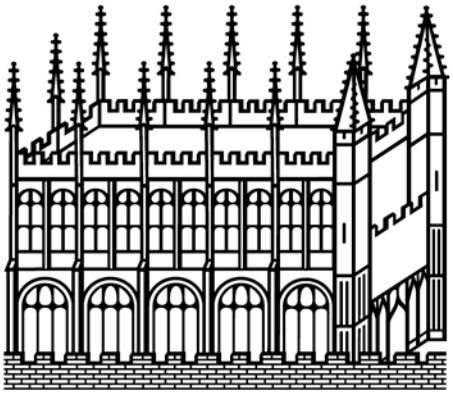

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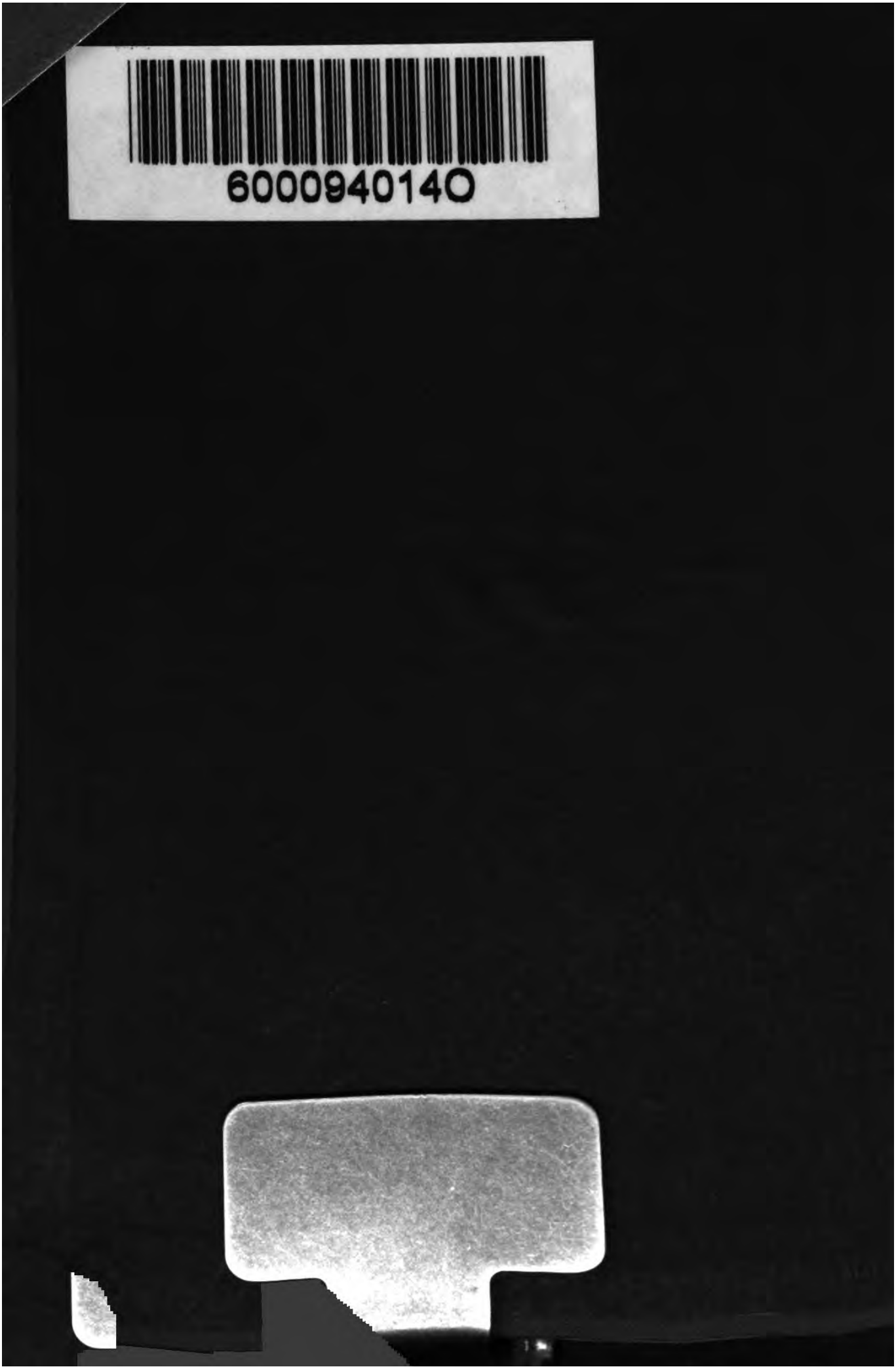
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THE POEMS OF OSSIAN

JAMES MACPHERSON.

THE

OSSIAN

280. o. 102.

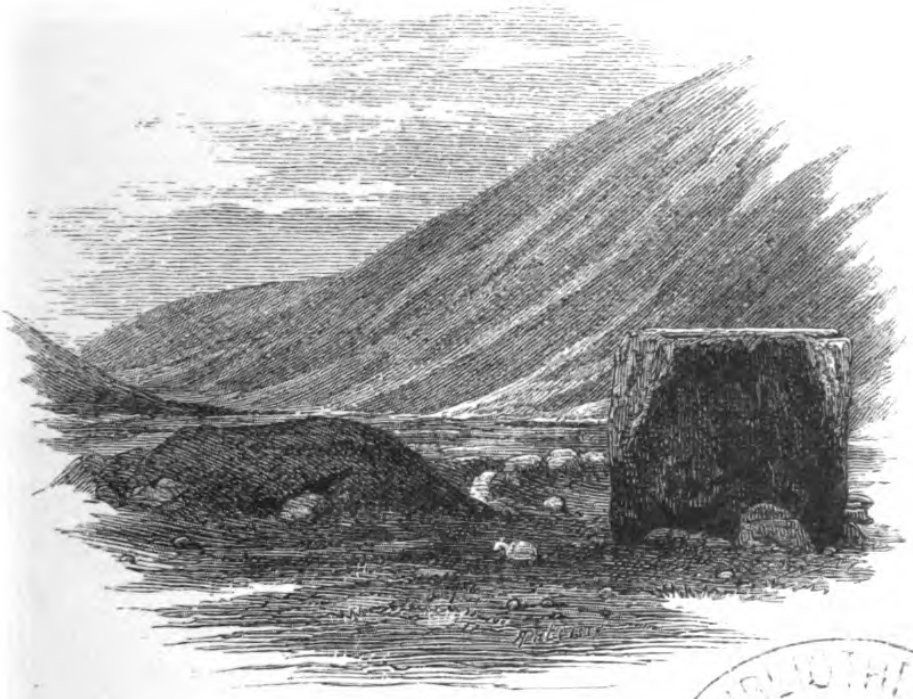
JAMES MACPHERSON

THE

POEMS OF OSSIAN

TRANSLATED

By JAMES MACPHERSON



In this still place, remote from men,
Sleeps Ossian, in the Narrow Glen.
WORDSWORTH.

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Fingal.

BOOK I.

CUTHULLIN.

CUTHULLIN sat by Tura's wall: by the tree of the rustling sound. His spear leaned against a rock. His shield lay on grass, by his side. Amid his thoughts of mighty Cairbar, a hero slain by the chief in war; the scout of ocean comes, Moran, the son of Fithil!

"Arise," says the youth, "Cuthullin, arise. I see the ships of the north! Many, chief of men, are the foe. Many the heroes of the sea-borne Swaran!" "Moran!" replied the blue-eyed chief, "thou ever tremblest, son of Fithil! thy fears have increased the foe. It is Fingal, king of deserts, with aid to green Erin of streams." "I beheld their chief," said Moran, "tall as a glittering rock. His spear is a blasted pine. His shield the rising moon! He sat on the shore! like a cloud of mist on the silent hill. Many, chief of heroes! I said, many are our hands

of war. Well art thou named, the Mighty Man: but many mighty men are seen from Tura's windy walls."

"He spoke, like a wave on a rock, who in this land appears like me? Heroes stand not in my presence: they fall to earth from my hand. Who can meet Swaran in fight? Who but Fingal, king of Selma of storms? Once we wrestled on Malmor;[1] our heels overturned the woods. Rocks fell from their place; rivulets, changing their course, fled murmuring from our side. Three days we renewed the strife; heroes stood at a distance and trembled. On the fourth, Fingal says, that the king of the ocean fell! but Swaran says, he stood! Let dark Cuthullin yield to him, that is strong as the storms of his land!"

"No!" replied the blue-eyed chief, "I never yield to mortal man! Dark Cuthullin shall be great or dead! Go, son of Fithil, take my spear. Strike the sounding shield of Semo.[2] It hangs at Tura's rustling gate. The sound of peace is not its voice! My heroes shall hear and obey." He went. He struck the bossy shield. The hills, the rocks reply. The sound spreads along the wood: deer start by the lake of roes. Curach leaps from the sounding rock; and Connal of the bloody spear! Crugal's[3] breast of snow beats high. The son of Favi leaves the dark-brown hind. It is the shield of war, said Ronnar! the spear

1 Meal-mor, *a great hill.*

2 Grandfather of Fingal, who was so remarkable for his valour that his shield was used as an incitement to arms by his descendants. A horn was the common instrument of call.

3 Cruth-geal, *fair-complexioned.*

of Cuthullin, said Lugar! son of the sea, put on thy arms! Calmar, lift thy sounding steel! Puno! dreadful hero, arise! Cairbar, from thy red tree of Cromla! Bend thy knee, O Eth! descend from the streams of Lena. Ca-olt, stretch thy side as thou movest along the whistling heath of Mora: thy side that is white as the foam of the troubled sea, when the dark winds pour it on rocky Cuthon.[1]

Now I behold the chiefs, in the pride of their former deeds! Their souls are kindled at the battles of old; at the actions of other times. Their eyes are flames of fire. They roll in search of the foes of the land. Their mighty hands are on their swords. Lightning pours from their sides of steel. They come like streams from the mountains; each rushes roaring from his hill. Bright are the chiefs of battle, in the armour of their fathers. Gloomy and dark their heroes follow, like the gathering of the rainy clouds behind the red meteors of heaven. The sounds of crashing arms ascend. The grey dogs howl between. Unequal bursts the song of battle. Rocking Cromla[2] echoes round. On Lena's dusky heath they stand, like mist that shades the hills of autumn: when broken and dark it settles high, and lifts its head to heaven!

"Hail," said Cuthullin, "sons of the narrow vales! hail, hunters of the deer! Another sport is

[1] Cu-thon, *the mournful sound of waves.*

[2] Crom-leach, signified a place of worship among the Druids. It is here the proper name of a hill on the coast of Ullin or Ulster.

drawing near: It is like the dark rolling of that wave on the coast! Or shall we fight, ye sons of war! or yield green Erin to Lochlin! O Connal, speak, thou first of men! thou breaker of the shields! thou hast often fought with Lochlin: wilt thou lift thy father's spear?"

"Cuthullin!" calm the chief replied, "the spear of Connal is keen. It delights to shine in battle; to mix with the blood of thousands. But though my hand is bent on fight, my heart is for the peace of Erin. Behold, thou first in Cormac's war, the sable fleet of Swaran. His masts are many on our coasts, like reeds in the lake of Lego. His ships are forests clothed with mist, when the trees yield by turns to the squally wind. Many are his chiefs in battle. Connal is for peace! Fingal would shun his arm the first of mortal men! Fingal, who scatters the mighty, as stormy winds the heath; when streams roar through echoing Cona: and night settles with all her clouds on the hill!"

"Fly, thou man of peace," said Calmar, "fly," said the son of Matha; "go, Connal, to thy silent hills, where the spear never brightens in war! Pursue the dark-brown deer of Cromla: stop with thine arrows the bounding roes of Lena. But, blue-eyed son of Semo, Cuthullin, ruler of the field, scatter thou the sons of Lochlin; roar through the ranks of their pride. Let no vessel of the kingdom of Snow bound on the dark-rolling waves of Inis-tore.[1] Rise,

[1] The Orkney islands.

ye dark winds of Erin, rise! roar whirlwinds of Lara of hinds! Amid the tempest let me die, torn, in a cloud, by angry ghosts of men; amid the tempest let Calmar die, if ever chase was sport to him so much as the battle of shields!"

"Calmar!" Connal slow replied, "I never fled, young song of Matha! I was swift with my friends in fight; but small is the fame of Connal! The battle was won in my presence; the valiant overcame! But, son of Semo, hear my voice, regard the ancient throne of Cormac. Give wealth and half the land for peace, till Fingal shall arrive on our coast. Or, if war be thy choice, I lift the sword and spear. My joy shall be in the midst of thousands: my soul shall lighten through the gloom of the fight!"

"To me," Cuthullin replies, "pleasant is the noise of arms! pleasant as the thunder of heaven, before the shower of spring! But gather all the shining tribes, that I may view the sons of war! Let them pass along the heath, bright as the sunshine before a storm; when the west wind collects the clouds and Morven echoes over all her oaks! But where are my friends in battle? The supporters of my arm in danger? Where art thou, white-bosomed Cathbar? Where is that cloud in war, Duchomar? Hast thou left me, O Fergus! in the day of the storm? Fergus, first in our joy at the feast! son of Rossa! arm of death! comest thou like a roe from Malmor? Like a hart from thy echoing hills? Hail, thou son of Rossa! what shades the soul of war?"

"Four stones," replied the chief, "rise on the grave of Cathba. These hands have laid in earth Duchomar, that cloud in war! Cathba, son of Torman! thou wert a sunbeam in Erin. And thou, O valiant Duchomar, a mist of the marshy Leno; when it moves on the plains of autumn, bearing the death of thousands along. Morna! fairest of maids! calm is thy sleep in the cave of the rock! Thou hast fallen in darkness, like a star that shoots across the desert; when the traveller is alone, and mourns the transient beam!"

"Say," said Semo's blue-eyed son, "say how fell the chiefs of Erin? Fell they by the sons of Lochlin, striving in the battle of heroes? Or what confines the strong in arms to the dark and narrow house?"

"Cathba," replied the hero, "fell by the sword of Duchomar at the oak of the noisy streams. Duchomar came to Tura's cave; he spoke to the lovely Morna. Morna, fairest among women, lovely daughter of strong-armed Cormac! Why in the circle of stones? in the cave of the rock alone? The stream murmurs along. The old tree groans in the wind. The lake is troubled before thee; dark are the clouds of the sky! But thou art snow on the heath; thy hair is the mist of Cromla; when it curls on the hill; when it shines to the beam of the west! Thy breasts are two smooth rocks seen from Branno of streams. Thy arms like two white pillars in the halls of the great Fingal."

"From whence," the fair-haired maid replied,

" from whence, Duchomar, most gloomy of men? Dark are thy brows and terrible! Red are thy rolling eyes! Does Swaran appear on the sea? what of the foe, Duchomar?" " From the hill I return, O Morna, from the hill of the dark-brown hinds. Three have I slain with my bended yew. Three with my long bounding dogs of the chase. Lovely daughter of Cormac, I love thee as my soul! I have slain one stately deer for thee. High was his branchy head; and fleet his feet of wind." " Duchomar!" calm the maid replied, " I love thee not, thou gloomy man! hard is thy heart of rock; dark is thy terrible brow. But Cathba, young son of Torman, thou art the love of Morna. Thou art a sunbeam in the day of the gloomy storm. Sawest thou the son of Torman, lovely on the hill of his hinds? Here the daughter of Cormac waits the coming of Cathba!"

" Long shall Morna wait," Duchomar said, " long shall Morna wait for Cathba! Behold this sword unsheathed! Here wanders the blood of Cathba. Long shall Morna wait. He fell by the stream of Branno! On Cromla I will raise his tomb, daughter of blue-shielded Cormac! Turn on Duchomar thine eyes; his arm is strong as a storm." " Is the son of Torman fallen?" said the wildly bursting voice of the maid. " Is he fallen on his echoing hills, the youth with the breast of snow? The first in the chase of hinds? The foe of the strangers of ocean? Thou art dark to me, Duchomar, cruel is thine arm to

Morna! Give me that sword, my foe! I love the wandering blood of Cathba!"

He gave the sword to her tears. She pierced his manly breast! He fell, like the bank of a mountain-stream, and stretching forth his hand, he spoke: "Daughter of blue-shielded Cormac! Thou hast slain me in youth! The sword is cold in my breast: Morna, I feel it cold. Give me to Moina the maid. Duchomar was the dream of her night! She will raise my tomb; the hunter shall raise my fame. But draw the sword from my breast. Morna, the steel is cold!" She came, in all her tears, she came; she drew the sword from his breast. He pierced her white side! He spread her fair locks on the ground! Her bursting blood sounds from her side: her white arm is stained with red. Rolling in death she lay. The cave re-echoed to her sighs."

"Peace," said Cuthullin, "to the souls of the heroes! their deeds were great in fight. Let them ride around [1] me on clouds. Let them show their features of war. My soul shall then be firm in danger; mine arm like the thunder of heaven! But be thou on a moon-beam, O Morna! near the window of my rest; when my thoughts are of peace; when the din of arms is past. Gather the strength of the tribes! Move to the wars of Erin! Attend the car of my

1 It was the opinion then, as indeed it is to this day, in some parts of the Highlands, that the souls of the deceased hovered round surviving friends; and sometimes appeared to them when they were about to engage in any great enterprise.

battles! Rejoice in the noise of my course! Place three spears by my side: follow the bounding of my steeds! That my soul may be strong in my friends, when battle darkens round the beams of my steel!"

As rushes a stream of foam from the dark shady steep of Cromla; when the thunder is travelling above, and dark-brown night sits on half the hill. Through the breaches of the tempest look forth the dim faces of ghosts. So fierce, so vast, so terrible, rushed on the sons of Erin. The chief like a whale of ocean, whom all his billows pursue, poured valour forth, as a stream, rolling his might along the shore. The sons of Lochlin heard the noise, as the sound of a winter storm. Swaran struck his bossy shield: he called the son of Arno. "What murmur rolls along the hill, like the gathered flies of the eve? The sons of Erin descend, or rustling winds roar in the distant wood! Such is the noise of Gormal, before the white tops of my waves arise. O son of Arno, ascend the hill; view the dark face of the heath!"

He went. He, trembling, swift returned. His eyes rolled wildly round. His heart beat high against his side. His words were faultering, broken, slow. "Arise, son of ocean, arise, chief of the dark-brown shields! I see the dark, the mountain-stream of battle! The deep-moving strength of the sons of Erin! The car, the car of war comes on, like the flame of death! the rapid car of Cuthullin, the noble son of Semo! It bends behind like a wave near a rock; like the sun-streaked mist of the heath. Its sides are

embossed with stones, and sparkle like the sea round the boat of night. Of polished yew is its beam ; its seat of the smoothest bone. The sides are replenished with spears ; the bottom is the footstool of heroes ! Before the right side of the car is seen the snorting horse ! The high-maned, broad-breasted proud, wide-leaping, strong steed of the hill. Loud and resounding is his hoof; the spreading of his mane above is like a stream of smoke on a ridge of rocks. Bright are the sides of the steed ! his name is Sulin-Sifadda !"

Before the left side of the car is seen the snorting horse ! The thin-maned, high-headed, strong-hoofed, fleet, bounding son of the hill : his name is Dusronnal, among the stormy sons of the sword ! A thousand thongs bind the car on high. Hard polished bits shine in a wreath of foam. Thin thongs, bright-studded with gems, bend on the stately necks of the steeds. The steeds that like wreaths of mist fly over the streamy vales ! The wildness of deer is in their course, the strength of eagles descending on the prey. Their noise is like the blast of winter on the sides of the snow-headed Gormal.

Within the car is seen the chief ; the strong-armed son of the sword. The hero's name is Cuthullin, son of Semo, king of shells. His red cheek is like my polished yew. The look of his blue-rolling eye is wide, beneath the dark arch of his brow. His hair flies from his head like a flame, as bending forward he wields the spear. Fly, king of ocean, fly ! He comes, like a storm, along the streamy vale !

"When did I fly?" replied the king. "When fled Swaran from the battle of spears? When did I shrink from danger, chief of the little soul? I met the storm of Gormal, when the foam of my waves beat high. I met the storm of the clouds! shall Swaran fly from a hero? Were Fingal himself before me, my soul should not darken with fear. Arise to battle, my thousands! pour round me like the echoing main. Gather round the bright steel of your king; strong as the rocks of my land; that meet the storm with joy, and stretch their dark pines to the wind!"

Like autumn's dark storms, pouring from two echoing hills, toward each other approached the heroes. Like two deep streams from high rocks meeting, mixing, roaring on the plain; loud, rough, and dark in battle meet Lochlin and Innis-fail. Chief mixes his strokes with chief, and man with man; steel, clanging, sounds on steel. Helmets are cleft on high. Blood bursts and smokes around. Strings murmur on the polished yews. Darts rush along the sky. Spears fall like the circles of light, which gild the face of night. As the noise of the troubled ocean, when roll the waves on high. As the last peal of thunder in heaven, such is the din of war! Though Cormac's hundred bards were there, to give the fight to song; feeble was the voice of a hundred bards to send the deaths to future times! For many were the deaths of heroes; wide poured the blood of the brave!

Mourn, ye sons of song, mourn the death of the

noble Sithallin. Let the sighs of Fiona rise on the lone plains of her lovely Ardan. They fell, like two hinds of the desert, by the hands of the mighty Swaran: when, in the midst of thousands, he roared; like the shrill spirit of a storm. He sits dim, on the clouds of the north, and enjoys the death of the mariner. Nor slept thy hand by thy side, chief of the Isle of Mist![1] many were the deaths of thine arm, Cuthullin, thou son of Semo! His sword was like the beam of heaven when it pierces the sons of the vale; when the people are blasted and fall, and all the hills are burning around. Dusronnal[2] snorted over the bodies of heroes. Sifadda[3] bathed his hoof in blood. The battle lay behind them, as groves overturned on the desert of Cromla; when the blast has passed the heath, laden with the spirits of night!

Weep on the rocks of roaring winds, O maid of Inistore![4] Bend thy fair head over the waves, thou lovelier than the ghost of the hills; when it moves, in a sunbeam, at noon, over the silence of Morven! He is fallen! thy youth is low! pale beneath the sword of Cuthullin! No more shall valour raise thy love to match the blood of kings. Trenar, graceful Trenar died, O maid of Inistore!

1 The Isle of Skye; not inappropriately called the *isle of mist*.
2 One of Cuthullin's horses. Dubhstron gheal.
3 Sith-fadda, *i.e. a long stride*.
4 Inistore, the Orkney islands, which, with those of Shetland, were subject to the king of Lochlin (Norway).

His grey dogs[1] are howling at home ; they see his passing ghost. His bow is in the hall unstrung. No sound is in the hill of his hinds !

As roll a thousand waves to the rocks, so Swaran's host came on. As meets a rock a thousand waves, so Erin met Swaran of spears. Death raises all his voices around, and mixes with the sounds of shields. Each hero is a pillar of darkness ; the sword a beam of fire in his hand. The field echoes from wing to wing, as a hundred hammers that rise, by turns, on the red son of the furnace. Who are these on Lena's heath, these so gloomy and dark ? Who are these like two clouds, and their swords like lightning above them ? The little hills are troubled around ; the rocks tremble with all their moss. Who is it but Ocean's son and the car-borne chief of Erin ? Many are the anxious eyes of their friends, as they see them dim on the heath. But night conceals the chiefs in clouds, and ends the dreadful fight !

It was on Cromla's shaggy side that Dorglas had placed the deer : the early fortune of the chase, before the heroes left the hill. A hundred youths collect the heath ; ten warriors wake the fire ; three hundred choose the polished stones. The feast is smoking wide ![2] Cuthullin, chief of Erin's war, re-

[1] Dogs and horses were supposed to be cognisant of the ghosts of their deceased masters. It was also believed that the souls of heroes went immediately after death to the hills of their country, or other scenes frequented during the happiest time of life.

[2] In allusion to the following traditionary manner of pre-

sumed his mighty soul. He stood upon his beamy spear, and spoke to the son of songs; to Carril of other times, the grey-haired son of Kinfena. "Is this feast spread for me alone and the king of Lochlin on Erin's shore; far from the deer of his hills, and sounding halls of his feasts? Rise, Carril of other times; carry my words to Swaran. Tell him from the roaring of waters, that Cuthullin gives his feast. Here let him listen to the sound of my groves, amidst the clouds of night. For cold and bleak the blustering winds rush over the foam of his seas. Here let him praise the trembling harp, and hear the songs of heroes!"

Old Carril went, with softest voice. He called the king of dark-brown shields! "Rise from the skins of thy chase; rise, Swaran, king of groves! Cuthullin gives the joy of shells. Partake the feast of Erin's blue-eyed chief!" He answered like the sullen sound of Cromla before a storm. "Though all thy daughters, Inis-fail! should stretch their arms of snow; should raise the heavings of their breasts, and softly roll their eyes of love; yet, fixed as Lochlin's thousand rocks, here Swaran should remain; till morn, with the young beams of the east, shall light me to the death of Cuthullin. Pleasant to my ear is Lochlin's wind! It rushes over my seas! It speaks aloft

paring venison in a pit dug in the ground. The pit having been heated with a quantity of burning heather, the flesh was deposited between layers of smooth stones, and covered over with heather to confine the steam.

in all my shrouds, and brings my green forests to my mind: The green forests of Gormal, which often echoed to my winds, when my spear was red in the chase of the boar. Let dark Cuthullin yield to me the ancient throne of Cormac; or Erin's torrents shall show from their hills the red foam of the blood of his pride!"

"Sad is the sound of Swaran's voice!" said Carril of other times! "Sad to himself alone," said the blue-eyed son of Semo. "But, Carril, raise the voice on high; tell the deeds of other times. Send thou the night away in song; and give the joy of grief. For many heroes and maids of love have moved on Inis-fail: And lovely are the songs of woe that are heard in Albion's rocks; when the noise of the chase is past, and the streams of Cona[1] answer to the voice of Ossian."

"In other days," Carril replies, "came the sons of Ocean to Erin! A thousand vessels bounded on waves to Ullin's lovely plains. The sons of Inis-fail arose, to meet the race of dark-brown shields. Cairbar, first of men, was there, and Grudar, stately youth! Long had they strove for the spotted bull, that lowed on Golbun's echoing heath. Each claimed him as his own. Death was often at the point of their steel! Side by side the heroes fought; the strangers of Ocean fled. Whose name was fairer

[1] Cona is the name of a small river that runs through Glencoe in Argyleshire. One of the hills in that romantic valley is still called Scornafena, or the hill of Fingal's people.

on the hill than the name of Cairbar and Grudar? But ah! why ever lowed the bull on Golbun's echoing heath? They saw him leaping like snow. The wrath of the chiefs returned!"

"On Lubar's grassy banks they fought; Grudar fell in his blood. Fierce Cairbar came to the vale, where Brassolis, fairest of his sisters, all alone raised the song of grief. She sung of the actions of Grudar, the youth of her secret soul! She mourned him in the field of blood; but still she hoped for his return. Her white bosom is seen from her robe as the moon from the clouds of night, when its edge heaves white on the view, from the darkness which covers its orb. Her voice was softer than the harp to raise the song of grief. Her soul was fixed on Grudar. The secret look of her eye was his. "When shalt thou come in thine arms, thou mighty in the war?"

"Take, Brassolis," Cairbar came and said, "take, Brassolis, this shield of blood. Fix it on high within my hall, the armour of my foe! Her soft heart beat against her side. Distracted, pale, she flew. She found her youth in all his blood; she died on Cromla's heath. Here rests their dust, Cuthullin! these lonely yews sprung from their tombs, and shade them from the storm. Fair was Brassolis on the plain! Stately was Grudar on the hill! The bard shall preserve their names, and send them down to future times!"

"Pleasant is thy voice, O Carril," said the blue-

eyed chief of Erin. "Pleasant are the words of other times! They are like the calm shower of spring; when the sun looks on the field, and the light cloud flies over the hills. O strike the harp in praise of my love, the lonely sunbeam of Dunscaith! Strike the harp in the praise of Bragela; she that I left in the Isle of Mist, the spouse of Semo's son! Dost thou raise thy fair face from the rock to find the sails of Cuthullin? The sea is rolling distant far; its white foam deceives thee for my sails. Retire, for it is night, my love; the dark winds sing in thy hair. Retire to the halls of my feasts; think of the times that are past. I will not return till the storm of war is ceased. O Connal! speak of war and arms, and send her from my mind. Lovely with her flowing hair is the white-bosomed daughter of Sorglan."

Connal, slow to speak, replied, "Guard against the race of Ocean. Send thy troop of night abroad, and watch the strength of Swaran. Cuthullin! I am for peace till the race of Selma come; till Fingal come, the first of men, and beam, like the sun, on our fields!" The hero struck the shield of alarms, the warriors of the night moved on! The rest lay in the heath of the deer, and slept beneath the dusky wind. The ghosts[1] of the lately dead

1 It was long the opinion of the ancient Scots, that a ghost was heard shrieking near the place where a death was to happen. The popular accounts of this extraordinary prognostication are very poetical. The ghost comes mounted on a meteor, and twice

were near, and swam on the gloomy clouds: And far distant, in the dark silence of Lena, the feeble voices of death were faintly heard.

or thrice surrounds the fatal spot; it then pursues the course of the funeral, shrieking at intervals; until it disappears above the burial-place.

BOOK II.

THE GHOST OF CRUGAL.

CONNAL lay by the sound of the mountain stream, beneath the aged tree. A stone, with its moss, supported his head. Shrill through the heath of Lena, he heard the voice of night. At distance from the heroes he lay; the son of the sword feared no foe! The hero beheld, in his rest, a dark-red stream of fire rushing down from the hill. Crugal sat upon the beam, a chief who fell in fight. He fell by the hand of Swaran, striving in the battle of heroes. His face is like the beam of the setting moon. His robes are of the clouds of the hill. His eyes are two decaying flames. Dark is the wound of his breast! "Crugal," said the mighty Connal, son of Dedgal famed on the hill of hinds! "Why so pale and sad, thou breaker of the shields? Thou hast never been pale for fear! What disturbs the departed Crugal?" Dim, and in tears, he stood and stretched his pale hand over the hero. Faintly he raised his feeble voice, like the gale of the reedy Lego!

"My spirit, Connal, is on my hills: my corse on

the sands of Erin. Thou shalt never talk with Crugal, nor find his lone steps in the heath. I am light as the blast of Cromla. I move like the shadow of mist! Connal, son of Colgar, I see a cloud of death: it hovers dark over the plains of Lena. The sons of green Erin must fall. Remove from the field of ghosts." Like the darkened moon he retired, in the midst of the whistling blast. "Stay," said the mighty Connal, "stay, my dark-red friend. Lay by that beam of heaven, son of the windy Cromla! What cave is thy lonely house? What green-headed hill the place of thy repose? Shall we not hear thee in the storm? In the noise of the mountain-stream? When the feeble sons of the wind come forth, and scarcely seen pass over the desert?"

The soft-voiced Connal rose, in the midst of his sounding arms. He struck his shield above Cuthullin. The son of battle waked. "Why," said the ruler of the car, "comes Connal through my night? My spear might turn against the sound; and Cuthullin mourn the death of his friend. Speak, Connal; son of Colgar, speak, thy counsel is the son of heaven!" "Son of Semo!" replied the chief, "the ghost of Crugal came from his cave. The stars dim-twinkled through his form! His voice was like the sound of a distant stream. He is a messenger of death! He speaks of the dark and narrow house! Sue for peace, O chief of Erin! or fly over the heath of Lena."

"He spoke to Connal," replied the hero, "though

stars dim-twinkled through his form! Son of Colgar, it was the wind that murmured across thy ear. Or if it was the form of Crugal, why didst thou not force him to my sight? Hast thou inquired where is his cave? The house of that son of wind? My sword might find that voice, and force his knowledge from Crugal. But small is his knowledge, Connal; he was here to-day. He could not have gone beyond our hills! who could tell him there of our fall?" "Ghosts fly on clouds, and ride on winds," said Connal's voice of wisdom. "They rest together in their caves, and talk of mortal men."

"Then let them talk of mortal men; of every man but Erin's chief. Let me be forgot in their cave. I will not fly from Swaran! If fall I must, my tomb shall rise amidst the fame of future times. The hunter shall shed a tear on my stone; sorrow shall dwell round the high-bosomed Bragela. I fear not death; to fly I fear! Fingal has seen me victorious! Thou dim phantom of the hill, show thyself to me! come on thy beam of heaven, show me my death in thine hand; yet I will not fly, thou feeble son of the wind! Go, son of Colgar, strike the shield. It hangs between the spears. Let my warriors rise to the sound, in the midst of the battles of Erin. Though Fingal delays his coming with the race of his stormy isles; we shall fight, O Colgar's son, and die in the battle of heroes!"

The sound spreads wide. The heroes rise, like the breaking of a blue-rolling wave. They stood on the

heath, like oaks with all their branches round them; when they echo to the stream of frost, and their withered leaves are rustling to the wind! High Cromla's head of clouds is grey. Morning trembles on the half-enlightened ocean. The blue mist swims slowly by, and hides the sons of Inis-fail.

"Rise ye," said the king of the dark-brown shields, "ye that came from Lochlin's waves. The sons of Erin have fled from our arms; pursue them over the plains of Lena! Morla, go to Cormac's hall. Bid them yield to Swaran; before his people sink to the tomb; and silence spread over his isle." They rose, rustling like a flock of sea-fowl, when the waves expel them from the shore. Their sound was like a thousand streams that meet in Cona's vale, when, after a stormy night, they turn their dark eddies, beneath the pale light of the morn.

As the dark shades of autumn fly over hills of grass; so gloomy, dark, successive, came the chiefs of Lochlin's echoing woods. Tall as the stag of Morven, moved stately before them the king. His shining shield is on his side, like a flame on the heath at night. When the world is silent and dark, and the traveller sees some ghost sporting in the beam! Dimly gleam the hills around, and show indistinctly their oaks! A blast from the troubled ocean removed the settled mist. The sons of Erin appear, like a ridge of rocks on the coast; when mariners, on shores unknown, are trembling at veering winds!

"Go, Morla, go," said the king of Lochlin, "offer

peace to these! Offer the terms we give to kings, when nations bow down to our swords. When the valiant are dead in war; when virgins weep on the field! Tall Morla came, the son of Swarth, and stately strode the youth along! He spoke to Erin's blue-eyed chief, among the lesser heroes. "Take Swaran's peace," the warrior spoke, "the peace he gives to kings, when nations bow to his sword. Leave Erin's streamy plains to us, and give thy spouse and dog. Thy spouse high-bosomed, heaving fair! Thy dog that overtakes the wind! Give these to prove the weakness of thine arm; live then beneath our power!"

"Tell Swaran, tell that heart of pride, Cuthullin never yields. I give him the dark rolling sea; I give his people graves in Erin. But never shall a stranger have the pleasing sunbeam of my love. No deer shall fly on Lochlin's hills, before swift-footed Luath." "Vain ruler of the car," said Morla, "wilt thou then fight the king? The king whose ships of many groves could carry off thine isle? So little is thy green-hilled Erin to him who rules the stormy waves!" "In words I yield to many, Morla. My sword shall yield to none. Erin shall own the sway of Cormac, while Connal and Cuthullin live! O Connal, first of mighty men, thou hearest the words of Morla. Shall thy thoughts then be of peace, thou breaker of the shields? Spirit of fallen Crugal! why didst thou threaten us with death? The narrow house shall receive me, in the midst of the light of renown. Exalt,

ye sons of Erin, exalt the spear, and bend the bow: rush on the foe in darkness, as the spirits of stormy nights!"

Then dismal, roaring, fierce, and deep the gloom of battle poured along; as mist that is rolled on a valley, when storms invade the silent sunshine of heaven! Cuthullin moves before in arms, like an angry ghost before a cloud; when meteors inclose him with fire; when the dark winds are in his hand. Carril, far on the heath, bids the horn of battle sound. He raises the voice of song, and pours his soul into the minds of the brave.

"Where," said the mouth of the song, "where is the fallen Crugal? He lies forgot on earth; the hall of shells[1] is silent. Sad is the spouse of Crugal! She is a stranger in the hall of her grief. But who is she, that, like a sunbeam, flies before the ranks of the foe? It is Degrena, lovely fair, the spouse of fallen Crugal. Her hair is on the wind behind. Her eye is red; her voice is shrill. Pale, empty is thy Crugal now! His form is in the cave of the hill. He comes to the ear of rest; he raises his feeble voice; like the humming of the mountain bee! like the collected flies of the eve! But Degrena falls like a cloud of the morn; the sword of Lochlin is in her side. Cairbar, she is fallen, the rising thought of thy youth. She is fallen, O Cairbar, the thought of thy youthful hours!"

1 Large shells were frequently used as drinking-cups in the Highlands, hence the frequent allusions to *the chief of shells* and *the hall of shells.*

Fierce Cairbar heard the mournful sound. He rushed along like ocean's whale. He saw the death of his daughter: He roared in the midst of thousands. His spear met a son of Lochlin! battle spreads from wing to wing! As a hundred winds in Lochlin's groves; as fire in the pines of a hundred hills; so loud, so ruinous, so vast the ranks of men are hewn down. Cuthullin cut off heroes like thistle; Swaran wasted Erin. Curach fell by his hand, Cairbar of the bossy shield! Morglan lies in lasting rest! Caolt trembles as he dies! His white breast is stained with blood; his yellow hair stretched in the dust of his native land! He often had spread the feast where he fell. He often there had raised the voice of the harp, when his dogs leapt around for joy; and the youths of the chase prepared the bow!

Still Swaran advanced, as a stream that bursts from the desert. The little hills are rolled in its course; the rocks are half-sunk by its side! But Cuthullin stood before him, like a hill, that catches the clouds of heaven. The winds contend on its head of pines; the hail rattles on its rocks. But, firm in its strength, it stands, and shades the silent vale of Cona! So Cuthullin shaded the sons of Erin, and stood in the midst of thousands. Blood rises like the fount of a rock, from panting heroes around. But Erin falls on either wing, like snow in the day of the sun.

"O sons of Erin," said Grumal. "Lochlin conquers on the field. Why strive we as reeds against

the wind? Fly to the hill of dark-brown hinds." He fled like the stag of Morven; his spear is a trembling beam of light behind him. Few fled with Grumal, chief of the little soul: they fell in the battle of heroes, on Lena's echoing heath. High on his car, of many gems, the chief of Erin stood. He slew a mighty son of Lochlin, and spoke, in haste, to Connal. "O Connal, first of mortal men, thou hast taught this arm of death! Though Erin's sons have fled, shall we not fight the foe? Carril, son of other times, carry my friends to that bushy hill. Here, Connal, let us stand, like rocks, and save our flying friends."

Connal mounts the car of gems. They stretch their shields, like the darkened moon, the daughter of the starry skies, when she moves, a dun circle, through heaven; and dreadful change is expected by men. Sithfadda panted up the hill, and Sronnal, haughty steed. Like waves behind a whale, behind them rushed the foe. Now on the rising side of Cromla stood Erin's few sad sons; like a grove through which the flame had rushed, hurried on by the winds of the stormy night; distant, withered, dark they stand, with not a leaf to shake in the gale.

Cuthullin stood beside an oak. He rolled his red eye in silence, and heard the wind in his bushy hair; the scout of ocean came, Moran the son of Fithil. "The ships," he cried, "the ships of the lonely isles. Fingal comes, the first of men, the breaker of the shields! The waves foam before his black prows!" His masts with sails are like groves in clouds!"

"Blow," said Cuthullin, "blow, ye winds that rush along my isle of mist. Come to the death of thousands, O king of resounding Selma! Thy sails, my friend, are to me the clouds of the morning; thy ships the light of heaven; and thou thyself a pillar of fire that beams on the world by night. O Connal, first of men, how pleasing, in grief, are our friends! But the night is gathering around! Where now are the ships of Fingal? Here let us pass the hours of darkness; here wish for the moon of heaven."

The winds come down on the woods. The torrents rush from the rocks. Rain gathers round the head of Cromla. The red stars tremble between the flying clouds. Sad, by the side of a stream whose sound is echoed by a tree, sad by the side of a stream the chief of Erin sits. Connal, son of Colgar, is there, and Carril of other times. "Unhappy is the hand of Cuthullin," said the son of Semo, "unhappy is the hand of Cuthullin, since he slew his friend! Ferda, son of Damman, I loved thee as myself!"

"How, Cuthullin, son of Semo! how fell the breaker of the shields? Well I remember," said Connal, "the son of the noble Damman. Tall and fair he was like the rainbow of heaven." Ferda from Albion came, the chief of a hundred hills. In Muri's hall he learned the sword, and won the friendship of Cuthullin. We moved to the chase together: one was our bed in the heath!

Deugala was the spouse of Cairbar, chief of the plains of Ullin. She was covered with the light of

beauty, but her heart was the house of pride. She loved that sunbeam of youth, the son of noble Damman. "Cairbar," said the white-armed Deugala, "give me half of the herd. No more will I remain in your halls. Divide the herd, dark Cairbar!" "Let Cuthullin," said Cairbar, "divide my herd on the hill. His breast is the seat of justice. Depart, thou light of beauty!" I went and divided the herd. One snow-white bull remained. I gave that bull to Cairbar. The wrath of Deugala rose!

"Son of Damman," began the fair, "Cuthullin hath pained my soul. I must hear of his death, or Lubar's stream shall roll over me. My pale ghost shall wander near thee, and mourn the wound of my pride. Pour out the blood of Cuthullin, or pierce this heaving breast." "Deugala," said the fair-haired youth, "how shall I slay the son of Semo! He is the friend of my secret thoughts. Shall I then lift the sword?" She wept three days before the chief; on the fourth he said he would fight. "I will fight my friend, Deugala! but may I fall by his sword! Could I wander on the hill alone? Could I behold the grave of Cuthullin?" We fought on the plain of Muri. Our swords avoid a wound. They slide on the helmets of steel; or sound on the slippery shields. Deugala was near with a smile, and said to the son of Damman: "Thine arm is feeble, sunbeam of youth! Thy years are not strong for steel. Yield to the son of Semo. He is a rock on Malmor."

"The tear is in the eye of youth. He faltering

said to me: 'Cuthullin, raise thy bossy shield. Defend thee from the hand of thy friend. My soul is laden with grief: for I must slay the chief of men!' I sighed as the wind in the cleft of a rock. I lifted high the edge of my steel. The sunbeam of battle fell: the first of Cuthullin's friends! Unhappy is the hand of Cuthullin since the hero fell!"

"Mournful is thy tale, son of the car," said Carril of other times. "It sends my soul back to the ages of old, to the days of other years. Often have I heard of Comal, who slew the friend he loved; yet victory attended his steel: the battle was consumed in his presence!

"Comal was a son of Albion: the chief of an hundred hills! His deer drank of a thousand streams. A thousand rocks replied to the voice of his dogs. His face was the mildness of youth. His hand the death of heroes. One was his love, and fair was she! the daughter of mighty Conloch. She appeared like a sunbeam among women. Her hair was the wing of the raven. Her dogs were taught to the chase. Her bowstring sounded on the winds. Her soul was fixed on Comal. Often met their eyes of love. Their course in the chase was one. Happy were their words in secret. But Grumal loved the maid, the dark chief of the gloomy Ardven. He watched her lone steps in the heath; the foe of unhappy Comal!

"One day tired of the chase, when the mist had concealed their friends, Comal and the daughter of Conloch met, in the cave of Ronan. It was the

wonted haunt of Comal. Its sides were hung with his arms. A hundred shields of thongs were there; a hundred helms of sounding steel. "Rest here," he said, "my love, Galbina: thou light of the cave of Ronan! A deer appears on Mora's brow. I go; but I will soon return." "I fear," she said, "dark Grumal my foe: he haunts the cave of Ronan! I will rest among the arms; but soon return, my love."

"He went to the deer of Mora. The daughter of Conloch would try his love. She clothed her fair sides with his armour; she strode from the cave of Ronan! He thought it was his foe. His heart beat high. His colour changed, and darkness dimmed his eyes. He drew the bow. The arrow flew. Galbina fell in blood! He ran with wildness in his steps: he called the daughter of Conloch. No answer in the lonely rock. Where art thou, O my love? He saw at length her heaving heart beating around the arrow he threw. "O Conloch's daughter, is it thou? He sunk upon her breast! The hunters found the hapless pair; he afterwards walked the hill. But many and silent were his steps round the dark dwelling of his love. The fleet of the ocean came. He fought, the strangers fled. He searched for death along the field. But who could slay the mighty Comal! He threw away his dark-brown shield. An arrow found his manly breast. He sleeps with his loved Galbina at the noise of the sounding surge! Their green tombs are seen by the mariner, when he bounds on the waves of the north."

BOOK III.

CARRIL THE BARD.

"PLEASANT are the words of the song," said Cuthullin! "lovely the tales of other times! They are like the calm dew of the morning on the hill of roes; when the sun is faint on its side, and the lake is settled and blue in the vale. O Carril, raise again thy voice! let me hear the song of Selma: which was sung in my halls of joy, when Fingal, king of shields, was there, and glowed at the deeds of his fathers."

"Fingal! thou dweller of battle," said Carril, "early were thy deeds in arms. Lochlin was consumed in thy wrath, when thy youth strove with the beauty of maids. They smiled at the fair-blooming face of the hero; but death was in his hands. He was strong as the waters of Lora. His followers were the roar of a thousand streams. They took the king of Lochlin in war; they restored him to his ships. His big heart swelled with pride; the death of the youth was dark in his soul. For none ever but Fingal had overcome the strength of the mighty Starno. He sat in the hall of his shells in Lochlin's

woody land. He called the grey-haired Snivan, that often sung round the circle[1] of Loda: when the stone of power heard his voice, and battle turned in the field of the valiant!"

"Go, grey-haired Snivan," Starno said, "go to Ardven's sea-surrounded rocks. Tell to the king of Selma; he the fairest among his thousands, tell him I give him my daughter, the loveliest maid that ever heaved a breast of snow. Her arms are white as the foam of my waves. Her soul is generous and mild. Let him come with his bravest heroes, to the daughter of the secret hall!" Snivan came to Selma's hall: Fair-haired Fingal attended his steps. His kindled soul flew to the maid, as he bounded on the waves of the north. "Welcome," said the dark-brown Starno. "welcome, king of rocky Morven: welcome his heroes of might, sons of the distant isle! Three days within my halls shall ye feast; three days pursue my boars; that your fame may reach the maid who dwells in the secret hall."

Starno designed their death. He gave the feast of shells. Fingal, who doubted the foe, kept on his arms of steel. The sons of death were afraid: They fled from the eyes of the king. The voice of sprightly mirth arose. The trembling harps of joy were strung. Bards sung the battle of heroes; they sung the heaving breast of love. Ullin, Fingal's bard, was there: the sweet voice of resounding Cona. He praised the

[1] Of stone circles there are still many remains; and *the stone of power* is the image of one of the deities of Scandinavia.

daughter of Lochlin; and Morven's[1] high-descended chief. The daughter of Lochlin overheard. She left the hall of her secret sigh! She came in all her beauty, like the moon from the cloud of the east. Loveliness was around her as light. Her steps were the music of songs. She saw the youth and loved him. He was the stolen sigh of her soul. Her blue eye rolled on him in secret: she blessed the chief of resounding Morven.

The third day, with all its beams, shone bright on the wood of boars. Forth moved the dark-browed Starno; and Fingal, king of shields. Half the day they spent in the chase; the spear of Selma was red in blood. It was then the daughter of Starno, with blue eyes rolling in tears; it was then she came with her voice of love, and spoke to the king of Morven. "Fingal, high-descended chief, trust not Starno's heart of pride. Within that wood he has placed his chiefs. Beware of the wood of death. But remember, son of the isle, remember Agandecca: save me from the wrath of my father, king of the windy Morven!"

The youth, with unconcern, went on; his heroes by his side. The sons of death fell by his hand; and Gormal echoed around! Before the halls of Starno the sons of the chase convened. The king's dark brows were like clouds. His eyes like meteors of night. "Bring hither," he said, "Agandecca to her

[1] All the north-west coast of Scotland probably went once under the name of Morven, which signifies a ridge of very high hills.

lovely king of Morven! His hand is stained with the blood of my people; her words have not been in vain!" She came with the red eye of tears. She came with loosely flowing locks. Her white breast heaved with broken sighs, like the foam of the streamy Lubar. Starno pierced her side with steel. She fell, like a wreath of snow, which slides from the rocks of Ronan: when the woods are still, and echo deepens in the vale! Then Fingal eyed his valiant chiefs, his valiant chiefs took arms. The gloom of battle roared; Lochlin fled or died. Pale, in his bounding ship he closed the maid of the softest soul. Her tomb ascends on Ardven: the sea roars round her narrow dwelling.

"Blessed be her soul," said Cuthullin; "blessed be the mouth of the song! Strong was the youth of Fingal; strong is his arm of age. Lochlin shall fall again before the king of echoing Morven. Show thy face from a cloud, O moon! light his white sails on the wave: and if any strong spirit of heaven[1] sits on that low-hung cloud; turn his dark ships from the rock, thou rider of the storm!"

Such were the words of Cuthullin at the sound of the mountain-stream; when Calmar ascended the hill, the wounded son of Matha. From the field he came in his blood. He leaned on his bending spear. Feeble is the arm of battle! but strong the soul of

[1] Either a superior being is here referred to, or the ghost of some deceased warrior, spirits being supposed in those times to rule the storms, and to transport themselves in a gust of wind from one country to another.

the hero! "Welcome! O son of Matha," said Connal, "welcome art thou to thy friends! Why bursts that broken sigh from the breast of him who never feared before? And never, Connal, will he fear, chief of the pointed steel! My soul brightens in danger: in the noise of arms. I am of the race of battle. My fathers never feared.

"Cormar was the first of my race. He sported through the storms of waves. His black skiff bounded on ocean; he travelled on the wings of the wind. A spirit once embroiled the night. Seas swell, and rocks resound. Winds drive along the clouds. The lightning flies on wings of fire. He feared, and came to land: then blushed that he feared at all. He rushed again among the waves to find the son of the wind. Three youths guide the bounding bark; he stood with sword unsheathed. When the low-hung vapour passed, he took it by the curling head. He searched its dark womb with his steel. The sun of the wind forsook the air. The moon and stars returned! Such was the boldness of my race. Calmar is like his fathers. Danger flies from the lifted sword. They best succeed who dare!

"But now, ye sons of green Erin, retire from Lena's bloody heath. Collect the sad remnant of our friends, and join the sword of Fingal. I heard the sound of Lochlin's advancing arms! Calmar will remain and fight. My voice shall be such, my friends, as if thousands were behind me. But, son of Semo, remember me. Remember Calmar's lifeless corse.

When Fingal shall have wasted the field, place me by some stone of remembrance, that future times may hear my fame; that the mother of Calmar may rejoice in my renown."

"No: son of Matha," said Cuthullin, "I will never leave thee here. My joy is in unequal fight: my soul increases in danger. Connal, and Carril of other times, carry off the sad sons of Erin. When the battle is over, search for us in this narrow way. For near this oak we shall fall, in the stream of the battle of thousands!" O Fithil's son, with flying speed rush over the heath of Lena. Tell to Fingal that Erin is fallen. Bid the king of Morven come. O let him come, like the sun in a storm, to lighten, to restore the isle!"

Morning is grey on Cromla. The sons of the sea ascend. Calmar stood forth to meet them in the pride of his kindling soul. But pale was the face of the chief. He leaned on his father's spear. That spear which he brought from Lara, when the soul of his mother was sad; the soul of the lonely Alcletha, waning in the sorrow of years. But slowly now the hero falls, like a tree on the plain. Dark Cuthullin stands alone like a rock in a sandy vale. The sea comes with its waves, and roars on its hardened sides. Its head is covered with foam; the hills are echoing around.

Now from the grey mist of the ocean the white-sailed ships of Fingal appear. High is the grove of their masts, as they nod, by turns, on the rolling wave. Swaran saw them from the hill. He returned

from the sons of Erin. As ebbs the resounding sea, through the hundred isles of Inistore; so loud, so vast, so immense returned the sons of Lochlin against the king. But bending, weeping, sad, and slow, and dragging his long spear behind, Cuthullin sunk in Cromla's wood, and mourned his fallen friends. He feared the face of Fingal, who was wont to greet him from the fields of renown!

"How many lie there of my heroes! the chiefs of Erin's race! they that were cheerful in the hall, when the sound of the shells arose! No more shall I find their steps in the heath. No more shall I hear their voice in the chase. Pale, silent, low on bloody beds, are they who were my friends! O spirits of the lately dead, meet Cuthullin on his heath! Speak to him on the wind, when the rustling tree of Tura's cave resounds. There, far remote, I shall lie unknown. No bard shall hear of me. No grey stone shall rise to my renown. Mourn me with the dead, O Bragela! departed is my fame." Such were the words of Cuthullin, when he sunk in the woods of Cromla!

Fingal, tall in his ship, stretched his bright lance before him. Terrible was the gleam of the steel: it was like the green meteor of death, setting in the heath of Malmor, when the traveller is alone, and the broad moon is darkened in heaven.

"The battle is past," said the king. "I behold the blood of my friends. Sad is the heath of Lena! mournful the oaks of Cromla! The hunters have fallen in their strength: the son of Semo is no more.

Ryno and Fillan, my sons, sound the horn of Fingal. Ascend that hill on the shore; call the children of the foe. Call them from the grave of Lamdarg, the chief of other times. Be your voice like that of your father, when he enters the battles of his strength. I wait for the mighty stranger. I wait on Lena's shore for Swaran. Let him come with all his race; strong in battle are the friends of the dead!"

Fair Ryno as lightning gleamed along: Dark Fillan rushed like the shade of autumn. On Lena's heath their voice is heard. The sons of ocean heard the horn of Fingal. As the roaring eddy of ocean returning from the kingdom of snows; so strong, so dark, so sudden came down the sons of Lochlin. The king in their front appears, in the dismal pride of his arms! Wrath burns on his dark-brown face: his eyes roll in the fire of his valour. Fingal beheld the son of Starno: he remembered Agandecca. For Swaran with the tears of youth had mourned his white-bosomed sister. He sent Ullin of songs to bid him to the feast of shells: For pleasant on Fingal's soul returned the memory of the first of his loves.

Ullin came with aged steps, and spoke to Starno's son. "O thou that dwellest afar, surrounded, like a rock, with thy waves! come to the feast of the king, and pass the day in rest. To-morrow let us fight, O Swaran, and break the echoing shields." "To-day," said Starno's wrathful son, "we break the echoing shields: to-morrow my feast shall be spread; but Fingal shall lie on earth." "To-morrow let his feast

be spread," said Fingal with a smile. "To-day, O my sons! we shall break the echoing shields. Ossian, stand thou near my arm. Gaul, lift thy terrible sword. Fergus, bend thy crooked yew. Throw, Fillan, thy lance through heaven. Lift your shields, like the darkened moon. Be your spears the meteors of death. Follow me in the path of my fame. Equal my deeds in battle."

As a hundred winds on Morven: as the streams of a hundred hills; as clouds fly successive over heaven; as the dark ocean assails the shore of the desert: so roaring, so vast, so terrible, the armies mixed on Lena's echoing heath. The groan of the people spread over the hills: It was like the thunder of night, when the cloud bursts on Cona; and a thousand ghosts shriek at once on the hollow wind. Fingal rushed on in his strength, terrible as the spirit of Trenmor; when, in a whirlwind, he comes to Morven, to see the children of his pride. The oaks resound on their mountains, and the rocks fall down before him. Dimly seen, as lightens the night, he strides largely from hill to hill. Bloody was the hand of my father, when he whirled the gleam of his sword. He remembers the battles of his youth. The field is wasted in his course!

Ryno went on like a pillar of fire. Dark is the brow of Gaul. Fergus rushed forward with feet of wind. Fillan like the mist of the hill. Ossian, like a rock came down. I exulted in the strength of the king. Many were the deaths of my arm! dismal the gleam of my sword! My locks were not then

so grey; nor trembled my hands with age. My eyes were not closed in darkness; my feet failed not in the race!

Who can relate the deaths of the people? Who the deeds of mighty heroes? when Fingal, burning in his wrath, consumed the sons of Lochlin? Groans swelled on groans from hill to hill, till night had covered all. Pale, staring like a herd of deer, the sons of Lochlin convene on Lena. We sat and heard the sprightly harp, at Lubar's gentle stream. Fingal himself was next to the foe. He listened to the tales of his bards. His godlike race were in the song, the chiefs of other times. Attentive, leaning on his shield, the king of Morven sat. The wind whistled through his locks; his thoughts are of the days of other years. Near him on his bending spear, my young, my valiant Oscar stood. He admired the king of Morven; his deeds were swelling in his soul!

"Son of my son," begun the king, "O Oscar, pride of youth! I saw the shining of thy sword. I gloried in my race. Pursue the fame of our fathers; Be thou what they have been, when Trenmor lived, the first of men, and Trathal the father of heroes! They fought the battle in their youth. They are the song of bards. O Oscar! bend the strong in arm; but spare the feeble hand. Be thou a stream of many tides against the foes of thy people; but like the gale that moves the grass, to those who ask thine aid. So Trenmor lived; such Trathal was; and such has Fingal been. My arm was the support of the

injured; the weak rested behind the lightning of my steel.

"Oscar! I was young like thee, when lovely Fainasollis came: that sunbeam! that mild light of love! the daughter of Craca's king![1] I then returned from Cona's heath, and few were in my train. A white-sailed boat appeared far off; we saw it like a mist, that rode on ocean's wind. It soon approached. We saw the fair. Her white breast heaved with sighs. The wind was in her loose dark hair: her rosy cheek had tears. "Daughter of beauty," calm I said, "what sigh is in thy breast? Can I, young as I am, defend thee, daughter of the sea? My sword is not unmatched in war, but dauntless is my heart."

"To thee I fly," with sighs she said, "O prince of mighty men! To thee I fly, chief of the generous shells, supporter of the feeble hand! The king of Craca's echoing isle owned me the sunbeam of his race. Cromla's hills have heard the sighs of love for unhappy Fainasollis! Sora's chief beheld me fair; he loved the daughter of Craca. His sword is a beam of light upon the warrior's side. But dark is his brow; and tempests are in his soul. I shun him, on the roaring sea; but Sora's chief pursues."

"Rest thou," I said, "behind my shield; rest in peace, thou beam of light! The gloomy chief of Sora will fly, if Fingal's arm is like his soul. In some lone cave I might conceal thee, daughter of the sea!

[1] Craca was most probably one of the Shetland isles.

but Fingal never flies. Where the danger threatens, I rejoice in the storm of spears. I saw the tears upon her cheek. I pitied Craca's fair. Now, like a dreadful wave afar, appeared the ship of stormy Borbar. His masts high-bended over the sea behind their sheets of snow. White roll the waters on either side. The strength of ocean sounds. "Come thou," I said, "from the roar of ocean, thou rider of the storm! Partake the feast within my hall. It is the house of strangers."

The maid stood trembling by my side. He drew the bow. She fell. "Unerring is thy hand," I said, "but feeble was the foe!" We fought, nor weak the strife of death! He sunk beneath my sword. We laid them in two tombs of stone; the hapless lovers of youth! Such have I been in my youth, O Oscar! be thou like the age of Fingal. Never search thou for battle; nor shun it when it comes.

"Fillan and Oscar of the dark-brown hair! ye that are swift in the race! fly over the heath in my presence. View the sons of Lochlin. Far off I hear the noise of their feet, like distant sounds in woods. Go: that they may not fly from my sword, along the waves of the north. For many chiefs of Erin's race lie here on the dark bed of death. The children of war are low; the sons of echoing Cromla."

The heroes flew like two dark clouds: two dark clouds that are the chariots of ghosts; when air's dark children come forth to frighten hapless men.

It was then that Gaul,[1] the son of Morni, stood like a rock in night. His spear is glittering to the stars; his voice like many streams.

"Son of battle," cried the chief, "O Fingal, king of shells! let the bards of many songs soothe Erin's friends to rest. Fingal, sheath thou thy sword of death; and let thy people fight. We wither away without our fame; our king is the only breaker of shields! When morning rises on our hills, behold, at a distance our deeds. Let Lochlin feel the sword of Morni's son! that bards may sing of me. Such was the custom heretofore of Fingal's noble race. Such was thine own, thou king of swords, in battles of the spear."

"O son of Morni," Fingal replied, "I glory in thy fame. Fight; but my spear shall be near, to aid thee in the midst of danger. Raise, raise the voice, ye sons of song! and lull me into rest. Here will Fingal lie amidst the wind of night. And if thou, Agandecca, art near, among the children of thy land; if thou sittest on a blast of wind, among the high-shrouded masts of Lochlin; come to my dreams, my fair one. Show thy bright face to my soul.

Many a voice and many a harp, in tuneful sounds arose. Of Fingal's noble deeds they sung; of Fin-

[1] Gaul, the son of Morni, was chief of a tribe that disputed long the pre-eminence with Fingal. The tribe was reduced at last to obedience, and Gaul converted from an enemy to a friend. His character corresponds somewhat with that of Ajax in its exhibition of greater strength than judgment.

gal's noble race: And sometimes, on the lovely sound, was heard the name of Ossian. I often fought, and often won, in battles of the spear. But blind, and tearful, and forlorn, I walk with little men! O Fingal, with thy race of war I now behold thee not! The wild roes feed on the green tomb of the mighty king of Morven! Blest be thy soul, thou king of swords, thou most renowned on the hills of Cona!

BOOK IV.

VISION OF EVERALLIN.

WHO comes with her songs from the hill, like the bow of the showery Lena? It is the maid of the voice of love! The white-armed daughter of Toscar![1] Often hast thou heard my song; often given the tear of beauty. Dost thou come to the wars of thy people? to hear the actions of Oscar? When shall I cease to mourn, by the streams of resounding Cona? My years have passed away in battle. My age is darkened with grief!

"Daughter of the hand of snow! I was not so mournful and blind. I was not so dark and forlorn when Everallin loved me! Everallin with the dark-brown hair, the white-bosomed daughter of Branno! A thousand heroes sought the maid, she refused her love to a thousand. The sons of the sword were despised: for graceful in her eyes was Ossian! I went, in suit of the maid, to Lego's sable surge. Twelve of my people were there, the sons of streamy Morven! We came to Branno, friend of strangers!

[1] Everallin appears here as a warning spirit.

Branno of the sounding mail! "From whence," he said, "are the arms of steel? Not easy to win is the maid, who has denied the blue-eyed sons of Erin! But blessed be thou, O son of Fingal. Happy is the maid that waits thee! Though twelve daughters of beauty were mine, thine were the choice, thou son of fame!"

He opened the hall of the maid, the dark-haired Everallin. Joy kindled in our manly breasts. We blest the maid of Branno. "Above us on the hill appeared the people of stately Cormac. Eight were the heroes of the chief. The heath flamed wide with their arms. There Colla; there Durra of wounds, there mighty Toscar, and Tago, there Frestal the victorious stood! Dairo of the happy deeds: Dala, the battle's bulwark in the narrow way! The sword flamed in the hand of Cormac. Graceful was the look of the hero! Eight were the heroes of Ossian. Ullin, stormy son of war. Mullo of the generous deeds. The noble, the graceful Scelacha. Oglan, and Cerdal the wrathful. Dumariccan's brows of death! And why should Ogar be the last; so wide renowned on the hills of Ardven?"

"Ogar met Dala the strong, face to face, on the field of heroes. The battle of the chiefs was like wind on ocean's foamy waves. The dagger is remembered by Ogar; the weapon which he loved. Nine times he drowned it in Dala's side. The stormy battle turned. Three times I broke on Cormac's shield: three times he broke his spear. But, un-

happy youth of love! I cut his head away. Five times I shook it by the lock. The friends of Cormac fled. Whoever would have told me, lovely maid, when then I strove in battle, that blind, forsaken, and forlorn I now should pass the night; firm ought his mail to have been; unmatched his arm in war!"

On Lena's gloomy heath the voice of music died away. The unconstant blast blew hard. The high oak shook its leaves around. Of Everallin were my thoughts, when in all the light of beauty she came. Her blue eyes rolling in tears. She stood on a cloud before my sight, and spoke with feeble voice! "Rise, Ossian, rise, and save my son; save Oscar, prince of men. Near the red oak of Luba's stream, he fights with Lochlin's sons." She sunk into her cloud again. I covered me with steel. My spear supported my steps; my rattling armour rung. I hummed, as I was wont in danger, the songs of heroes of old. Like distant thunder Lochlin heard. They fled; my son pursued.

"I called him like a distant stream. Oscar, return over Lena. No further pursue the foe," I said, "though Ossian is behind thee." He came; and pleasant to my ear was Oscar's sounding steel. "Why didst thou stop my hand," he said, "till death had covered all? For dark and dreadful by the stream they met thy son and Fillan! They watched the terrors of the night. Our swords have conquered some. But as the winds of night pour the ocean over the white sands of Mora, so dark advance

the sons of Lochlin, over Lena's rustling heath! The ghosts of night shriek afar: I have seen the meteors of death. Let me awake the king of Morven, he that smiles in danger! He that is like the son of heaven, rising in a storm!"

Fingal had started from a dream, and leaned on Trenmor's shield; the dark-brown shield of his fathers; which they had lifted of old in war. The hero had seen, in his rest, the mournful form of Agandecca. She came from the way of the ocean. She slowly, lonely, moved over Lena. Her face was pale like the mist of Cromla. Dark were the tears of her cheek. She often raised her dim hand from her robe: her robe which was of the clouds of the desert: she raised her dim hand over Fingal, and turned away her silent eyes! "Why weeps the daughter of Starno?" said Fingal, with a sigh: "why is thy face so pale, fair wanderer of the clouds?" She departed on the wind of Lena. She left him in the midst of the night. She mourned the sons of her people, that were to fall by the hand of Fingal.

The hero started from rest. Still he beheld her in his soul. The sound of Oscar's steps approached. The king saw the grey shield on his side: For the faint beam of the morning came over the waters of Ullin. "What do the foes in their fear?" said the rising king of Morven; "or fly they through ocean's foam, or wait they the battle of steel? But why should Fingal ask? I hear their voice on the early wind! Fly over Lena's heath: O Oscar, awake our friends!"

The king stood by the stone of Lubar. Thrice he reared his terrible voice. The deer started from the fountains of Cromla. The rocks shook on all their hills. Like the noise of a hundred mountain streams, that burst, and roar, and foam! like the clouds, that gather to a tempest on the blue face of the sky! so met the sons of the desert, round the terrible voice of Fingal. Pleasant was the voice of the king of Morven to the warriors of his land. Often had he led them to battle; often returned with the spoils of the foe!

"Come to battle," said the king, "ye children of echoing Selma! Come to the death of thousands. Comhal's son will see the fight. My sword shall wave on the hill, the defence of my people in war. But never may you need it, warriors: while the son of Morni fights, the chief of mighty men! He shall lead my battle; that his fame may rise in song! O ye ghosts of heroes dead! ye riders of the storm of Cromla! receive my falling people with joy, and bear them to your hills. And may the blast of Lena carry them over my seas, that they may come to my silent dreams, and delight my soul in rest! Fillan and Oscar, of the dark-brown hair! fair Ryno, with the pointed steel! advance with valour to the fight. Behold the son of Morni! Let your swords be like his in strife: behold the deeds of his hands. Protect the friends of your father. Remember the chiefs of old. My children, I will see you yet, though here ye should fall in Erin. Soon shall our cold, pale ghosts, meet in a cloud on Cona's eddying winds!"

Now like a dark and stormy cloud, edged round with the red lightning of heaven; flying westward from the morning's beam, the king of Selma removed. Terrible is the light of his armour; two spears are in his hand. His grey hair falls on the wind. He often looks back on the war. Three bards attend the son of fame, to bear his words to the chiefs. High on Cromla's side he sat, waving the lightning of his sword, and as he waved we moved.

Joy rises in Oscar's face. His cheek is red. His eye sheds tears. The sword is a beam of fire in his hand. He came, and smiling, spoke to Ossian. "O ruler of the fight of steel! my father, hear thy son! Retire with Morven's mighty chief. Give me the fame of Ossian. If here I fall: O chief remember that breast of snow, the lonely sunbeam of my love, the white-handed daughter of Toscar! For, with red cheek from the rock, bending over the stream, her soft hair flies about her bosom, as she pours the sigh for Oscar. Tell her I am on my hills, a lightly-bounding son of the wind; tell her, that in a cloud I may meet the lovely maid of Toscar." Raise, Oscar, rather raise my tomb: I will not yield the war to thee. The first and bloodiest in the strife, my arm shall teach thee how to fight. But remember, my son, to place this sword, this bow, the horn of my deer, within that dark and narrow house, whose mark is one grey stone! Oscar, I have no love to leave to the care of my son. Everallin is no more, the lovely daughter of Branno!

Such were our words, when Gaul's loud voice came growing on the wind. He waved on high the sword of his father. We rushed to death and wounds. As waves, white bubbling over the deep, come swelling, roaring on; as rocks of ooze meet roaring waves: so foes attacked and fought. Man met with man, and steel with steel. Shields sound, and warriors fall. As a hundred hammers on the red son of the furnace, so rose, so rung their swords!

Gaul rushed on, like a whirlwind in Ardven. The destruction of heroes is on his sword. Swaran was like the fire of the desert in the echoing heath of Gormal! How can I give to the song the death of many spears? My sword rose high, and flamed in the strife of blood. Oscar, terrible wert thou, my best, my greatest son! I rejoiced in my secret soul, when his sword flamed over the slain. They fled amain through Lena's heath. We pursued and slew. As stones that bound from rock to rock; as axes in echoing woods; as thunder rolls from hill to hill, in dismal broken peals; so blow succeeded to blow, and death to death, from the hand of Oscar and mine.

But Swaran closed round Morni's son, as the strength of the tide of Inistore. The king half-rose from his hill at the sight. He half-assumed the spear. "Go, Ullin, go, my aged bard," began the king of Morven. "Remind the mighty Gaul of war. Remind him of his fathers. Support the yielding fight with song; for song enlivens war." Tall Ullin went,

with step of age, and spoke to the king of swords. "Son of the chief of generous steeds! high-bounding king of spears. Strong arm in every perilous toil. Hard heart that never yields. Chief of the pointed arms of death. Cut down the foe; let no white sail bound round dark Inistore. Be thine arm like thunder, thine eyes like fire, thy heart of solid rock. Whirl round thy sword as a meteor at night; lift thy shield like the flame of death. Son of the chief of generous steeds, cut down the foe. Destroy!" The hero's heart beat high. But Swaran came with battle. He cleft the shield of Gaul in twain. The sons of Selma fled.

Fingal at once arose in arms. Thrice he reared his dreadful voice. Cromla answered around. The sons of the desert stood still. They bent their blushing faces to earth, ashamed at the presence of the king. He came, like a cloud of rain in the day of the sun, when slow it rolls on the hill, and fields expect the shower. Silence attends its slow progress aloft; but the tempest is soon to arise. Swaran beheld the terrible king of Morven. He stopped in the midst of his course. Dark he leaned on his spear, rolling his red eyes around. Silent and tall he seemed as an oak on the banks of Lubar, which had its branches blasted of old by the lightning of heaven. It bends over the stream: the grey moss whistles in the wind: so stood the king. Then slowly he retired to the rising heath

[1] It was customary to encourage warriors with extempore rhymes. Several of these war-songs are still extant.

of Lena. His thousands pour around the hero. Darkness gathers on the hill!

Fingal, like a beam from heaven, shone in the midst of his people. His heroes gather around him. He sends forth the voice of his power. "Raise my standards on high; spread them on Lena's wind, like the flames of an hundred hills! Let them sound on the winds of Erin, and remind us of the fight. Ye sons of the roaring streams, that pour from a thousand hills, be near the king of Morven! attend to the words of his power! Gaul, strongest arm of death! O Oscar, of the future fights! Connal, son of the blue shields of Sora! Dermid of the dark-brown hair! Ossian, king of many songs, be near your father's arm!" We reared the sunbeam[1] of battle; the standard of the king! Each hero exulted with joy, as, waving, it flew on the wind. It was studded with gold above, as the blue wide shell of the nightly sky. Each hero had his standard too; and each his gloomy men!

"Behold," said the king of generous shells, "how Lochlin divides on Lena! They stand like broken clouds on a hill; or an half-consumed grove of oaks; when we see the sky through its branches, and the meteor passing behind! Let every chief among the friends of Fingal take a dark troop of those that frown

[1] Fingal's standard is distinguished by the name of sunbeam; probably on account of its bright colour. To begin a battle is expressed, in old composition, by *lifting of the sunbeam.*

so high: Nor let a son of the echoing groves bound on the waves of Inistore!"

"Mine," said Gaul, "be the seven chiefs, that came from Leno's lake." "Let Inistore's dark king," said Oscar, "come to the sword of Ossian's son." "To mine the king of Iniscon," said Connal, "heart of steel!" "Or Mudan's chief or I," said brown-haired Dermid, "shall sleep on clay-cold earth." "My choice, though now so weak and dark, was Terman's battling king; I promised with my hand to win the hero's dark-brown shield." "Blest and victorious be my chiefs," said Fingal of the mildest look. "Swaran, king of roaring waves, thou art the choice of Fingal!"

Now, like an hundred different winds, that pour through many vales; divided, dark, the sons of Selma advanced. Cromla echoed around! "How can I relate the deaths, when we closed in the strife of arms! O daughter of Toscar! bloody were our hands! The gloomy ranks of Lochlin fell, like the banks of the roaring Cona! Our arms were victorious on Lena: each chief fulfilled his promise! Beside the murmur of Branno thou didst often sit, O maid! thy white bosom rose frequent, like the down of the swan when slow she swims on the lake, and sidelong winds blow on her ruffled wing. Thou hast seen the sun retire, red and slow behind his cloud: night gathering round on the mountain, while the unfrequent blast roared in the narrow vales. At length the rain beats hard: thunder rolls in peals.

Lightning glances on the rocks! Spirits ride on beams of fire! The strength of the mountain-streams comes roaring down the hills. Such was the noise of battle, maid of the arms of snow! Why, daughter of Toscar, why that tear? The maids of Lochlin have cause to weep! The people of their country fell. Bloody were the blue swords of the race of my heroes! But I am sad, forlorn, and blind: no more the companion of heroes. Give, lovely maid, to me thy tears. I have seen the tombs of all my friends!"

It was then, by Fingal's hand, a hero fell, to his grief! Grey-haired he rolled in the dust. He lifted his faint eyes to the king: "And is it by me thou hast fallen," said the son of Comhal, "thou friend of Agandecca! I have seen thy tears for the maid of my love in the halls of the bloody Starno! Thou hast been the foe of the foes of my love, and hast thou fallen by my hand? Raise, Ullin, raise the grave of Mathon; and give his name to Agandecca's song. Dear to my soul hast thou been, thou darkly-dwelling maid of Ardven!"

Cuthullin, from the cave of Cromla, heard the noise of the troubled war. He called to Connal chief of swords; to Carril of other times. The grey-haired heroes heard his voice. They took their pointed spears. They came, and saw the tide of battle, like ocean's crowded waves: when the dark wind blows from the deep, and rolls the billows through the sandy vale! Cuthullin kindled at the sight. Darkness gathered on his brow. His hand is on the sword

of his fathers: his red rolling eyes on the foe. He thrice attempted to rush to battle. He thrice was stopped by Connal. "Chief of the isle of mist," he said, "Fingal subdues the foe. Seek not a part of the fame of the king; himself is like the storm!"

"Then, Carril, go," replied the chief, "go, greet the king of Morven. When Lochlin falls away like a stream after rain: when the noise of the battle is past. Then be thy voice sweet in his ear to praise the king of Selma! Give him the sword of Caithbat. Cuthullin is not worthy to lift the arms of his fathers! Come, O ye ghosts of the lonely Cromla! ye souls of chiefs that are no more! be near the steps of Cuthullin; talk to him in the cave of his grief. Never more shall I be renowned, among the mighty in the land. I am a beam that has shone; a mist that has fled away: when the blast of the morning came, and brightened the shaggy side of the hill: Connal! talk of arms no more: departed is my fame. My sighs shall be on Cromla's wind; till my footsteps cease to be seen. And thou, white-bosomed Bragela, mourn over the fall of my fame: vanquished, I will never return to thee, thou sunbeam of my soul!"

BOOK V.

THE DEFEAT OF SWARAN.

On Cromla's resounding side, Connal spoke to the chief of the noble car. Why that gloom, son of Semo? Our friends are the mighty in fight. Renowned art thou, O warrior! many were the deaths of thy steel. Often has Bragela met, with blue-rolling eyes of joy: often has she met her hero, returning in the midst of the valiant; when his sword was red with slaughter; when his foes were silent in the fields of the tomb. Pleasant to her ears were thy bards, when thy deeds arose in song.

But behold the king of Morven! He moves, below, like a pillar of fire. His strength is like the stream of Lubar, or the wind of the echoing Cromla; when the branchy forests of night are torn from all their rocks! Happy are thy people, O Fingal! thine arm shall finish their wars. Thou art the first in their dangers: the wisest in the days of their peace. Thou speakest, and thy thousands obey: armies tremble at the sound of thy steel. Happy are thy people, O Fingal! king of resounding Selma! Who

is that so dark and terrible coming in the thunder of his course? who but Starno's son to meet the king of Morven? Behold the battle of the chiefs! it is the storm of the ocean, when two spirits meet far distant, and contend for the rolling of waves. The hunter hears the noise on his hill. He sees the high billows advancing to Ardven's shore!

Such were the words of Connal, when the heroes met in fight. There was the clang of arms! there every blow, like the hundred hammers of the furnace! Terrible is the battle of the kings; dreadful the look of their eyes. Their dark-brown shields are cleft in twain. Their steel flies, broken, from their helms. They fling their weapons down. Each rushes to his hero's grasp: Their sinewy arms bend round each other: they turn from side to side, and strain and stretch their large spreading limbs below. But when the pride of their strength arose, they shook the hill with their heels. Rocks tumble from their places on high; the green-headed bushes are overturned. At length the strength of Swaran fell: the king of the groves is bound. Thus have I seen on Cona; but Cona I behold no more! thus have I seen two dark hills, removed from their place, by the strength of the bursting stream. They turn from side to side in their fall; their tall oaks meet one another on high. Then they tumble together with all their rocks and trees. The streams are turned by their side. The red ruin is seen afar.

"Sons of distant Morven," said Fingal: "guard

the king of Lochlin! He is strong as his thousand waves. His hand is taught to war. His race is of the times of old. Gaul, thou first of my heroes; Ossian, king of songs, attend. He is the friend of Agandecca; raise to joy his grief. But, Oscar, Fillan, and Ryno, ye children of the race! pursue Lochlin over Lena; that no vessel may hereafter bound on the dark-rolling waves of Inistore!"

They flew sudden across the heath. He slowly moved like a cloud of thunder, when the sultry plain of summer is silent and dark! His sword is before him as a sunbeam; terrible as the streaming meteor of night. He came toward a chief of Lochlin. He spoke to the son of the wave. "Who is that so dark and sad, at the rock of the roaring stream? He cannot bound over its course: How stately is the chief! His bossy shield is on his side; his spear, like the tree of the desert! Youth of the dark-red hair, art thou of the foes of Fingal?"

"I am a son of Lochlin," he cries, "strong is my arm in war. My spouse is weeping at home. Orla shall never return!" "Or fights or yields the hero?" said Fingal of the noble deeds? "foes do not conquer in my presence: my friends are renowned in the hall. Son of the wave, follow me, partake the feast of my shells: pursue the deer of my desert: be thou the friend of Fingal." "No:" said the hero, "I assist the feeble. My strength is with the weak in arms. My sword has been always unmatched, O warrior! let the king of Morven yield!" "I never yielded,

Orla! Fingal never yielded to man. Draw thy sword and choose thy foe. Many are my heroes!"

"Does then the king refuse the fight?" said Orla of the dark-brown shield. "Fingal is a match for Orla: and he alone of all his race!" "But, king of Morven, if I shall fall; as one time the warrior must die; raise my tomb in the midst: let it be the greatest on Lena. Send, over the dark-blue wave, the sword of Orla to the spouse of his love; that she may show it to her son, with tears, to kindle his soul to war." "Son of the mournful tale," said Fingal, "why dost thou awaken my tears? One day the warriors must die, and the children see their useless arms in the hall. But, Orla! thy tomb shall rise. Thy white-bosomed spouse shall weep over thy sword."

They fought on the heath of Lena. Feeble was the arm of Orla. The sword of Fingal descended, and cleft his shield in twain. It fell and glittered on the ground, as the moon on the ruffled stream. "King of Morven," said the hero, "lift thy sword and pierce my breast. Wounded and faint from battle, my friends have left me here. The mournful tale shall come to my love, on the banks of the streamy Lota; when she is alone in the wood; and the rustling blast in the leaves!"

"No;" said the king of Morven, "I will never wound thee, Orla. On the banks of Lota let her see thee, escaped from the hands of war. Let thy grey-haired father, who, perhaps, is blind with age: let him hear the sound of thy voice, and brighten within

his hall. With joy let the hero rise, and search for his son with his hands!" "But never will he find him, Fingal," said the youth of the streamy Lota. "On Lena's heath I must die: foreign bards shall talk of me. My broad belt covers my wound of death. I give it to the wind!"

The dark blood poured from his side, he fell pale on the heath of Lena. Fingal bent over him as he dies, and called his younger chiefs. "Oscar and Fillin, my sons, raise high the memory of Orla. Here let the dark-haired hero rest, far from the spouse of his love. Here let him rest in his narrow house far from the sound of Lota. The feeble will find his bow at home; but will not be able to bend it. His faithful dogs howl on his hills; his boars, which he used to pursue, rejoice. Fallen is the arm of battle! the mighty among the valiant is low! Exalt the voice and blow the horn, ye sons of the king of Morven! Let us go back to Swaran, to send the night away on song. Fillin, Oscar, and Ryno, fly over the heath of Lena. Where, Ryno, art thou, young son of fame? Thou art not wont to be the last to answer thy father's voice!"

"Ryno," said Ullin, first of bards, "is with the awful forms of his fathers. With Trathal king of shields; with Trenmor of mighty deeds. The youth is low, the youth is pale, he lies on Lena's heath!" "Fell the swiftest in the race," said the king, "the first to bend the bow? Thou scarce hast been known to me! why did young Ryno fall? But sleep thou

softly on Lena, Fingal shall soon behold thee. Soon shall my voice be heard no more, and my footsteps cease to be seen. The bards will tell of Fingal's name. The stones will talk of me. But Ryno, thou art low indeed! thou hast not received thy fame. Ullin, strike the harp for Ryno; tell what the chief would have been. Farewell, thou first in every field! No more shall I direct thy dart! Thou that hast been so fair! I behold thee not. Farewell." The tear is on the cheek of the king, for terrible was his son in war. His son! that was like a beam of fire by night on a hill; when the forests sink down in its course, and the traveller trembles at the sound. But the winds drive it beyond the steep. It sinks from sight, and darkness prevails.

"Whose fame is in that dark-green tomb?" began the king of generous shells; "four stones with their heads of moss stand there! they mark the narrow house of death. Near it let Ryno rest. A neighbour to the brave let him lie. Some chief of fame is here, to fly, with my son, on clouds. O Ullin! raise the songs of old. Awake their memory in their tomb. If in the field they never fled, my son shall rest by their side. He shall rest, far distant from Morven, on Lena's resounding plains!"

"Here," said the bard of song, "here rest the first of heroes. Silent is Lamderg[1] in this place: dumb

[1] Lamh-dhearg signifies *bloody hand.* Gelchossa, *white legged.* Tuathal *surly.* Ulfahda, *long beard.* Ferchios, *the conqueror of men.*

is Ullin, king of swords: And who, soft smilling from her cloud, shows me her face of love? Why, daughter, why so pale art thou, first of the maids of Cromla? Dost thou sleep with the foes in battle, white-bosomed daughter of Tuathal? Thou hast been the love of thousands, but Lamderg was thy love." He came to Tura's mossy towers, and, striking his dark buckler, spoke: "Where is Gelchossa, my love, the daughter of the noble Tuathal? I left her in the hall of Tura, when I fought with great Ulfada. 'Return soon, O Lamderg!' she said, 'for here I sit in grief.' Her white breast rose with sighs. Her cheek was wet with tears. But I see her not coming to meet me; to soothe my soul after war. Silent is the hall of my joy! I hear not the voice of the bard. Bran[1] does not shake his chains at the gate, glad at the coming of Lamderg. Where is Gelchossa, my love, the mild daughter of the generous Tuathal?"

"Lamderg!" says Ferchios, son of Aidon, "Gelchossa moves stately on Cromla. She and the maids of the bow pursue the flying deer!" "Ferchios!" replied the chief of Cromla, "no noise meets the ear of Lamderg! No sound is in the woods of Lena. No deer fly in my sight. No panting dog pursues. I see not Gelchossa, my love, fair as the full moon setting on the hills. Go, Ferchios, go to Allad,[2] the grey-haired son of the rock. His dwelling is in the

[1] Bran, the name of a favourite dog.

[2] Allad being called son of the rock, etc., he may be regarded as one of the Druids.

circle of stones. He may know of the bright Gelchossa!"

"The son of Aidon went. He spoke to the ear of Age. Allad! dweller of rocks: thou that tremblest alone! what saw thine eyes of age?" "I saw," answered Allad the old, "Ullin the son of Cairbar. He came in darkness, from Cromla. He hummed a surly song, like a blast in a leafless wood. He entered the hall of Tura. "Lamderg," he said, "most dreadful of men, fight or yield to Ullin." "Lamderg," replied Gelchossa, "the son of battle is not here. He fights Ulfada, mighty chief. He is not here, thou first of men! But Lamderg never yields. He will fight the son of Cairbar!" "Lovely art thou," said terrible Ullin, "daughter of the generous Tuathal. I carry thee to Cairbar's halls. The valiant shall have Gelchossa. Three days I remain on Cromla, to wait that son of battle, Lamderg. On the fourth Gelchossa is mine; if the mighty Lamderg flies."

"Allad!" said the chief of Cromla, "peace to thy dreams in the cave. Ferchios, sound the horn of Lamderg, that Ullin may hear in his halls." Lamderg, like a roaring storm, ascended the hill from Tura. He hummed a surly song as he went, like the noise of a falling stream. He darkly stood upon the hill, like a cloud varying its form to the wind. He rolled a stone, the sign of war. Ullin heard in Cairbar's hall. The hero heard, with joy, his foe. He took his father's spear. A smile brightens his dark-brown cheek, as he places his sword by his side.

The dagger glittered in his hand. He whistled as he went.

Gelchossa saw the silent chief, as a wreath of mist ascending the hill. She struck her white and heaving breast; and silent, tearful, feared for Lamderg. "Cairbar, hoary chief of shells," said the maid of the tender hand, "I must bend the bow on Cromla. I see the dark-brown hinds!" She hasted up the hill. In vain! the gloomy heroes fought. Why should I tell to Selma's king how wrathful heroes fight? Fierce Ullin fell. Young Lamderg came, all pale, to the daughter of generous Tuathal! "What blood, my love?" she trembling said; "what blood runs down my warrior's side?" It is Ullin's blood," the chief replied, "thou fairer than the snow! Gelchossa, let me rest here a little while." The mighty Lamderg died! "And sleepest thou so soon on earth, O chief of shady Tura?" Three days she mourned beside her love. The hunters found her cold. They raised this tomb above the three. "Thy son, O king of Morven, may rest here with heroes!"

"And here my son shall rest," said Fingal. "The voice of their fame is in mine ears. Fillan and Fergus! bring hither Orla; the pale youth of the stream of Lota! Not unequalled shall Ryno lie in earth, when Orla is by his side. Weep, ye daughters of Morven! ye maids of the streamy Lota, weep! Like a tree they grew on the hills. They have fallen like the oak of the desert; when it lies across a stream, and withers in the wind. Oscar! chief of every

youth! thou seest how they have fallen. Be thou like them, on earth renowned. Like them the song of bards. Terrible were their forms in battle; but calm was Ryno in the days of peace. He was like the bow of the shower seen far distant on the stream: when the sun is setting on Mora; when silence dwells on the hill of deer. Rest, youngest of my sons! rest, O Ryno! on Lena. We too shall be no more. Warriors one day must fall!"

Such was thy grief, thou king of swords, when Ryno lay on earth. What must the grief of Ossian be, for thou thyself art gone? I hear not thy distant voice on Cona. My eyes perceive thee not. Often forlorn and dark I sit at thy tomb; and feel it with my hands. When I think I hear thy voice, it is but the passing blast. Fingal has long since fallen asleep, the ruler of the war!

Then Gaul and Ossian sat with Swaran, on the soft green banks of Lubar. I touched the harp to please the king. But gloomy was his brow. He rolled his red eyes towards Lena. The hero mourned his host. I raised mine eyes to Cromla's brow. I saw the son of generous Semo. Sad and slow he retired, from his hill, towards the lonely cave of Tura. He saw Fingal victorious, and mixed his joy with grief. The sun is bright on his armour. Connal slowly strode behind. They sunk behind the hill, like two pillars of the fire of night: when winds pursue them over the mountain, and the flaming heath resounds! Beside a stream of roaring foam his cave

is in a rock. One tree bends above it. The rushing winds echo against its sides. Here rests the chief of Erin, the son of generous Semo. His thoughts are on the battles he lost. The tear is on his cheek. He mourned the departure of his fame, that fled like the mist of Cona. O Bragela! thou art too far remote to cheer the soul of the hero. But let him see thy bright form in his mind: that his thoughts may return to the lonely sunbeam of his love!

Who comes with the locks of age? It is the son of songs. "Hail, Carril of other times! Thy voice is like the harp in the halls of Tura. Thy words are pleasant as the shower which falls on the sunny field. Carril of the times of old, why comest thou from the son of the generous Semo?"

"Ossian, king of swords," replied the bard, "thou best can raise the song. Long hast thou been known to Carril, thou ruler of war! Often have I touched the harp to lovely Everallin. Thou too hast often joined my voice, in Branno's hall of generous shells. And often, amidst our voices, was heard the mildest Everallin. One day she sang of Cormac's fall, the youth who died for her love. I saw the tears on her cheek, and on thine, thou chief of men! Her soul was touched for the unhappy, though she loved him not. How fair among a thousand maids was the daughter of generous Branno!"

"Bring not, Carril," I replied, "bring not her memory to my mind. My soul must melt at the remembrance. My eyes must have their tears. Pale

in the earth is she, the softly-blushing fair of my love! but sit thou on the heath, O bard! and let us hear thy voice. It is pleasant as the gale of spring, that sighs on the hunter's ear; when he awakens from dreams of joy, and has heard the music of the spirits of the hill!"

BOOK VI.

FEAST OF RECONCILIATION.

THE clouds of night came rolling down. Darkness rests on the steeps of Cromla. The stars of the north arise over the rolling of Erin's waves: they show their heads of fire, through the flying mist of heaven. A distant wind roars in the wood. Silent and dark is the plain of death! Still on the dusky Lena arose in my ears the voice of Carril. He sung of the friends of our youth; the days of former years; when we met on the banks of Lego: when we sent round the joy of the shell. Cromla answered to his voice. The ghosts of those he sung came in their rustling winds. They were seen to bend with joy, towards the sound of their praise!

Be thy soul blest, O Carril! in the midst of thy eddying winds. O that thou wouldst come to my hall, when I am alone by night! And thou dost come, my friend. I hear often thy light hand on my harp; when it hangs on the distant wall, and the feeble sound touches my ear. Why dost thou not speak to me in my grief, and tell when I shall behold my friends?

But thou passest away in thy murmuring blast; the wind whistles through the grey hair of Ossian!

Now, on the side of Mora, the heroes gathered to the feast. A thousand aged oaks are burning to the wind. The strength[1] of the shells goes round. The souls of warriors brighten with joy. But the king of Lochlin is silent. Sorrow reddens in the eyes of his pride. He often turned toward Lena. He remembered that he fell. Fingal leaned on the shield of his fathers. His grey locks slowly waved on the wind, and glittered to the beam of night. He saw the grief of Swaran, and spoke to the first of bards.

"Raise, Ullin, raise the song of peace. O soothe my soul from war! Let mine ear forget, in the sound, the dismal noise of arms. Let a hundred harps be near to gladden the king of Lochlin. He must depart from us with joy. None ever went sad from Fingal. Oscar! the lightning of my sword is against the strong in fight. Peaceful it lies by my side when warriors yield in war."

"Trenmor,"[2] said the mouth of songs, "lived in the days of other years. He bounded over the waves of the north: companion of the storm! The high rocks of the land of Lochlin; its groves of murmuring sounds appeared to the hero through mist: he bound his white-bosomed sails. Trenmor pursued the boar, that roared through the woods of

[1] The ancient Celtæ brewed beer, and they were no strangers to mead. Several ancient poems mention wax lights and wine as common in the halls of Fingal.

[2] Trenmor, Fingal's great-grandfather.

Gormal. Many had fled from its presence: but it rolled in death on the spear of Trenmor. Three chiefs, who beheld the deed, told of the mighty stranger. They told that he stood, like a pillar of fire, in the bright arms of his valour. The king of Lochlin prepared the feast. He called the blooming Trenmor. Three days he feasted at Gormal's windy towers, and received his choice in the combat. The land of Lochlin had no hero that yielded not to Trenmor. The shell of joy went round with songs, in praise of the king of Morven. He that came over the waves, the first of mighty men!

"Now when the fourth grey morn arose, the hero launched his ship. He walked along the silent shore, and called for the rushing wind; for loud and distant he heard the blast murmuring behind the groves. Covered over with arms of steel, a son of the woody Gormal appeared. Red was his cheek and fair his hair. His skin like the snow of Morven. Mild rolled his blue and smiling eye, when he spoke to the king of swords.

"Stay, Trenmor, stay thou first of men, thou hast not conquered Lonval's son. My sword has often met the brave. The wise shun the strength of my bow." "Thou fair-haired youth," Trenmor replied, "I will not fight with Lonval's son. Thine arm is feeble, sunbeam of youth! Retire to Gormal's dark-brown hinds." "But I will retire," replied the youth, "with the sword of Trenmor: and exult in the sound of my fame. The virgins shall gather

with smiles around him who conquered mighty Trenmor. They shall sigh with the sighs of love, and admire the length of thy spear; when I shall carry it among thousands; when I lift the glittering point to the sun."

"Thou shalt never carry my spear," said the angry king of Morven. "Thy mother shall find thee pale on the shore; and, looking over the dark-blue deep, see the sails of him that slew her son!" "I will not lift the spear," replied the youth; "my arm is not strong with years. But, with the feathered dart, I have learned to pierce a distant foe. Throw down that heavy mail of steel. Trenmor is covered from death. I first will lay my mail on earth. Throw now thy dart, thou king of Morven!" He saw the heaving of her breast. It was the sister of the king. She had seen him in the hall: and loved his face of youth. The spear dropped from the hand of Trenmor: he bent his red cheek to the ground. She was to him a beam of light that meets the sons of the cave; when they revisit the fields of the sun, and bend their aching eyes!

"Chief of the windy Morven," began the maid of the arms of snow, "let me rest in thy bounding ship, far from the love of Corlo. For he, like the thunder of the desert, is terrible to Inibaca. He loves me in the gloom of pride. He shakes ten thousand spears!" "Rest thou in peace," said the mighty Trenmor, "rest behind the shield of my fathers. I will not fly from the chief, though he shakes ten thousand

spears!" Three days he waited on the shore. He sent his horn abroad. He called Corlo to battle, from all his echoing hills. But Corlo came not to battle. The king of Lochlin descends from his hall. He feasted on the roaring shore. He gave the maid to Trenmor.

"King of Lochlin," said Fingal, "thy blood flows in the veins of thy foe. Our fathers met in battle, because they loved the strife of spears. But often did they feast in the hall: and send round the joy of the shell. Let thy face brighten with gladness, and thine ear delight in the harp. Dreadful as the storm of thine ocean, thou hast poured thy valour forth; thy voice has been like the voice of thousands when they engage in war. Raise, to-morrow, raise thy white sails to the wind, thou brother of Agandecca. Bright as the beam of noon, she comes on my mournful soul. I have seen thy tears for the fair one. I spared thee in the halls of Starno; when my sword was red with slaughter; when my eye was full of tears for the maid. Or dost thou choose the fight? The combat which thy fathers gave to Trenmor is thine! that thou mayest depart renowned, like the sun setting in the west!"

"King of the race of Morven," said the chief of resounding Lochlin! "never will Swaran fight with thee, first of a thousand heroes! I have seen thee in the halls of Starno: few were thy years beyond my own. When shall I, I said to my soul, lift the spear like the noble Fingal? We have fought heretofore,

O warrior, on the side of the shaggy Malmor; after my waves had carried me to thy halls, and the feast of a thousand shells was spread. Let the bards send his name who overcame to future years, for noble was the strife of Malmor! But many of the ships of Lochlin have lost their youths on Lena. Take these, thou king of Morven, and be the friend of Swaran! When thy sons shall come to Gormal, the feast of shells shall be spread, and the combat offered on the vale."

"Nor ship," replied the king, "shall Fingal take, nor land of many hills. The desert is enough to me, with all its deer and woods. Rise on thy waves again, thou noble friend of Agandecca! Spread thy white sails to the beam of the morning; return to the echoing hills of Gormal." "Blest be thy soul, thou king of shells," said Swaran of the dark-brown shield. "In peace thou art the gale of spring; in war the mountain-storm. Take now my hand in friendship, king of echoing Selma! Let thy bards mourn those who fell. Let Erin give the sons of Lochlin to earth. Raise high the mossy stones of their fame: that the children of the north hereafter may behold the place where their fathers fought. The hunter may say, when he leans on a mossy tomb, here Fingal and Swaran fought, the heroes of other years. Thus hereafter shall he say, and our fame shall last for ever!"

"Swaran," said the king of hills, "to-day our fame is greatest. We shall pass away like a dream. No sound will remain in our fields of war. Our

tombs will be lost in the heath. The hunter shall not know the place of our rest. Our names may be heard in song. What avails it, when our strength hath ceased? O Ossian, Carril, and Ullin! you know of heroes that are no more. Give us the song of other years. Let the night pass away on the sound, and morning return with joy."

We gave the song to the kings. An hundred harps mixed their sound with our voice. The face of Swaran brightened, like the full moon of heaven; when the clouds vanish away, and leave her calm and broad, in the midst of the sky!

"Where, Carril," said the great Fingal, "Carril of other times! Where is the son of Semo, the king of the isle of mist? has he retired, like the meteor of death, to the dreary cave of Tura?" "Cuthullin," said Carril of other times, "lies in the dreary cave of Tura. His hand is on the sword of his strength. His thoughts on the battles he lost. Mournful is the king of spears; till now unconquered in war. He sends his sword to rest on the side of Fingal: For, like the storm of the desert, thou hast scattered all his foes. Take, O Fingal! the sword of the hero. His fame is departed like mist, when it flies, before the rustling wind, along the brightening vale."

"No:" replied the king, "Fingal shall never take his sword. His arm is mighty in war: his fame shall never fail. Many have been overcome in battle; whose renown arose from their fall. O Swaran! king

of resounding woods, give all thy grief away. The vanquished, if brave, are renowned. They are like the sun in a cloud, when he hides his face in the south, but looks again on the hills of grass!

"Grumal was a chief of Cona. He sought the battle on every coast. His soul rejoiced in blood. His ear in the din of arms. He poured his warriors on Craca; Craca's king met him from his grove: for then, within the circle of Brumo,[1] he spoke to the stone of power. Fierce was the battle of the heroes, for the maid of the breast of snow. The fame of the daughter of Craca had reached Grumal at the streams of Cona: he vowed to have the white-bosomed maid, or die on echoing Craca. Three days they strove together, and Grumal on the fourth was bound. Far from his friends they placed him, in the horrid circle of Brumo; where often, they said, the ghosts of the dead howled round the stone of their fear. But he afterwards shone, like a pillar of the light of heaven. They fell by his mighty hand. Grumal had all his fame!"

"Raise, ye bards of other times," continued the great Fingal, "raise high the praise of heroes: that my soul may settle on their fame; that the mind of Swaran may cease to be sad." They lay in the heath of Mora. The dark winds rustled over the chiefs. A hundred voices, at once, arose: a hundred harps were strung. They sung of other times; the mighty chiefs of former years! When now shall I hear the bard?

[1] Another allusion to the ancient Stone Monuments, see p. 64.

When rejoice at the fame of my fathers? The harp is not strung on Morven. The voice of music ascends not on Cona. Dead, with the mighty, is the bard. Fame is in the desert no more.

Morning trembles with the beam of the east; it glimmers on Cromla's side. Over Lena is heard the horn of Swaran. The sons of the ocean gather around. Silent and sad they rise on the wave. The blast of Erin is behind their sails. White, as the mist of Morven, they float along the sea. "Call," said Fingal, "call my dogs, the long-bounding sons of the chase. Call white-breasted Bran and the surly strength of Luath! Fillan, and Ryno; but he is not here! My son rests on the bed of death. Fillan and Fergus! blow the horn, that the joy of the chase may arise: that the deer of Cromla may hear and start at the lake of roes."

The shrill sound spreads along the wood. The sons of heathy Cromla arise. A thousand dogs fly off at once, grey-bounding through the heath. A deer fell by every dog; three by the white-breasted Bran. He brought them, in their flight, to Fingal, that the joy of the king might be great! One deer fell at the tomb of Ryno. The grief of Fingal returned. He saw how peaceful lay the stone of him who was the first at the chase! "No more shalt thou rise, O my son! to partake of the feast of Cromla. Soon will thy tomb be hid, and the grass grow rank on thy grave. The sons of the feeble shall pass along. They shall not know where the mighty lie.

"Ossian and Fillan, sons of my strength! Gaul, chief of the blue steel of war! let us ascend the hill to the cave of Tura. Let us find the chief of the battles of Erin. Are these the walls of Tura? grey and lonely they rise on the heath. The chief of shells is sad, and the halls are silent and lonely. Come, let us find Cuthullin, and give him all our joy. But is that Cuthullin, O Fillan, or a pillar of smoke on the heath? The wind of Cromla is on my eyes. I distinguish not my friend."

"Fingal!" replied the youth, "it is the son of Semo! Gloomy and sad is the hero! His hand is on his sword. Hail to the son of battle, breaker of the shields!" "Hail to thee," replied Cuthullin, "hail to all the sons of Morven! Delightful is thy presence, O Fingal; it is the sun on Cromla; when the hunter mourns his absence for a season, and sees him between the clouds. Thy sons are like stars that attend thy course. They give light in the night. It is not thus thou hast seen me, O Fingal! returning from the wars of thy land: when the kings of the world[1] had fled, and joy returned to the hill of hinds!" "Many are thy words, Cuthullin," said Connan of small renown. "Thy words are many, son of Semo, but where are thy deeds in arms? Why did we come, over ocean, to aid thy feeble sword? Thou fliest to thy cave of grief, and Connan fights

[1] The reference here is to the wars of Fingal against the Romans: the Roman emperor is distinguished by the title of king of the world.

thy battles. Resign to me these arms of light. Yield them, thou chief of Erin." "No hero," replied the chief, "ever sought the arms of Cuthullin! and had a thousand heroes sought them, it were in vain, thou gloomy youth! I fled not to the cave of grief, till Erin failed at her streams."

"Youth of the feeble arm," said Fingal, "Connan, cease thy words! Cuthullin is renowned in battle; terrible over the world. Often have I heard thy fame, thou stormy chief of Inis-fail. Spread now thy white sails for the isle of mist. See Bragela leaning on her rock. Her tender eye is in tears; the winds lift her long hair from her heaving breast. She listens to the breeze of night, to hear the voice of thy rowers;[1] to hear the song of the sea! the sound of thy distant harp!"

"Long shall she listen in vain. Cuthullin shall never return! How can I behold Bragela, to raise the sigh of her breast? Fingal, I was always victorious in battles of other spears!" "And hereafter thou shalt be victorious," said Fingal of generous shells. "The fame of Cuthullin shall grow, like the branchy tree of Cromla. Many battles await thee, O chief! Many shall be the wounds of thy hand! Bring hither, Oscar, the deer! Prepare the feast of shells. Let our souls rejoice after danger, and our friends delight in our presence!"

We sat. We feasted. We sung. The soul of

[1] The practice of singing to inspirit rowers was common among the Highlanders. See Scott's Lady of the Lake, Canto II.

Cuthullin rose. The strength of his arm returned. Gladness brightened along his face. Ullin gave the song; Carril raised the voice. I joined the bards and sung of battles of the spear. Battles! where I often fought. Now I fight no more! The fame of my former deeds is ceased. I sit forlorn at the tombs of my friends!

Thus the night passed away in song. We brought back the morning with joy. Fingal arose on the heath, and shook his glittering spear. He moved first toward the plains of Lena. We followed in all our arms.

"Spread the sail," said the king, "seize the winds as they pour from Lena." We rose on the wave with songs. We rushed, with joy, through the foam of the deep.

Temora.

THE scene of Temora, as of Fingal, is laid in Ireland, but the events related are of a posterior date. The subject is an expedition of Fingal and his Caledonian chiefs to revenge the death of Cormac, the rightful heir to the throne, who had been murdered during his minority; to dethrone and punish the usurper, Cairbar, and to restore the kingdom to the race of Cormac. The poem opens with the descent of Fingal on the coast, and the consultation held by the King of Erin with his chiefs. The murder of the young prince Cormac is introduced in the first book. Subsequently three battles are described, in one of which Fingal's army is brought into jeopardy by the wounding of his warrior Gaul, and the death of his son Fillan. Fingal at last assumes the command, and having slain the Irish king in single combat, he settles the throne upon Ferad-Artho, the rightful heir.

PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS.

CALEDONIANS.

FINGAL, King of Morven.

FILLAN, his youngest son . }
OSCAR, son of Ossian . . } *Chiefs.*
GAUL, son of Morni . }
CONNAL, of Dunlora . . }

DERMID.

OSSIAN, ULLIN, ALTHAN, FONAR, CARRIL—*Bards.*

MALVINA.

IRISH.

CAIRBAR, King of Erin.

CATHMOR, his brother.

FOLDATH of Moma . . }
MORLATH . . . . }
MALTHOS . . . . } *Chiefs.*
HIDALLO, of Clonra . . }
RATHMEN . . . . }
CALMEN . . . . . }

TURLOTHO, of Morath.

OLLA and FORRAN—*Bards.*

SULMALLA, daughter of King Conmor.

SCENE—IRELAND.

Temora, ancient seat of Irish Kings, in Ulster, on a Plain near the Hill of Mora.

Temora.

BOOK I.

THE FEAST OF SHELLS.

THE blue waves of Erin roll in light. The mountains are covered with day. Trees shake their dusky heads in the breeze. Grey torrents pour their noisy streams. Two green hills, with aged oaks, surround a narrow plain. The blue course of a stream is there. On its banks stood Cairbar of Atha. His spear supports the king: the red eye of his fear is sad. Cormac rises in his soul, with all his ghastly wounds. The grey form of the youth appears in darkness. Blood pours from his airy sides. Cairbar thrice threw his spear on earth. Thrice he stroked his beard. His steps are short. He often stops. He tosses his sinewy arms. He is like a cloud in the desert, varying its form to every blast. The valleys are sad around, and fear, by turns, the shower! The king, at length, resumed his soul. He took his pointed spear. He turned his eye to Moi-lena. The scouts of blue ocean

came. They came with steps of fear, and often looked behind. Cairbar knew that the mighty were near! He called his gloomy chiefs.

The sounding steps of his warriors came. They drew, at once, their swords. There Mor-lath stood with darkened face. Hidalla's long hair sighs in wind. Red-haired Cormar bends on his spear, and rolls his side-long-looking eyes. Wild is the look of Malthos from beneath two shaggy brows. Foldath stands, like an oozy rock, that covers its dark sides with foam. His spear is like Slimora's fir, that meets the wind of heaven. His shield is marked with the strokes of battle. His red eye despises danger. These and a thousand other chiefs surrounded the king of Erin, when the scout of ocean came, Moran-nal, from streamy Moi-lena. His eyes hang forward from his face. His lips are trembling, pale!

"Do the chiefs of Erin stand," he said, "silent as the grove of the evening? Stand they, like a silent wood, and Fingal on the coast? Fingal, who is terrible in battle, the king of streamy Morven!" "Hast thou seen the warrior?" said Cairbar, with a sigh. "Are his heroes many on the coast? Lifts he the spear of battle? Or comes the king in peace?" "In peace he comes not, king of Erin! I have seen his forward spear.[1] It is a meteor of death. The blood of thousands is on its steel. He came first to the shore, strong in the grey hair of age.

[1] Keeping the point of the spear forward was a token of hostility, as the reverse was of friendship.

Full rose his sinewy limbs as he strode in his might. That sword is by his side, which gives no second wound. His shield is terrible, like the bloody moon, ascending through a storm. Then came Ossian, king of songs. Then Morni's son, the first of men. Connal leaps forward on his spear. Dermid spreads his dark-brown locks. Fillan bends his bow, the young hunter of streamy Moruth. But who is that before them, like the terrible course of a stream? It is the son of Ossian, bright between his locks! His long hair falls on his back. His dark brows are half-inclosed in steel. His sword hangs loose on his side. His spear glitters as he moves. I fled from his terrible eyes, king of high Temora!"

"Then fly, thou feeble man," said Foldath's gloomy wrath. "Fly to the grey streams of thy land, son of the little soul! Have not I seen that Oscar? I beheld the chief in war. He is of the mighty in danger: but there are others who lift the spear. Erin has many sons as brave, king of Temora of Groves! Let Foldath meet him in his strength. Let me stop this mighty stream. My spear is covered with blood. My shield is like the wall of Tura!"

"Shall Foldath alone meet the foe?" replied the dark-browed Malthos. "Are they not on our coast, like the waters of many streams? Are not these the chiefs who vanquished Swaran, when the sons of green Erin fled? Shall Foldath meet their bravest hero? Foldath of the heart of pride! take the

strength of the people! and let Malthos come. My sword is red with slaughter, but who has heard my words?"

"Sons of green Erin," said Hidalla, "let not Fingal hear your words. The foe might rejoice, and his arm be strong in the land. Ye are brave, O warriors! Ye are tempests in war. Ye are like storms which meet the rocks without fear, and overturn the woods. But let us move in our strength, slow as a gathered cloud! Then shall the mighty tremble; the spear shall fall from the hand of the valiant. We see the cloud of death, they will say, while shadows fly over their face. Fingal will mourn in his age. He shall behold his flying fame. The steps of his chiefs will cease in Morven. The moss of years shall grow in Selma."

Cairbar heard their words in silence, like the cloud of a shower; it stands dark on Cromla till the lightning bursts its side. The valley gleams with heaven's flame; the spirits of the storm rejoice. So stood the silent king of Temora; at length his words broke forth. "Spread the feast on Moi-lena. Let my hundred bards attend. Thou red-haired Olla, take the harp of the king. Go to Oscar, chief of swords. Bid Oscar to our joy. To-day we feast and hear the song: to-morrow break the spears! Tell him that I have raised the tomb of Cathol;[1] that bards gave his friend to the winds. Tell him that Cairbar has heard of his fame, at the stream of

1 The son of Moran whom he had murdered.

resounding Carun. Cathmor my brother is not here. He is not here with his thousands, and our arms are weak. Cathmor is a foe to strife at the feast! His soul is bright as that sun! But Cairbar must fight with Oscar, chiefs of woody Temora! His words for Cathol were many; the wrath of Cairbar burns. He shall fall on Moi-lena. My fame shall rise in blood."

Their faces brightened round with joy. They spread over Moi-lena. The feast of shells is prepared. The songs of bards arise. The chiefs of Selma heard their joy. We thought that mighty Cathmor came. Cathmor the friend of strangers! the brother of red-haired Cairbar. Their souls were not the same. The light of heaven was in the bosom of Cathmor. His towers rose on the banks of Atha; seven paths led to his halls. Seven chiefs stood on the paths, and called the stranger to the feast! But Cathmor dwelt in the wood, to shun the voice of praise.

Olla came with his songs. Oscar went to Cairbar's feast. Three hundred warriors strode along Moi-lena of the streams. The grey dogs bounded on the heath; their howling reached afar. Fingal saw the departing hero. The soul of the king was sad. He dreaded Cairbar's gloomy thoughts amid the feast of shells. My son raised high the spear of Cormac. An hundred bards met him with songs. Cairbar concealed, with smiles, the death that was dark in his soul. The feast is spread. The shells resound. Joy brightens the face of the host. But it was like the

parting beam of the sun, when he is to hide his red head in a storm!

Cairbar rises in his arms. Darkness gathers on his brow. The hundred harps cease at once. The clang of shields is heard. Far distant on the heath Olla raised a song of woe. My son knew the sign of death,[1] and rising seized his spear. "Oscar," said the dark-red Cairbar, "I behold the spear of Erin. The spear of Temora glitters in thy hand, son of woody Morven! It was the pride of an hundred kings. The death of heroes of old. Yield it, son of Ossian, yield it to car-borne Cairbar!"

"Shall I yield," Oscar replied, "the gift of Erin's injured king; the gift of fair-haired Cormac, when Oscar scattered his foes? I came to Cormac's halls of joy, when Swaran fled from Fingal. Gladness rose in the face of youth. He gave the spear of Temora. Nor did he give it to the feeble: neither to the weak in soul. The darkness of thy face is no storm to me: nor are thine eyes the flame of death. Do I fear thy clanging shield! Tremble I at Olla's song? No: Cairbar, frighten the feeble: Oscar is a rock!"

"Wilt thou not yield the spear?" replied the rising pride of Cairbar. "Are thy words so mighty, because Fingal is near? Fingal with aged locks, from Morven's hundred groves! He has fought with little men. But he must vanish before Cairbar, like a thin pillar

[1] The death-knell is here signified by the striking of shields with spears.

of mist before the winds of Atha!"[1] "Were he who fought with little men near Atha's haughty chief: Atha's chief would yield green Erin to avoid his rage! Speak not of the mighty, O Cairbar! Turn thy sword on me. Our strength is equal: but Fingal is renowned! the first of mortal men!"

Their people saw the darkening chiefs. Their crowding steps are heard around. Their eyes roll in fire. A thousand swords are half-unsheathed. Red-haired Olla raised the song of battle. The trembling joy of Oscar's soul arose: the wonted joy of his soul when Fingal's horn was heard. Dark as the swelling wave of ocean before the rising winds, when it bends its head near the coast, came on the host of Cairbar.

Daughter of Toscar![2] why that tear? He is not fallen yet. Many were the deaths of his arm before my hero fell!

Behold they fall before my son, like groves in the desert; when an angry ghost rushes through night, and takes their green heads in his hand! Morlath falls. Maronnan dies. Conachar trembles in his blood! Cairbar shrinks before Oscar's sword! he creeps in darkness behind a stone. He lifts the spear in secret: he pierces my Oscar's side! He falls forward on his shield: his knee sustains the chief. But still his spear is in his hand. See gloomy Cairbar

[1] Atha, *shallow river:* the name of Cairbar's seat in Connaught.

[2] Malvina, who had Oscar for her lover.

falls! The steel pierced his forehead, and divided his red hair behind. He lay, like a shattered rock, which Cromla shakes from its shaggy side; when the green-valleyed Erin shakes its mountains from sea to sea!

But never more shall Oscar rise! He leans on his bossy shield. His spear is in his terrible hand. Erin's sons stand distant and dark. Their shouts arise like crowded streams. Moi-lena echoes wide. Fingal heard the sound. He took the spear of Selma. His steps are before us on the heath. He spoke the words of woe. "I hear the noise of war. Young Oscar is alone. Rise, sons of Morven: join the hero's sword!"

Ossian rushed along the heath. Fillan bounded over Moi-lena. Fingal strode in his strength. The light of his shield is terrible. The sons of Erin saw it far distant. They trembled in their souls. They knew that the wrath of the king arose: and they foresaw their death. We first arrived. We fought. Erin's chiefs withstood our rage. But when the king came, in the sound of his course, what heart of steel could stand? Erin fled over Moi-lena. Death pursued their flight. We saw Oscar on his shield. We saw his blood around. Silence darkened every face. Each turned his back and wept. The king strove to hide his tears. His grey beard whistled in the wind. He bends his head above the chief. His words are mixed with sighs.

"Art thou fallen, O Oscar! in the midst of thy

course? the heart of the aged beats over thee! He sees thy coming wars! The wars which ought to come he sees! They are cut off from thy fame? When shall joy dwell at Selma? When shall grief depart from Morven? My sons fall by degrees: Fingal is the last of his race. My fame begins to pass away. Mine age will be without friends. I shall sit a grey cloud in my hall. I shall not hear the return of a son, in his sounding arms. Weep, ye heroes of Morven! never more shall Oscar rise!"

And they did weep, O Fingal! Dear was the hero to their souls. He went out to battle, and the foes vanished. He returned, in peace, amidst their joy. No father mourned his son slain in youth: no brother his brother of love. They fell, without tears, for the chief of the people is low! Bran[1] is howling at his feet: gloomy Luath is sad, for he had often led them to the chase; to the bounding roe of the desert!

When Oscar saw his friends around, his heaving breast arose. "The groans," he said, "of aged chiefs: the howling of my dogs: the sudden bursts of the song of grief have melted Oscar's soul. My soul, that never melted before. It was like the steel of my sword. Ossian, carry me to my hills! Raise the stones of my renown. Place the horn of a deer:[2]

[1] Bran (signifying a *mountain stream*), one of Fingal's dogs.

[2] It was customary to bury a deer's horn (as the emblem of the chase), along with his sword, in the grave of a chieftain. Red

place my sword by my side. The torrent hereafter may raise the earth: the hunter may find the steel, and say, 'This has been Oscar's sword, the pride of other years!'" "Fallest thou, son of my fame! shall I never see thee, Oscar! When others hear of their sons, shall I not hear of thee? The moss is on thy four grey stones. The mournful wind is there. The battle shall be fought without thee. Thou shalt not pursue the dark-brown hinds. When the warrior returns from battles, and tells of other lands; 'I have seen a tomb,' he will say, 'by the roaring stream, the dark dwelling of a chief. He fell by car-borne Oscar, the first of mortal men.' I, perhaps, shall hear his voice. A beam of joy will rise in my soul."

Night would have descended in sorrow, and morning returned in the shadow of grief. Our chiefs would have stood, like cold dropping rocks on Moi-lena, and have forgot the war; did not the king disperse his grief, and raise his mighty voice. The chiefs, as new-wakened from dreams, lift up their heads around.

"How long on Moi-lena shall we weep? How long pour in Erin our tears? The mighty will not return. Oscar shall not rise in his strength. The valiant must fall in their day, and be no more known on their hills. Where are our fathers, O warriors! the chiefs of the times of old? They have set like stars that have shone. We only hear the sound of their praise. But they were renowned in their years:

deers' horns have been found in various ancient tumuli in Scotland along with human bones.

the terror of other times. Thus shall we pass away in the day of our fall. Then let us be renowned when we may, and leave our fame behind us, like the last beams of the sun when he hides his red head in the west. The traveller mourns his absence, thinking of the flame of his beams. Ullin, my aged bard! take thou the ship of the king. Carry Oscar to Selma of harps. Let the daughters of Morven weep. We must fight in Erin for the race of fallen Cormac. The days of my years begin to fail. I feel the weakness of my arm. My fathers bend from their clouds, to receive their grey-hair'd son. But, before I go hence, one beam of fame shall rise. My days shall end, as my years begun, in fame. My life shall be one stream of light to bards of other times!"

Ullin raised his white sails. The wind of the south came forth. He bounded on the waves toward Selma. I remained in my grief, but my words were not heard. The feast is spread on Moi-lena. An hundred heroes reared the tomb of Cairbar. No song is raised over the chief. His soul had been dark and bloody. The bards remembered the fall of Cormac! what could they say in Cairbar's praise?

Night came rolling down. The light of an hundred oaks arose. Fingal sat beneath a tree. Old Althan[1] stood in the midst. He told the tale of fallen Cormac. Althan the son of Conachar, the friend of car-borne Cuthullin. He dwelt with Cormac in windy Temora,

[1] Formerly chief bard of the king of Ireland, who had escaped from Cairbar after the death of Cormac, and fled to Fingal.

when Semo's son fell at Lego's stream. The tale of Althan was mournful. The tear was in his eye when he spoke.

Althan's Tale.

The setting sun was yellow on Dora.[1] Grey evening began to descend. Temora's woods shook with the blast of the inconstant wind. A cloud gathered in the west. A red star looked from behind its edge. I stood in the wood alone. I saw a ghost on the darkening air! His stride extended from hill to hill. His shield was dim on his side. It was the son of Semo. I knew the warrior's face. But he passed away in his blast; and all was dark around! My soul was sad. I went to the hall of shells. A thousand lights arose. The hundred bards had strung the harp. Cormac stood in the midst, like the morning star, when it rejoices on the eastern hill, and its young beams are bathed in showers. Bright and silent is its progress aloft, but the cloud, that shall hide it, is near! The sword of Artho[2] was in the hand of the king. He looked with joy on its polished studs: thrice he attempted to draw it, and thrice he failed; his yellow locks are spread on his shoulders: his cheeks of youth are red. I mourned over the beam of youth, for he was soon to set!

"Althan!" he said, with a smile, "didst thou behold my father? Heavy is the sword of the king; surely his arm was strong. O that I were like him in

[1] Dora, *the woody side of a mountain.*

[2] Artho, grandfather of young Prince Cormac.

battle, when the rage of his wrath arose! then would I have met with Cuthullin, the car-borne son of Cantéla! But years may come on, O Althan! and my arm be strong. Hast thou heard of Semo's son, the ruler of high Temora? He might have returned with his fame. He promised to return to-night. My bards wait him with songs. My feast is spread in the hall of kings."

I heard Cormac in silence. My tears began to flow. I hid them with my aged locks. The king perceived my grief. "Son of Conachar!" he said, "is the son of Semo low? Why bursts the sigh in secret? Why descends the tear? Comes the car-borne Torlath? Comes the sound of red-haired Cairbar? They come, for I behold thy grief. Mossy Tura's[1] chief is low? Shall I not rush to battle? But I cannot lift the spear! O had mine arm the strength of Cuthullin, soon would Cairbar fly; the fame of my fathers would be renewed; and the deeds of other times!"

He took his bow. The tears flow down from both his sparkling eyes. Grief saddens round. The bards bend forward from their hundred harps. The lone blast touched their trembling strings. The sound is sad and low! A voice is heard at a distance, as of one in grief. It was Carril of other times, who came from dark Slimora.[2] He told of

[1] Cuthullin, so called king of Tura from a castle on the coast of Ulster.

[2] Slimora a hill in Connaught, near which Cuthullin was killed.

the fall of Cuthullin. He told of his mighty deeds. The people were scattered round his tomb. Their arms lay on the ground. They had forgot the war, for he, their sire, was seen no more!

"But who," said the soft-voiced Carril, "who come like bounding roes? Their stature is like young trees in the valley, growing in a shower! Soft and ruddy are their cheeks! Fearless souls look forth from their eyes! Who but the sons of Usnoth, chief of streamy Etha?[1] The people rise on every side, like the strength of an half-extinguished fire, when the winds come, sudden, from the desert, on their rustling wings. Sudden glows the dark brow of the hill; the passing mariner lags on his winds. The sound of Caithbat's shield was heard. The warriors saw Cuthullin[2] in Nathos. So rolled his sparkling eyes! his steps were such on heath! Battles are fought at Lego. The sword of Nathos prevails. Soon shalt thou behold him in thy halls, king of Temora of groves!"

"Soon may I behold the chief!" replied the blue-eyed king. "But my soul is sad for Cuthullin. His voice was pleasant in mine ear. Often have we moved, on Dora, to the chase of the dark-brown hinds. His bow was unerring on the hills. He spoke of mighty men. He told of the deeds of my fathers. I felt my rising joy. But sit thou at the

[1] Etha, a district on the western coast of Scotland.

[2] That is, they saw a likeness between the person of Nathos and Cuthullin.

feast, O Carril! I have often heard thy voice. Sing in praise of Cuthullin. Sing of Nathos of Etha!"

Day rose on Temora, with all the beams of the east. Crathin came to the hall, the son of old Gelláma. "I behold," he said, "a cloud in the desert, king of Erin! a cloud it seemed at first, but now a crowd of men! One strides before them in his strength. His red hair flies in wind. His shield glitters to the beam of the east. His spear is in his hand." "Call him to the feast of Temora," replied the brightening king. "My hall is the house of strangers, son of generous Gelláma! It is perhaps the chief of Etha, coming in all his renown. Hail, mighty stranger! art thou of the friends of Cormac? But Carril, he is dark and unlovely. He draws his sword. Is that the son of Usnoth, bard of the times of old?"

"It is not the son of Usnoth!" said Carril. "It is Cairbar thy foe. Why comest thou in thy arms to Temora? chief of the gloomy brow. Let not thy sword rise against Cormac! Whither dost thou turn thy speed?" He passed on in darkness. He seized the hand of the king. Cormac foresaw his death; the rage of his eyes arose. Retire, thou chief of Atha! Nathos comes with war. Thou art bold in Cormac's hall, for his arm is weak." The sword entered the side of the king. He fell in the halls of his fathers. His fair hair is in the dust. His blood is smoking round.

"Art thou fallen in thy halls!" said Carril. "O

son of noble Artho! The shield of Cuthullin was not near. Nor the spear of thy father. Mournful are the mountains of Erin, for the chief of the people is low! Blest be thy soul, O Cormac! Thou art darkened in thy youth."

His words came to the ears of Cairbar. He closed us in the midst of darkness. He feared to stretch his sword to the bards,[1] though his soul was dark. Long we pined alone! At length, the noble Cathmor came. He heard our voice from the cave. He turned the eye of his wrath on Cairbar.

"Brother of Cathmor," he said, "how long wilt thou pain my soul? Thy heart is a rock. Thy thoughts are dark and bloody! But thou art the brother of Cathmor; and Cathmor shall shine in thy war. But my soul is not like thine: thou feeble hand in fight! The light of my bosom is stained with thy deeds. Bards will not sing of my renown: They may say, 'Cathmor was brave, but he fought for gloomy Cairbar.' They will pass over my tomb in silence. My fame shall not be heard. Cairbar! loose the bards. They are the sons of future times. Their voice shall be heard in other years; after the kings of Temora have failed. We came forth at the words of the chief. We saw him in his strength. He was like thy youth, O Fingal! when thou first didst lift the spear. His face was like the plain of the sun, when it is bright. No darkness travelled over his brow. But he came with his thousands to

[1] The persons of the bards were held sacred.

aid the red-haired Cairbar. Now he comes to revenge his death, O king of woody Morven!"

"Let Cathmor come," replied the king. "I love a foe so great. His soul is bright. His arm is strong. His battles are full of fame. But the little soul is a vapour that hovers round the marshy lake. It never rises on the green hill, lest the winds should meet it there. Its dwelling is in the cave, it sends forth the dart of death! Our young heroes, O warriors! are like the renown of our fathers. They fight in youth. They fall. Their names are in song. Fingal is amid his darkening years. He must not fall, as an aged oak, across a secret stream. Near it are the steps of the hunter, as it lies beneath the wind. 'How has that tree fallen?' he says, and, whistling, strides along. Raise the song of joy, ye bards of Morven! Let our souls forget the past. The red stars look on us from clouds, and silently descend. Soon shall the grey beam of the morning rise, and shew us the foes of Cormac. Fillan! my son, take thou the spear of the king. Go to Mora's dark-brown side. Let thine eyes travel over the heath. Observe the foes of Fingal: Observe the course of generous Cathmor. I hear a distant sound, like falling rocks in the desert. But strike thou thy shield, at times, that they may not come through night, and the fame of Morven cease. I begin to be alone, my son. I dread the fall of my renown!"

The voice of bards arose. The king leaned on the shield of Trenmor. Sleep descended on his eyes. His future battles arose in his dreams. The host are sleeping around. Dark-haired Finlan observes the foe. His steps are on a distant hill. We hear, at times, his clanging shield.

BOOK II.

OSSIAN'S SOLILOQUY ON THE DEATH OF HIS SON OSCAR.

FATHER of heroes! O Trenmor! High dweller of eddying winds! where the dark-red thunder marks the troubled clouds! Open thou thy stormy halls. Let the bards of old be near. Let them draw near, with songs and their half-viewless harps. No dweller of misty valley comes! No hunter unknown at his streams! It is the car-borne Oscar, from the fields of war. Sudden is thy change, my son, from what thou wert on dark Moi-lena! The blast folds thee in its skirt, and rustles through the sky! Dost thou not behold thy father, at the stream of night? The chiefs of Morven sleep far distant. They have lost no son! But ye have lost a hero, chiefs of resounding Morven! Who could equal his strength, when battle rolled against his side, like the darkness of crowded waters? Why this cloud on Ossian's soul? It ought to burn in danger. Erin is near with her host. The king of Selma is alone. Alone thou shalt not be, my father, while I can lift the spear!

I rose, in all my arms. I rose and listened to the wind. The shield of Fillan is not heard. I tremble for the son of Fingal. "Why should the foe come by night? Why should the dark-haired warrior fail?" Distant, sullen murmurs rise: like the noise of the lake of Lego, when its waters shrink in the days of frost and all its bursting ice resounds. The people of Lara look to heaven, and foresee the storm! My steps are forward on the heath. The spear of Oscar is in my hand! Red stars looked from high. I gleamed along the night. I saw Fillan silent before me, bending forward from Mora's rock. He heard the shout of the foe. The joy of his soul arose. He heard my sounding tread, and turned his lifted spear. "Comest thou, son of night, in peace? Or dost thou meet my wrath? The foes of Fingal are mine. Speak, or fear my steel. I stand not, in vain, the shield of Morven's race." "Never mayst thou stand in vain, son of blue-eyed Clatho! Fingal begins to be alone. Darkness gathers on the last of his days. Yet he has two sons who ought to shine in war. Who ought to be two beams of light, near the steps of his departure."

"Son of Fingal," replied the youth, "it is not long since I raised the spear. Few are the marks of my sword in war. But Fillan's soul is fire! The chiefs of Bolga[1] crowd around the shield of generous

[1] Bolga, from the Fir-bolg or Belgæ of Britain, who settled in a colony in the southern parts of Ireland. *Fir-bolg* signifies *bowmen*, from *bolg*, a *quiver*.

Cathmor. Their gathering is on that heath. Shall my steps approach their host? I yielded to Oscar alone, in the strife of the race, on Cona!"

"Fillan, thou shalt not approach their host; nor fall before thy fame is known. My name is heard in song: when needful I advance. From the skirts of night I shall view them over all their gleaming tribes. Why, Fillan, didst thou speak of Oscar! Why awake my sigh? I must forget the warrior till the storm is rolled away. Sadness ought not to dwell in danger, nor the tear in the eye of war. Our fathers forgot their fallen sons till the noise of arms was past. Then sorrow returned to the tomb, and the song of bards arose." The memory of those who fell quickly followed the departure of war: When the tumult of battle is past, the soul, in silence, melts away for the dead.

Conar was the brother of Trathal, first[1] of mortal men. His battles were on every coast. A thousand streams rolled down the blood of his foes. His fame filled green Erin like a pleasant gale. The nations gathered in Ulin, and they blessed the king; the king of the race of their fathers, from the land of Selma.

The chiefs of the south[2] were gathered in the darkness of their pride. In the horrid cave of Muma

[1] Conar, the first king of Ireland, son of Trenmor, and great-grandfather of Fingal.

[2] These were the chiefs of the Fir-bolg who preceded the Scots in the south of Ireland.

they mixed their secret words. Thither often, they said, the spirits of their fathers came; shewing their pale forms from the chinky rocks: reminding them of the honour of Bolga. "Why should Conar reign," they said, "the son of resounding Morven?"

They came forth, like the streams of the desert, with the roar of their hundred tribes. Conar was a rock before them: broken they rolled on every side. But often they returned, and the sons of Selma fell. The king stood among the tombs of his warriors. He darkly bent his mournful face. His soul was rolled into itself: and he had marked the place where he was to fall when Trathal came in his strength, his brother from cloudy Morven. Nor did he come alone. Colgar was at his side; Colgar the son of the king and of white-bosomed Solincorma.

As Trenmor, clothed with meteors, descends from the halls of thunder, pouring the dark storm before him over the troubled sea: so Colgar descended to battle, and wasted the echoing field. His father rejoiced over the hero: but an arrow came! His tomb was raised without a tear. The king was to revenge his son. He lightened forward in battle, till Bolga yielded at her streams!

When peace returned to the land: When his blue waves bore the king to Morven: then he remembered his son, and poured the silent tear. Thrice did the bards, at the cave of Furmono, call the soul of Colgar. They called him to the hills of his land.

He heard them in his mist. Trathal placed his sword in the cave, that the spirit of his son might rejoice.

"Colgar, son of Trathal!" said Fillan, "thou wert renowned in youth! But the king hath not marked my sword, bright-streaming on the field. I go forth with the crowd. I return without my fame. But the foe approaches, Ossian! I hear their murmur on the heath. The sound of their steps is like thunder, in the bosom of the ground, when the rocking hills shake their groves, and not a blast pours from the darkened sky!"

Ossian turned sudden on his spear. He raised the flame of an oak on high. I spread it large, on Mora's wind. Cathmor stopt in his course. Gleaming he stood, like a rock on whose sides are the wandering of blasts; which seize its echoing streams and clothe them over with ice. So stood the friend of strangers![1] The winds lift his heavy locks. Thou art the tallest of the race of Erin, king of streamy Atha!

"First of bards," said Cathmor, "Fona, call the chiefs of Erin. Call red-haired Cormar: dark-browed Malthos: the side-long-looking gloom of Maronan. Let the pride of Foldath appear. The red-rolling eye of Turlotho. Nor let Hidallo be forgot; his voice, in danger, is the sound of a shower when it falls in the blasted vale, near Atha's falling stream. Pleasant is its sound on the plain, whilst broken thunder travels over the sky!"

1 An epithet of Cathmor's.

They came in their clanging arms. They bent forward to his voice, as if a spirit of their fathers spoke from a cloud of night. Dreadful shone they to the light; like the fall of the stream of Brumo,[1] when the meteor lights it before the nightly stranger. Shuddering, he stops in his journey, and looks up for the beam of the morn!

"Why delights Foldath," said the king, "to pour the blood of foes by night! Fails his arm in battle, in the beams of day? Few are the foes before us, why should we clothe us in shades? The valiant delight to shine in the battles of their land! Thy counsel was in vain, chief of Moma! The eyes of Morven do not sleep. They are watchful as eagles on their mossy rocks. Let each collect, beneath his cloud, the strength of his roaring tribe. To-morrow I move in light to meet the foes of Bolga! Mighty was he that is low, the race of Borbar-Du-thul!"

"Not unmarked!" said Foldath, "were my steps before thy race. In light I met the foes of Cairbar. The warrior praised my deeds. But his stone was raised without a tear! No bard sung over Erin's king. Shall his foes rejoice along their mossy hills? No: they must not rejoice! He was the friend of Foldath! Our words were mixed in secret in Moma's silent cave, whilst thou a boy in the field pursuedst the thistle's beard. With Moma's sons I shall rush abroad and find the foe on his dusky hills.

[1] Brumo was a place of worship (Fing. b. vi.) in one of the Shetland Isles, and haunted at night by the spirits of the dead.

Fingal shall lie without his song, the grey-haired king of Selma."

"Dost thou think, thou feeble man," replied Cathmor, half-enraged: "Dost thou think Fingal can fall, without his fame, in Erin? Could the bards be silent at the tomb of Selma's king? The song would burst in secret! the spirit of the king would rejoice! It is when thou shalt fall that the bard shall forget the song. Thou art dark, chief of Moma, though thine arm is a tempest in war. Do I forget the king of Erin in his narrow house? My soul is not lost to Cairbar, the brother of my love! I marked the bright beams of joy which travelled over his cloudy mind when I returned with fame to Atha of the streams."

Tall they removed, beneath the words of the king. Each to his own dark tribe; where, humming, they rolled on the heath, faint glittering to the stars: like waves in a rocky bay before the nightly wind. Beneath an oak lay the chief of Atha. His shield, a dusky round, hung high. Near him, against a rock, leaned the fair stranger of Inis-huna:[1] that beam of light, with wandering locks, from Lumon of the roes. At distance rose the voice of Fona, with the deeds of the days of old. The song fails, at times, in Lubar's growing roar!

Fona's Song.

"Crothar," begun the bard, "first dwelt at Atha's mossy stream! A thousand oaks from the moun-

[1] That is Sulmalla, daughter of Conmor, king of Inis-huna, the ancient name of a part of South Britain next the Irish coast.

tains formed his echoing hall. The gathering of the people was there, around the feast of the blue-eyed king. But who among his chiefs was like the stately Crothar? Warriors kindled in his presence. The young sigh of the virgins rose. In Alnecma[1] was the warrior honoured: the first of the race of Bolga.

"He pursued the chase in Ullin: on the moss-covered top of Drumardo. From the wood looked the daughter of Cathmin, the blue-rolling eye of Con-láma. Her sigh rose in secret. She bent her head, amidst her wandering locks. The moon looked in at night, and saw the white-tossing of her arms; for she thought of the mighty Crothar, in the season of dreams.

"Three days feasted Crothar with Cathmin. On the fourth they awaked the hinds. Con-láma moved to the chase, with all her lovely steps. She met Crothar in the narrow path. The bow fell at once from her hand. She turned her face away, and half hid it with her locks. The love of Crothar rose. He brought the white-bosomed maid to Atha. Bards raised the song in her presence. Joy dwelt round the daughter of Cathmin.

"The pride of Turloch rose, a youth who loved the white-handed Con-láma. He came, with battle, to Alnecma; to Atha of the roes. Cormul went forth to the strife, the brother of car-borne Crothar. He went forth, but he fell. The sigh of his people rose. Silent and tall, across the stream, came the darkening strength of Crothar: he rolled the foe from Alnecma. He returned midst the joy of Con-láma.

1 Alnecma, or Alnecmacht, an ancient name of Connaught.

"Battle on battle comes. Blood is poured on blood. The tombs of the valiant rise. Erin's clouds are hung round with ghosts. The chiefs of the south gathered round the echoing shield of Crothar. He came with death to the paths of the foe. The virgins wept by the streams of Ullin. They looked to the mist of the hill: No hunter descended from its folds. Silence darkened in the land. Blasts sighed lonely on grassy tombs.

"Descending like the eagle of heaven, with all his rustling wings, when he forsakes the blast, with joy the son of Trenmor came; Conar, arm of death, from Morven of the groves. He poured his might along green Erin. Death dimly strode behind his sword. The sons of Bolga fled from his course as from a stream, that bursting from the stormy desert rolls the fields together with all their echoing woods. Crothar met him in battle; but Alnecma's warriors fled. The king of Atha slowly retired, in the grief of his soul. He afterwards shone in the south, but dim as the sun of Autumn when he visits, in his robes of mist, Lara of dark streams. The withered grass is covered with dew; the field, though bright, is sad!"

"Why wakes the bard before me," said Cathmor, "the memory of those who fled! Has some ghost, from his dusky cloud, bent forward to thine ear; to frighten Cathmor from the field, with the tales of old? Dwellers of the skirts of night, your voice is

but a blast to me, which takes the grey thistle's head, and strews its beard on streams. Within my bosom is a voice. Others hear it not. His soul forbids the king of Erin to shrink back from war."

Abashed the bard sinks back in night; retired he bends above a stream. His thoughts are on the days of Atha, when Cathmor heard his song with joy. His tears came rolling down. The winds are in his beard. Erin sleeps around. No sleep comes down on Cathmor's eyes. Dark in his soul he saw the spirit of low-laid Cairbar. He saw him, without his song, rolled in a blast of night. He rose. His steps were round the host. He struck at times his echoing shield. The sound reached Ossian's ear, on Morni's mossy brow.

"Fillan," I said, "the foes advance. I hear the shield of war. Stand thou in the narrow path. Ossian shall mark their course. If over my fall the host should pour, then be thy buckler heard. Awake the king on his heath, lest his fame should fly away." I strode in all my rattling arms; wide-bounding over a stream that darkly-winded in a field before the king of Atha. Green Atha's king, with lifted spear, came forward on my course. Now would we have mixed in horrid fray, like two contending ghosts, that bending forward, from two clouds, send forth the roaring winds, did not Ossian behold on high the helmet of Erin's kings. The eagle's wing spread above it, rustling in the breeze. A red star looked through the plumes. I stopt the lifted spear.

"The helmet of kings is before me! Who art thou, son of night? Shall Ossian's spear be renowned when thou art lowly-laid? At once he dropt the gleaming lance. Growing before me seemed the form. He stretched his hand in night. He spoke the words of kings."

"Friend of the spirits of heroes, do I meet thee thus in shades? I have wished for thy stately steps in Atha, in the days of joy. Why should my spear now arise? The sun must behold us, Ossian, when we bend gleaming in the strife. Future warriors shall mark the place: and, shuddering, think of other years. They shall mark it, like the haunt of ghosts, pleasant and dreadful to the soul."

"Shall it then be forgot," I said, "where we meet in peace? Is the remembrance of battles always pleasant to the soul? Do not we behold with joy the place where our fathers feasted? But our eyes are full of tears on the fields of their war. This stone shall rise, with all its moss, and speak to other years. 'Here Cathmor and Ossian met: the warriors met in peace!' When thou, O stone, shalt fail. When Lubar's stream shall roll away! then shall the traveller come, and bend here, perhaps, in rest. When the darkened moon is rolled over his head, our shadowy forms may come, and, mixing with his dreams, remind him of this place. But why turnest thou so dark away, son of Borbar-du-thul?" [1]

"Not forgot, son of Fingal, shall we ascend these

[1] That is, *surly warrior of dark-brown eyes*, a name well

winds. Our deeds are streams of light before the eyes of bards. But darkness is rolled on Atha: the king is low without his song: still there was a beam towards Cathmor from his stormy soul; like the moon, in a cloud, amidst the dark-red course of thunder."

"Son of Erin," I replied, "my wrath dwells not in his earth. My hatred flies, on eagle wing, from the foe that is low. He shall hear the song of bards. Cairbar shall rejoice on his winds."

Cathmor's swelling soul arose. He took the dagger from his side, and placed it gleaming in my hand. He placed it in my hand, with sighs, and silent strode away. Mine eyes followed his departure. He dimly gleamed, like the form of a ghost which meets a traveller by night on the dark-skirted heath. His words are dark, like songs of old: with morning strides the unfinished shade away!

Who comes from Lubar's vale? From the skirts of the morning mist? The drops of heaven are on his head. His steps are in the paths of the sad. It is Carril of other times. He comes from Tura's silent cave. I behold it dark in the rock, through the thin folds of mist. There, perhaps, Cuthullin sits, on the blast which bends its trees. Pleasant is the song of the morning from the bard of Erin!

"The waves crowd away," said Carril. "They crowd away for fear. They hear the sound of thy

suited to his character. He was brother of Colculla, mentioned in the beginning of the fourth book.

coming forth, O sun! Terrible is thy beauty, son of heaven, when death is descending on thy locks: when thou rollest thy vapours before thee, over the blasted host. But pleasant is thy beam to the hunter, sitting by the rock in a storm, when thou shewest thyself from the parted cloud, and brightenest his dewy locks: he looks down on the streamy vale, and beholds the descent of roes! How long shalt thou rise on war, and roll a bloody shield through heaven! I see the death of heroes dark-wandering over thy face!"

"Why wander the words of Carril?" I said. "Does the son of heaven mourn? He is unstained in his course, ever rejoicing in his fire. Roll on, thou careless light. Thou too, perhaps, must fall. Thy darkening hour may seize thee, struggling, as thou rollest through thy sky. But pleasant is the voice of the bard: pleasant to Ossian's soul! It is like the shower of the morning, when it comes thro' the rustling vale, on which the sun looks thro' mist just rising from his rocks. But this is no time, O bard! to sit down at the strife of song. Fingal is in arms on the vale. Thou seest the flaming shield of the king. His face darkens between his locks. He beholds the wide rolling of Erin. Does not Carril behold that tomb, beside the roaring stream? Three stones lift their grey heads beneath a bending oak. A king is lowly laid! Give thou his soul to the wind. He is the brother of Cathmor! Open his airy hall! Let thy song be a stream of joy to Cairbar's darkened ghost!"

BOOK III.

GAUL, SON OF MORNI.

WHO is that at blue-streaming Lubar? Who, by the bending hill of roes? Tall, he leans on an oak torn from high by nightly winds. Who but Comhal's son, brightening in the last of his fields? His grey hair is on the breeze. He half unsheaths the sword of Luno. His eyes are turned to Moi-lena, to the dark moving of foes. Dost thou hear the voice of the king? It is like the bursting of a stream in the desert, when it comes between its echoing rocks to the blasted field of the sun!

Wide-skirted comes down the foe! Sons of woody Selma, arise! Be ye like the rocks of our land, on whose brown sides are the rolling of streams. A beam of joy comes on my soul. I see the foe mighty before me. It is when HE is feeble that the sighs of Fingal are heard; lest death should come without renown, and darkness dwell on his tomb. Who shall lead the war against the host of Alnecma? It is only when danger grows that my sword shall shine. Such was the custom, heretofore, of Trenmor

the ruler of winds! and thus descended to battle the blue-shielded Trathal!

The chiefs bend towards the king. Each darkly seems to claim the war. They tell by halves their mighty deeds. They turn their eyes on Erin. But far before the rest the son of Morni stands. Silent he stands, for who had not heard of the battles of Gaul? They rose within his soul. His hand in secret seized the sword. The sword which he brought from Strumon,[1] when the strength of Morni failed.

On his spear leans Fillan of Selma, in the wandering of his locks. Thrice he raises his eyes to Fingal: his voice thrice fails him, as he speaks. My brother could not boast of battles: at once he strides away. Bent over a distant stream he stands: the tear hangs in his eye. He strikes, at times, the thistle's head with his inverted spear. Nor is he unseen of Fingal. Sidelong he beholds his son. He beholds him, with bursting joy; and turns, amid his crowded soul. In silence turns the king towards Mora of woods. He hides the big tear with his locks. At length his voice is heard.

"First of the sons of Morni! Thou rock that defiest the storm! Lead thou my battle, for the race of low-laid Cormac. No boy's staff is thy spear: no harmless beam of light thy sword. Son of Morni of steeds, behold the foe! Destroy! Fillan, observe

1 Strumon, *stream of the hill*, the name of Gaul's family seat, near Selma.

the chief! He is not calm in strife: nor burns he heedless in battle. My son, observe the chief! He is strong as Lubar's stream, but never foams and roars. High on cloudy Mora, Fingal shall behold the war. Stand, Ossian, near thy father, by the falling stream. Raise the voice, O bards! Selma, move beneath the sound. It is my latter field. Clothe it over with light."

As the sudden rising of winds; or distant rolling of troubled seas, when some dark ghost, in wrath heaves the billows over an isle: an isle, the seat of mist, on the deep, for many dark-brown years! So terrible is the sound of the host, wide moving over the field. Gaul is tall before them. The streams glitter within his strides. The bards raise the song by his side. He strikes his shield between. On the skirts of the blast, the tuneful voices rise.

"On Crona," said the bards, "there bursts a stream by night. It swells in its own dark course, till morning's early beam. Then comes it white from the hill, with the rocks and their hundred groves. Far be my steps from Crona. Death is tumbling there. Be ye a stream from Mora, sons of cloudy Morven!"

"Who rises from his car on Clutha? The hills are troubled before the king! The dark woods echo round, and lighten at his steel. See him, amidst the foe, like Colgach's[1] sportful ghost: when he scatters

1. Colgach signifies *fiercely-looking*, and is possibly the origin of Galgacus.

the clouds, and rides the eddying winds! It is Morni of bounding steeds! Be like thy father, O Gaul!"

"Selma is opened wide. Bards take the trembling harps. Ten youths bear the oak of the feast. A distant sun-beam marks the hill. The dusky waves of the blast fly over the fields of grass. Why art thou silent, O Selma? The king returns with all his fame. Did not the battle roar? yet peaceful is his brow? It roared, and Fingal overcame. Be like thy father, O Fillan!"

They move beneath the song. High wave their arms, as rushy fields beneath autumnal winds. On Mora stands the king in arms. Mist flies around his buckler abroad; as, aloft, it hung on a bough, on Cormul's mossy rock. In silence I stood by Fingal, and turned my eyes on Cromla's wood: lest I should behold the host, and rush amid my swelling soul. My foot is forward on the heath. I glittered, tall, in steel: like the falling stream of Tromo, which nightly winds bind over with ice. The boy sees it on high gleaming to the early beam: toward it he turns his ear, and wonders why it is so silent!

Nor bent over a stream is Cathmor, like a youth in a peaceful field. Wide he drew forward the war a dark and troubled wave. But when he beheld Fingal on Mora, his generous pride arose. "Shall the chief of Atha fight, and no king in the field? Foldath lead my people forth. Thou art a beam of fire."

Forth issues Foldath of Moma like a cloud, the

robe of ghosts. He drew his sword, a flame, from his side. He bade the battle move. The tribes, like ridgy waves, dark pour their strength around. Haughty is his stride before them. His red eye rolls in wrath. He calls Cormul chief of Dun-ratho; and his words were heard.

"Cormul, thou beholdest that path. It winds green behind the foe. Place thy people there, lest Selma should escape from my sword. Bards of green-valleyed Erin, let no voice of yours arise. The sons of Morven must fall without song. They are the foes of Cairbar. Hereafter shall the traveller meet their dark, thick mist on Lena, where it wanders, with their ghost, beside the reedy lake. Never shall they rise, without song, to the dwelling of winds."

Cormul darkened as he went. Behind him rushed his tribe. They sunk beyond the rock. Gaul spoke to Fillan of Selma; as his eye pursued the course of the dark-eyed chief of Dun-ratho. "Thou beholdest the steps of Cormul! Let thine arm be strong! When he is low, son of Fingal, remember Gaul in war. Here I fall forward into battle, amid the ridge of shields."

The sign of death ascends; the dreadful sound of Morni's shield. Gaul pours his voice between. Fingal rises on Mora. He saw them, from wing to wing, bending at once in strife. Gleaming on his own dark hill, stood Cathmor of streamy Atha. The kings were like two spirits of heaven, standing each on his gloomy cloud when they pour abroad the winds

and lift the roaring seas. The blue tumbling of waves is before them, marked with the paths of whales. They themselves are calm and bright. The gale lifts slowly their locks of mist!

What beam of light hangs high in air? What beam, but Morni's dreadful sword! Death is strewed on thy paths, O Gaul! Thou foldest them together in thy rage. Like a young oak falls Tur-lathon, with his branches round him. His high-bosomed spouse stretches her white arms, in dreams, to the returning chief, as she sleeps by gurgling Moruth, in her disordered locks. It is his ghost, Oichoma. The chief is lowly laid. Hearken not to the winds for Tur-lathon's echoing shield. It is pierced by his streams. Its sound is passed away.

Not peaceful is the hand of Foldath. He winds his course in blood. Connal met him in fight. They mixed their clanging steel. Why should mine eyes behold them? Connal, thy locks are grey? Thou wert the friend of strangers at the moss-covered rock of Dun-lora. When the skies were rolled together: then thy feast was spread. The stranger heard the winds without; and rejoiced at thy burning oak. Why, son of Duth-caron, art thou laid in blood? The blasted tree bends above thee. Thy shield lies broken near. Thy blood mixes with the stream: thou breaker of the shields!

Ossian took the spear in his wrath. But Gaul rushed forward on Foldath. The feeble pass by his side; his rage is turned on Moma's chief. Now they

had raised their dreadful spears: unseen an arrow came. It pierced the hand of Gaul. His steel fell sounding to earth. Young Fillan came, with Cormul's shield! He stretched it large before the chief. Foldath sent his shouts abroad, and kindled all the field: as a blast that lifts the wide-winged flame over Lumon's echoing groves.

"Son of blue-eyed Clatho," said Gaul, "O Fillan! thou art a beam from heaven, that, coming on the troubled deep, binds up the tempest's wing. Cormul is fallen before thee. Early art thou in the fame of thy fathers. Rush not too far, my hero. I cannot lift the spear to aid. I stand harmless in battle; but my voice shall be poured abroad. The sons of Selma shall hear, and remember my former deeds."

His terrible voice rose on the wind. The host bends forward in fight. Often had they heard him, at Strumon, when he called them to the chase of the hinds. He stands tall amid the war, as an oak in the skirts of a storm, which now is clothed on high in mist; then shows its broad waving head. The musing hunter lifts his eye from his own rushy field!

My soul pursues thee, O Fillan! through the path of thy fame. Thou rolledst the foe before thee. Now Foldath, perhaps, may fly: but night comes down with its clouds. Cathmor's horn is heard on high. The sons of Selma hear the voice of Fingal from Mora's gathered mist. The bards pour their song like dew on the returning war.

"Who comes from Strumon," they said, "amid

her wandering locks? She is mournful in her steps, and lifts her blue eyes towards Erin. Why art thou sad, Evir-choma?[1] Who is like thy chief in renown? He descended dreadful to battle; he returns like a light from a cloud. He raised the sword in wrath: they shrunk before blue-shielded Gaul!

"Joy, like the rustling gale, comes on the soul of the king. He remembers the battles of old; the days wherein his fathers fought. The days of old return on Fingal's mind as he beholds the renown of his son. As the sun rejoices, from his cloud, over the tree his beams have raised, as it shakes its lonely head on the heath, so joyful is the king over Fillan!

"As the rolling of thunder on hills, when Lara's fields are still and dark, such are the steps of Selma, pleasant and dreadful to the ear. They return with their sound, like eagles to their dark-browed rock, after the prey is torn on the field, the dun sons of the bounding hind. Your fathers rejoice from their clouds, sons of streamy Selma!"

Such was the nightly voice of bards on Mora of the hinds. A flame rose from an hundred oaks which winds had torn from Cormul's steep. The feast is spread in the midst: around sat the gleaming chiefs. Fingal is there in his strength. The eagle-wing of his helmet sounds. The rustling blasts of the west unequal rush through night. Long looks the king in silence round: at length his words are heard.

[1] Evir-choma, wife of Gaul. The word signifies *mild and stately maid.*

"My soul feels a want in our joy. I behold a breach among my friends. The head of one tree is low. The squally wind pours in on Selma. Where is the chief of Dun-lora? Ought Connal to be forgot at the feast? When did he forget the stranger in the midst of his echoing hall? Ye are silent in my presence! Connal is then no more. Joy meet thee, O warrior! like a stream of light. Swift be thy course to thy fathers, along the roaring winds! Ossian, thy soul is fire: kindle the memory of the king. Awake the battles of Connal, when first he shone in war. The locks of Connal were grey. His days of youth were mixed with mine. In one day Duthcaron first strung our bows against the roes of Dun-lora.

"Many," I said, "are our paths to battle in green-valleyed Erin. Often did our sails arise over the blue tumbling waves, when we came in other days to aid the race of Conar. The strife roared once in Alnecma, at the foam-covered streams of Duth-úla.[1] With Cormac descended to battle Duthcaron from cloudy Selma. Nor descended Duthcaron alone, his son was by his side, the long-haired youth of Connal lifting the first of his spears. Thou didst command them, O Fingal! to aid the king of Erin.

"Like the bursting strength of ocean, the sons of Bolga rushed to war. Colc-ulla[2] was before them,

[1] Duth-úla, *dark-rushing water;* a river in Connaught.

[2] Colc-ulla, *firm look in readiness*, was the brother of Borbarduthul, father of the Irish kings, Cairbar and Cathmor.

the chief of blue-streaming Atha. The battle was mixed on the plain. Cormac[1] shone in his own strife, bright as the forms of his fathers. But, far before the rest, Duthcaron hewed down the foe. Nor slept the arm of Connal by his father's side. Colc-ulla prevailed on the plain: like scattered mist fled the people of Cormac.

"Then rose the sword of Duthcaron, and the steel of broad-shielded Connal. They shaded their flying friends, like two rocks with their heads of pine. Night came down on Duth-úla: silent strode the chiefs over the field. A mountain-stream roared across the path, nor could Duthcaron bound over its course. 'Why stands my father,' said Connal. 'I hear the rushing foe.'

"'Fly, Connal,' he said. 'Thy father's strength begins to fail. I come wounded from battle. Here let me rest in night.' 'But thou shalt not remain alone,' said Connal's bursting sigh. 'My shield is an eagle's wing to cover the king of Dun-lora.' He bends dark above his father. The mighty Duthcaron dies."

Day rose, and night returned. No lonely bard appeared, deep-musing on the heath: and could Connal leave the tomb of his father till he should receive his fame? He bent the bow against the rose of Duth-úla. He spread the lonely feast. Seven nights

[1] Cormac, son of Conar, second king of Ireland, of the race of the Caledonians. This insurrection of the Firbolg happened towards the latter end of the long and harassed reign of Cormac.

he laid his head on the tomb, and saw his father in his dreams. He saw him rolled, dark, in a blast, like the vapour of reedy Lego. At length the steps of[1] Colgan came, the bard of high Temora. Duthcaron received his fame, and brightened as he rose on the wind.

"Pleasant to the ear," said Fingal, "is the praise of the kings of men; when their bows are strong in battle; when they soften at the sight of the sad. Thus let my name be renowned, when bards shall lighten my rising soul. Carril, son of Kinfena! take the bards and raise a tomb. To-night let Connal dwell within his narrow house. Let not the soul of the valiant wander on the winds. Faint glimmers the moon on Moi-lena, through the broad-headed groves of the hill! Raise stones beneath its beam to all the fallen in war. Though no chiefs were they, yet their hands were strong in fight. They were my rock in danger. The mountain from which I spread my eagle-wings. Thence am I renowned. Carril forget not the low!"

Loud, at once, from the hundred bards, rose the song of the tomb. Carril strode before them, they are the murmur of streams behind his steps. Silence dwells in the vales of Moi-lena, where each, with its own dark rill, is winding between the hills. I heard the voice of the bards, lessening, as they moved along. I leaned forward from my shield; and felt

[1] Colgan, the son of Cathmul, was the principal bard of king Cormac.

the kindling of my soul. Half-formed, the words of my song burst forth upon the wind. So hears a tree, on the vale, the voice of spring around. It pours its green leaves to the sun. It shakes its lonely head. The hum of the mountain bee is near it; the hunter sees it, with joy, from the blasted heath.

Young Fillan at a distance stood. His helmet lay glittering on the ground. His dark hair is loose to the blast. A beam of light is Clatho's son! He heard the words of the king with joy. He leaned forward on his spear.

"My son," said car-borne Fingal; "I saw thy deeds, and my soul was glad. The fame of our fathers, I said, bursts from its gathering cloud. Thou art brave, son of Clatho! but headlong in the strife. So did not Fingal advance, though he never feared a foe. Let thy people be a ridge behind. They are thy strength in the field. Then shalt thou be long renowned, and behold the tombs of the old. The memory of the past returns my deeds in other years: when first I descended from ocean on the green-valleyed isle."

We bend towards the voice of the king. The moon looks abroad from her cloud. The grey-skirted mist is near: the dwelling of the ghosts!

BOOK IV.

FINGAL'S EXPEDITION TO IRELAND

"BENEATH an oak," said the king,[1] "I sat on Selma's streamy rock, when Connal rose from the sea with the broken spear of Duth-caron. Far distant stood the youth. He turned away his eyes. He remembered the steps of his father on his own green hills. I darkened in my place. Dusky thoughts flew over my soul. The kings of Erin rose before me. I half unsheathed the sword. Slowly approached the chiefs. They lifted up their silent eyes. Like a ridge of clouds they wait for the bursting forth of my voice. My voice was to them a wind from heaven to roll the mist away.

"I bade my white sails to rise before the roar of Cona's wind. Three hundred youths looked from their waves on Fingal's bossy shield. High on the mast it hung, and marked the dark-blue sea. But when night came down, I struck, at times, the warning boss: I struck, and looked on high for fiery-

[1] Fingal relates his first expedition to Ireland, and marriage with Ros-crána, daughter of Cormac.

haired Ul-erin.[1] Nor absent was the star of heaven. It travelled red between the clouds. I pursued the lovely beam, on the faint-gleaming deep. With morning, Erin rose in mist. We came into the bay of Moi-lena, where its blue waters tumbled in the bosom of echoing woods. Here Cormac, in his secret hall, avoids the strength of Colc-ulla. Nor he alone avoids the foe. The blue eye of Ros-crána is there: Ros-crána,[2] white-handed maid, the daughter of the king!

"Grey on his pointless spear came forth the aged steps of Cormac. He smiled, from his waving locks; but grief was in his soul. He saw us few before him, and his sigh arose. 'I see the arms of Trenmor,' he said; 'and these are the steps of the king! Fingal! thou art a beam of light to Cormac's darkened soul. Early is thy fame, my son; but strong are the foes of Erin. They are like the roar of streams in the land, son of car-borne Comhal!' 'Yet they may be rolled away,' I said in my rising soul. 'We are not of the race of the feeble, king of blue-shielded hosts! Why should fear come amongst us, like a ghost of night? The soul of the valiant grows when foes increase in the field. Roll no darkness, king of Erin, on the young in war!'

"The bursting tears of the king came down. He seized my hand in silence. 'Race of the daring

[1] Ul-erin, *guide to Ireland*, a star which served as a guide to those who sailed by night from the Hebrides to the coast of Ulster.

[2] Ros-crána, *beam of the rising sun;* mother of Ossian.

Trenmor!' at length he said, 'I roll no cloud before thee. Thou burnest in the fire of thy fathers. I behold thy fame. It marks thy course in battle, like a stream of light. But wait the coming of Cairbar, my son must join thy sword. He calls the sons of Erin from all their distant streams.'

"We came to the hall of the king, where it rose in the midst of rocks, on whose dark sides were the marks of streams of old. Broad oaks bend around with their moss. The thick birch is waving near. Half-hid, in her shady grove, Ros-crána raises the song. Her white hands move on the harp. I beheld her blue-rolling eyes. She was like a spirit of heaven half-folded in the skirt of a cloud!

"Three days we feasted at Moi-lena. She rises bright in my troubled soul. Cormac beheld me dark. He gave the white-bosomed maid. She comes with bending eye, amid the wandering of her heavy locks. She came! Straight the battle roared. Colc-ulla appeared: I took my spear. My sword rose, with my people, against the ridgy foe. Alnecma fled. Colc-ulla fell. Fingal returned with fame.

"Renowned is he, O Fillan! who fights in the strength of his host. The bard pursues his steps, through the land of the foe. But he who fights alone; few are his deeds to other times! He shines to-day, a mighty light. To-morrow, he is low. One song contains his fame. His name is on one dark field. He is forgot; but where his tomb sends forth the tufted grass."

Such are the words of Fingal on Mora of the roes. Three bards from the rock of Cormul pour down the pleasing song. Sleep descends, in the sound, on the broad-skirted host. Carril returned with the bards from the tomb of Dun-lora's chief. The voice of morning shall not come to the dusky bed of Duth-caron. No more shalt thou hear the tread of roes around thy narrow house.

As roll the troubled clouds round a meteor of night, when they brighten their sides with its light along the heaving sea, so gathers Erin around the gleaming form of Cathmor. He, tall in the midst, careless lifts at times his spear, as swells or falls the sound of Fonar's distant harp. Near him leaned against a rock Sul-malla of blue eyes, the white-bosomed daughter of Conmor, king of Inishuna. To his aid came blue-shielded Cathmor, and rolled his foes away. Sul-malla beheld him stately in the hall of feasts. Nor careless rolled the eyes of Cathmor on the long-haired maid!

The third day arose, when Fithil came from Erin of the streams. He told of the lifting up of the shield in Selma: He told of the danger of Cairbar. Cathmor raised the sail at Cluba, but the winds were in other lands. Three days he remained on the coast, and turned his eyes on Conmar's halls. He remembered the daughter of strangers, and his sigh arose. Now when the winds awaked the wave, from the hill came a youth in arms to lift the sword with Cathmor in his echoing fields. It was the white-

armed Sul-malla. Secret she dwelt beneath her helmet. Her steps were in the path of the king: on him her blue eyes rolled with joy when he lay by his roaring streams! But Cathmor thought that on Lumon she still pursued the roes. He thought that fair on a rock she stretched her white hand to the wind; to feel his course from Erin, the green dwelling of her love. He had promised to return with his white-bosomed sails. The maid is near thee, O Cathmor! leaning on her rock.

The tall forms of the chiefs stand around; all but dark-browed Foldath. He leaned against a distant tree, rolled into his haughty soul. His bushy hair whistles in wind. At times bursts the hum of a song. He struck the tree, at length, in wrath, and rushed before the king! Calm and stately, to the beam of the oak, arose the form of young Hidalla. His hair falls round his blushing cheek in wreaths of waving light. Soft was his voice in Clonra,[1] in the valley of his fathers. Soft was his voice when he touched the harp in the hall near his roaring streams!

"King of Erin," said Hidalla, "now is the time to feast. Bid the voice of bards arise. Bid them roll the night away. The soul returns from song more terrible to war. Darkness settles on Erin. From hill to hill bend the skirted clouds. Far and grey, on the heath, the dreadful strides of ghosts are seen: the ghosts of those who bend forward to their song.

[1] Claon-rath, *winding-field.* The *th* is seldom pronounced audibly in the Gaelic language.

Bid, O Cathmor! the harps to rise, to brighten the dead on their wandering blasts."

"Be all the dead forgot?" said Foldath's bursting wrath. "Did not I fail in the field? Shall I then hear the song? Yet was not my course harmless in war. Blood was a stream around my steps. But the feeble were behind me. The foe has escaped from my sword. In Clonra's vale touch thou the harp. Let Dura answer to the voice of Hidalla. Let some maid look, from the wood, on thy long, yellow locks. Fly from Lubar's echoing plain. This is the field of heroes!"

"King of Erin," Malthos said, "it is thine to lead in war. Thou art a fire to our eyes on the dark-brown field. Like a blast thou hast past over hosts. Thou hast laid them low in blood. But who has heard thy words returning from the field? The wrathful delight in death: their remembrance rests on the wounds of their spear. Strife is folded in their thoughts, their words are ever heard. Thy course, chief of Moma, was like a troubled stream. The dead were rolled on thy path, but others also lift the spear. We were not feeble behind thee, but the foe was strong."

Cathmor beheld the rising rage, and bending forward of either chief: for, half-unsheathed, they held their swords, and rolled their silent eyes. Now would they have mixed in horrid fray had not the wrath of Cathmor burned. He drew his sword: it gleamed through night to the high-flaming oak! "Sons of

pride," said the king, "allay your swelling souls. Retire in night. Why should my rage arise? Should I contend with both in arms? It is no time for strife. Retire, ye clouds, at my feast. Awake my soul no more."

They sunk from the king on either side, like two columns of morning mist when the sun rises between them on his glittering rocks. Dark is their rolling on either side; each toward its reedy pool!

Silent sat the chiefs at the feast. They look at times on Atha's king where he strode, on his rock, amid his settling soul. The host lie along the field. Sleep descends on Moi-lena. The voice of Fonar ascends alone beneath his distant tree. It ascends in the praise of Cathmor, son of Larthon of Lumon. But Cathmor did not hear his praise. He lay at the roar of a stream. The rustling breeze of night flew over his whistling locks.

His brother came to his dreams, half-seen from his low-hung cloud. Joy rose darkly in his face. He had heard the song of Carril. A blast sustained his dark-skirted cloud, which he seized in the bosom of night as he rose with his fame towards his airy hall. Half-mixed with the noise of the stream, he poured his feeble words.

"Joy meet the soul of Cathmor. His voice was heard on Moi-lena. The bard gave his song to Cairbar. He travels on the wind. My form is in my father's hall, like the gliding of a terrible light which darts across the desert in a stormy night. No

bard shall be wanting at thy tomb when thou art lowly laid. The sons of song love the valiant. Cathmor, thy name is a pleasant gale. The mournful sounds arise! On Lubar's field there is a voice! Louder still, ye shadowy ghosts! The dead were full of fame! Shrilly swells the feeble sound. The rougher blast alone is heard! Ah, soon is Cathmor low!" Rolled into himself he flew, wide on the bosom of winds. The old oak felt his departure, and shook its whistling head. Cathmor starts from rest. He takes his deathful spear. He lifts his eyes around. He sees but dark-skirted night.

"It was the voice of the king," he said. "But now his form is gone. Unmarked is your path in the air, ye children of the night. Often, like a reflected beam, are ye seen in the desert wild: but ye retire in your blasts, before our steps approach. Go then, ye feeble race! Knowledge with you there is none! Your joys are weak, and like the dreams of our rest, or the light-winged thought, that flies across the soul. Shall Cathmor soon be low? Darkly laid in his narrow house? Where no morning comes with her half-opened eyes? Away, thou shade! to fight is mine! All further thought away! I rush forth, on eagle's wings, to seize my beam of fame. In the lonely vale of streams abides the narrow soul. Years roll on, seasons return, but he is still unknown. In a blast comes cloudy death, and lays his grey head low. His ghost is folded in the vapour of the fenny field. Its course is never

on hills, nor mossy vales of wind. So shall not Cathmor depart. No boy in the field was he, who only marks the bed of roes upon the echoing hills. My issuing forth was with kings. My joy in dreadful plains: where broken hosts are rolled away like seas before the wind."

So spoke the king of Alnecma, brightening in his rising soul. Valour, like a pleasant flame, is gleaming within his breast. Stately is his stride on the heath! The beam of east is poured around. He saw his grey host on the field, wide spreading their ridges in light. He rejoiced, like a spirit of heaven, whose steps come forth on the seas, when he beholds them peaceful round, and all the winds are laid. But soon he awakes the waves, and rolls them large to some echoing shore.

On the rushy bank of a stream slept the daughter of Inis-huna. The helmet had fallen from her head. Her dreams were in the lands of her fathers. There morning is on the field. Grey streams leap down from the rocks. The breezes in shadowy waves fly over the rushy fields. There is the sound that prepares for the chase. There the moving of warriors from the hall. But tall above the rest is seen the hero of streamy Atha. He bends his eye of love on Sul-malla, from his stately steps. She turns, with pride, her face away, and careless bends the bow.

Such were the dreams of the maid, when Cathmor of Atha came. He saw her fair face before him, in

the midst of her wandering locks. He knew the maid of Lumon. What should Cathmor do? His sighs arise. His tears come down. But straight he turns away. "This is no time, king of Atha, to awake thy secret soul. The battle is rolled before thee like a troubled stream."

He struck that warning boss,[1] wherein dwelt the voice of war. Erin rose around him, like the sound of eagle-wing. Sul-malla started from sleep, in her disordered locks. She seized the helmet from earth. She trembled in her place. "Why should they know in Erin of the daughter of Inis-huna?" She remembered the race of the kings. The pride of her soul arose! Her steps are behind a rock, by the blue-winding stream of a vale, where dwelt the dark-brown hind ere yet the war arose. Thither came the voice of Cathmor, at times, to Sul-malla's ear. Her soul is darkly sad. She pours her words on wind.

"The dreams of Inis-huna departed. They are dispersed from my soul. I hear not the chase in my land. I am concealed in the skirt of war. I look forth from my cloud. No beam appears to light my path. I behold my warrior low; for the broad-shielded king is near, he that overcomes in danger, Fingal from Selma of spears! Spirit of departed Conmor! are thy steps on the bosom of winds? Comest thou at times to other lands, father of sad Sul-malla? Thou dost come! I have heard thy voice at night, while yet I rose on the wave to Erin

[1] Namely of the shield, which conveyed a particular signal.

of the streams. The ghost of fathers, they say, call away the souls of their race, while they behold them lonely in the midst of woe. Call me, my father, away! When Cathmor is low on earth. Then shall Sul-malla be lonely in the midst of woe!"

BOOK V.

THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF FILLAN.

THOU dweller between the shields that hang on high in Ossian's hall! Descend from thy place, O harp, and let me hear thy voice! Son of Alpin, strike the string. Thou must awake the soul of the bard. The murmur of Lora's stream has rolled the tale away. I stand in the cloud of years. Few are its openings towards the past; and when the vision comes it is but dim and dark. I hear thee, harp of Selma! my soul returns like a breeze which the sun brings back to the vale where dwelt the lazy mist!

Lubar is bright before me in the windings of its vale. On either side, on their hills, rise the tall forms of the kings. Their people are poured around them, bending forward to their words, as if their fathers spoke, descending from the winds. But they themselves are like two rocks in the midst, each with its dark head of pines, when they are seen in the desert, above low-sailing mist. High on their face are streams, which spread their foam on blasts of wind!

Beneath the voice of Cathmor pours Erin, like the

sound of flame. . Wide they come down to Lubar. Before them is the stride of Foldath. But Cathmor retires to his hill, beneath his bending oak. The tumbling of a stream is near the king. He lifts at times his gleaming spear. It is a flame to his people in the midst of war. Near him stands the daughter of Con-mor, leaning on a rock. She did not rejoice at the strife. Her soul delighted not in blood. A valley spreads green behind the hill, with its three blue streams. The sun is there in silence. The dun mountain-roes come down. On these are turned the eyes of Sul-malla in her thoughtful mood.

Fingal beholds Cathmor on high, the son of Borbar-duthul! he beholds the deep-rolling of Erin on the darkened plain. He strikes that warning boss, which bids the people to obey, when he sends his chief before them, to the field of renown. Wide rise their spears to the sun. Their echoing shields reply around. Fear, like a vapour, winds not among the host, for he, the king, is near, the strength of streamy Selma. Gladness brightens the hero. We hear his words with joy.

"Like the coming forth of winds is the sound of Selma's sons! They are mountain waters, determined in their course. Hence is Fingal renowned. Hence is his name in other lands. He was not a lonely beam in danger, for your steps were always near! But never was Fingal a dreadful form in your presence, darkened into wrath. My voice was no thunder to your ears. Mine eyes sent forth no death. When

the haughty appeared I beheld them not. They were forgot at my feasts. Like mist they melted away. A young beam is before you! Few are his paths to war! They are few, but he is valiant. Defend my dark-haired son. Bring Fillan back with joy. Hereafter he may stand alone. His form is like his fathers. His soul is a flame of their fire. Son of car-borne Morni, move behind the youth. Let thy voice reach his ear from the skirts of war. Not unobserved rolls battle before thee, breaker of the shields!"

The king strode, at once, away to Cormul's lofty rock. Intermitting, darts the light from his shield as slow the king of heroes moves. Sidelong rolls his eye o'er the heath, as, forming, advance the lines. Graceful fly his half-grey locks round his kingly features, now lightened with dreadful joy. Wholly mighty is the chief! Behind him, dark and slow, I moved. Straight came forward the strength of Gaul. His shield hung loose on its thong. He spoke in haste to Ossian. "Bind, son of Fingal, this shield! Bind it high to the side of Gaul. The foe may behold it, and think I lift the spear. If I should fall, let my tomb be hid in the field; for fall I must without fame. Mine arm cannot lift the steel. Let not Evir-choma hear it, to blush between her locks. Fillan, the mighty behold us! Let us not forget the strife. Why should they come from their hills to aid our flying field?"

He strode onward, with the sound of his shield.

My voice pursued him as he went. "Can the son of Morni fall without his fame in Erin? but the deeds of the mighty are forgot by themselves. They rush careless over the fields of renown. Their words are never heard!" I rejoiced over the steps of the chief. I strode to the rock of the king, where he sat, in his wandering locks, amid the mountain-wind!

In two dark ridges bend the hosts toward each other at Lubar. Here Foldath rises a pillar of darkness; there brightens the youth of Fillan. Each, with his spear in the stream, sent forth the voice of war. Gaul struck the shield of Selma. At once they plunge in battle! Steel pours its gleam on steel: like the fall of streams shone the field, when they mix their foam together from two dark-browed rocks! Behold he comes, the son of fame! He lays the people low! Death sits on blasts around him! Warriors strew thy paths, O Fillan!

Rothmar,[1] the shield of warriors, stood between two chinky rocks. Two oaks, which winds had bent from high, spread their branches on either side. He rolls his darkening eyes on Fillan, and, silent, shades his friends. Fingal saw the approaching fight. The hero's soul arose. But as the stone of Loda[2] falls, shook, at once, from rocking Druman-ard, when

[1] Roth-mar, *the sound of the sea before a storm.* Drumanard, *high-ridge.* Cul-min, *soft-haired.* Cull-allin, *beautiful locks.* Strutha, *streamy river.*

[2] A supposed place of worship. Some ruins and circular pales of stone in Orkney and Shetland still retain the name of *Loda* or *Loaen.*

spirits heave the earth in their wrath, so fell, blue-shielded Rothmar.

Near are the steps of Culmin. The youth came, bursting into tears. Wrathful he cut the wind, ere yet he mixed his strokes with Fillan. He had first bent the bow with Rothmar at the rock of his own blue streams. There they had marked the place of the roe, as the sunbeam flew over the fern. Why, son of Cul-allin! Why, Culmin, dost thou rush on that beam[1] of light? It is a fire that consumes. Son of Cul-allin retire. Your fathers were not equal in the glittering strife of the field. The mother of Culmin remains in the hall. She looks forth on blue-rolling Strutha. A whirlwind rises on the stream, dark-eddying round the ghost of her son. His dogs[2] are howling in their place. His shield is bloody in the hall. "Art thou fallen, my fair-haired son, in Erin's dismal war?"

As a roe, pierced in secret, lies panting by her wonted streams, the hunter surveys her feet of wind: He remembers her stately bounding before. So lay the son of Cul-allin beneath the eye of Fillan. His hair is rolled in a little stream. His blood wanders on his shield. Still his hands holds the sword that failed him in the midst of danger. "Thou art fallen," said Fillan, "ere yet thy fame was heard.

[1] A metaphorical allusion to Fillan.

[2] The dogs are here supposed sensible of the death of their master although it happened at a distance. The blood-stained hue which fell upon armour left at home, when the warrior to whom it belonged fell in battle, was also a prevailing superstition.

Thy father sent thee to war. He expects to hear of thy deeds. He is grey, perhaps, at his streams. His eyes are toward Moi-lena. But thou shalt not return with the spoil of the fallen foe!"

Fillan pours the flight of Erin before him, over the resounding heath. But, man on man, fell Morven before the dark-red rage of Foldath, for, far on the field, he poured the roar of half his tribes. Dermid stands before him in wrath. The sons of Selma gathered around. But his shield is cleft by Foldath. His people fly over the heath.

Then said the foe, in his pride, "They have fled. My fame begins! Go, Malthos, go bid Cathmor guard the dark-rolling of ocean, that Fingal may not escape from my sword. He must lie on earth. Beside some fen shall his tomb be seen. It shall rise without a song. His ghost shall hover, in mist, over the reedy pool."

Malthos heard, with darkening doubt. He rolled his silent eyes. He knew the pride of Foldath. He looked up to Fingal on his hills; then darkly turning, in doubtful mood, he plunged his sword in war.

In Clono's[1] narrow vale, where bend two trees above the stream, dark, in his grief, stood Duthno's silent son. The blood pours from the side of Dermid. His shield is broken near. His spear leans against a stone. Why, Dermid, why so sad? "I hear the roar of battle. My people are alone. My steps are

[1] So named from Clono, son of Lethmal of Lora, one of the ancestors of Dermid, the son of Duthno.

slow on the heath, and no shield is mine. Shall he then prevail? It is then after Dermid is low! I will call thee forth, O Foldath! and meet thee yet in fight."

He took his spear, with dreadful joy. The son of Morni came. "Stay, son of Duthno, stay thy speed. Thy steps are marked with blood. No bossy shield is thine. Why should'st thou fall unarmed?" "Son of Morni! give thou thy shield. It has often rolled back the war. I shall stop the chief in his course. Son of Morni! behold that stone! It lifts its grey head through grass. There dwells a chief of the race of Dermid. Place me there in night."

He slowly rose against the hill. He saw the troubled field: the gleaming ridges of battle, disjoined and broken around. As distant fires on heath by night, now seen as lost in smoke, now rearing their red streams on the hill, as blow or cease the winds: so met the intermitting war the eye of broad-shielded Dermid. Through the host are the strides of Foldath, like some dark ship on wintry waves, when she issues from between two isles, to sport on resounding ocean!

Dermid, with rage, beholds his course. He strives to rush along. But he fails amid his steps, and the big tear comes down. He sounds his father's horn. He thrice strikes his bossy shield. He calls thrice the name of Foldath from his roaring tribes. Foldath, with joy, beholds the chief. He lifts aloft his bloody

spear. As a rock is marked with streams that fell troubled down its side in a storm, so, streaked with wandering blood is the dark chief of Moma! The host on either side withdraw from the contending of kings. They raise, at once, their gleaming points. Rushing comes Fillan of Selma. Three paces back Foldath withdraws, dazzled with that beam of light which came, as issuing from a cloud, to save the wounded chief. Growing in his pride he stands. He calls forth all his steel.

As meet two broad-winged eagles, in their sounding strife, in winds, so rush the two chiefs on Moilena into gloomy fight. By turns are the steps of the kings[1] forward on their rocks above; for now the dusky war seems to descend on their swords. Cathmor feels the joy of warriors on his mossy hill: their joy in secret, when dangers rise to match their souls. His eye is not turned on Lubar, but on Selma's dreadful king. He beholds him on Mora, rising in his arms.

Foldath falls on his shield. The spear of Fillan pierced the king. Nor looks the youth on the fallen, but onward rolls the war. The hundred voices of death arise. "Stay, son of Fingal, stay thy speed. Beholdest thou not that gleaming form, a dreadful sign of death? Awaken not the king of Erin. Return, son of blue-eyed Clatho."

Malthos beholds Foldath low. He darkly stands above the chief. Hatred is rolled from his soul. He

[1] Fingal and Cathmor.

seems a rock in a desert, on whose dark side are the trickling of waters, when the slow-sailing mist has left it, and all its trees are blasted with winds. He spoke to the dying hero about the narrow house. "Whether shall thy grey stone rise in Ullin or in Moma's[1] woody land? where the sun looks in secret on the blue streams of Dalrutho? There are the steps of thy daughter, blue-eyed Dardu-lena?"

"Rememberest thou her," said Foldath, "because no son is mine: no youth to roll the battle before him, in revenge of me? Malthos, I am revenged. I was not peaceful in the field. Raise the tombs of those I have slain, around my narrow house. Often shall I forsake the blast to rejoice above their graves; when I behold them spread around, with their long-whistling grass."

His soul rushed to the vale of Moma, to Dardu-lena's dreams, where she slept, by Dalrutho's stream, returning from the chase of the hinds. Her bow is near the maid, unstrung. The breezes fold her long hair on her breasts. Clothed in the beauty of youth, the love of heroes lay. Dark-bending, from the skirts of the wood, her wounded father seemed to come. He appeared at times, then hid himself in mist. Bursting into tears she rose. She knew that the chief was low. To her came a beam from his

[1] The name of a place in the south of Connaught, once famous as the residence of an Arch-Druid. The cave of Moma was inhabited by the spirits of the Fir-bolg chiefs, who were supposed to be gifted with oracular powers.

soul, when folded in its storms. Thou wert the last of his race, O blue-eyed Dardu-lena!

Wide spreading over echoing Lubar, the flight of Bolga is rolled along. Fillan hangs forward on their steps. He strews with dead the heath. Fingal rejoices over his son. Blue-shielded Cathmor rose.

Son of Alpin bring the harp. Give Fillan's praise to the wind. Raise high his praise in mine ear while yet he shines in war.

"Leave, blue-eyed Clatho, leave thy hall! Behold that early beam of thine! The host is withered in its course. No further look, it is dark. Light-trembling from the harp, strike, virgins, strike the sound. No hunter he descends from the dewy haunt of the bounding roe. He bends not his bow on the wind; nor sends his grey arrow abroad.

"Deep-folded in red war! See battle roll against his side. Striding amid the ridgy strife, he pours the deaths of thousands forth. Fillan is like a spirit of heaven that descends from the skirt of winds. The troubled ocean feels his steps as he strides from wave to wave. His path kindles behind him. Islands shake their heads on the heaving seas! Leave, blue-eyed Clatho, leave thy hall!"

BOOK VI.

DEATH OF FILLAN.

"CATHMOR rises on his hill! Shall Fingal take the sword of Luna?[1] But what shall become of thy fame, son of white-bosomed Clatho? Turn not thine eyes from Fingal, fair daughter of Inistore. I shall not quench thy early beam. It shines along my soul. Rise, wood-skirted Mora, rise between the war and me! Why should Fingal behold the strife, lest his dark-haired warrior should fall! Amidst the song, O Carril, pour the sound of the trembling harp! Here are the voices of rocks! and there the bright tumbling of waters. Father of Oscar, lift the spear! Defend the young in arms. Conceal thy steps from Fillan. He must not know that I doubt his steel. No cloud of mine shall rise, my son, upon thy soul of fire!"

He sunk behind his rock, amid the sound of Carril's song. Brightening, in my growing soul, I took the spear of Temora. I saw, along Moi-lena, the wild tumbling of battle; the strife of death in

[1] This is the speech of Fingal, who sees Cathmor coming to the assistance of his flying army.

gleaming rows, disjoined and broken round. Fillan is a beam of fire. From wing to wing is his wasteful course. The ridges of war melt before him. They are rolled in smoke from the fields!

Now is the coming forth of Cathmor, in the armour of kings! Dark waves the eagle's wing, above his helmet of fire. Unconcerned are his steps, as if they were to the chase of Erin. He raises at times his terrible voice. Erin, abashed, gathers round. Their souls return back like a stream. They wonder at the steps of their fear. He rose, like the beam of the morning, on a haunted heath: the traveller looks back, with bending eye, on the field of dreadful forms! Sudden, from the rock of Moi-lena, are Sul-malla's trembling steps. An oak takes the spear from her hand. Half-bent she looses the lance. But then are her eyes on the king, from amid her wandering locks! No friendly strife is before thee! No light contending of bows, as when the youth of Inishuna come forth beneath the eye of Conmor!

As the rock of Runo, which takes the passing clouds as they fly, seems growing, in gathered darkness, over the streamy heath, so seems the chief of Atha taller as gather his people around. As different blasts fly over the sea, each behind its dark-blue wave, so Cathmor's words, on every side, pour his warriors forth. Nor silent on his hill is Fillan. He mixes his words with his echoing shield. An eagle he seemed, with sounding wings, calling the

wind to his rock, when he sees the coming forth of the roes on Lutha's[1] rushy field!

Now they bend forward in battle. Death's hundred voices arise. The kings, on either side, were like fires on the souls of the hosts. Ossian bounded along. High rocks and trees rush tall between the war and me. But I hear the noise of steel between my clanging arms. Rising, gleaming, on the hill, I behold the backward steps of hosts: their backward steps, on either side, and wildly-looking eyes. The hiefs were met in dreadful fight! The two blue-shielded kings! Tall and dark, through gleams of steel, are seen the striving heroes! I rush. My fears for Fillan fly, burning across my soul.

I come. Nor Cathmor flies; nor yet comes on; he sidelong stalks along. An icy rock, cold, tall, he seems. I call forth all my steel. Silent awhile we stride, on either side of a rushing stream: then, sudden turning, all at once, we raise our pointed spears! We raise our spears, but night comes down. It is dark and silent round; but where the distant steps of hosts are sounding over the heath!

I come to the place where Fillan fought. Nor voice, nor sound is there. A broken helmet lies on earth, a buckler cleft in twain. Where, Fillan, where art thou, young chief of echoing Morven? He hears me, leaning on a rock, which bends its grey head over the stream. He hears; but sullen, dark he stands. At length I saw the hero.

[1] Lutha, *swift stream*; the name of a valley in Morven.

"Why standest thou, robed in darkness, son of woody Selma? Bright is thy path, my brother, in this dark-brown field! Long has been thy strife in battle! Now the horn of Fingal is heard. Ascend to the cloud of thy father, to his hill of feasts. In the evening mist he sits, and hears the sound of Carril's harp. Carry joy to the aged, young breaker of the shields!"

"Can the vanquished carry joy? Ossian, no shield is mine! It lies broken on the field. The eagle-wing of my helmet is torn. It is when foes fly before them that fathers delight in their sons. But their sighs burst forth in secret when their young warriors yield. No: Fillan shall not behold the king! Why should the hero mourn?"

"Son of blue-eyed Clatho! O Fillan, awake not my soul! Wert thou not a burning fire before him? Shall he not rejoice? Such fame belongs not to Ossian; yet is the king still a sun to me. He looks on my steps with joy. Shadows never rise on his face. Ascend, O Fillan, to Mora! His feast is spread in the folds of mist."

"Ossian! give me that broken shield: these feathers that are rolled in the wind. Place them near to Fillan, that less of his fame may fall. Ossian, I begin to fail. Lay me in that hollow rock. Raise no stone above, lest one should ask about my fame. I am fallen in the first of my fields; fallen without renown. Let thy voice alone send joy to my flying soul. Why should the bard know where dwells the lost beam of Clatho?"

"Is thy spirit on the eddying winds, O Fillan, young breaker of shields! Joy pursue my hero through his folded clouds. The forms of thy fathers, O Fillan, bend to receive their son. I behold the spreading of their fire on Mora: the blue-rolling of their wreaths. Joy meet thee, my brother! But we are dark and sad! I behold the foe round the aged. I behold the wasting away of his fame. Thou art left alone in the field, O grey-haired king of Selma!"

I laid him in the hollow rock, at the roar of the nightly stream. One red star looked in on the hero. Winds lift, at times, his locks. I listen. No sound is heard. The warrior slept! As lightning on a cloud, a thought came rushing along my soul. My eyes roll in fire: my strides was in the clang of steel: "I will find thee, king of Erin! in the gathering of thy thousands, find thee. Why should that cloud escape that quenched our early beam? Kindle your meteors on your hills, my fathers. Light my daring steps. I will consume in wrath. But should not I return! The king is without a son, grey-haired among his foes! His arm is not as in the days of old. His fame grows dim in Erin. Let me not behold him laid low in his latter field. But can I return to the king? Will he not ask about his son? 'Thou oughtest to defend young Fillan.' Ossian will meet the foe! Green Erin, thy sounding tread is pleasant to my ear. I rush on thy ridgy host to shun the eyes of Fingal. I hear the voice of the king on Mora's misty top! He calls his two sons! I come, my

father, in my grief. I come like an eagle which the flame of night met in the desert, and spoiled of half his wings!"

Distant, round the king, on Mora, the broken ridges of Morven are rolled. They turned their eyes; each darkly bends on his own ashen spear. Silent stood the king in the midst. Thought on thought rolled over his soul, as waves on a secret mountain-lake, each with its back of foam. He looked; no son appeared with his long-beaming spear. The sighs rose, crowding from his soul, but he concealed his grief. At length I stood beneath an oak No voice of mine was heard. What could I say to Fingal in his hour of woe? His words rose, at length, in the midst; the people shrunk backward as he spoke.

"Where is the son of Selma, he who led in war? I behold not his steps among my people returning from the field. Fell the young bounding roe, who was so stately on my hills? He fell; for ye are silent. The shield of war is cleft in twain. Let his armour be near to Fingal, and the sword of dark-brown Luno. I am waked on my hills; with morning I descend to war."

High on Cormul's rock an oak is flaming to the wind. The grey skirts of mist are rolled around; thither strode the king in his wrath. Distant from the host he always lay, when battle burnt within his soul. On two spears hung his shield on high, the gleaming sign of death; that shield, which he was wont to strike by night before he rushed to war. It

was then his warriors knew when the king was to lead in strife, for never was this buckler heard till the wrath of Fingal arose. Unequal were his steps on high, as he shone in the beam of the oak; he was dreadful as the form of the spirit of night, when he clothes, on hills, his wild gestures with mist, and, issuing forth on the troubled ocean, mounts the car of winds.

Nor settled, from the storm, is Erin's sea of war! they glitter, beneath the moon, and, low-humming, still roll on the field. Alone are the steps of Cathmor, before them on the heath; he hangs forward, with all his arms, on Morven's flying host. Now had he come to the mossy cave where Fillan lay in night. One tree was bent above the stream, which glittered over the rock. There shone to the moon the broken shield of Clatho's son; and near it, on grass, lay hairy-footed Bran. He had missed the chief on Mora, and searched him along the wind. He thought that the blue-eyed hunter slept; he lay upon his shield. No blast came over the heath unknown to bounding Bran.

Cathmor saw the white-breasted dog: he saw the broken shield. Darkness is blown back on his soul; he remembers the falling away of the people. They come, a stream; are rolled away; another race succeeds. "But some mark the fields, as they pass, with their own mighty names. The heath, through dark-brown years, is theirs; some blue stream winds to their fame. Of these be the chief of Atha, when

he lays him down on earth. Often may the voice of future times meet Cathmor in the air, when he strides from wind to wind, or folds himself in the wing of a storm."

Green Erin gathered round the king to hear the voice of his power. Their joyful faces bend, unequal, forward, in the light of the oak. They who were terrible were removed: Lubar winds again in their host. Cathmor was that beam from heaven which shone when his people were dark. He was honoured in the midst. Their souls rose with ardour around. The king alone no gladness shewed; no stranger he to war!

"Why is the king so sad?" said Malthos eagle-eyed. "Remains there a foe at Lubar? Lives there among them who can lift the spear? Not so peaceful was thy father, Borbar-duthul, king of spears. His rage was a fire that always burned; his joy over fallen foes was great. Three days feasted the grey-haired hero when he heard that Calmar fell: Calmar, who aided the race of Ullin, from Lara of the streams. Often did he feel with his hands the steel which, they said, had pierced his foe. He felt it with his hands, for Borbar-duthul's eyes had failed. Yet was the king a sun to his friends, a gale to lift their branches round. Joy was around him in his halls; he loved the sons of Bolga. His name remains in Atha, like the awful memory of ghosts, whose presence was terrible, but they blew the storm away. Now let the voices of Erin raise the soul of the king, he that shone

when war was dark, and laid the mighty low. Fonar, from that grey-browed rock, pour the tale of other times: pour it on wide-skirted Erin as it settles round."

"To me," said Cathmor, "no song shall rise; nor Fonar sit on the rock of Lubar. The mighty there are laid low. Disturb not their rushing ghosts. Far, Malthos, far, remove the sound of Erin's song. I rejoice not over the foe when he ceases to lift the spear. With morning we pour our strength abroad. Fingal is wakened on his echoing hill."

Like waves blown back by sudden winds, Erin retired at the voice of the king. Deep-rolled into the field of night, they spread their humming tribes. Beneath his own tree, at intervals, each bard sat down with his harp. They raised the song, and touched the string, each to the chief he loved. Before a burning oak Sul-malla touched at times the harp. She touched the harp, and heard, between, the breezes in her hair. In darkness near, lay the king of Atha beneath an aged tree. The beam of the oak was turned from him; he saw the maid, but was not seen. His soul poured forth in secret when he beheld her fearful eye. "But battle is before thee, son of Borbar-duthul."

Amidst the harp, at intervals, she listened whether the warrior slept. Her soul was up; she longed in secret to pour her own sad song. The field is silent. On their wings the blasts of night retire. The bards had ceased, and meteors came, red-winding with their

ghosts. The sky grew dark; the forms of the dead were blended with the clouds. But heedless bends the daughter of Conmor over the decaying flame. Thou wert alone in her soul, car-borne chief of Atha. She raised the voice of the song, and touched the harp between.

"Clun-galo[1] came; she missed the maid. Where art thou, beam of light? Hunters, from the mossy rock, saw ye the blue-eyed fair? Are her steps on grassy Lumon; near the bed of roes? Ah me! I behold her bow in the hall. Where art thou, beam of light?"

"Cease, love of Conmor, cease; I hear thee not on the ridgy heath. My eye is turned to the king, whose path is terrible in war. He for whom my soul is up, in the season of my rest. Deep-bosomed in war he stands, he beholds me not from his cloud. Why, sun of Sul-malla, dost thou not look forth? I dwell in darkness here; wide over me flies the shadowy mist. Filled with dew are my locks: look thou from thy cloud, O sun of Sul-malla's soul!"

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[1] Clun-galo, wife of Conmor, king of Inis-huna, and mother of Sul-malla.

BOOK VII.

THE WARRIOR'S GRAVE.

FROM the wood-skirted waters of Lego ascend at times grey-bosomed mists; when the gates of the west are closed, on the sun's eagle-eye. Wide, over Lara's stream is poured the vapour dark and deep: the moon, like a dim shield, is swimming through its folds. With this, clothe the spirits of old their sudden gestures on the wind, when they stride from blast to blast along the dusky night. Often, blended with the gale to some warrior's grave,[1] they roll the mist, a grey dwelling to his ghost, until the songs arise.

A sound came from the desert; it was Conar, king of Inis-fail. He poured his mist on the grave of Fillan, at blue-winding Lubar. Dark and mournful sat the ghost, in his grey ridge of smoke. The blast at times rolled him together; but the form returned

[1] The lake of Lego was the Hades of ghosts during the interval between death and the pronouncing of the funeral elegy over their tombs. Until this ceremony was performed the spirits of the dead could not gain admittance to the *airy halls* of their ancestors. It was the part of the spirit nearest in relation to take the mist of Lego and pour it over the grave.

again. It returned with bending eyes and dark winding of locks of mists.

It was dark. The sleeping host were still in the skirts of night. The flame decayed on the hill of Fingal; the king lay lonely on his shield. His eyes were half-closed in sleep; the voice of Fillan came. "Sleeps the husband of Clatho? Dwells the father of the fallen in rest? Am I forgot in the folds of darkness; lonely in the season of night?"

"Why dost thou mix," said the king, "with the dreams of thy father? Can I forget thee, my son, or thy path of fire in the field? Not such come the deeds of the valiant on the soul of Fingal. They are not there a beam of lightning, which is seen and is then no more. I remember thee, O Fillan! and my wrath begins to rise."

The king took his deathful spear, and struck the deeply-sounding shield: his shield that hung high in night, the dismal sign of war! Ghosts fled on every side, and rolled their gathered forms on the wind. Thrice from the winding vale arose the voice of deaths. The harps[1] of the bards, untouched, sound mournful over the hill.

[1] This *warning voice of the dead* was the melancholy sound emitted by the harps of bards on the night preceding death, and which were attributed to *the light touch of passing ghosts. The voice death,* mentioned in the preceding sentence, was of a different kind. The *voices of death,* mentioned previously, were foreboding shrieks; each person being supposed to have an attendant spirit, who assumed his form and voice on the night preceding death, and who appeared in the attitude in which the person was to die.

He struck again the shield; battles rose in the dreams of his host. The wide-tumbling strife is gleaming over their souls. Blue-shielded kings descend to war. Backward-looking armies fly; and mighty deeds are half hid in the bright gleams of steel.

But when the third sound arose, deer started from the clefts of their rocks. The screams of fowl are heard in the desert as each flew, frighted on his blast. The sons of Selma half-rose, and half-assumed their spears. But silence rolled back on the host: they knew the shield of the king. Sleep returned to their eyes; the field was dark and still.

No sleep was thine in darkness, blue-eyed daughter of Conmor! Sul-malla heard the dreadful shield, and rose amid the night. Her steps are towards the king of Atha. "Can danger shake his daring soul!" In doubt, she stands, with bending eyes. Heaven burns with all its stars.

Again the shield resounds! She rushed. She stopt. Her voice half-rose. It failed. She saw him, amidst his arms, that gleamed to heaven's fire. She saw him dim in his locks, that rose to nightly wind. Away, for fear, she turned her steps. "Why should the king of Erin awake? Thou art not a dream to his rest, daughter of Inis-huna."

More dreadful rings the shield. Sul-malla starts. Her helmet falls. Loud echoes Lubar's rock as over it rolls the steel. Bursting from the dreams of night, Cathmor half rose, beneath his tree. He saw the

form of the maid, above him, on the rock. A red star, with twinkling beam, looked thro' her floating hair.

"Who comes through night to Cathmor, in the season of his dreams? Bring'st thou aught of war? Who art thou, son of night? Stand'st thou before me, a form of the times of old? A voice from the fold of a cloud, to warn me of the danger of Erin?"

"Nor lonely scout am I, nor voice from folded cloud," she said; "but I warn thee of the danger of Erin. Dost thou hear that sound! It is not the feeble, king of Atha, that rolls his signs on night."

"Let the warrior roll his signs," he replied; "to Cathmor they are the sounds of harps. My joy is great, voice of night, and burns over all my thoughts. This is the music of kings, on lonely hills, by night; when they light their daring souls, the sons of mighty deeds! The feeble dwell alone in the valley of the breeze; where mists lift their morning skirts from the blue-winding streams."

"Not feeble, king of men, were they, the fathers of my race. They dwelt in the folds of battle, in their distant lands. Yet delights not my soul in the signs of death! He, who never yields, comes forth: O send the bard of peace!"

Like a dropping rock in the desert stood Cathmor in his tears. Her voice came, a breeze, on his soul, and waked the memory of her land; where she dwelt by her peaceful streams before he came to the war of Conmor.

"Daughter of strangers," he said (she trembling turned away), "long have I marked thee in thy steel, young pine of Inis-huna. But my soul, I said, is folded in a storm. Why should that beam arise, till my steps return in peace? Have I been pale in thy presence, as thou bidst me to fear the king? The time of danger, O maid, is the season of my soul; for then it swells, a mighty stream, and rolls me on the foe."

"Beneath the moss-covered rock of Lona, near his own loud stream; grey in his locks of age, dwells Clonmal king of harps. Above him is his echoing tree, and the dun-bounding of roes. The noise of our strife reaches his ear, as he bends in the thoughts of years. There let thy rest be, Sul-malla, until our battle cease. Until I return, in my arms, from the skirts of the evening mist, that rises on Lona, round the dwelling of my love."

A light fell on the soul of the maid; it rose kindled before the king. She turned her face to Cathmor, from amidst her waving locks. "Sooner shall the eagle of heaven be torn from the stream of his roaring wind, when he sees the dun prey before him, the young sons of the bounding roe, than thou, O Cathmor, be turned from the strife of renown. Soon may I see thee, warrior, from the skirts of the evening mist, when it is rolled around me, on Lona of the streams. While yet thou art distant far, strike, Cathmor, strike the shield, that joy may return to my darkened soul, as I lean on the mossy rock. But

if thou shouldst fall, I am in the land of strangers; O send thy voice from thy cloud to the maid of Inis-huna!"

"Young branch of green-headed Lumon, why dost thou shake in the storm? Often has Cathmor returned from darkly-rolling wars. The darts of death are but hail to me; they have often rattled along my shield. I have risen brightened from battle, like a meteor from a stormy cloud. Return not, fair beam, from thy vale, when the roar of battle grows. Then might the foe escape, as from my fathers of old.

"They told to Son-mor, of Clunar, who was slain by Cormac in fight. Three days darkened Son-mor, over his brother's fall. His spouse beheld the silent king, and foresaw his steps to war. She prepared the bow in secret, to attend her blue-shielded hero. To her dwelt darkness at Atha when he was not there. From their hundred streams by night poured down the sons of Alnecma. They had heard the shield of the king, and their rage arose. In clanging arms they moved along towards Ullin of the groves. Son-mor struck his shield at times, the leader of the war.

"Far behind followed Sul-allin, over the streamy hills. She was a light on the mountain when they crossed the vale below. Her steps were stately on the vale when they rose on the mossy hill. She feared to approach the king, who left her in echoing Atha. But when the roar of battle rose; when host

was rolled on host; when Son-mor burnt, like the fire of heaven in clouds, with her spreading hair came Sul-allin; for she trembled for her king. He stopped the rushing strife to save the love of heroes. The foe fled by night; Clunar slept without his blood; the blood which ought to be poured upon the warrior's tomb.

"Nor rose the rage of Son-mor, but his days were silent and dark. Sul-allin wandered by her grey streams with her tearful eyes. Often did she look on the hero when he was folded in his thoughts. But she shrunk from his eyes, and turned her lone steps away. Battles rose like a tempest and drove the mist from his soul. He beheld with joy her steps in the hall, and the white rising of her hands on the harp."

In his arms strode the chief of Atha to where his shield hung, high, in night; high on a mossy bough, over Lubar's streamy roar. Seven bosses rose on the shield; the seven voices of the king, which his warriors received from the wind, and marked over all their tribes.

On each boss is placed a star of night; Can-mathon with beams unshorn; Col-derna rising from a cloud: Uloicho robed in mist; and the soft beam of Cathlin glittering on a rock. Smiling, on its own blue wave, Reldurath half sinks its western light. The red eye of Berthin looks through a grove on the hunter as he returns by night with the spoils of the bounding roe. Wide, in the midst, arose the cloud-

less beams of Ton-théna, that star which looked by night on the course of the sea-tossed Larthon: Larthon, the first of Bolga's race, who travelled on the winds. White-bosomed spread the sails of the king towards streamy Inis-fail; dun night was rolled before him with its skirts of mist. Unconstant blew the winds, and rolled him from wave to wave. Then rose the fiery-haired Ton-théna, and smiled from her parted cloud. Larthon[1] blessed the well-known beam as it faint gleamed on the deep.

Beneath the spear of Cathmor rose that voice which awakes the bards. They came, dark-winding, from every side; each with the sound of his harp. Before them rejoiced the king, as the traveller in the day of the sun, when he hears, far rolling around, the murmur of mossy streams; streams that burst in the desert from the rock of roes.

"Why," said Fonar, "hear we the voice of the king in the season of his rest? Were the dim forms of thy fathers bending in thy dreams? Perhaps they stand on that cloud and wait for Fonar's song; often they come to the fields where their sons are to lift the spear. Or shall our voice arise for him who lifts the spear no more; he that consumed the field from Moma of the groves?

"Not forgot is that cloud in war, bard of other times. High shall his tomb rise, on Moi-lena the dwelling of renown. But, now, roll back my soul

[1] Larthon, compounded of *Lear*, sea, and *thon*, wave, a name given to the chief of the first colony of the Fir-bolg.

to the times of my fathers: to the years when first they rose on Inis-huna's waves. Nor alone pleasant to Cathmor is the remembrance of wood-covered Lumon. Lumon of the streams, the dwelling of white-bosomed maids.

"Lumon of the streams, thou risest on Fonar's soul! Thy sun is on thy side, on the rocks of thy bending trees. The dun roe is seen from thy furze; the deer lifts his branchy head; for he sees at times the hound on the half covered heath. Slow, on the vale, are the steps of maids; the white-armed daughters of the bow: they lift their blue eyes to the hill from amidst their wandering locks. Not there is the stride of Larthon, chief of Inis-huna. He mounts the wave on his own dark oak, in Cluba's ridgy bay. That oak which he cut from Lumon, to bound along the sea. The maids turn their eyes away lest the king should be lowly-laid; for never had they seen a ship, dark rider of the wave!

"Now he dares to call the winds, and to mix with the mist of ocean. Blue Inis-fail rose in smoke; but dark-skirted night came down. The sons of Bolga feared. The fiery-haired Ton-théna rose. Culbin's bay received the ship in the bosom of its echoing woods. There issued a stream from Duthuma's horrid cave, where spirits gleamed at times with their half-finished forms.

"Dreams descended on Larthon: he saw seven spirits of his fathers. He heard their half-formed words, and dimly beheld the times to come. He

beheld the kings of Atha, the sons of future days. They led their hosts along the field, like ridges of mist which winds pour in autumn over Atha of the groves.

"Larthon raised the hall of Samla[1] to the music of the harp. He went forth to the roes of Erin, to their wonted streams. Nor did he forget green-headed Lumon; he often bounded over his seas to where white-handed Flathal[2] looked from the hill of roes. Lumon of the foamy streams, thou risest on Fonar's soul!"

Morning pours from the east. The misty heads of the mountains rise. Valleys show on every side the grey-winding of their streams. His host heard the shield of Cathmor; at once they rose around, like a crowded sea when first it feels the wings of the wind. The waves know not whether to roll; they lift their troubled heads.

Sad and slow retired Sul-malla to Lona of the streams. She went, and often turned; her blue eyes rolled in tears. But when she came to the rock that darkly-covered Lona's vale she looked from her bursting soul on the king, and sunk at once behind.

Son of Alpin, strike the string. Is there aught of joy in the harp? Pour it then on the soul of Ossian: It is folded in mist. I hear thee, O bard! in my night. But cease the lightly-trembling sound. The joy of grief belongs to Ossian amidst his dark-brown years.

[1] Samla, *apparitions.*

[2] Flathal, wife of Larthon. The word signifies *heavenly.*

Green thorn of the hill of ghosts, that shakest thy head to nightly winds! I hear no sound in thee; is there no spirit's windy skirt now rustling in thy leaves? Often are the steps of the dead in the dark-eddying blasts; when the moon, a dun shield, from the east, is rolled along the sky.

Ullin, Carril, and Ryno, voices of the days of old! Let me hear you while yet it is dark, to please and awake my soul. I hear you not, ye sons of song; in what hall of the clouds is your rest? Do you touch the shadowy harp, robed with morning mist, where the rustling sun comes forth from his green-headed waves?

BOOK VIII.

FINGAL'S VICTORY.

As when the wintry winds have seized the waves of the mountain lake, have seized them in stormy night, and clothed them over with ice; white, to the hunter's early eye, the billows still seem to roll. He turns his ear to the sound of each unequal ridge. But each is silent, gleaming, strewn with boughs and tufts of grass, which shake and whistle to the wind, over their grey seats of frost. So silent shone to the morning the ridges of Morven's host, as each warrior looked up from his helmet towards the hill of the king; the cloud-covered hill of Fingal, where he strode in the folds of mist. At times is the hero seen, greatly dim in all his arms. From thought to thought rolled the war along his mighty soul.

Now is the coming forth of the king. First appeared the sword of Luno; the spear half issuing from a cloud, the shield still dim in mist. But when the stride of the king came abroad, with all his grey, dewy locks in the wind, then rose the shouts of his host over every moving tribe. They gathered, gleaming, round, with all their echoing shields. So rise

the green seas round a spirit that comes down from the squally wind. The traveller hears the sound afar, and lifts his head over the rock. He looks on the troubled bay, and thinks he dimly sees the form. The waves sport, unwieldy, round, with all their backs of foam.

Far distant stood the son of Morni, Duthno's race, and Cona's bard. We stood far distant; each beneath his tree. We shunned the eyes of the king; we had not conquered in the field. A little stream rolled at my feet: I touched its light wave with my spear. I touched it with my spear; nor there was the soul of Ossian. It darkly rose, from thought to thought, and sent abroad the sigh.

"Son of Morni," said the king, "Dermid, hunter of roes! why are ye dark, like two rocks, each with its trickling waters? No wrath gathers on Fingal's soul, against the chiefs of men. Ye are my strength in battle; the kindling of my joy in peace. My early voice has been a pleasant gale to your ears when Fillan prepared the bow. The son of Fingal is not here, nor yet the chase of the bounding roes. But why should the breakers of shields stand, darkened, far away?"

Tall they strode towards the king; they saw him turned to Mora's wind. His tears came down for his blue-eyed son who slept in the cave of streams. But he brightened before them, and spoke to the broad-shielded kings.

"Crommal, with woody rocks and misty top,

the field of winds, pours forth to the sight blue Lubar's streamy roar. Behind it rolls clear-winding Lavath, in the still vale of deer. A cave is dark in a rock; above it strong-winged eagles dwell; broad headed oaks before it sound in Cluna's wind. Within, in his locks of youth, is Ferad-artho,[1] blue-eyed king, the son of broad-shielded Cairbar, from Ullin of the roes. He listens to the voice of Condan, as, grey, he bends in feeble light. He listens, for his foes dwell in the echoing halls of Temora. He comes at times abroad, in the skirts of mist, to pierce the bounding roes. When the sun looks on the field, nor by the rock, nor stream, is he! He shuns the race of Bolga, who dwell in his father's hall. Tell him that Fingal lifts the spear, and that his foes, perhaps, may fail."

"Lift up, O Gaul, the shield before him. Stretch, Dermid, Temora's spear. Be thy voice in his ear, O Carril, with the deeds of his fathers. Lead him to green Moi-lena, to the dusky field of ghosts; for there, I fall forward, in battle, in the folds of war. Before dun-night descends come to high Dunmora's top. Look, from the grey skirts of mist, on Lena of the streams. If there my standard shall float on wind, over Lubar's gleaming stream, then has not Fingal failed in the last of his fields."

Such were his words; nor aught replied the silent,

1 Ferad-artho was the son of Cairbar Mac-Cormac king of Ireland. He was the sole descendant of the race of Conar, son of Trenmor, the first Irish monarch.

striding kings. They looked side-long on Erin's host, and darkened as they went. Never before had they left the king in the midst of the stormy field. Behind them, touching at times his harp, the grey-haired Carril moved. He foresaw the fall of the people, and mournful was the sound! It was like a breeze that comes by fits over Lego's reedy lake; when sleep half descends on the hunter within his mossy cave.

"Why bends the bard of Cona," said Fingal, "over his secret stream? Is this a time for sorrow, father of low-laid Oscar? Be the warriors remembered in peace; when echoing shields are heard no more. Bend, then, in grief, over the flood, where blows the mountain breeze. Let them pass on thy soul, the blue-eyed dwellers of the tomb. But Erin rolls to war; wide-tumbling, rough, and dark. Lift, Ossian, lift the shield. I am alone, my son!"

As comes the sudden voice of winds to the becalmed ship of Inis-huna, and drives it large, along the deep, dark rider of the wave; so the voice of Fingal sent Ossian, tall, along the heath. He lifted high his shining shield, in the dusky wing of war: like the broad, blank moon, in the skirt of a cloud, before the storms arise.

Loud, from moss-covered Mora, poured down at once the broad-winged war. Fingal led his people forth, king of Morven of streams. On high spreads the eagle's wing. His grey hair is poured on his shoulders broad. In thunder are his mighty strides.

He often stood, and saw behind the wide-gleaming rolling of armour. A rock he seemed, grey over with ice, whose woods are high in wind. Bright streams leap from its head, and spread their foam on blasts.

Now he came to Lubar's cave, where Fillan darkly slept. Bran still lay on the broken shield: the eagle-wing is strewed by the winds. Bright, from withered furze, looked forth the hero's spear. Then grief stirred the soul of the king, like whirlwinds blackening on a lake. He turned his sudden step, and leaned on his bending spear.

White-breasted Bran came bounding with joy to the known path of Fingal. He came, and looked towards the cave where the blue-eyed hunter lay, for he was wont to stride with morning to the dewy bed of the roe. It was then the tears of the king came down, and all his soul was dark. But as the rising wind rolls away the storm of rain, and leaves the white streams to the sun, and high hills with their heads of grass, so the returning war brightened the mind of Fingal. He bounded on his spear over Lubar, and struck his echoing shield. His ridgy host bend forward at once, with all their pointed steel.

Nor Erin heard with fear the sound: wide they came rolling along. Dark Malthos, in the wing of war, looks forward from shaggy brows. Next rose that beam of light Hidalla; then the side-long-looking gloom of Maronnan. Blue-shielded Clonar lifts the spear; Cormar shakes his bushy locks on the wind. Slowly, from behind a rock, rose the bright form of

Atha. First appeared his two pointed spears, then the half of his burnished shield: like the rising of a nightly meteor over the vale of ghosts. But when he shone all abroad the hosts plunged at once into strife. The gleaming waves of steel are poured on either side.

As meet two troubled seas, with the rolling of all their waves, when they feel the wings of contending winds in the rock-sided firth of Lumon; along the echoing hills is the dim course of ghosts: from the blast fall the torn groves on the deep, amidst the foamy path of whales. So mixed the hosts! Now Fingal; now Cathmor came abroad. The dark tumbling of death is before them: the gleam of broken steel is rolled on their steps, as, loud, the high-bounding kings hewed down the ridge of shields.

Maronnan fell, by Fingal, laid large across a stream. The waters gathered by his side, and leapt grey over his bossy shield. Clonar is pierced by Cathmor: nor yet lay the chief on earth. An oak seized his hair in his fall. His helmet rolled on the ground. By its thong, hung his broad shield; over it wandered his streaming blood. Tla-min shall weep in the hall, and strike her heaving breast.

Nor did Ossian forget the spear in the wing of his war. He strewed the field with dead. Young Hidalla came. "Soft voice of streamy Clonra! Why dost thou lift the steel? O that we met in the strife of song in thy own rushy vale!" Malthos beheld him low and darkened as he rushed along. On

either side of a stream we bend in the echoing strife. Heaven comes rolling down: around burst the voices of squally winds. Hills are clothed at times in fire. Thunder rolls in wreaths of mist. In darkness shrunk the foe: Morven's warriors stood aghast. Still I bent over the stream amidst my whistling locks.

Then rose the voice of Fingal, and the sound of the flying foe. I saw the king at times in lightning, darkly-striding in his might. I struck my echoing shield, and hung forward on the steps of Alnecma: the foe is rolled before me like a wreath of smoke.

The sun looked forth from his cloud. The hundred streams of Moi-lena shone. Slow rose the blue columns of mist against the glittering hill. "Where are the mighty kings? Nor by that stream, nor wood are they! I hear the clang of arms! Their strife is in the bosom of that mist. Such is the contending of spirits in a nightly cloud when they strive for the wintry wings of winds, and the rolling of the foam-covered waves.

I rushed along. The grey mist rose. Tall, gleaming, they stood at Lubar. Cathmor leaned against a rock. His half-fallen shield received the stream that leapt from the moss above. Towards him is the stride of Fingal: he saw the hero's blood. His sword fell slowly to his side. He spoke, amidst his darkening joy.

"Yields the race of Borbar-duthul? Or still does he lift the spear? Not unheard is thy name at Atha,

in the green dwelling of strangers. It has come, like the breeze of his desert, to the ear of Fingal. Come to my hill of feasts: the mighty fail at times. No fire am I to low-laid foes! I rejoice not over the fall of the brave. To close the wound is mine: I have known the herbs of the hills. I seized their fair heads on high, as they waved by their secret streams. Thou art dark and silent, king of Atha of strangers!"

"By Atha of the stream," he said, "there rises a mossy rock. On its head is the wandering of boughs, within the course of winds. Dark, in its face, is a cave, with its own loud rill. There have I heard the tread of strangers when they passed to my hall of shells. Joy rose, like a flame, on my soul: I blest the echoing rock. Here be my dwelling, in darkness; in my grassy vale. From this I shall mount the breeze that pursues my thistle's beard; or look down on blue-winding Atha from its wandering mist."

"Why speaks the king of the tomb? Ossian! the warrior has failed! Joy meet thy soul, like a stream, Cathmor, friend of strangers! My son, I hear the call of years; they take my spear as they pass along. Why does not Fingal, they seem to say, rest within his hall? Dost thou always delight in blood? In the tears of the sad? No: ye dark-rolling years, Fingal delights not in blood. Tears are wintry streams that waste away my soul. But when I lie down to rest then comes the mighty voice of war. It awakes me in my hall, and calls forth all my steel. It shall call it forth no more; Ossian,

take thou thy father's spear. Lift it in battle when the proud arise.

"My fathers, Ossian, trace my steps; my deeds are pleasant to their eyes. Wherever I come forth to battle, on my field are their columns of mist. But mine arm rescued the feeble; the haughty found my rage was fire. Never over the fallen did mine eye rejoice. For this,[1] my fathers shall meet me at the gates of their airy halls, tall, with robes of light, with mildly-kindled eyes. But to the proud in arms they are darkened moons in heaven, which send the fire of night red-wandering over their face.

"Father of heroes, Trenmor, dweller of eddying winds! I give thy spear to Ossian, let thine eye rejoice. Thee have I seen at times bright from between thy clouds; so appear to my son when he is to lift the spear: then shall he remember thy mighty deeds though thou art now but a blast."

He gave the spear to my hand, and raised at once a stone on high, to speak to future times with its grey head of moss. Beneath he placed a sword[2] in earth, and one bright boss from his shield. Dark

[1] The Celtic nations had their own idea of rewards and punishments after death. Those who behaved in life with bravery and virtue were received with joy to the airy halls of their fathers; but *the dark in soul,* to use the poetical expression, were spurned *from the habitation of heroes to wander on the winds.* Another opinion which tended to emulate men to excel one another in martial achievements was, that in the *hall of clouds* every one's seat was raised in proportion to his standard of valour while he lived.

[2] Stones are still to be seen which are supposed to have been

in thought, awhile, he bends: his words at length came forth.

"When thou, O stone, shall moulder down and lose thee in the moss of years, then shall the traveller come, and whistling pass away. Thou know'st not, feeble man, that fame once shone on Moi-lena. Here Fingal resigned his spear after the last of his fields. Pass away, thou empty shade! in thy voice there is no renown. Thou dwellest by some peaceful stream; yet a few years and thou art gone. No one remembers thee, thou dweller of thick mist! But Fingal shall be clothed with fame, a beam of light to other times; for he went forth in echoing steel to save the weak in arms."

Brightening, in his fame, the king strode to Lubar's sounding oak where it bent from its rock over the bright tumbling stream. Beneath it is a narrow plain, and the sound of the fount of the rock. Here the standard of Morven poured its wreaths on the wind, to mark the way of Ferad-artho, from his secret vale. Bright, from his parted west, the sun of heaven looked abroad. The hero saw his people, and heard their shouts of joy. In broken ridges round, they glittered to the beam. The king rejoiced, as a hunter in his own green vale, when, after the storm is rolled away, he sees the gleaming sides of the rocks. The green thorn shakes its head in their face; from their top look forward the roes.

erected as memorials of ancient chiefs, and pieces of armour, and half-burnt wood, have often been found beneath them.

Grey, at his mossy cave, is bent the aged form of Clonmal. The eyes of the bard had failed. He leaned forward on his staff. Bright in her locks, before him, Sul-malla listened to the tale; the tale of the kings of Atha, in the days of old. The noise of battle had ceased in his ear; he stopt, and raised the secret sigh. The spirits of the dead, they said, often lightened along his soul. He saw the king of Atha low, beneath his bending tree.

"Why art thou dark?" said the maid. "The strife of arms is past. Soon shall he come to thy cave, over thy winding streams. The sun looks from the rocks of the west. The mists of the lake arise.

"Grey, they spread on that hill, the rushy dwelling of roes. From the mist shall my king appear! Behold, he comes in his arms. Come to the cave of Clonmal, O my best beloved!"

It was the spirit of Cathmor, stalking, large, a gleaming form. He sunk by the hollow stream that roared between the hills. "It was but the hunter," she said, "who searches for the bed of the roe. His steps are not forth to war; his spouse expects him with night. He shall, whistling, return with the spoils of the dark-brown hinds." Her eyes were turned to the hill: again the stately form came down. She rose in the midst of joy. He retired again in mist. Gradual vanish his limbs of smoke, and mix with the mountain wind. Then she knew that he fell! "King of Erin art thou low!" Let Ossian forget her grief; it wastes the soul of age.

Evening came down on Moi-lena. Grey rolled the streams of the land. Loud came forth the voice of Fingal: the beam of oaks arose. The people gathered round with gladness; with gladness blended with shades. They sidelong looked to the king, and beheld his unfinished joy. Pleasant, from the way of the desert, the voice of music came. It seemed at first the noise of a stream, far distant on its rocks. Slow it rolled along the hill, like the ruffled wing of a breeze, when it takes the tufted beard of the rocks in the still season of night. It was the voice of Condan, mixed with Carril's trembling harp. They came, with blue-eyed Ferad-artho, to Mora of the streams.

Sudden bursts the song from our bards on Lena: the host struck their shields midst the sound. Gladness rose brightening on the king, like the beam of a cloudy day when it rises on the green hill before the roar of winds. He struck the bossy shield of kings; at once they cease around. The people lean forward, from their spears, towards the voice of their land.

"Sons of Morven, spread the feast; send the night away in song. Ye have shone around me, and the dark storm is past. My people are the windy rocks, from which I spread my eagle wings when I rush forth to renown, and seize it on its field. Ossian, thou hast the spear of Fingal: it is not the staff of a boy with which he strews the thistle round, young wanderer of the field. No: it is the lance of the mighty, with which they stretched forth their hands

to death. Look to thy fathers, my son; they are awful beams. With morning lead Ferad-artho forth to the echoing halls of Temora. Remind him of the kings of Erin; the stately forms of old. Let not the fallen be forgot, they were mighty in the field. Let Carril pour his song, that the kings may rejoice in their mist. To-morrow I spread my sails to Selma's shaded walls: where streamy Duthula winds through the seats of roes."

Minor Poems.

PERSONS.

CARTHON, leader of the Britons.
CLESSAMMOR, his father.
REUTHAMIR, British chief of Balclutha.
FINGAL.
ULLIN, Bard.
CATHAL.
MOINA, daughter of Reuthamir.

THIS poem relates the tragical death of Carthon, who fell in combat with his own father. The story is that Clessammor, a Caledonian chief and uncle of Fingal, had been driven by a storm into the river Clyde, where he took shelter at Balclutha, a settlement of Britons. Reuthamir the chief receives him hospitably, and gives him in marriage his daughter Moina, with whom Clessammor had fallen in love at first sight. A rival young Briton appears in the field, and under the influence of jealousy or disappointment incites Clessammor to a duel. The young Briton is killed, and Clessammor obliged to flee. Clessammor returns to rejoin Fingal at Morven, but is supposed to have perished at sea. Moina dies after giving birth to a son named Carthon (which signifies *murmur of the waves*) after the supposed fate of his father). While still a boy Balclutha is attacked and burnt by Comhal, the father of Fingal, in one of his predatory expeditions. Carthon escapes, but in revenge returns the attack as soon as he comes to a state of manhood. Accordingly he sets sail accompanied by a host of Britons, and encounters the Caledonians at Morven. Ignorant, however, of the presence of Clessammor in the ranks of the enemy, and refusing a gracious offer of peace made to him by Fingal, he accidentally falls a victim to the sword of his own father.

Carthon.

A TALE of the times of old! The deeds of days of other years!

The murmur of thy streams, O Lora! brings back the memory of the past. The sound of thy woods, Garmallar, is lovely in mine ear. Dost thou not behold, Malvina, a rock with its head of heath? Three aged pines bend from its face; green is the narrow plain at its feet; there the flower of the mountain grows, and shakes its white head in the breeze. The thistle is there alone, shedding its aged beard. Two stones, half sunk in the ground, show their heads of moss. The deer of the mountain avoids the place, for he beholds a dim ghost standing there. The mighty lie, O Malvina! in the narrow plain of the rock.

A tale of the times of old! the deeds of days of other years!

Who comes from the land of strangers, with his thousands around him? The sunbeam pours its bright stream before him; his hair meets the wind of

his hills. His face is settled from war. He is calm as the evening beam, that looks from the cloud of the west, on Cona's silent vale. Who is it but Comhal's son,[1] the king of mighty deeds! He beholds his hills with joy, he bids a thousand voices rise. "Ye have fled over your fields, ye sons of the distant land! The king of the world sits in his hall, and hears of his people's flight. He lifts his red eye of pride; he takes his father's sword. Ye have fled over your fields, sons of the distant land!"

Such were the words of the bards when they came to Selma's halls. A thousand lights from the stranger's land rose in the midst of the people. The feast is spread around; the night passed away in joy. Where is the noble Clessammor,[2] said the fair-haired Fingal? Where is the brother of Morna in the hour of my joy? Sullen and dark he passes his days in the vale of echoing Lora: but, behold he comes from the hill, like a steed in his strength, who finds his companions in the breeze; and tosses his bright mane in the wind. Blest be the soul of Clessammor, why so long from Selma?

Returns the chief, said Clessammor, in the midst of his fame? Such was the renown of Comhal[3] in the battles of his youth. Often did we pass over Carun to the land of the strangers: our swords returned, not unstained with blood: nor did the kings of the world rejoice. Why do I remember

[1] Fingal. [2] Clessamh-mor, mighty deeds.
[3] Father of Fingal.

the times of our war? My hair is mixed with grey. My hand forgets to bend the bow: I lift a lighter spear. O that my joy would return as when I first beheld the maid; the white-bosomed daughter of strangers, Moina,[1] with the dark-blue eyes!

Tell, said the mighty Fingal, the tale of thy youthful days. Sorrow, like a cloud on the sun, shades the soul of Clessammor. Mournful are thy thoughts, alone, on the banks of the roaring Lora. Let us hear the sorrow of thy youth and the darkness of thy days!

"It was in the days of peace," replied the great Clessammor, "I came in my bounding ship, to Balclutha's[2] walls of towers. The winds had roared behind my sails, and Clutha's streams received my dark-bosomed ship. Three days I remained in Reuthamir's halls, and saw his daughter, that beam of light. The joy of the shell went round, and the aged hero gave the fair. Her breasts were like foam on the wave, and her eyes like stars of light: her hair was dark as the raven's wing: her soul was generous and mild. My love for Moina was great: my heart poured forth in joy.

"The son of a stranger came; a chief who loved the white-bosomed Moina. His words were mighty in the hall; he often half-unsheathed his sword. Where, said he, is the mighty Comhal, the restless

[1] Moina, soft in temper and person.

[2] Bal-clutha, *i.e.* the town of Clyde, probably the Alcluth of Bede.

wanderer of the heath? Comes he with his host to Balclutha, since Clessammor is so bold? My soul, I replied, O warrior! burns in a light of its own. I stand without fear in the midst of thousands, though the valiant are distant far. Stranger! thy words are mighty, for Clessammor is alone. But my sword trembles by my side, and longs to glitter in my hand. Speak no more of Comhal, son of the winding Clutha!"

"The strength of his pride arose. We fought; he fell beneath my sword. The banks of Clutha heard his fall; a thousand spears glittered around. I fought: the strangers prevailed: I plunged into the stream of Clutha. My white sails rose over the waves, and I bounded on the dark-blue sea. Moina came to the shore, and rolled the red eye of her tears: her loose hair flew on the wind: and I heard her mournful distant cries. Often did I turn my ship; but the winds of the east prevailed. Nor Clutha ever since have I seen, nor Moina of the dark brown hair. She fell in Balclutha, for I have seen her ghost. I knew her as she came through the dusky night along the murmur of Lora: she was like the new moon seen through the gathered mist, when the sky pours down its flaky snow, and the world is silent and dark."

Raise, ye bards, said the mighty Fingal, the praise of unhappy Moina. Call her ghost with your songs to our hills, that she may rest with the fair of Morven, the sunbeams of other days, the delight of

heroes of old. I have seen the walls of Balclutha, but they were desolate. The fire had resounded in the halls, and the voice of the people is heard no more. The stream of Clutha was removed from its place by the fall of the walls. The thistle shook there its lonely head: the moss whistled to the wind. The fox looked out from the windows, the rank grass of the wall waved round its head. Desolate is the dwelling of Moina, silence is in the house of her fathers. Raise the song of mourning, O bards! over the land of strangers. They have but fallen before us: for one day we must fall. Why dost thou build the hall, son of the winged days? Thou lookest from thy towers to-day; yet a few years and the blast of the desert comes; it howls in thy empty court, and whistles round thy half-worn shield. And let the blast of the desert come! we shall be renowned in our day! The mark of my arm shall be in battle; my name in the song of bards. Raise the song; send round the shell: let joy be heard in my hall. When thou, sun of heaven, shalt fail! if thou shalt fail, thou mighty light! if thy brightness is for a season, like Fingal, our fame shall survive thy beams!

Such was the song of Fingal in the day of his joy. His thousand bards leaned forward from their seats to hear the voice of the king. It was like the music of harps on the gale of the spring. Lovely were thy thoughts, O Fingal! why had not Ossian the strength of thy soul? But thou standest alone, my father! Who can equal the king of Selma?

The night passed away in song; morning returned in joy. The mountains showed their grey heads; the blue face of ocean smiled. The white wave is seen tumbling round the distant rock; a mist rose slowly from the lake. It came, in the figure of an aged man, along the silent plain. Its large limbs did not move in steps, for a ghost supported it in mid air. It came towards Selma's hall, and dissolved in a shower of blood.

The king alone beheld the sight; he foresaw the death of the people. He came in silence to his hall, and took his father's spear. The mail rattled on his breast. The heroes rose around. They looked in silence on each other, marking the eyes of Fingal. They saw battle in his face: the death of armies on his spear. A thousand shields at once are placed on their arms; they drew a thousand swords. The hall of Selma brightened around. The clang of arms ascends. The grey dogs howl in their place. No word is among the mighty chiefs. Each marked the eyes of the king, and half-assumed his spear.

Sons of Morven, begun the king, this is no time to fill the shell. The battle darkens near us; death hovers over the land. Some ghost, the friend of Fingal, has forewarned us of the foe. The sons of the stranger come from the darkly-rolling sea. For, from the water came the sign of Morven's gloomy danger. Let each assume his heavy spear, each gird on his father's sword. Let the dark helmet rise on every head; the mail pour its lightning from every

side. The battle gathers like a storm; soon shall ye hear the roar of death.

The hero moved on before his host, like a cloud before a ridge of green fire, when it pours on the sky of night, and mariners foresee a storm. On Cona's rising heath they stood; the white-bosomed maids beheld them above like a grove; they foresaw the death of the youth, and looked towards the sea with fear. The white wave deceived them for distant sails; the tear is on their cheek! The sun rose on the sea, and we beheld a distant fleet. Like the mist of ocean they came, and poured their youth upon the coast. The chief was among them, like the stag in the midst of the herd. His shield is studded with gold; stately strode the king of spears. He moved towards Selma; his thousands moved behind.

Go with a song of peace, said Fingal; go, Ullin, to the king of swords. Tell him that we are mighty in war, that the ghosts of our foes are many. But renowned are they who have feasted in my halls! they show the arms[1] of my fathers in a foreign land: the sons of the strangers wonder, and bless the friends of Morven's race; for our names have been heard afar; the kings of the world shook in the midst of their host.

Ullin went with his song. Fingal rested on his

[1] It was a custom among the Scots to exchange arms with their guests, and those arms were preserved in the different families as monuments of friendship.

spear: he saw the mighty foe in his armour: he blessed the stranger's son. "How stately art thou, son of the sea!" said the king of woody Morven. "Thy sword is a beam of fire by thy side: thy spear is a pine that defies the storm. The varied face of the moon is not broader than thy shield. Ruddy is thy face of youth! soft the ringlets of thy hair! But this tree may fall, and his memory be forgot! The daughter of the stranger will be sad, looking to the rolling sea: the children will say, 'we see a ship, perhaps it is the king of Balclutha.' The tear starts from their mother's eye. Her thoughts are of him who sleeps in Morven!"

Such were the words of the king, when Ullin came to the mighty Carthon; he threw down the spear before him; he raised the song of peace. "Come to the feast of Fingal, Carthon, from the rolling sea! partake of the feast of the king, or lift the spear of war! The ghosts of our foes are many: but renowned are the friends of Morven! Behold that field, O Carthon; many a green hill rises there, with mossy stones and rustling grass: these are the tombs of Fingal's foes, the sons of the rolling sea!"

"Dost thou speak to the weak in arms!" said Carthon, "bard of the woody Morven? Is my face pale for fear, son of the peaceful song? Why, then, dost thou think to darken my soul with the tales of those who fell? My arm has fought in battle; my renown is known afar. Go to the feeble in arms, bid them yield to Fingal. Have not I seen the fallen

Balclutha? And shall I feast with Comhal's son? Comhal! who threw his fire in the midst of my father's hall! I was young, and knew not the cause why the virgins wept. The columns of smoke pleased mine eye when they rose above my walls! I often looked back, with gladness when my friends fled along the hill. But when the years of my youth came on, I beheld the moss of my fallen walls: my sigh arose with the morning, and my tears descended with night. Shall I not fight, I said to my soul, against the children of my foes? And I will fight, O bard! I feel the strength of my soul."

His people gathered around the hero, and drew at once their shining swords. He stands in the midst like a pillar of fire; the tear half-starting from his eye; for he thought of the fallen Balclutha; the crowded pride of his soul arose. Sidelong he looked up to the hill where our heroes shone in arms; the spear trembled in his hand; bending forward, he seemed to threaten the king.

Shall I, said Fingal to his soul, meet at once the youth? Shall I stop him in the midst of his course, before his fame shall arise? But the bard, hereafter, may say, when he sees the tomb of Carthon; Fingal took his thousands to battle before the noble Carthon fell. No: bard of the times to come! thou shalt not lessen Fingal's fame. My heroes will fight the youth, and Fingal behold the war. If he overcomes, I rush in my strength like the roaring stream of

Cona. Who of my chiefs will meet the son of the rolling sea? Many are his warriors on the coast: and strong is his ashen spear!

Cathul rose in his strength, the son of the mighty Lormar: three hundred youths attend the chief, the race[1] of his native streams. Feeble was his arm against Carthon; he fell, and his heroes fled. Connal resumed the battle, but he broke his heavy spear: he lay bound on the field: Carthon pursued his people.

Clessammor! said the king[2] of Morven, where is the spear of thy strength? Wilt thou behold Connal bound; thy friend at the stream of Lora? Rise in the light of thy steel, companion of valiant Comhal! Let the youth of Balclutha feel the strength of Morven's race. He rose in the strength of his steel, shaking his grizzly locks. He fitted the shield to his side; he rushed in the pride of valour.

Carthon stood on a rock; he saw the hero rushing on. He loved the dreadful joy of his face: his strength in the locks of age! "Shall I lift that spear, he said, that never strikes but once a foe? Or shall I, with the words of peace, preserve the warrior's life? Stately are his steps of age! lovely the remnant of his years! Perhaps it is the husband of Moina; the father of car-borne Carthon. Often

[1] It appears from this passage that clanship was established in the days of Fingal, though not on the same footing as subsequently.

[2] Fingal here speaks in ignorance of the relationship between Carthon and Clessammor.

have I heard that he dwelt at the echoing stream of Lora."

Such were his words, when Clessammor came and lifted high his spear. The youth received it on his shield, and spoke the words of peace. "Warrior of the aged locks! Is there no youth to lift the spear? Hast thou no son to raise the shield before his father, to meet the arm of youth? Is the spouse of thy love no more? or weeps she over the tombs of thy sons? Art thou of the kings of men? What will be the fame of my sword shouldest thou fall?"

"It will be great, thou son of pride!" begun the tall Clessammor. I have been renowned in battle; but I never told my name[1] to a foe. Yield to me, son of the wave, then shalt thou know that the mark of my sword is in many a field. "I never yielded, king of spears!" replied the noble pride of Carthon: "I have also fought in war; I behold my future fame. Despise me not, thou chief of men! my arm, my spear is strong. Retire among thy friends, let younger heroes fight." "Why dost thou wound my soul," replied Clessammor with a tear? "Age does not tremble on my hand; I still can lift the sword. Shall I fly in Fingal's sight; in the sight of him I love? Son of the sea? I never fled: exalt thy pointed spear."

They fought like two contending winds that strive to roll the wave. Carthon bade his spear to err;

[1] *A man who tells his name to his enemy* was of old an ignominious term for a coward.

he still thought that the foe was the spouse of Moina. He broke Clessammor's beamy spear in twain: he seized his shining sword. But as Carthon was binding the chief, the chief drew the dagger of his fathers. He saw the foe's uncovered side, and opened there a wound.

Fingal saw Clessammor low: he moved in the sound of his steel. The host stood silent in his presence; they turned their eyes to the king. He came like the sullen noise of a storm before the winds arise: the hunter hears it in the vale, and retires to the cave of the rock. Carthon stood in his place; the blood is rushing down his side: he saw the coming down of the king; his hopes of fame arose; but pale was his cheek: his hair flew loose, his helmet shook on high: the force of Carthon failed; but his soul was strong.

Fingal beheld the hero's blood; he stopt the uplifted spear. "Yield, king of swords!" said Comhal's son; "I behold thy blood. Thou hast been mighty in battle; and thy fame shall never fade." "Art thou the king so far renowned," replied the car-borne Carthon? "Art thou that light of death, that frightens the kings of the world? But why should Carthon ask? for he is like the stream of his hills; strong as a river in his course: swift as the eagle of heaven. O that I had fought with the king; that my fame might be great in song! that the hunter beholding my tomb might say he fought with the mighty Fingal. But Carthon dies unknown, he has poured out his force on the weak."

"But thou shalt not die unknown," replied the king of woody Morven: "my bards are many, O Carthon! their songs descend to future times. The children of years to come shall hear the fame of Carthon; when they sit round the burning oak, and the night is spent in songs of old. The hunter sitting in the heath shall hear the rustling blast; and raising his eyes, behold the rock where Carthon fell. He shall turn to his son and show the place where the mighty fought; 'There the king of Balclutha fought like the strength of a thousand streams.'"

Joy rose in Carthon's face: he lifted his heavy eyes. He gave his sword to Fingal, to lie within his hall, that the memory of Balclutha's king might remain in Morven. The battle ceased along the field, the bard had sung the song of peace. The chiefs gathered round the falling Carthon; they heard his words with sighs. Silent they leaned on their spears while Balclutha's hero spoke. His hair sighed in the wind, and his voice was sad and low.

"King of Morven," Carthon said, "I fall in the midst of my course. A foreign tomb receives, in youth, the last of Reuthamir's race. Darkness dwells in Balclutha: the shadows of grief in Crathmo. But raise my remembrance on the banks of Lora: where my fathers dwelt. Perhaps the husband of Moina will mourn over his fallen Carthon." His words reached the heart of Clessammor: he fell in silence on his son. The host stood darkened around:

no voice is on the plain. Night came; the moon from the east looked on the mournful field: but still they stood, like a silent grove that lifts its head on Gormal, when the loud winds are laid, and dark autumn is on the plain.

Three days they mourned above Carthon; on the fourth his father died. In the narrow plain of the rock they lie; a dim ghost defends their tomb. There lovely Moina is often seen; when the sunbeam darts on the rock, and all around is dark. There she is seen, Malvina! but not like the daughters of the hill. Her robes are from the stranger's land; and she is still alone.

Fingal was sad for Carthon; he commanded his bards to mark the day when shadowy autumn returned: and often did they mark the day and sing the hero's praise. "Who comes so dark from ocean's roar, like autumn's shadowy cloud? Death is trembling in his hand! his eyes are flames of fire! Who roars along dark Lora's heath? Who, but Carthon king of swords! The people fall! see! how he strides, like the sullen ghost of Morven! But there he lies a goodly oak, which sudden blasts overturned! When shalt thou rise, Balclutha's joy? When, Carthon, shalt thou arise? Who comes so dark from ocean's roar, like autumn's shadowy cloud?" Such were the words of the bards, in the day of their mourning: Ossian often joined their voice; and added to their song. My soul has been mournful for Carthon; he fell in the days of his

youth: and thou, O Clessammor! where is thy dwelling in the wind? Has the youth forgot his wound? Flies he on clouds with thee? I feel the sun, O Malvina! leave me to my rest. Perhaps they may come to my dreams; I think I hear a feeble voice! The beam of heaven delights to shine on the grave of Carthon: I feel it warm around!

O thou that rollest above, round as the shield of my fathers! Whence are thy beams, O sun! thy everlasting light? Thou comest forth in thy awful beauty; the stars hide themselves in the sky; the moon, cold and pale, sinks in the western wave. But thou thyself movest alone: who can be a companion of thy course! The oaks of the mountains fall: the mountains themselves decay with years; the ocean shrinks and grows again: the moon herself is lost in heaven; but thou art for ever the same, rejoicing in the brightness of thy course. When the world is dark with tempests—when thunder rolls and lightning flies, thou lookest in thy beauty from the clouds, and laughest at the storm. But to Ossian thou lookest in vain; for he beholds thy beams no more; whether thy yellow hair flows on the eastern clouds or thou tremblest at the gates of the west. But thou art perhaps like me, for a season; thy years will have an end. Thou shalt sleep in the clouds, careless of the voice of the morning. Exult then, O sun! in the strength of thy youth! Age is dark and unlovely; it is like the

glimmering light of the moon, when it shines through broken clouds, and the mist is on the hills; the blast of the north is on the plain, the traveller shrinks in the midst of his journey.

Dar-thula.

DAR-THULA, "woman with fine eyes," is the tragic story of a famous Celtic beauty. The story, as handed down by tradition, is that Usnorth, lord of Etha (which is probably a part of Argyleshire), had three sons, Nathos, Althos, and Ardan. The three brothers, when very young, were sent over to Ireland to learn the use of arms, under Cuthullin, their uncle. But just as they landed in Ulster they heard the news of Cuthullin's death. Nathos, notwithstanding his youth, took the command of Cuthullin's host, made head against Cairbar the usurper, and defeated him in several battles. Cairbar having found means to murder Cormac, the lawful king, the army of Nathos deserted in favour of Cairbar, and Nathos himself was obliged to return into Ulster, in order to pass over into Scotland. Before embarking he throws himself on the hospitality of the Chief of Seláma, whose daughter Dar-thula is at that time the idol of Cairbar,

his rival and enemy. Love at first sight springs up between Nathos and Dar-thula, otherwise called the daughter of Colla; and on a dark and stormy night she flees with Nathos and his brothers from the love of Cairbar, the common enemy. But a storm rising at sea, they are unfortunately driven back on that very part of the coast of Ulster where Cairbar lies encamped, and a deadly encounter ensues. The three brothers, after defending themselves for some time with great bravery, are at last overpowered and slain, and the unfortunate Dar-thula, who mingles nobly in the fight, is at last pierced by an arrow, and falls dead upon the body of her lover.

The poem commences with the flight from Seláma.

Dar-thula.

DAUGHTER of heaven, fair art thou! the silence of thy face is pleasant! Thou comest forth in loveliness. The stars attend thy blue course in the east. The clouds rejoice in thy presence, O moon! They brighten their dark-brown sides. Who is like thee in heaven, light of the silent night? The stars are ashamed in thy presence. They turn away their sparkling eyes. Whither dost thou retire from thy course, when the darkness of thy countenance grows? Hast thou thy hall, like Ossian? Dwellest thou in the shadow of grief? Have thy sisters fallen from heaven? Are they who rejoiced with thee at night no more? Yes! they have fallen, fair light! and thou dost often retire to mourn. But thou thyself shalt fail one night; and leave thy blue path in heaven. The stars will then lift their heads: they who were ashamed in thy presence will rejoice. Thou art now clothed with thy brightness. Look from thy gates in the sky. Burst the cloud, O wind! that the daughter of night may look forth! that the

shaggy mountains may brighten, and the ocean roll its white waves in light.

Nathos is on the deep, and Althos, that beam of youth. Ardan is near his brothers. They move in the gloom of their course. The sons of Usnoth move in darkness, from the wrath of Cairbar of Erin. Who is that, dim by their side? The night has covered her beauty! Her hair sighs on ocean's wind. Her robe streams in dusky wreaths. She is like the fair spirit of heaven in the midst of his shadowy mist. Who is it but Dar-thula, the first of Erin's maids? She has fled from the love of Cairbar, with blue-shielded Nathos. But the winds deceive thee, O Dar-thula! They deny the woody Etha, to thy sails. These are not the mountains of Nathos; nor is that the roar of his climbing waves. The halls of Cairbar are near: the towers of the foe lift their heads! Erin stretches its green head into the sea. Tura's bay receives the ship. Where have ye been, ye southern winds! when the sons of my love were deceived? But ye have been sporting on plains, pursuing the thistle's beard. O that ye had been rustling in the sails of Nathos, till the hills of Etha arose! till they arose in their clouds, and saw their returning chief! Long hast thou been absent, Nathos! The day of thy return is past!

But the land of strangers saw thee, lovely! thou wast lovely in the eyes of Dar-thula. Thy face was like the light of the morning. Thy hair like the raven's wing. Thy soul was generous and mild, like

the hour of the setting sun. Thy words were the gale of the reeds; the gilding stream of Lora! But when the rage of battle rose, thou wast a sea in a storm. The clang of thy arms was terrible: the host vanished at the sound of thy course. It was then Dar-thula beheld thee from the top of her mossy tower: from the tower of Seláma,[1] where her fathers dwelt.

"Lovely art thou, O stranger!" she said, for her trembling soul arose. "Fair art thou in thy battles, friend of the fallen Cormac! Why dost thou rush on, in thy valour, youth of the ruddy look? Few are thy hands in fight against the dark-browed Cairbar! O that I might be freed from his love![2] that I might rejoice in the presence of Nathos! Blest are the rocks of Etha! they will behold his steps at the chase; they will see his white bosom when the winds lift his flowing hair!" Such were thy words, Dar-thula, in Seláma's mossy towers. But, now, the night is around thee. The winds have deceived thy sails. The winds have deceived thy sails, Dar-thula! Their blustering sound is high. Cease a little while, O north wind! Let me hear the voice of the lovely. Thy voice is lovely, Dar-thula, between the rustling blasts!

"Are these the rocks of Nathos?" she said, "This

[1] Seláma, like Selma, signifies a place *with a pleasant or wide prospect.*

[2] That is, of the love of Cairbar, by whom Cormac, the young king of Ireland, had been murdered.

the roar of his mountain-streams? Comes that beam of light from Usnoth's nightly hall? The mist spreads around; the beam is feeble and distant far. But the light of Dar-thula's soul dwells in the chief of Etha! Son of the generous Usnoth, why that broken sigh? Are we in the land of strangers, chief of echoing Etha!"

"These are not the rocks of Nathos," he replied, "nor this the roar of his streams. No light comes from Etha's halls, for they are distant far. We are in the land of strangers, in the land of cruel Cairbar. The winds have deceived us, Dar-thula. Erin lifts here her hills. Go towards the north, Althos: be thy steps, Ardan, along the coast; that the foe may not come in darkness, and our hopes of Etha fail." "I will go towards that mossy tower, to see who dwells about the beam. Rest, Dar-thula, on the shore! rest in peace, thou lovely light! the sword of Nathos is around thee, like the lightning of heaven!" He went. She sat alone; she heard the rolling of the wave. The big tear is in her eye. She looks for returning Nathos. Her soul trembles at the blast. She turns her ear towards the tread of his feet. The tread of his feet is not heard. "Where art thou, son of my love! The roar of the blast is around me. Dark is the cloudy night. But Nathos does not return. What detains thee, chief of Etha? Have the foes met the hero in the strife of the night?"

He returned, but his face was dark. He had seen his departed friend! It was the wall of Tura. The

ghost of Cuthullin stalked there alone: The sighing of his breast was frequent. The decayed flame of his eyes was terrible! His spear was a column of mist. The stars looked dim through his form. His voice was like hollow wind in a cave: his eye a light seen afar. He told the tale of grief. The soul of Nathos was sad, like the sun in the day of mist, when his face is watery and dim.

"Why art thou sad, O Nathos?" said the lovely daughter of Colla. "Thou art a pillar of light to Dar-thula. The joy of her eyes is in Etha's chief. Where is my friend, but Nathos? My father, my brother is fallen! Silence dwells on Seláma. Sadness spreads on the blue streams of my land. My friends have fallen with Cormac. The mighty were slain in the battles of Erin. Hear, son of Usnoth! hear, O Nathos! my tale of grief.

"Evening darkened on the plain. The blue streams failed before mine eyes. The unfrequent blast came rustling, in the tops of Seláma's groves. My seat was beneath a tree, on the walls of my fathers. Truthil passed before my soul: the brother of my love: He that was absent in battle against the haughty Cairbar! Bending on his spear, the grey-haired Colla came. His downcast face is dark, and sorrow dwells in his soul. His sword is on the side of the hero: the helmet of his fathers on his head. The battle grows in his breast. He strives to hide the tear."

"Dar-thula, my daughter," he said, "thou art the

last of Colla's race! Truthil is fallen in battle. The chief of Seláma is no more! Cairbar comes with his thousands towards Seláma's walls. Colla will meet his pride, and revenge his son. But where shall I find thy safety, Dar-thula with the dark-brown hair? thou art lovely as the sun-beam of heaven, and thy friends are low!" "Is the son of battle fallen?" I said, with a bursting sigh. "Ceased the generous soul of Truthil to lighten through the field? My safety, Colla, is in that bow. I have learned to pierce the deer. Is not Cairbar like the hart of the desert, father of fallen Truthil?"

"The face of age brightened with joy. The crowded tears of his eyes poured down. The lips of Colla trembled. His grey beard whistled in the blast. 'Thou art the sister of Truthil,' he said; 'thou burnest in the fire of his soul. Take, Dar-thula, take that spear, that brazen shield, that burnished helm; they are the spoils of a warrior, a son of early youth! When the light rises on Seláma we go to meet the car-borne Cairbar. But keep thou near the arm of Colla, beneath the shadow of my shield. Thy father, Dar-thula, could once defend thee; but age is trembling on his hand. The strength of his arm has failed. His soul is darkened with grief.'

"We passed the night in sorrow. The light of morning rose. I shone in the arms of battle. The grey-haired hero moved before. The sons of Seláma convened around the sounding shield of Colla. But

few were they in the plain, and their locks were grey. The youths had fallen with Truthil in the battle of car-borne Cormac. 'Friends of my youth!' said Colla, 'It was not thus you have seen me in arms. It was not thus I strode to battle, when the great Confadan fell. But ye are laden with grief. The darkness of age comes like the mist of the desert. My shield is worn with years! my sword is fixed[1] in its place! I said to my soul thy evening shall be calm: Thy departure like a fading light. But the storm has returned. I bend like an aged oak. My boughs are fallen on Seláma. I tremble in my place. Where art thou with thy fallen heroes, O my beloved Truthil! Thou answerest not from thy rushing blast. The soul of thy father is sad. But I will be sad no more, Cairbar or Colla must fall! I feel the returning strength of my arm. My heart leaps at the sound of war.'

"The hero drew his sword. The gleaming blades of his people rose. They moved along the plain. Their grey hair streamed in the wind. Cairbar sat at the feast in the silent plain of Lona. He saw the coming of the heroes. He called his chiefs to war. Why should I tell to Nathos, how the strife of battle grew? I have seen thee, in the midst of thousands, like the beam of heaven's fire: it is beautiful, but terrible; the people fall in its dreadful course. The

1 The fixing of the arms was a custom of ancient times, by which aged warriors signified their unfitness for further duty. The arms were fixed in the great hall, so as to be openly visible.

spear of Colla flew. He remembered the battles of his youth. An arrow came with its sound. It pierced the hero's side. He fell on his echoing shield. My soul started with fear. I stretched my buckler over him, but my heaving breast was seen. Cairbar came with his spear. He beheld Selâma's maid. Joy rose on his dark-brown face. He stayed the lifted steel. He raised the tomb of Colla. He brought me weeping to Selâma. He spoke the words of love, but my soul was sad. I saw the shields of my fathers; the sword of car-borne Truthil. I saw the arms of the dead; the tear was on my cheek! Then thou didst come, O Nathos! and gloomy Cairbar fled. He fled like the ghost of the desert before the morning's beam. His host was not near: and feeble was his arm against thy steel! Why art thou sad, O Nathos! said the lovely daughter of Colla?"

"I have met," replied the hero, "the battle in my youth. My arm could not lift the spear when danger first arose. My soul brightened in the presence of war, as the green narrow vale, when the sun pours his streamy beams before he hides his head in a storm. The lonely traveller feels a mournful joy. He sees the darkness that slowly comes. My soul brightened in danger before I saw Selâma's fair; before I saw thee like a star that shines on the hill at night: the cloud advances and threatens the lovely light! We are in the land of foes. The winds have deceived us, Dar-thula? The strength of our friends

is not near, nor the mountains of Etha. Where shall I find thy peace, daughter of mighty Colla! The brothers of Nathos are brave! and his own sword has shone in fight. But what are the sons of Usnoth to the host of dark-browed Cairbar! O that the winds had brought thy sails, Oscar king of men! Thou didst promise to come to the battles of fallen Cormac! Then would my hand be strong, as the flaming arm of death. Cairbar would tremble in his halls, and peace dwell round the lovely Dar-thula. But why dost thou fall, my soul? The sons of Usnoth may prevail!"

"And they will prevail, O Nathos!" said the rising soul of the maid. "Never shall Dar-thula behold the halls of gloomy Cairbar. Give me those arms of brass, that glitter to the passing meteor. I see them dimly in the dark-bosomed ship. Dar-thula will enter the battle of steel. Ghost of the noble Colla! do I behold thee on that cloud? Who is that dim beside thee? Is it the car-borne Truthil! Shall I behold the halls of him that slew Seláma's chief? No: I will not behold them, spirits of my love!"

Joy rose in the face of Nathos, when he heard the white-bosomed maid. "Daughter of Seláma! thou shinest along my soul. Come, with thy thousands, Cairbar! the strength of Nathos is returned! Thou, O aged Usnoth! shalt not hear that thy son has fled. I remember thy words on Etha; when my sails began to rise: when I spread them towards Erin,

towards the mossy walls of Tura! "Thou goest," he said, "O Nathos, to the king of shields! Thou goest to Cuthullin, chief of men, who never fled from danger. Let not thine arm be feeble: neither be thy thoughts of flight; lest the son of Semo should say that Etha's race are weak. His words may come to Usnoth, and sadden his soul in the hall." The tear was on my father's cheek. He gave this shining sword!

"I came to Tura's bay: but the halls of Tura were silent. I looked around, and there was none to tell of the son of generous Semo. I went to the hall of shells, where the arms of his fathers hung. But the arms were gone, and aged Lamhor sat in tears. "Whence are the arms of steel?" said the rising Lamhor. "The light of the spear has long been absent from Tura's dusky walls. Come ye from the rolling sea? Or from Temora's mournful halls?"

"We come from the sea," I said, "from Usnoth's rising towers. We are the sons of Slis-sama, the daughter of car-borne Semo. Where is Tura's chief, son of the silent hall? But why should Nathos ask? for I behold thy tears. How did the mighty fall, son of the lonely Tura?" "He fell not," Lamhor replied, "like the silent star of night, when it flies through darkness and is no more. But he was like a meteor that shoots into a distant land. Death attends its dreary course. Itself is the sign of wars. Mournful are the banks of Lego; and the roar of streamy Lara! There the hero fell, son of the

noble Usnoth!" "The hero fell in the midst of slaughter," I said with a bursting sigh. "His hand was strong in war. Death dimly sat behind his sword."

We came to Lego's sounding banks. We found his rising tomb. His friends in battle are there: his bards of many songs. Three days we mourned over the hero: on the fourth, I struck the shield of Caithbar. The heroes gathered around with joy, and shook their beamy spears. Corlath was near with his host, the friend of car-borne Cairbar. We came like a stream by night. His heroes fell before us. When the people of the valley rose, they saw their blood with morning's light. But we rolled away, like wreaths of mist, to Cormac's echoing hall. Our swords rose to defend the king. But Temora's halls were empty. Cormac had fallen in his youth. The king of Erin was no more!

Sadness seized the sons of Erin. They slowly, gloomily retired: like clouds that long having threatened rain, vanish behind the hills. The sons of Usnoth moved in their grief towards Tura's sounding bay. We passed by Selâma. Cairbar retired like Lano's mist, when driven before the winds. It was then I beheld thee, O Dar-thula! like the light of Etha's sun. "Lovely is that beam!" I said. The crowded sigh of my bosom rose. "Thou camest in thy beauty, Dar-thula, to Etha's mournful chief. But the winds have deceived us, daughter of Colla, and the foe is near?"

"Yes, the foe is near," said the rushing strength of Althos. "I heard their clanging arms on the coast. I saw the dark wreaths of Erin's standard. Distinct is the voice of Cairbar. Loud as Cromla's falling stream. He had seen the dark ship on the sea, before the dusky night came down. His people watch on Lena's plain. They lift ten thousand swords." "And let them lift ten thousand swords," said Nathos with a smile. "The sons of car-borne Usnoth will never tremble in danger! Why dost thou roll with all thy foam, thou roaring sea of Erin? Why do ye rustle, on your dark wings, ye whistling storms of the sky? Do ye think, ye storms, that ye keep Nathos on the coast? No: his soul detains him, children of the night! Althos! bring my father's arms: thou seest them beaming to the stars. Bring the spear of Semo. It stands in the dark-bosomed ship!"

He brought the arms. Nathos covered his limbs in all their shining steel. The stride of the chief is lovely. The joy of his eyes was terrible. He looks towards the coming of Cairbar. The wind is rustling in his hair. Dar-thula is silent at his side. Her look is fixed on the chief. She strives to hide the rising sigh. Two tears swell in her radiant eyes!

"Althos!" said the chief of Etha, "I see a cave in that rock. Place Dar-thula there. Let thy arm, my brother, be strong. Ardan! we meet the foe; call to battle gloomy Cairbar. O that he came in his sounding steel to meet the son of Usnoth!

Dar-thula! if thou shalt escape, look not on the fallen Nathos! Lift thy sails, O Althos! towards the echoing groves of my land.

"Tell the chief that his son fell with fame; that my sword did not shun the fight. Tell him I fell in the midst of thousands. Let the joy of his grief be great. Daughter of Colla! call the maids to Etha's echoing hall! Let their songs arise for Nathos, when shadowy autumn returns. O that the voice of Cona, that Ossian, might be heard in my praise! then would my spirit rejoice in the midst of the rushing winds." "And my voice shall praise thee, Nathos, chief of the woody Etha! The voice of Ossian shall rise in thy praise, son of the generous Usnoth! Why was I not on Lena when the battle rose? Then would the sword of Ossian defend thee, or himself fall low!"

We sat that night in Selma round the strength of the shell. The wind was abroad in the oaks. The spirit of the mountain roared. The blast came rustling through the hall, and gently touched my harp. The sound was mournful and low, like the song of the tomb. Fingal heard it the first. The crowded sighs of his bosom rose. "Some of my heroes are low," said the grey-haired king of Morven. "I hear the sound of death on the harp. Ossian, touch the trembling string. Bid the sorrow rise, that their spirits may fly with joy to Morven's woody hills!" I touched the harp before the king, the sound was mournful and low. "Bend forward from

your clouds," I said, "ghosts of my fathers! bend. Lay by the red terror of your course. Receive the falling chief, whether he comes from a distant land or rises from the rolling sea. Let his robe of mist be near; his spear that is formed of a cloud. Place an half-extinguished meteor by his side, in the form of the hero's sword. And, oh! let his countenance be lovely, that his friends may delight in his presence. Bend from your clouds," I said, "ghosts of my fathers! bend!"

Such was my song, in Selma, to the lightly-trembling harp. But Nathos was on Erin's shore, surrounded by the night. He heard the voice of the foe, amidst the roar of tumbling waves. Silent he heard their voice, and rested on his spear! Morning rose with its beams. The sons of Erin appear, like grey rocks, with all their trees, they spread along the coast. Cairbar stood in the midst. He grimly smiled when he saw the foe. Nathos rushed forward in his strength: nor could Dar-thula stay behind. She came with the hero, lifting her shining spear. "And who are these in their armour in the pride of youth? Who but the sons of Usnoth, Althos and dark-haired Ardan?"

"Come," said Nathos, "come! chief of high Temora! Let our battle be on the coast, for the white bosomed-maid. His people are not with Nathos; they are behind these rolling seas. Why dost thou bring thy thousands against the chief of Etha? Thou didst fly from him in battle, when his

friends were around his spear." "Youth of the heart of pride, shall Erin's king fight with thee? Thy fathers were not among the renowned, nor of the kings of men. Are the arms of foes in their halls? Or the shields of other times? Cairbar is renowned in Temora, nor does he fight with feeble men!"

The tear started from car-borne Nathos. He turned his eyes to his brothers. Their spears flew at once. Three heroes lay on earth. Then the light of their swords gleamed on high. The ranks of Erin yield; as a ridge of dark clouds before a blast of wind! Then Cairbar ordered his people, and they drew a thousand bows. A thousand arrows flew. The sons of Usnoth fell in blood. They fell like three young oaks, which stood alone on the hill: The traveller saw the lovely trees, and wondered how they grew so lonely: the blast of the desert came by night and laid their green heads low; next day he returned, but they were withered, and the heath was bare!

Dar-thula stood in silent grief, and beheld their fall! No tear is in her eye. But her look is wildly sad. Pale was her cheek. Her trembling lips broke short an half-formed word. Her dark hair flew on wind. The gloomy Cairbar came. "Where is thy lover now, the car-borne chief of Etha? Hast thou beheld the halls of Usnoth? Or the dark-brown hills of Fingal? My battle would have roared on Morven had not the winds met Dar-thula. Fingal himself would have been low, and sorrow dwelling in

Selma!" Her shield fell from Dar-thula's arm. Her breast of snow appeared. It appeared; but it was stained with blood. An arrow was fixed in her side. She fell on the fallen Nathos, like a wreath of snow! Her hair spreads wide on his face. Their blood is mixing round!

"Daughter of Colla! thou art low!" said Cairbar's hundred bards. "Silence is at the blue streams of Seláma. Truthil's[1] race have failed. When wilt thou rise in thy beauty, first of Erin's maids? Thy sleep is long in the tomb. The morning distant far. The sun shall not come to thy bed and say, 'Awake, Dar-thula! awake, thou first of women! the wind of spring is abroad. The flowers shake their heads on the green hills. The woods wave their growing leaves. Retire, O sun! the daughter of Colla is asleep. She will not come forth in her beauty. She will not move in the steps of her loveliness.'"

Such was the song of the bards when they raised the tomb. I sung over the grave when the king of Morven came; when he came to green Erin to fight with car-borne Cairbar!

[1] Truthil was the founder of Dar-thula's family.

Carric-thura.

THE theme of this poem is the chivalry and prowess of Fingal in his deliverance of Carric-thura from Frothal, the rival of Cathulla. The poem opens with a song of the bard Cronnan, in which is related a romance of Vinvela and Shilric. On Fingal's arrival in Ireland he sees the signal fire of distress on the tower of Carric-thura. Mounting a hill at night to obtain a better view of the signal, he is overtaken by a storm, in the midst of which there appears to him the ghost of Loda (supposed to be Odin), who warns him of Frothal's power, and advises his retreat. Undaunted by the gloomy foreboding, he advances to the relief of his friend and ally Cathulla; and encountering Frothal, defeats him in single combat. Frothal had been followed throughout the battle by Utha, "the maid of his love," disguised as a warrior, and on his fall she rushes to cover the chief with her shield, and to intercede on his behalf. But this was unnecessary. Fingal's sword "was never stained with the blood of the vanquished." He generously spares his fallen foe, and invites both hero and heroine to a feast of shells in the hall of Carric-thura.

CHARACTERS.

FINGAL, King of Morven.
CRONNAN, } Bards.
ULLIN, }
GHOST OF LODA.
FROTHAL, King of Sora.
THUBAR, Warrior.
UTHA, daughter of Herman.
CATHULLA, King of Inistore.

Carric-thura.

HAST thou left thy blue course in heaven, golden-haired son of the sky! The west has opened its gates; the bed of thy repose is there. The waves come to behold thy beauty. They lift their trembling heads. They see thee lovely in thy sleep; they shrink away with fear. Rest, in thy shadowy cave, O sun! let thy return be in joy.

But let a thousand lights arise to the sound of the harps of Selma: let the beam spread in the hall, the king of shells is returned! The strife of Carun is past like sounds that are no more. Raise the song, O bards! the king is returned, with his fame!

Such were the words of Ullin, when Fingal returned from war: when he returned in the fair blushing of youth with all his heavy locks. His blue arms were on the hero; like a light cloud on the sun, when he moves in his robes of mist, and shows but half his beams. His heroes follow the king: the feast of shells is spread. Fingal turns to his bards, and bids the song to rise.

Voices of echoing Cona! he said, O bards of other times! Ye, on whose souls the blue hosts of our fathers rise! strike the harp in my hall; and let me hear the song. Pleasant is the joy of grief! it is like the shower of spring, when it softens the branch of the oak, and the young leaf rears its green head. Sing on, O bards! to-morrow we lift the sail. My blue course is through the ocean, to Carric-thura's walls; the mossy walls of Sarno, where Comala dwelt. There the noble Cathulla spreads the feast of shells. The boars of his woods are many; the sound of the chace shall arise!

Cronnan, son of the song! said Ullin, Minona, graceful at the harp! raise the tale of Shilric, to please the king of Morven. Let Vinvela come in her beauty, like the showery bow, when it shows its lovely head on the lake, and the setting sun is bright. She comes, O Fingal! her voice is soft but sad.

VINVELA.

My love is a son of the hill. He pursues the flying deer. His grey dogs are panting around him; his bow-string sounds in the wind. Dost thou rest by the fount of the rock, or by the noise of the mountain-stream? The rushes are nodding to the wind, the mist flies over the hill. I will approach my love unseen; I will behold him from the rock. Lovely I saw thee first by the aged oak of Branno;[1] thou wert returning tall from the chace; the fairest among thy friends.

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[1] Bran, or Branno, signifies a mountain-stream: it is here some river known by that name in the days of Ossian. There are several small rivers in the north of Scotland still retaining the name of Bran; in particular one which falls into the Tay at Dunkeld.

SHILRIC.

What voice is that I hear? that voice like the summer-wind! I sit not by the nodding rushes; I hear not the fount of the rock. Afar, Vinvela, afar, I go to the wars of Fingal. My dogs attend me no more. No more I tread the hill. No more from on high I see thee, fair moving by the stream of the plain; bright as the bow of heaven; as the moon on the western wave.

VINVELA.

Then thou art gone, O Shilric! I am alone on the hill! The deer are seen on the brow; void of fear they graze along. No more they dread the wind; no more the rustling tree. The hunter is far removed: he is in the field of graves. Strangers! sons of the waves! spare my lovely Shilric!

SHILRIC.

If fall I must in the field, raise high my grave, Vinvela. Grey stones, and heaped-up earth, shall mark me to future times. When the hunter shall sit by the mound, and produce his food at noon, "Some warrior rests here," he will say; and my fame shall live in his praise. Remember me, Vinvela, when low on earth I lie!

VINVELA.

Yes! I will remember thee; alas! my Shilric will fall! What shall I do, my love! when thou art for ever gone? Through these hills I will go at noon: I will go through the silent heath. There I will see the place of thy rest, returning from the chace. Alas! my Shilric will fall; but I will remember Shilric.

And I remember the chief, said the king of woody Morven; he consumed the battle in his rage. But now my eyes behold him not. I met him, one day, on the hill; his cheek was pale; his brow was dark. The sigh was frequent in his breast: his steps were towards the Desert. But now he is not in the crowd of my chiefs, when the sounds of my shields arise.

Dwells he in the narrow house, the chief of high Carmora?

Cronnan! said Ullin of other times, raise the song of Shilric; when he returned to his hills, and Vinvela was no more. He leaned on her grey mossy stone; he thought Vinvela lived. He saw her fair moving[1] on the plain: but the bright form lasted not: the sun-beam fled from the field, and she was seen no more. Hear the song of Shilric, it is soft but sad!

I sit by the mossy fountain; on the top of the hill of winds. One tree is rustling above me. Dark waves roll over the heath. The lake is troubled below. The deer descend from the hill. No hunter at a distance is seen. It is mid-day: but all is silent. Sad are my thoughts alone. Didst thou but appear, O my love! a wanderer on the heath! thy hair floating on the wind behind thee; thy bosom heaving on the sight; thine eyes full of tears for thy friends, whom the mist of the hill hath concealed! Thee I would comfort, my love, and bring thee to thy father's house!

But is it she that there appears, like a beam of light on the heath? bright as the moon in autumn, as the sun in a summer-storm, comest thou, O maid, over rocks, over mountains to me? She speaks: but how weak her voice! like the breeze in the reeds of the lake..

"Returnest thou safe from the war? Where are thy friends, my love? I heard of thy death on the hill; I heard and mourned thee, Shilric! Yes, my fair, I return; but I alone of my race. Thou shalt see them no more: their graves I raised on the plain. But why art thou on the desert hill? Why on the heath alone?

"Alone I am, O Shilric! alone in the winter-house. With grief for thee I fell. Shilric, I am pale in the tomb."

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[1] The distinction which the ancient Scots made between good and bad spirits, was, that the former appeared sometimes in the day-time in lonely unfrequented places, but the latter never but by night, and in some dismal gloomy scene.

She fleets, she sails away; as mist before the wind! and wilt thou not stay, Vinvela? Stay and behold my tears! fair thou appearest, Vinvela! fair thou wast, when alive!

By the mossy fountain I will sit; on the top of the hill of winds. When mid-day is silent around, O talk with me, Vinvela! come on the light-winged gale! on the breeze of the desert, come! Let me hear thy voice, as thou passest, when mid-day is silent around!

Such was the song of Cronnan, on the night of Selma's joy. But morning rose in the east; the blue waters rolled in high. Fingal bade his sails to rise; the winds came rustling from their hills. Inistore rose to sight, and Carric-thura's mossy towers! But the sign of distress was on their top: the warning flame edged with smoke. The king of Morven struck his breast: he assumed, at once, his spear. His darkened brow bends forward to the coast: he looks back to the lagging winds. His hair is disordered on his back. The silence of the king is terrible!

Night came down on the sea; Rotha's bay received the ship. A rock bends along the coast with all its echoing wood. On the top is the circle of Loda,[1] the mossy stone of power! A narrow plain spreads beneath, covered with grass and aged trees, which the midnight winds, in their wrath, had torn from the shaggy rock. The blue course of a stream is there! the lonely blast of ocean pursues the thistle's beard. The flame of three oaks arose: the feast is spread

[1] The circle of Loda is supposed to be a place of worship among the Scandinavians, as the spirit of Loda is thought to be the same with their god Odin.

around: but the soul of the king is sad, for Carric-thura's Chief distrest.

The wan, cold moon, rose in the east. Sleep descended on the youths! Their blue helmets glitter to the beam; the fading fire decays. But sleep did not rest on the king; he rose in the midst of his arms, and slowly ascended the hill, to behold the flame of Sarno's tower.

The flame was dim and distant; the moon hid her red face in the east. A blast came from the mountain, on its wings was the spirit of Loda. He came to his place in his terrors, and shook his dusky spear. His eyes appear like flames in his dark face; his voice is like distant thunder. Fingal advanced his spear in night, and raised his voice on high.

Son of night, retire: call thy winds, and fly! Why dost thou come to my presence, with thy shadowy arms? Do I fear thy gloomy form, spirit of dismal Loda? Weak is thy shield of clouds; feeble is that meteor, thy sword! The blast rolls them together: and thou thyself art lost. Fly from my presence, son of night! call thy winds and fly!

Dost thou force me from my place, replied the hollow voice? The people bend before me. I turn the battle in the field of the brave. I look on the nations, and they vanish: my nostrils pour the blast of death. I come abroad on the winds: the tempests are before my face. But my dwelling is calm, above the clouds; the fields of my rest are pleasant.

Dwell in thy pleasant fields, said the king: Let Comhal's son be forgot. Do my steps ascend, from my hills, into thy peaceful plains? Do I meet thee, with a spear, on thy cloud, spirit of dismal Loda? Why then dost thou frown on me? Why shake thine airy spear? Thou frownest in vain: I never fled from the mighty in war. And shall the sons of the wind frighten the king of Morven? No: he knows the weakness of their arms!

Fly to thy land, replied the form: receive the wind, and fly! The blasts are in the hollow of my hand: the course of the storm is mine. The king of Sora is my son, he bends at the stone of my power. His battle is around Carric-thura; and he will prevail! Fly to thy land, son of Comhal, or feel my flaming wrath!

He lifted high his shadowy spear! He bent forward his dreadful height. Fingal, advancing, drew his sword; the blade of dark-brown Luno. The gleaming path of the steel winds through the gloomy ghost. The form fell shapeless into air, like a column of smoke, which the staff of the boy disturbs, as it rises from the half-extinguished furnace.

The spirit of Loda shrieked, as, rolled into himself, he rose on the wind. Inistore shook at the sound. The waves heard it on the deep. They stopped, in their course, with fear: the friends of Fingal started at once; and took their heavy spears. They missed the king; they rose in rage; all their arms resound.

The moon came forth in the east. Fingal returned in the gleam of his arms. The joy of his youth was

great, their souls settled, as a sea from a storm. Ullin raised the song of gladness. The hills of Inistore rejoiced. The flame of the oak arose; and the tales of heroes are told.

But Frothal, Sora's wrathful king, sits in sadness beneath a tree. The host spreads around Carric-thura. He looks towards the walls with rage. He longs for the blood of Cathulla, who once overcame him in war. When Annir reigned in Sora, the father of sea-borne Frothal, a storm arose on the sea, and carried Frothal to Inistore. Three days he feasted in Sarno's halls, and saw the slow-rolling eyes of Comala. He loved her, in the flame of youth, and rushed to seize the white-armed maid. Cathulla met the chief. The gloomy battle rose. Frothal was bound in the hall; three days he pined alone. On the fourth, Sarno sent him to his ship, and he returned to his land. But wrath darkened in his soul against the noble Cathulla. When Annir's stone of fame arose, Frothal came in his strength. The battle burned round Carric-thura, and Sarno's mossy walls.

Morning rose on Inistore. Frothal struck his dark-brown shield. His chiefs started at the sound; they stood, but their eyes were turned to the sea. They saw Fingal coming in his strength; and first the noble Thubar spoke. "Who comes like the stag of the desert, with all his herd behind him? Frothal, it is a foe! I see his forward spear. Perhaps it is the king of Morven, Fingal the first of men. His deeds are well known in Lochlin; the blood of his foes is

in Sterno's halls. Shall I ask the peace of kings? His sword is the bolt of heaven!"

Son of the feeble hand, said Frothal, shall my days begin in a cloud? Shall I yield before I have conquered, chief of streamy Tora? The people would say in Sora, Frothal flew forth like a meteor; but a darkness has met him; and his fame is no more. No, Thubar, I will never yield; my fame shall surround me like light. No, I will never yield, chief of streamy Tora!

He went forth with the stream of his people, but they met a rock: Fingal stood unmoved, broken they rolled back from his side. Nor did they safely fly; the spear of the king pursued their steps. The field is covered with heroes. A rising hill preserved the foe.

Frothal saw their flight. The rage of his bosom rose. He bent his eyes to the ground, and called the noble Thubar. Thubar! my people are fled. My fame has ceased to arise. I will fight the king; I feel my burning soul! Send a bard to demand the combat, Speak not against Frothal's words. But, Thubar! I love a maid: she dwells by Thano's stream, the white-bosomed daughter of Herman, Utha with soft-rolling eyes. She feared the low-laid Comala: her secret sighs rose when I spread the sail. Tell to Utha of harps, that my soul delighted in her!

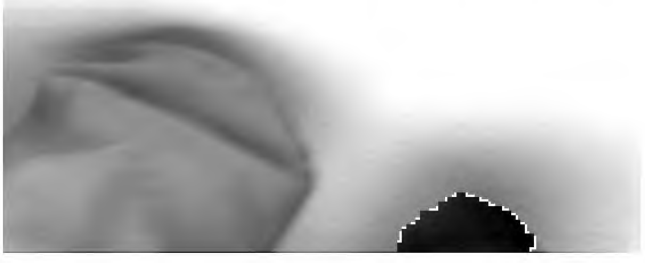
Such were his words, resolved to fight. The soft sigh of Utha was near! She had followed her hero, in the armour of a man. She rolled her eye on the youth, in secret, from beneath her steel. She saw the

bard as he went; the spear fell thrice from her hand; Her loose hair flew on the wind. Her white breast rose, with sighs. She raised her eyes to the king. She would speak, but thrice she failed.

Fingal heard the words of the bard; he came in the strength of his steel. They mixed their deathful spears: they raised the gleam of their arms. But the sword of Fingal descended and cut Frothal's shield in twain. His fair side is exposed; half bent he foresees his death. Darkness gathered on Utha's soul. The tear rolled down her cheek. She rushed to cover the chief with her shield; but a fallen oak met her steps. She fell on her arm of snow; her shield, her helmet flew wide. Her white bosom heaved to the sight: her dark-brown hair is spread on earth.

Fingal pitied the white-armed maid! he stayed the uplifted sword. The tear was in the eye of the king, as, bending forward, he spoke. "King of streamy Sora! fear not the sword of Fingal. It was never stained with the blood of the vanquished; it never pierced a fallen foe. Let thy people rejoice by thy native streams. Let the maids of thy love be glad. Why shouldest thou fall in thy youth, king of streamy Sora?" Frothal heard the words of Fingal, and saw the rising maid: they stood in silence, in their beauty, like two young trees of the plain, when the shower of spring is on their leaves, and the loud winds are laid.

Daughter of Herman, said Frothal, didst thou come from Tora's streams; didst thou come, in thy beauty, to behold thy warrior low? But he was low



before the mighty, maid of the slow-rolling eye! The feeble did not overcome the son of car-borne Annir! Terrible art thou, O king of Morven! in battles of the spear. But, in peace, thou art like the sun, when he looks through a silent shower: the flowers lift their fair heads before him; the gales shake their rustling wings. O that thou wert in Sora! that my feast were spread! The future kings of Sora would see thy arms and rejoice. They would rejoice at the fame of their fathers, who beheld the mighty Fingal!

Son of Annir, replied the king, the fame of Sora's race shall be heard! When chiefs are strong in war, then does the song arise! But if their swords are stretched over the feeble: if the blood of the weak has stained their arms; the bard shall forget them in the song, and their tombs shall not be known. The stranger shall come and build there, and remove the heaped-up earth. An half-worn sword shall rise before him; bending above it, he will say, "These are the arms of the chiefs of old, but their names are not in song." Come thou, O Frothal! to the feast of Inistore; let the maid of thy love be there; let our faces brighten with joy!

Fingal took his spear, moving in the steps of his might. The gates of Carric-thura are opened wide. The feast of shells is spread. The soft sound of music arose. Gladness brightened in the hall. The voice of Ullin was heard; the harp of Selma was strung. Utha rejoiced in his presence, and demanded the song

of grief; the big tear hung in her eye, when the soft Crimora spoke. Crimora the daughter of Rinval, who dwelt at Lotha's [1] roaring stream! The tale was long, but lovely; and pleased the blushing Utha.

CRIMORA.

Who cometh from the hill, like a cloud tinged with the beam of the west? Whose voice is that, loud as the wind, but pleasant as the harp of Carril? It is my love in the light of steel: but sad is his darkened brow! Live the mighty race of Fingal? Or what darkens in Connal's [2] soul?

CONNAL.

They live. They return from the chace, like a stream of light. The sun is on their shields. Like a ridge of fire they descend the hill. Loud is the voice of the youth! the war, my love, is near! To-morrow the dreadful Dargo comes to try the force of our race. The race of Fingal he defies; the race of battle and wounds!

CRIMORA.

Connal, I saw his sails like grey mist on the dark-brown wave. They slowly came to land. Connal, many are the warriors of Dargo!

CONNAL.

Bring me thy father's shield; the bossy, iron shield of Rinval; that shield like the full-orbed moon, when she moves darkened through heaven.

CRIMORA.

That shield I bring, O Connal! but it did not defend my father. By the spear of Gormar he fell. Thou mayst fall, O Connal!

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1 Lotha was the ancient name of one of the great rivers in the north of Scotland, but the only one that still retains any similarity of sound is the Lochy in Inverness-shire.

2 Connal, son of Diaran, and one of the most famous heroes of Fingal, was slain in a battle against Dargo a Briton.

CONNAL.

Fall I may! But raise my tomb, Crimora! Grey stones, a mound of earth, shall send my name to other times. Bend thy red eye over my grave, beat thy mournful heaving breast. Though fair thou art, my love, as the light; more pleasant than the gale of the hill; yet I will not here remain. Raise my tomb, Crimora!

CRIMORA.

Then give me those arms that gleam: that sword and that spear of steel. I shall meet Dargo with Connal, and aid him in the fight. Farewell, ye rocks of Ardven! ye deer! and ye streams of the hill! We shall return no more. Our tombs are distant far!

"And did they return no more?" said Utha's bursting sigh. "Fell the mighty in battle, and did Crimora live? Her steps were lonely; her soul was sad for Connal. Was he not young and lovely; like the beam of the setting sun?" Ullin saw the virgin's tear, he took the softly-trembling harp: the song was lovely, but sad, and silence was in Carric-thura.

Autumn is dark on the mountains; grey mist rests on the hills. The whirlwind is heard on the heath. Dark rolls the river through the narrow plain. A tree stands alone on the hill, and marks the slumbering Connal. The leaves whirl round with the wind, and strew the grave of the dead. At times are seen here the ghosts of the departed, when the musing hunter alone stalks slowly over the heath.

Who can reach the source of thy race, O Connal! who recount thy fathers? Thy family grew like an oak on the mountain, which meeteth the wind with its lofty head. But now it is torn from the earth.

Who shall supply the place of Connal? Here was the din of arms! here the groans of the dying. Bloody are the wars of Fingal, O Connal! it was here thou didst fall. Thine arm was like a storm; thy sword a beam of the sky; thy height, a rock on the plain; thine eyes, a furnace of fire. Louder than a storm was thy voice, in the battles of thy steel. Warriors fell by thy sword, as the thistle by the staff of a boy. Dargo the mighty came on, darkening in his rage. His brows were gathered into wrath. His eyes like two caves in a rock. Bright rose their swords on each side: loud was the clang of their steel.

The daughter of Rinval was near; Crimora bright in the armour of man; her yellow hair is loose behind, her bow is in her hand. She followed the youth to the war, Connal her much-beloved. She drew the string on Dargo; but erring she pierced her Connal. He falls like an oak on the plain; like a rock from the shaggy hill. What shall she do, hapless maid? He bleeds; her Connal dies! All the night long she cries, and all the day, "O Connal, my love, and my friend!" With grief the sad mourner dies! Earth here incloses the loveliest pair on the hill. The grass grows between the stones of the tomb; I often sit in the mournful shade. The wind sighs through the grass; their memory rushes on my mind. Undisturbed you now sleep together; in the tomb of the fountain you rest alone!

And soft be their rest, said Utha, hapless children of streamy Lotha! I will remember them with tears,

and my secret song shall rise; when the wind is in the groves of Tora, when the stream is roaring near. Then shall they come on my soul, with all their lovely grief.

Three days feasted the kings: on the fourth their white sails arose. The winds of the north drove Fingal to Morven's woody land. But the spirit of Loda sat, in his cloud, behind the ships of Frothal. He hung forward with all his blasts, and spread the white-bosomed sails. The wounds of his form were not forgot; he still feared[1] the hand of the king!

[1] The spirit of Loda is supposed to be the famous Odin, and the reference to it here accords with the notion of the times concerning ghosts; which was that the souls of the dead were material, and consequently susceptible of pain; or it may be taken in a figurative sense.

Lathmon.

CHARACTERS.

Fingal.	Lathmon, son of Nuath, King of Dunlathmon.
Morni.	
Ossian.	
Gaul.	Sulmath, Chief of Dutha.

This poem extols the prowess of the two famous followers of Fingal, Ossian and Gaul. Ossian was a tried warrior, as well as a skilled bard, but Gaul adventures here on his first battle. The enemy is Lathmon, described as King of Dunlathmon, and who was probably some neighbourly chieftain from the north-eastern part of Scotland, who makes a raid on Morven during the absence of Fingal. In this respect, however, he has reckoned without his host, for Fingal returns in time to concert measures to drive him back, Ossian and Gaul particularly distinguishing themselves in the fierce combat that ensues. In the subsequent poem Gaul's attachment to Lathmon's daughter is related, and its tragical result.

Lathmon.

SELMA, thy halls are silent. There is no sound in the woods of Morven. The wave tumbles alone on the coast. The silent beam of the sun is on the field. The daughters of Morven come forth, like the bow of the shower; they look towards green Erin for the white sails of the king. He had promised to return, but the winds of the north arose!

Who pours from the eastern hill, like a stream of darkness? It is the host of Lathmon. He has heard of the absence of Fingal. He trusts in the wind of the north. His soul brightens with joy. Why dost thou come O Lathmon? The mighty are not in Selma. Why comest thou with thy forward spear? Will the daughters of Morven fight? But stop, O mighty stream, in thy course? Does not Lathmon behold these sails? Why dost thou vanish, Lathmon, like the mist of the lake? But the squally storm is behind thee; Fingal pursues thy steps!

The king of Morven had started from sleep, as we

rolled on the dark-blue wave. He stretched his hand to his spear, his heroes rose around. We knew that he had seen his fathers, for they often descended to his dreams, when the sword of the foe rose over the land; and the battle darkened before us. "Whither hast thou fled, O wind?" said the king of Morven. "Dost thou rustle in the chambers of the south, pursuest thou the shower in other lands? Why dost thou not come to my sails? to the blue face of my seas? The foe is in the land of Morven, and the king is absent far. But let each bind on his mail, and each assume his shield. Stretch every spear over the wave; let every sword be unsheathed. Lathmon is before us with his host: he that fled from Fingal on the plains of Lona. But he returns, like a collected stream, and his roar is between our hills."

Such were the words of Fingal. We rushed into Carmona's bay. Ossian ascended the hill: He thrice struck his bossy shield. The rock of Morven replied; the bounding roes came forth. The foe was troubled in my presence: he collected his darkened host. I stood, like a cloud on the hill, rejoicing in the arms of my youth.

Morni sat beneath a tree, at the roaring waters of Strumon; his locks of age are grey; he leans forward on his staff; young Gaul is near the hero, hearing the battles of his father. Often did he rise, in the fire of his soul, at the mighty deeds of Morni. The aged heard the sound of Ossian's shield: he knew the sign of war. He started at once from his

place. His grey hair parted on his back. He remembered the deeds of other years.

"My son," he said to fair-haired Gaul, "I hear the sound of war. The King of Morven is returned, his signals are spread on the wind. Go to the halls of Strumon; bring his arms to Morni. Bring the shield of my father's latter years, for my arm begins to fail. Take thou thy armour, O Gaul! and rush to the first of thy battles. Let thine arm reach to the renown of thy fathers. Be thy course in the field like the eagle's wing. Why shouldst thou fear death, my son? the valiant fall with fame; their shields turn the dark stream of danger away; renown dwells on their aged hairs. Dost thou not see, O Gaul! how the steps of my age are honoured? Morni moves forth, and the young meet him with awe, and turn their eyes, with silent joy, on his course. But I never fled from danger, my son! my sword lightened through the darkness of war. The stranger melted before me; the mighty were blasted in my presence."

Gaul brought the arms to Morni: the aged warrior is covered with steel. He took the spear in his hand, which was stained with the blood of the valiant. He came towards Fingal, his son attended his steps. The son of Comhal arose before him with joy, when he came in his locks of age.

"Chief of roaring Strumon!" said the rising soul of Fingal; "do I behold thee in arms, after thy strength has failed? Often has Morni shone in fight, like the beam of the ascending sun; when he dis-

perses the storms of the hill and brings peace to the glittering fields. But why didst thou not rest in thine age? Thy renown is in the song. The people behold thee, and bless the departure of mighty Morni. Why didst thou not rest in thine age? The foe will vanish before Fingal!"

"Son of Comhal," replied the chief, "the strength of Morni's arm has failed. I attempt to draw the sword of my youth, but it remains in its place. I throw the spear, but it falls short of the mark. I feel the weight of my shield. We decay like the grass of the hill; our strength returns no more. I have a son, O Fingal! his soul has delighted in Morni's deeds; but his sword has not been lifted against a foe, neither has his fame begun. I come with him to war! to direct his arm in fight. His renown will be a light to my soul in the dark hour of my departure. O that the name of Morni were forgot among the people! that the heroes would only say, 'Behold the father of Gaul!'"

"King of Strumon," Fingal replied, "Gaul shall lift the sword in fight. But he shall lift it before Fingal; my arm shall defend his youth. But rest thou in the halls of Selma; and hear of our renown. Bid the harp to be strung, and the voice of the bard to arise, that those who fall may rejoice in their fame; and the soul of Morni brighten with joy. Ossian! thou hast fought in battles; the blood of strangers is on thy spear; thy course be with Gaul, in the strife; but depart not from the side of Fingal! lest the foe

should find you alone, and your fame fail in my presence."

"I saw (Ossian speaks) Gaul in his arms; my soul was mixed with his. The fire of the battle was in his eyes! he looked to the foe with joy. We spoke the words of friendship in secret; the lightning of our swords poured together; for we drew them behind the wood, and tried the strength of our arms on the empty air."

Night came down on Morven. Fingal sat at the beam of the oak. Morni sat by his side with all his grey waving locks. Their words were of other times, of the mighty deeds of their fathers. Three bards, at times, touched the harp: Ullin was near with his song. He sang of the mighty Comhal; but darkness gathered on Morni's brow. He rolled his red eye on Ullin: at once ceased the song of the bard. Fingal observed the aged hero, and he mildly spoke. "Chief of Strumon, why that darkness? Let the days of other years be forgot. Our fathers contended in war: but we meet together, at the feasts. Our swords are turned on the foe of our land: he melts before us on the field. Let the days of our fathers be forgot, hero of mossy Strumon!"

"King of Morven," replied the chief, "I remember thy father with joy. He was terrible in battle; the rage of the chief was deadly. My eyes were full of tears, when the king of heroes fell. The valiant fall, O Fingal! the feeble remain on the hills! How many heroes have passed away, in the days of Morni!

Yet I did not shun the battle; neither did I fly from the strife of the valiant. Now let the friends of Fingal rest; for the night is around; that they may rise with strength to battle against car-borne Lathmon. I hear the sound of his host, like thunder moving on the hills. Ossian! and fair-haired Gaul! ye are young and swift in the race. Observe the foes of Fingal from that woody hill. But approach them not, your fathers are not near to shield you. Let not your fame fall at once. The valour of youth may fail!"

We heard the words of the chief with joy. We moved in the clang of our arms. Our steps are on the woody hill. Heaven burns with all its stars. The meteors of death fly over the field. The distant noise of the foe reached our ears. It was then Gaul spoke, in his valour: his hand half-unsheathed the sword.

"Son of Fingal!" he said, "why burns the soul of Gaul? My heart beats high. My steps are disordered; my hand trembles on my sword. When I look towards the foe, my soul lightens before me. I see their sleeping host. Tremble thus the souls of the valiant in battles of the spear! How would the soul of Morni rise if we should rush on the foe! Our renown would grow in song: Our steps would be stately in the eyes of the brave."

"Son of Morni," I replied, "my soul delights in war. I delight to shine in battle alone, to give my name to the bards. But what if the foe should prevail; can I behold the eyes of the king? They are

terrible in his displeasure, and like the flames of death. But I will not behold them in his wrath! Ossian shall prevail or fall. But shall the fame of the vanquished rise? They pass like a shade away. But the fame of Ossian shall rise! His deeds shall be like his father's. Let us rush in our arms; son of Morni, let us rush to fight. Gaul! if thou shouldst return, go to Selma's lofty hall. Tell to Evirallin that I fell with fame; carry this sword to Branno's daughter. Let her give it to Oscar, when the years of his youth shall arise."

"Son of Fingal," Gaul replied with a sigh; "shall I return after Ossian is low? What would my father say, what Fingal the king of men? The feeble would turn their eyes and say, "Behold Gaul who left his friend in his blood!" Ye shall not behold me, ye feeble, but in the midst of my renown! Ossian! I have heard from my father the mighty deeds of heroes; their mighty deeds when alone; for the soul increases in danger."

"Son of Morni," I replied, and strode before him on the heath, "our fathers shall praise our valour, when they mourn our fall. A beam of gladness shall rise on their souls, when their eyes are full of tears. They will say, 'Our sons have not fallen unknown; they spread death around them.' But why should we think of the narrow house? The sword defends the brave. But death pursues the flight of the feeble; their renown is never heard."

We rushed forward through night; we came to the

roar of a stream, which bent its blue course round the foe, through trees that echoed to its sound. We came to the bank of the stream, and saw the sleeping host. Their fires were decayed on the plain; the lonely steps of their scouts were distant far. I stretched my spear before me to support my steps over the stream. But Gaul took my hand, and spoke the words of the brave. "Shall the son of Fingal rush on the sleeping foe? Shall he come like a blast by night, when it overturns the young trees in secret? Fingal did not thus receive his fame, nor dwells renown on the grey hairs of Morni, for actions like these. Strike, Ossian, strike the shield, and let their thousands rise! Let them meet Gaul in his first battle, that he may try the strength of his arm."

My soul rejoiced over the warrior: my bursting tears came down. "And the foe shall meet thee, Gaul!" I said: "the fame of Morni's son shall arise. But rush not too far, my hero: let the gleam of thy steel be near to Ossian. Let our hands join in slaughter. Gaul! dost thou not behold that rock? its grey side dimly gleams to the stars. Should the foe prevail, let our back be towards the rock. Then shall they fear to approach our spears; for death is in our hands!"

I struck thrice my echoing shield. The starting foe arose. We rushed on in the sound of our arms. Their crowded steps fly over the heath. They thought that the mighty Fingal was come. The strength of their arms withered away. The sound of

their flight was like that of flame, when it rushes through the blasted groves. It was then the spear of Gaul flew in its strength; it was then his sword arose. Cremor fell; and mighty Leth. Dunthormo struggled in his blood. The steel rushed through Crotho's side, as bent, he rose on his spear; the black stream poured from the wound, and hissed on the half-extinguished oak. Cathmin saw the steps of the hero behind him, he ascended a blasted tree; but the spear pierced him from behind. Shrieking, panting, he fell. Moss and withered branches pursue his fall, and strew the blue arms of Gaul.

Such were thy deeds, son of Morni, in the first of thy battles. Nor slept the sword by thy side, thou last of Fingal's race! Ossian rushed forward in his strength; the people fell before him, as the grass by the staff of the boy, when he whistles along the field, and the grey beard of the thistle falls. But careless the youth moves on; his steps are towards the desert. Grey morning rose around us; the winding streams are bright along the heath. The foe gathered on a hill; and the rage of Lathmon rose. He bent the red eye of his wrath; he is silent in his rising grief. He often struck his bossy shield; and his steps are unequal on the heath. I saw the distant darkness of the hero, and I spoke to Morni's son.

"Car-borne chief of Strumon, dost thou behold the foe? They gather on the hill in their wrath. Let our steps be towards the king. He shall rise in his strength, and the host of Lathmon vanish. Our fame

is around us, warrior, the eyes of the aged will rejoice. But let us fly, son of Morni, Lathmon descends the hill." "Then let our steps be slow," replied the fair-haired Gaul; "lest the foe say, with a smile, 'Behold the warriors of night. They are, like ghosts, terrible in darkness; they melt away before the beam of the east. Ossian, take the shield of Gormar who fell beneath thy spear. The aged heroes will rejoice beholding the deeds of their sons.'"

Such were our words on the plain, when Sulmath came to car-borne Lathmon: Sulmath chief of Dutha at the dark-rolling stream of Duvranna.* "Why dost thou not rush, son of Nuäth, with a thousand of thy heroes? Why dost thou not descend with thy host, before the warriors fly? Their blue arms are beaming to the rising light, and their steps are before us on the heath!"

"Son of the feeble hand," said Lathmon, "shall my host descend! They are but two, son of Dutha! shall a thousand lift their steel! Nuäth would mourn in his hall for the departure of his fame. His eyes would turn from Lathmon, when the tread of his feet approached. Go thou to the heroes, chief of Dutha! I behold the stately steps of Ossian. His fame is worthy of my steel! let us contend in fight."

The noble Sulmath came. I rejoiced in the words of the king. I raised the shield on my arm; Gaul

* Dubh-bhranna, *dark mountain-stream.* A river in Scotland which falls into the sea at Banff, and still retains the name of Deveron.

placed in my hand the sword of Morni. We returned to the murmuring stream; Lathmon came down in his strength. His dark host rolled, like clouds, behind him: but the son of Nuäth was bright in his steel!

"Son of Fingal," said the hero, "thy fame has grown on our fall. How many lie there of my people by thy hand, thou king of men! Lift now thy spear against Lathmon: lay the son of Nuäth low! Lay him low among his warriors, or thou thyself must fall! It shall never be told in my halls that my people fell in my presence; that they fell in the presence of Lathmon when his sword rested by his side: the blue eyes of Cutha would roll in tears: her steps be lonely in the vales of Dunlathmon!"

"Neither shall it be told," I replied, "that the son of Fingal fled. Were his steps covered with darkness, yet would not Ossian fly! his soul would meet him and say, 'Does the bard of Selma fear the foe?' No: he does not fear the foe. His joy is in the midst of battle!"

Lathmon came on with his spear. He pierced the shield of Ossian. I felt the cold steel by my side. I drew the sword of Morni. I cut the spear in twain. The bright point fell glittering on earth. The son of Nuäth burnt in his wrath. He lifted high his sounding shield. His dark eyes rolled above it, as bending forward, it shone like a gate of brass! But Ossian's spear pierced the brightness of its bosses, and sunk in a tree that rose behind. The shield hung on the

quivering lance! but Lathmon still advanced! Gaul foresaw the fall of the chief. He stretched his buckler before my sword; when it descended, in a stream of light, over the king of Dunlathmon!

Lathmon beheld the son of Morni. The tear started from his eye. He threw the sword of his fathers on earth, and spoke the words of the brave. "Why should Lathmon fight against the first of men? Your souls are beams from heaven; your swords the flames of death! Who can equal the renown of the heroes, whose deeds are so great in youth? O that ye were in the halls of Nuäth, in the green dwelling of Lathmon! then would my father say that his son did not yield to the weak: But who comes, a mighty stream, along the echoing heath! the little hills are troubled before him; a thousand ghosts are on the beams of his steel; the ghosts of those who are to fall, by the arm of the king of resounding Morven. Happy art thou, O Fingal! thy sons shall fight thy wars. They go forth before thee; they return with the steps of their renown!"

Fingal came, in his mildness, rejoicing in secret over the deeds of his son. Morni's face brightened with gladness; his aged eyes looked faintly through tears of joy. We came to the halls of Selma. We sat around the feast of shells. The maids of song came into our presence, and the mildly blushing Evirallin! Her hair spreads on her neck of snow, her

eye rolls in secret on Ossian. She touched the harp of music; we blessed the daughter of Branno!

Fingal rose in his place, and spoke to Lathmon king of spears. The sword of Trenmor shook by his side, as high he raised his mighty arm. "Son of Nuäth," he said, "why dost thou search for fame in Morven? We are not of the race of the feeble; our swords gleam not over the weak. When did we rouse thee, O Lathmon! with the sound of war? Fingal does not delight in battle, though his arm is strong! My renown grows on the fall of the haughty. The light of my steel pours on the proud in arms. The battle comes! and the tombs of the valiant rise; the tomb of my people rise, O my fathers! I at last must remain alone! But I will remain renowned; the departure of my soul shall be a stream of light. Lathmon! retire to thy place! Turn thy battles to other lands! The race of Morven are renowned; their foes are the sons of the unhappy!"

Oithona.

OITHONA is another tragic tale of female bravery. The heroine is described as the dark-haired daughter of St. Nuäth, brother of Lathmon of the previous poem, and the affianced bride of the valiant Gaul, son of Morni.

On returning from some expedition of war Gaul finds the gates of Dunlathmon, the abode of Oithona, open, the halls forsaken, and no voice of Oithona heard. Taking advantage of the absence of her protector, she had been violently seized by a northern chief, "the red-haired Dunrammoth, and carried off to a solitary island called Tromathon. Gaul, accompanied by the son of Leth, hastens to avenge the injury, and arriving at the island they find the disconsolate maid in a cave by the sea-shore. Gaul, burning to inflict punishment on his cowardly foe, is not afraid to meet him, though at great odds, and succeeds in slaying him and putting his attendants to flight. He returns with joy to the cave, and finds there a dying warrior, who, to his dismay, turns out to be Oithona in disguise. She "had armed herself in the cave, and came in search of death."

Oithona.

DARKNESS dwells around Dunlathmon, though the moon shows half her face on the hill. The daughter of night turns her eyes away; she beholds the approaching grief. The son of Morni is on the plain: there is no sound in the hall. No long-streaming beam of light comes trembling through the gloom. The voice of Oithona is not heard amidst the noise of the streams of Duvranna. "Whither art thou gone in thy beauty, dark-haired daughter of Nuäth? Lathmon is in the field of the valiant, but thou didst promise to remain in the hall; thou didst promise to remain in the hall till the son of Morni returned. Till he returned from Strumon, to the maid of his love! The tear was on thy cheek at his departure; the sigh rose in secret in thy breast. But thou dost not come forth with songs, with the lightly-trembling sound of the harp?"

Such were the words of Gaul, when he came to Dunlathmon's towers. The gates were open and dark. The winds were blustering in the hall.

The trees strewed the threshold with leaves; the murmur of night was abroad. Sad and silent, at a rock, the son of Morni sat; his soul trembled for the maid; but he knew not whither to turn his course? The son of Leth stood at a distance, and heard the winds in his bushy hair. But he did not raise his voice, for he saw the sorrow of Gaul?

Sleep descended on the chiefs. The visions of night arose. Oithona stood, in a dream, before the eyes of Morni's son. Her hair was loose and disordered; her lovely eye rolled deep in tears. Blood stained her snowy arm. The robe half hid the wound of her breast. She stood over the chief, and her voice was feebly heard. "Sleeps the son of Morni, he that was lovely in the eyes of Oithona? Sleeps Gaul at the distant rock, and the daughter of Nuäth low? The sea rolls round the dark isle of Tromathon. I sit in my tears in the cave! Nor do I sit alone, O Gaul? the dark chief of Cuthal is there. He is there in the rage of his love. What can Oithona do?"

A rougher blast rushed through the oak. The dream of night departed. Gaul took his aspen spear. He stood in the rage of his soul. Often did his eyes turn to the east. He accused the lagging light. At length the morning came forth. The hero lifted up the sail. The winds came rustling from the hill; he bounded on the waves of the deep. On the third day arose Tromathon, like a blue shield in the

midst of the sea. The white wave roared against its rocks; sad Oithona sat on the coast! She looked on the rolling waters, and her tears came down. But when she saw Gaul in his arms, she started, and turned her eyes away. Her lovely cheek is bent and red; her white arm trembles by her side. Thrice she strove to fly from his presence; thrice her steps failed her as she went!

"Daughter of Nuäth," said the hero, "why dost thou fly from Gaul? Do my eyes send forth the flame of death? Darkens hatred in my soul? Thou art to me the beam of the east, rising in a land unknown. But thou coverest thy face with sadness, daughter of car-borne Nuäth! Is the foe of Oithona near? My soul burns to meet him in fight. The sword trembles by the side of Gaul, and longs to glitter in his hand. Speak, daughter of Nuäth! dost thou not behold my tears?"

"Young chief of Strumon," replied the maid, "why comest thou over the dark-blue wave, to Nuäth's mournful daughter? Why did I not pass away in secret, like the flower of the rock, that lifts its fair head unseen, and strews its withered leaves on the blast? Why didst thou come, O Gaul! to hear my departing sigh? I vanish in my youth; my name shall not be heard. Or it will be heard with grief; the tears of Nuäth must fall. Thou wilt be sad, son of Morni! for the departed fame of Oithona. But she shall sleep in the narrow tomb, far from the voice of the mourner. Why didst thou

come, chief of Strumon! to the sea-beat rocks of Tromathon?"

"I came to meet thy foes, daughter of car-borne Nuäth! the death of Cuthal's chief darkens before me or Morni's son shall fall! Oithona! when Gaul is low, raise my tomb on that oozy rock. When the dark bounding ship shall pass, call the sons of the sea! call them, and give this sword, to bear it hence to Morni's hall. The grey-haired chief will then cease to look towards the desert for the return of his son!"

"Shall the daughter of Nuäth live?" she replied with a bursting sigh. "Shall I live in Tromathon, and the son of Morni low? My heart is not of that rock; nor my soul careless as that sea, which lifts its blue waves to every wind, and rolls beneath the storm! The blast which shall lay thee low shall spread the branches of Oithona on earth. We shall wither together, son of car-borne Morni! The narrow house is pleasant to me, and the grey stone of the dead: for never more will I leave thy rocks, O sea-surrounded Tromathon!—[Oithona here relates how she was captured]—Night came on with her clouds, after the departure of Lathmon, when he went to the wars of his fathers, to the moss-covered rock of Duthormoth. Night came on. I sat in the hall at the beam of the oak! The wind was abroad in the trees. I heard the sound of arms. Joy rose in my face. I thought of thy return. It was the chief of Cuthal, the red-haired strength of Donrommath. His eyes rolled in fire: the blood of my people was

on his sword. They who defended Oithona fell by the gloomy chief! What could I do? My arm was weak. I could not lift the spear. He took me in my grief! amidst my tears he raised the sail. He feared the returning Lathmon, the brother of unhappy Oithona! But behold he comes with his people! the dark wave is divided before him! Whither wilt thou turn thy steps, son of Morni? Many are the warriors of thy foe!"

"My steps never turned from battle," Gaul said, and unsheathed his sword. "Shall I then begin to fear, Oithona, when thy foes are near? Go to thy cave, my love, till our battle cease on the field. Son of Leth, bring the bows of our fathers! the sounding quiver of Morni! Let our three warriors bend the yew. Ourselves will lift the spear. They are an host on the rock! our souls are strong in war!"

Oithona went to the cave. A troubled joy rose on her mind, like the red path of lightning on a stormy cloud. Her soul was resolved; the tear was dried from her wildly-looking eye. Dunrommath slowly approached. He saw the son of Morni. Contempt contracted his face, a smile is on his dark-brown cheek; his red eye rolled, half-concealed, beneath his shaggy brows!

"Whence are the sons of the sea?" began the gloomy chief. "Have the winds driven you on the rocks of Tromathon? Or come you in search of the white-handed maid? The sons of the unhappy, ye

feeble men, come to the hand of Dunrommath! His eye spares not the weak; he delights in the blood of strangers. Oithona is a beam of light, and the chief of Cuthal enjoys it in secret; wouldst thou come on its loveliness, like a cloud, son of the feeble hand! Thou mayest come, but shalt thou return to the halls of thy fathers?"

"Dost thou not know me," said Gaul, "red-haired chief of Cuthal? Thy feet were swift on the heath, in the battle of car-borne Lathmon; when the sword of Morni's son pursued his host, in Morvin's woody land. Dunrommath! thy words are mighty, for thy warriors gather behind thee. But do I fear them, son of pride? I am not of the race of the feeble!"

Gaul advanced in his arms; Dunrommath shrunk behind his people. But the spear of Gaul pierced the gloomy chief; his sword lopped off his head, as it bended in death. The son of Morni shook it thrice by the lock; the warriors of Dunrommath fled. The arrows of Morven pursued them: ten fell on the mossy rocks. The rest lift the sounding sail, and bound on the troubled deep. Gaul advanced towards the cave of Oithona. He beheld a youth leaning on a rock. An arrow had pierced his side; his eye rolled faintly beneath his helmet. The soul of Morni's son was sad, he came and spoke the words of peace.

"Can the hand of Gaul heal thee, youth of the mournful brow? I have searched for the herbs of the mountains; I have gathered them on the secret

banks of their streams. My hand has closed the wound of the brave, their eyes have blessed the son of Morni. Where dwelt thy fathers, warrior? Were they of the sons of the mighty? Sadness shall come, like night, on thy native streams. Thou art fallen in thy youth!"

"My fathers," replied the stranger, "were of the race of the mighty; but they shall not be sad; for my fame is departed like morning mist. High walls rise on the banks of Duvranna; and see their mossy towers in the stream; a rock ascends behind them with its bending pines. Thou mayst behold it far distant. There my brother dwells. He is renowned in battle: give him this glittering helm."

The helmet fell from the hand of Gaul. It was the wounded Oithona! She had armed herself in the cave, and came in search of death. Her heavy eyes are half-closed; the blood pours from her heaving side. "Son of Morni!" she said, "prepare the narrow tomb. Sleep grows, like darkness, on my soul. The eyes of Oithona are dim! O had I dwelt at Duvranna, in the bright beam of my fame! then had my years come on with joy; the virgins would then bless my steps. But I fall in youth, son of Morni! my father shall blush in his hall!"

She fell pale on the rock of Tromathon. The mournful warrior raised her tomb. He came to Morven; we saw the darkness of his soul. Ossian took the harp in the praise of Oithona. The bright-

ness of the face of Gaul returned. But his sigh rose at times in the midst of his friends, like blasts that shake their unfrequent wings after the stormy winds are laid!

Cuthullin.

THE hero whose death is here recorded was son of Semo, and grandson of Cathbaid. He was chief of the Island of Skye, and had his seat at Dunscai, the present Dunsciach, in the district of Sleat—"a castle afterwards famous in the history of the Isles, and the grey hollow ruins of which can still be seen. An old Skye legend has it that this castle was built by Cuthullin and his Fingalians in a single night:

> 'All night the witch sang, and the castle grew
> Up from the rock with tower and turret crown'd;
> All night she sang—when fell the morning dew,
> 'Twas finished round and round.'[1]

Cuthullin was a great hunter, and with his hounds and his favourite dog 'Luath,' often 'waked the thundering echoes of the rugged Alps of Skye—which hills still bear his name.'[2] He fought with varied success in Ireland, and never returned to Skye, having been slain in battle at an early age. His continued absence at the wars in Ireland is mourned in the poem with tender longing by the fair Bragela."

[1] *A Summer in Skye*, by Alexander Smith.

[2] *History and Traditions of the Isle of Skye*, by Alexander Cameron.

The Death of Cuthullin,

CHIEF OF SKYE.

"Is the wind on the shield of Fingal? Or is the voice of past times in my hall? Sing on, sweet voice! for thou art pleasant. Thou carriest away my night with joy. Sing on, O Bragela, daughter of car-borne Sorglan!

"It is the white wave of the rock, and not Cuthullin's sails. Often do the mists deceive me, for the ship of my love! when they rise round some ghost, and spread their grey skirts on the wind. Why dost thou delay thy coming, son of the generous Semo? Four times has autumn returned with its winds, and raised the seas of Togorma,[1] since thou hast been in the roar of battles, and Bragela distant far? Hills of the isle of mist! when will ye answer to his hounds? But ye are dark in your clouds. Sad Bragela calls in vain! Night comes rolling down. The face of ocean fails. The heath-cock's head is beneath his wing. The hind sleeps

[1] Togorma, *i.e. the island of blue waves,* one of the Hebrides.

with the hart of the desert. They shall rise with morning's light, and feed by the mossy stream. But my tears return with the sun. My sighs come on with the night. When wilt thou come in thine arms, O chief of Erin's wars?"

Pleasant is thy voice in Ossian's ear, daughter of car-borne Sorglan! But retire to the hall of shells; to the beam of the burning oak. Attend to the murmur of the sea: it rolls at Dunscai's walls: let sleep descend on thy blue eyes. Let the hero arise in thy dreams!

Cuthullin sits at Lego's lake, at the dark rolling of waters. Night is around the hero. His thousands spread on the heath. A hundred oaks burn in the midst. The feast of shells is smoking wide. Carril strikes the harp beneath a tree. His grey locks glitter in the beam. The rustling blast of night is near, and lifts his aged hair. His song is of the blue Togorma, and of its chief, Cuthullin's friend! "Why art thou absent, Connal, in the day of the gloomy storm? The chiefs of the south have convened against the car-borne Cormac. The winds detain thy sails. Thy blue waters roll around thee. But Cormac is not alone. The son of Semo fights his wars! Semo's son his battles fights! the terror of the stranger! He that is like the vapour of death, slowly borne by sultry winds. The sun reddens in his presence: The people fall around."

Such was the song of Carril when a son of the foe appeared. He threw down his pointless spear. He

spoke the words of Torlath! Torlath, chief of heroes, from Lego's sable surge! He that led his thousands to battle, against car-borne Cormac. Cormac who was distant far, in Temora's echoing halls, he learned to bend the bow of his fathers, and to lift the spear. Nor long didst thou lift the spear, mildly-shining beam of youth! death stands dim behind thee, like the darkened half of the moon behind its growing light! Cuthullin rose before the bard that came from generous Torlath. He offered him the shell of joy. He honoured the son of songs. "Sweet voice of Lego!" he said, "what are the words of Torlath? Comes he to our feast or battle, the car-borne son of Cantela?"

"He comes to thy battle," replied the bard, "to the sounding strife of spears. When morning is grey on Lego, Torlath will fight on the plain. Wilt thou meet him in thine arms, king of the isle of mist? Terrible is the spear of Torlath! it is a meteor of night. He lifts it, and the people fall! death sits in the lightning of his sword!" "Do I fear," replied Cuthullin, "the spear of car-borne Torlath? He is brave as a thousand heroes: but my soul delights in war! The sword rests not by the side of Cuthullin, bard of the times of old! Morning shall meet me on the plain, and gleam on the blue arms of Semo's son. But sit thou on the heath, O bard! and let us hear thy voice. Partake of the joyful shell, and hear the songs of Temora!"

"This is no time," replied the bard, "to hear the

song of joy: when the mighty are to meet in battle, like the strength of the waves of Lego. Why art thou so dark, Slimora! with all thy silent woods? No star trembles on thy top. No moon-beam on thy side. But the meteors of death are there: the grey watery forms of ghosts. Why art thou dark, Slimora! with thy silent woods?" He retired, in the sound of his song. Carril joined his voice. The music was like the memory of joys that are past, pleasant and mournful to the soul. The ghosts of departed bards heard on Slimora's side. Soft sounds spread along the wood. The silent valleys of night rejoice. So, when he sits in the silence of the day, in the valley of his breeze, the humming of the mountain bee comes to Ossian's ear: the gale drowns it in its course; but the pleasant sound returns again! Slant looks the sun on the field! gradual grows the shade of the hill!

"Raise," said Cuthullin, to his hundred bards, "the song of the noble Fingal: that song which he hears at night, when the dreams of his rest descend: when the bards strike the distant harp, and the faint light gleams on Selma's walls. Or let the grief of Lara rise: the sighs of the mother of Calmar, when he was sought in vain on his hills; when she beheld his bow in the hall. Carril, place the shield of Caithbat on that branch. Let the spear of Cuthullin be near; that the sound of my battle may rise with the grey beam of the east." The hero leaned on his father's shield: the song of Lara rose! The hundred bards were distant far: Carril alone is near

the chief. The words of the song were his: the sound of his harp was mournful.

"Alcletha with the aged locks! mother of car-borne Calmar! why dost thou look toward the desert, to behold the return of thy son? These are not his heroes, dark on the heath: nor is that the voice of Calmar. It is but the distant grove, Alcletha! but the roar of the mountain wind!" "Who (Alcletha speaks) bounds over Lara's stream, sister of the noble Calmar? Does not Alcletha behold his spear? But her eyes are dim! Is it not the son of Matha daughter of my love?"

"It is but an aged oak, Alcletha!" replied the lovely weeping Alona. "It is but an oak, Alcletha, bent over Lara's stream. But who comes along the plain? sorrow is in his speed. He lifts high the spear of Calmar. Alcletha, it is covered with blood!" "But it is covered with the blood of foes, sister of car-borne Calmar! His spear never returned unstained with blood: nor his bow from the strife of the mighty. The battle is consumed in his presence: he is a flame of death, Alona! Youth of the mournful speed! where is the son of Alcletha? Does he return with his fame, in the midst of his echoing shields? Thou art dark and silent! Calmar is then no more! Tell me not, warrior, how he fell. I must not hear of his wound!" Why dost thou look towards the desert, mother of low-laid Calmar?

Such was the song of Carril, when Cuthullin lay

on his shield. The bards rested on their harps. Sleep fell softly around. The son of Semo was awake alone. His soul was fixed on war. The burning oaks began to decay. Faint red light is spread around. A feeble voice is heard! The ghost of Calmar came! He stalked dimly along the beam. Dark is the wound in his side. His hair is disordered and loose. Joy sits pale on his face. He seems to invite Cuthullin to his cave.

"Son of the cloudy night!" said the rising chief of Erin, "Why dost thou bend thy dark eyes on me, ghost of the noble Calmar? Wouldst thou frighten me, O Matha's son! from the battles of Cormac? Thy hand was not feeble in war: neither was thy voice for peace. How art thou changed, chief of Lara! if thou now dost advise to fly! But, Calmar, I never fled. I never feared the ghosts of night. Small is their knowledge, weak their hands; their dwelling is in the wind. But my soul grows in danger, and rejoices in the noise of steel. Retire thou to thy cave. Thou are not Calmar's ghost. He delighted in battle. His arm was like the thunder of heaven!" He retired in his blast with joy, for he had heard the voice of his praise.

The faint beam of the morning rose. The sound of Caithbat's buckler spread. Green Erin's warriors convened, like the roar of many streams. The horn of war is heard over Lego. The mighty Torlath came? "Why dost thou come with thy thou-

sands, Cuthullin," said the chief of Lego. I know the strength of thy arm. Thy soul is an unextinguished fire. Why fight we not on the plain, and let our hosts behold our deeds? Let them behold us like roaring waves, that tumble round a rock: the mariners hasten away, and look on their strife with fear."

"Thou risest, like the sun, on my soul," replied the son of Semo. "Thine arm is mighty, O Torlath! and worthy of my wrath. Retire, ye men of Ullin, to Slimora's shady side. Behold the chief of Erin, in the day of his fame. Carril! tell to mighty Connal, if Cuthullin must fall, tell him I accused the winds, which roar on Togorma's waves. Never was he absent in battle when the strife of my fame arose. Let his sword be before Cormac, like the beam of Heaven. Let his counsel sound in Temora, in the day of danger!"

He rushed, in the sound of his arms, like the terrible spirit of Loda, when he comes, in the roar of a thousand storms, and scatters battles from his eyes. He sits on a cloud over Lochlin's seas. His mighty hand is on his sword. Winds lift his flaming locks! The waning-moon half lights his dreadful face. His features blended in darkness arise to view. So terrible was Cuthullin in the day of his fame. Torlath fell by his hand. Lego's heroes mourned. They gather around the chief, like the clouds of the desert. A thousand swords rose at once; a thousand arrows flew: but he stood like a rock in the midst of a roar-

ing sea. They fell around. He strode in blood. Dark Slimora echoed wide. The sons of Ullin came. The battle spread over Lego. The chief of Erin overcame. He returned over the field with his fame. But pale he returned! The joy of his face was dark. He rolled his eyes in silence. The sword hung, unsheathed, in his hand. His spear bent at every step!

"Carril," said the chief in secret, "the strength of Cuthullin fails. My days are with the years that are past. No morning of mine shall arise. They shall seek me at Temora, but I shall not be found. Cormac will weep in his hall, and say, "where is Erin's chief?" But my name is renowned! my fame in the song of bards. The youth will say in secret, "O let me die as Cuthullin died! Renown clothed him like a robe. The light of his fame is great. Draw the arrow from my side. Lay Cuthullin beneath that oak. Place the shield of Caithbat near, that they may behold me amidst the arms of my fathers!"

"And is the son of Semo fallen?" said Carril, with a sigh. "Mournful are Tura's walls. Sorrow dwells at Dunscai. Thy spouse is left alone in her youth. The son of thy love is alone! He shall come to Bragela, and ask her why she weeps? He shall lift his eyes to the wall, and see his father's sword. "Whose sword is that?" he will say. The soul of his mother is sad. Who is that, like the hart of the desert, in the murmur of his course? His eyes look wildly round in search of his friend. Connal,

son of Colgar, where hast thou been when the mighty fell? Did the seas of Cogorma roll around thee? Was the wind of the south in thy sails? The mighty have fallen in battle, and thou wast not there. Let none tell it in Selma, nor in Morven's woody land. Fingal will be sad, and the sons of the desert mourn!"

By the dark rolling waves of Lego they raised the hero's tomb. Luath,[1] at a distance, lies. The song of bards rose over the dead.

Bard's Lament.

"Blest be thy soul, son of Semo! Thou wert mighty in battle. Thy strength was like the strength of a stream: thy speed like the eagle's wing. Thy path in battle was terrible: the steps of death were behind thy sword. Blest be thy soul, son of Semo, car-borne chief of Dunscai! Thou hast not fallen by the sword of the mighty, neither was thy blood on the spear of the brave. The arrow came, like the sting of death in a blast: nor did the feeble hand which drew the bow perceive it. Peace to thy soul, in thy cave, chief of the isle of mist!"

"The mighty are dispersed at Temora: there is none in Cormac's hall. The king mourns in his youth. He does not behold thy return. The sound of thy

[1] A favourite dog, which, according to custom, was buried near its master. There is a long stone still shown at Dunscaich, in the isle of Skye, to which Cuthullin commonly bound his dog Luath. The stone goes by his name to this day.

shield is ceased: his foes are gathering round. Soft be thy rest in thy cave, chief of Erin's wars! Bragela will not hope for thy return, or see thy sails in ocean's foam. Her steps are not on the shore: nor her ear open to the voice of thy rowers. She sits in the hall of shells. She sees the arms of him that is no more. Thine eyes are full of tears, daughter of car-borne Sorglan! Blest be thy soul in death, O chief of shady Tura!"

The Battle of Lora.

THIS poem relates the disastrous consequences of a petty umbrage taken by two heroes, Ma-ronnan and Aldo, for being excluded from a great feast given by Fingal in honour of a victory to which they had contributed. In resentment they change their allegiance to Erragon, king of Sora, an enemy of Fingal. The valour of Aldo gains him such reputation as to fascinate Lorma, the wife of Erragon, and the two make their escape along the troubled sea to seek the protection of Fingal. Erragon, roused by this injury and dishonour, invades Morven, and after proudly rejecting terms of peace offered him by Bosmina, Fingal's daughter, falls himself by the hand of Gaul after inflicting just retribution on Aldo. The unfortunate Lorma is left lamenting, and dies of grief.

The Battle of Lora.

Son of the distant land, who dwellest in the secret cell! do I hear the sound of thy grove? or is it thy voice of songs? The torrent was loud in my ear; but I heard a tuneful voice. Dost thou praise the chiefs of thy land: or the spirits of the wind? But, lonely dweller of rocks! look thou on that heathy plain. Thou seest green tombs, with their rank, whistling grass: with their stones ot mossy heads. Thou seest them, son of the rock, but Ossian's eyes have failed.

A mountain-stream comes roaring down, and sends its waters round a green hill. Four mossy stones, in the midst of withered grass, rear their heads on the top. Two trees, which the storms have bent, spread their whistling branches around. This is thy dwelling, Erragon;[1] this thy narrow house; the sound of thy shells have been long forgot in Sora. Thy shield is become dark in thy hall. Erragon, king of ships! chief of distant Sora! how hast thou fallen on our mountains? How is the mighty low? Son of the

[1] Erragon, or Ferg-thoun, *the rage of the waves.*

secret cell! dost thou delight in songs? Hear the battle of Lora. The sound of its steel is long since past. So thunder on the darkened hill roars and is no more. The sun returns with his silent beams. The glittering rocks, and green heads of the mountains smile.

The bay of Cona received our ships from Erin's rolling waves.[1] Our white sheets hung loose to the masts. The boisterous winds roared behind the groves of Morven. The horn of the king is sounded; the deer start from their rocks. Our arrows flew in the woods. The feast of the hill is spread. Our joy was great on our rocks, for the fall of the terrible Swaran. Two heroes were forgot at our feast. The rage of their bosoms burned. They rolled their red eyes in secret. The sigh bursts from their breasts. They were seen to talk together, and to throw their spears on earth. They were two dark clouds in the midst of our joy; like pillars of mist on the settled sea. They glitter to the sun, but the mariners fear a storm.

"Raise my white sails," said Ma-ronnan, "raise them to the winds of the west. Let us rush, O Aldo! through the foam of the northern wave. We are forgot at the feast; but our arms have been red in blood. Let us leave the hills of Fingal, and serve the king of Sora. His countenance is fierce. War darkens around his spear. Let us be renowned, O Aldo, in the battles of other lands!"

[1] This was on Fingal's return.

They took their swords, their shields of thongs. They rushed to Lumar's resounding bay. They came to Sora's haughty king, the chief of bounding steeds. Erragon had returned from the chase. His spear was red in blood. He bent his dark face to the ground; and whistled as he went. He took the strangers to his feasts: they fought and conquered in his wars.

Aldo returned with his fame towards Sora's lofty walls. From her tower looked the spouse of Erragon, the humid, rolling eyes of Lorma. Her yellow hair flies on the wind of ocean. Her white breast heaves like snow on heath, when the gentle winds arise and slowly move it in the light. She saw young Aldo, like the beam of Sora's setting sun. Her soft heart sighed. Tears filled her eyes. Her white arm supported her head. Three days she sat within the hall, and covered her grief with joy. On the fourth she fled with the hero, along the troubled sea. They came to Cona's mossy towers, to Fingal, king of spears.

"Aldo of the heart of pride!" said Fingal, rising in wrath: "shall I defend thee from the rage of Sora's injured king? Who will now receive my people into their halls? Who will give the feast of strangers since Aldo, of the little soul, has dishonoured my name in Sora? Go to thy hills, thou feeble hand! Go: hide thee in thy caves. Mournful is the battle we must fight with Sora's gloomy king. Spirit of the noble Trenmor! When will Fingal cease to fight? I was born in the midst of battles, and my steps must move in blood to the tomb. But my hand did

not injure the weak, my steel did not touch the feeble in arms. I behold thy tempests, O Morven! which will overturn my halls; when my children are dead in battle, and none remains to dwell in Selma. Then will the feeble come, but they will not know my tomb. My renown is only in song. My deeds shall be as a dream to future times!"

His people gathered around Erragon, as the storms round the ghost of night, when he calls them from the top of Morven and prepares to pour them on the land of the stranger. He came to the shore of Cona. He sent his bard to the king, to demand the combat of thousands, or the land of many hills! Fingal sat in his hall with the friends of his youth around him. The young heroes were at the chase, far distant in the desert. The grey-haired chiefs talked of other times; of the actions of their youth; when the aged Nartmor came, the chief of streamy Lora.

"This is no time." said Nartmor, "to hear the songs of other years: Erragon frowns on the coast, and lifts ten thousand swords. Gloomy is the king among his chiefs! he is like the darkened moon amidst the meteors of night when they sail along her skirts, and give the light that has failed o'er her orb." "Come," said Fingal, "from thy hall, come daughter of my love: come from thy hall, Bosmina,[1] maid of streamy Morven! Nartmor, take the steeds of the strangers. Attend the daughter of Fingal! Let

[1] Bos-mhina, *soft and tender hand*, the youngest of Fingal's children.

her bid the king of Sora to our feast, to Selma's shaded wall. Offer him, O Bosmina! the peace of heroes, and the wealth of generous Aldo. Our youths are far distant. Age is on our trembling hands!"

She came to the host of Erragon, like a beam of light to a cloud. In her right hand was seen a sparkling shell. In her left an arrow of gold. The first the joyful mark of peace! The latter the sign of war. Erragon brightened in her presence as a rock before the sudden beams of the sun, when they issue from a broken cloud, divided by the roaring wind!

"Son of the distant Sora," began the mildly blushing maid, "come to the feast of Morven's king, to Selma's shaded walls. Take the peace of heroes, O warrior! Let the dark sword rest by thy side. Choosest thou the wealth of kings? Then hear the words of generous Aldo. He gives to Erragon an hundred steeds, the children of the rein; an hundred maids from distant lands; an hundred hawks with fluttering wing, that fly across the sky. An hundred girdles[1] shall also be thine, to bind high-bosomed maids. The friends of the births of heroes. The cure of the sons of toil. Ten shells studded with gems shall shine in Sora's towers: the bright water trembles on their stars, and seems to

[1] Sanctified girdles were kept in many families in the north of Scotland for the use of women. They were wrought with several mystical figures, and the ceremony of binding them about the woman's waist, accompanied as it was with words and gestures, indicated a Druidical origin.

be sparkling wine. They gladdened once the kings of the world, in the midst of their echoing halls. These, O hero! shall be thine; or thy white-bosomed spouse. Lorma shall roll her bright eyes in thy halls: though Fingal loves the generous Aldo: Fingal! who never injured a hero, though his arm is strong!"

"Soft voice of Cona!" replied the king, "tell him, he spreads his feast in vain. Let Fingal pour his spoils around me. Let him bend beneath my power. Let him give me the swords of his fathers: the shields of other times; that my children may behold them in my halls, and say, "These are the arms of Fingal." "Never shall they behold them in thy halls!" said the rising pride of the maid. "They are in the hands of heroes, who never yielded in war. King of echoing Sora! the storm is gathering on our hills. Dost thou not foresee the fall of thy people, son of the distant land?"

She came to Selma's silent halls. The king beheld her downcast eyes. He rose from his place, in his strength. He shook his aged locks. He took the sounding mail of Trenmor. The dark-brown shield of his fathers. Darkness filled Selma's hall when he stretched his hand to his spear: the ghosts of thousands were near, and foresaw the death of the people. Terrible joy rose in the face of the aged heroes. They rushed to meet the foe. Their thoughts are on the deeds of other years: and on the fame that rises from death!

Now at Trathal's ancient tomb the dogs of the chase appeared. Fingal knew that his young heroes followed. He stopped in the midst of his course. Oscar appeared the first; then Morni's son and Nemi's race. Fercuth showed his gloomy form. Dermid spread his dark hair on wind. Ossian came the last. I hummed the song of other times. My spear supported my steps over the little streams. My thoughts were of mighty men. Fingal struck his bossy shield, and gave the dismal sign of war. A thousand swords at once unsheathed gleam on the waving heath. Three grey-haired sons of song raise the tuneful, mournful voice. Deep and dark with sounding steps we rush a gloomy ridge along: like the shower of a storm when it pours on a narrow vale.

The king of Morven sat on his hill. The sunbeam of battle flew on the wind. The friends of his youth are near, with all their waving locks of age. Joy rose in the hero's eyes when he beheld his sons in war: when he saw us amidst the lightning of swords, mindful of the deeds of our fathers. Erragon came on, in his strength, like the roar of a winter stream. The battle falls around his steps: death dimly stalks along by his side!

"Who comes," said Fingal, "like the bounding roe, like the hart of echoing Cona? His shield glitters on his side. The clang of his armour is mournful. He meets with Erragon in the strife! Behold the battle of the chiefs! It is like the contend-

ing of ghosts in a gloomy storm. But fallest thou, son of the hill, and is thy white bosom stained with blood? Weep, unhappy Lorma, Aldo is no more!" The king took the spear of his strength. He was sad for the fall of Aldo. He bent his deathful eyes on the foe: but Gaul met the king of Sora. Who can relate the fight of the chiefs? The mighty stranger fell!

"Sons of Cona!" Fingal cried aloud, "stop the hand of death. Mighty was he that is low. Much is he mourned in Sora! The stranger will come towards his hall, and wonder why it is so silent. The king is fallen, O stranger. The joy of his house is ceased. Listen to the sound of his woods. Perhaps his ghost is murmuring there! But he is far distant, on Morven, beneath the sword of a foreign foe." Such were the words of Fingal when the bard raised the song of peace. We stopped our uplifted swords. We spared the feeble foe. We laid Erragon in a tomb. I raised the voice of grief. The clouds of night came rolling down. The ghost of Erragon appeared to some. His face was cloudy and dark; an half-formed sigh is in his breast. "Blest be thy soul, O king of Sora! thine arm was terrible in war!"

Lorma sat in Aldo's hall. She sat at the light of a flaming oak. The night came down, but he did not return The soul of Lorma is sad! "What detains thee, hunter of Cona? Thou didst promise to return. Has the deer been distant far? do the dark winds

sigh round thee on the heath? I am in the land of strangers, who is my friend but Aldo? Come from thy sounding hills, O my best beloved!"

Her eyes are turned toward the gate. She listens to the rustling blast. She thinks it is Aldo's tread. Joy rises in her face! But sorrow returns again, like a thin cloud on the moon. "Wilt thou not return, my love? Let me behold the face of the hill. The moon is in the east. Calm and bright is the breast of the lake! When shall I behold his dogs returning from the chase? When shall I hear his voice loud and distant on the wind? Come from thy sounding hills, hunter of woody Cona!" His thin ghost appeared on a rock, like a watery beam of feeble light, when the moon rushes sudden from between two clouds, and the midnight shower is on the field! She followed the empty form over the heath. She knew that her hero fell. I heard her approaching cries on the wind, like the mournful voice of the breeze, when it sighs on the grass of the cave!

She came. She found her hero! Her voice was heard no more. Silent she rolled her eyes. She was pale, and wildly sad! Few were her days on Cona. She sunk into the tomb. Fingal commanded his bards; they sung over the death of Lorma. The daughters of Morven mourned her, for one day in the year, when the dark winds of autumn returned!

Son of the distant land! Thou dwellest in the field of fame! O let thy song arise at times in praise

of those who fell. Let their thin ghosts rejoice around thee; and the soul of Lorma come on a feeble beam: when thou liest down to rest, and the moon looks into thy cave. Then shalt thou see her lovely; but the tear is still on her cheek!

Conlath and Cuthona:

A REVERIE OF OSSIAN'S.

DID not Ossian hear a voice? or is it the sound of days that are no more? Often does the memory of former times come, like the evening sun, on my soul. The noise of the chase is renewed. In thought, I lift the spear. But Ossian did hear a voice! Who art thou, son of night? The children of the feeble are asleep. The midnight wind is in my hall. Perhaps it is the shield of Fingal that echoes to the blast. It hangs in Ossian's hall. He feels it sometimes with his hands. Yes! I hear thee, my friend! Long has thy voice been absent from mine ear! What brings thee, on thy cloud, to Ossian, son of generous Morni? Are the friends of the aged near thee? Where is Oscar, son of fame? He was often near thee, O Conlath, when the sound of battle arose.

GHOST OF CONLATH.

Sleeps the sweet voice of Cona in the midst of his rustling hall? Sleeps Ossian in his hall, and his

friends without their fame? The sea rolls round dark I-thona.[1] Our tombs are not seen in our isle. How long shall our fame be unheard, son of resounding Selma?

OSSIAN.

O that mine eyes could behold thee! Thou sittest, dim, on thy cloud! Art thou like the mist of Lano? An half-extinguished meteor of fire? Of what are the skirts of thy robe? Of what is thine airy bow? He is gone on his blast like the shade of a wandering cloud. Come from thy wall, O harp! Let me hear thy sound. Let the light of memory rise on I-thona. Let me behold again my friends! And Ossian does behold his friends on the dark-blue isle. The cave óf Thona appears, with its mossy rocks and bending trees. A stream roars at its mouth. Toscar bends over its course. Fercuth is sad by his side. Cuthóna[2] sits at a distance, and weeps. Does the wind of the waves deceive me? Or do I hear them speak?

TOSCAR.

The night was stormy. From their hills the groaning oaks came down. The sea darkly tumbled beneath the blast. The roaring waves climbed against our rocks. The lightning came often and showed the blasted fern. Fercuth! I saw the ghost

1 Ithona, *island of waves*, one of the western isles.

2 Cuthona, the daughter of Rumar, whom Toscar had carried away by force.

who embroiled the night.[1] Silent he stood on that bank. His robe of mist flew on the wind. I could behold his tears. An aged man he seemed, and full of thought!

FERCUTH.

It was thy father, O Toscar. He foresees some death among his race. Such was his appearance on Crómla, before the great Maronnan[2] fell. Erin of hills of grass! How pleasant are thy vales! Silence is near thy blue streams. The sun is on thy fields. Soft is the sound of the harp in Selama.[3] Lovely the cry of the hunter on Crómla. But we are in dark I-thona, surrounded by the storm. The billows lift their white heads above our rocks. We tremble amidst the night.

TOSCAR.

Whither is the soul of battle fled, Fercuth with locks of age. I have seen thee undaunted in danger: thine eyes burning with joy in the fight. Whither is the soul of battle fled? Our fathers never feared. Go: view the settling sea: the stormy wind is laid. The billows still tremble on the deep. They seem to fear the blast. Go view the

[1] It was long a prevailing idea in the Highlands of Scotland that storms were raised by the ghosts of the deceased, and that thus whirlwinds, and sudden squalls of wind, were occasioned by spirits who transported themselves in that manner from one place to another.

[2] Maronnan, brother of Toscar.

[3] Selamath, *beautiful to behold*, the name of Toscar's residence on the coast of Ulster, near the mountain Cromla.

settling sea. Morning is grey on our rocks. The sun will look soon from his east; in all his pride of light! I lifted up my sails, with joy, before the halls of generous Conlath. My course was by a desert isle: where Cuthóna pursued the deer. I saw her like that beam of the sun that issues from the cloud. Her hair was on her heaving breast. She, bending forward, drew the bow. Her white arm seemed behind her, like the snow of Crómla. Come to my soul, I said, huntress of the desert isle! But she wastes her time in tears. She thinks of the generous Conlath. Where can I find thy peace, Cuthóna, lovely maid!

CUTHÓNA.[1]

A distant steep bends over the sea, with aged trees and mossy rocks. The billow rolls at its feet. On its side is the dwelling of roes. The people call it Mora. There the towers of my love arise. There Conlath looks over the sea for his only love. The daughters of the chase returned. He beheld their downcast eyes. "Where is the daughter of Rumar?" But they answered not. My peace dwells on Mora, son of the distant land!

TOSCAR.

Cuthóna shall return to her peace: to the towers of generous Conlath. He is the friend of Toscar! I

[1] Cu-thona, *the mournful sound of the waves;* a name given her on account of her mourning to the sound of the waves.

have feasted in his halls! Rise, ye gentle breezes of Erin. Stretch my sails toward Mora's shores. Cuthóna shall rest on Mora: but the days of Toscar must be sad. I shall sit in my cave in the field of the sun. The blast will rustle in my trees. I shall think it is Cuthóna's voice. But she is distant far, in the halls of the mighty Conlath!

CUTHÓNA.

Ha! what cloud is that? It carries the ghosts of my fathers. I see the skirts of their robes, like grey and watery mist. When shall I fall, O Rumar? Sad Cuthóna foresees her death. Will not Conlath behold me before I enter the narrow house?

OSSIAN.

He shall behold thee, O maid. He comes along the heaving sea. The death of Toscar is dark on his spear. A wound is in his side! He is pale at the cave of Thona. He shews his ghastly wound. Where art thou with thy tears, Cuthóna! The chief of Mora dies. The vision grows dim on my mind. I behold the chiefs no more! But, O ye bards of future times, remember the fall of Conlath with tears. He fell before his day. Sadness darkened in his hall. His mother looked to his shield on the wall, and it was bloody.[1] She knew that her hero fell. Her

[1] This has reference to another superstition of the times, that the arms left by warriors at home became bloody the instant their owners were killed abroad.

sorrow was heard on Mora. Art thou pale on thy rock, Cuthóna, beside the fallen chiefs? Night comes, and day returns, but none appears to raise their tomb. Thou frightenest the screaming fowls away. Thy tears for ever flow. Thou art pale as a watery cloud that rises from a lake!

The sons of green Selma came. They found Cuthóna cold. They raised a tomb over the heroes. She rests at the side of Conlath! Come not to my dreams, O Conlath! Thou hast received thy fame. Be thy voice far distant from my hall; thy sleep may descend at night. O that I could forget my friends: till my footsteps should cease to be seen! till I come among them with joy! and lay my aged limbs in the narrow house!

The Songs of Selma.

STAR of descending night! fair is thy light in the west! thou liftest thy unshorn head from thy cloud: thy steps are stately on thy hill. What dost thou behold in the plain? The stormy winds are laid. The murmur of the torrent comes from afar. Roaring waves climb the distant rock. The flies of evening are on their feeble wings; the hum of their course is on the field. What dost thou behold, fair light? But thou dost smile and depart. The waves come with joy around thee: they bathe thy lovely hair. Farewell, thou silent beam! let the light of Ossian's soul arise!

And it does arise in its strength! I behold my departed friends. Their gathering is on Lora, as in the days of other years. Fingal comes like a watery column of mist; his heroes are around: And see the bards of song, grey-haired Ullin! stately Ryno! Alpin, with the tuneful voice! the soft complaint of Minona! How are ye changed, my friends, since the days of Selma's feast? when we contended, like

gales of spring, as they fly along the hill, and bend by turns the feebly-whistling grass.

MINONA SINGS THE SONG OF COLMA.

Minona came forth in her beauty; with downcast look and tearful eye. Her hair flew slowly on the blast, that rushed unfrequent from the hill. The souls of the heroes were sad when she raised the tuneful voice. Often had they seen the grave of Salgar, the dark dwelling of white-bosomed Colma. Colma left alone on the hill, with all her voice of song! Salgar promised to come: but the night descended around. Hear the voice of Colma, when she sat alone on the hill!

It is night; I am alone, forlorn on the hill of storms. The wind is heard in the mountain. The torrent pours down the rock. No hut receives me from the rain; forlorn on the hill of winds!

Rise, moon! from behind thy clouds. Stars of the night arise! Lead me, some light, to the place where my love rests from the chase alone! his bow near him unstrung: his dogs panting around him. But here I must sit alone, by the rock of the mossy stream. The stream and the wind roar aloud. I hear not the voice of my love! Why delays my Salgar, why the chief of the hill, his promise? Here is the rock, and here the tree! here is the roaring stream! Thou didst promise with night to be here. Ah! whither is my Salgar gone? With thee I would fly from my father; with thee from my brother of

pride. Our race have long been foes; we are not foes, O Salgar!

Cease a little while, O wind! stream, be thou silent awhile! let my voice be heard around. Let my wanderer hear me! Salgar! it is Colma who calls. Here is the tree, and the rock. Salgar, my love! I am here. Why delayest thou thy coming? Lo! the calm moon comes forth. The flood is bright in the vale. The rocks are grey on the steep. I see him not on the brow. His dogs come not before him, with tidings of his near approach. Here I must sit alone!

Who lie on the heath beside me! Are they my love and my brother! Speak to me, O my friends! To Colma they give no reply. Speak to me: I am alone! My soul is tormented with fears! Ah! they are dead! Their swords are red from the fight. O my brother! my brother! why hast thou slain my Salgar? why, O Salgar! hast thou slain my brother? Dear were ye both to me! what shall I say in your praise? Thou wert fair on the hill among thousands! he was terrible in fight. Speak to me; hear my voice; hear me, sons of my love! They are silent; silent for ever! Cold, cold are their breasts of clay! Oh! from the rock on the hill; from the top of the windy steep, speak, ye ghosts of the dead! speak, I will not be afraid! Whither are ye gone to rest! In what cave of the hill shall I find the departed? No feeble voice is on the gale; no answer half-drowned in the storm!

I sit in my grief! I wait for morning in my tears! Rear the tomb, ye friends of the dead. Close it not till Colma come. My life flies away like a dream: why should I stay behind? Here shall I rest with my friends, by the stream of the sounding rock. When night comes on the hill; when the loud winds arise; my ghost shall stand in the blast, and mourn the death of my friends. The hunter shall hear from his booth. He shall fear but love my voice! For sweet shall my voice be for my friends: pleasant were her friends to Colma!

Such was thy song, Minona, softly-blushing daughter of Torman. Our tears descended for Colma, and our souls were sad! Ullin came with his harp; he gave the song of Alpin. The voice of Alpin was pleasant: the soul of Ryno was a beam of fire! But they had rested in the narrow house: their voice had ceased in Selma. Ullin had returned one day from the chase, before the heroes fell. He heard their strife on the hill; their song was soft but sad! They mourned the fall of Morar, first of mortal men! His soul was like the soul of Fingal; his sword like the sword of Oscar. But he fell, and his father mourned: his sister's eyes were full of tears. Minona's eyes were full of tears, the sister of car-borne Morar. She retired from the song of Ullin, like the moon in the west, when she foresees the shower, and hides her fair head in a cloud. I touched the harp with Ullin; the song of mourning rose!

RYNO.

The wind and the rain are past: calm is the noon of day. The clouds are divided in heaven. Over the green hills flies the inconstant sun. Red through the stony vale comes down the stream of the hill. Sweet are thy murmurs, O stream! but more sweet is the voice I hear. It is the voice of Alpin, the son of song, mourning for the dead! Bent is his head of age; red his tearful eye. Alpin, thou son of song, why alone on the silent hill? Why complainest thou, as a blast in the wood; as a wave on the lonely shore?

ALPIN.

My tears, O Ryno! are for the dead; my voice for those that have passed away. Tall thou art on the hill; fair among the sons of the vale. But thou shalt fall like Morar; the mourner shall sit on thy tomb. The hills shall know thee no more; thy bow shall lie in the hall unstrung!

Thou wert swift, O Morar! as a roe on the desert; terrible as a meteor of fire. Thy wrath was as the storm. Thy sword in battle, as lightning in the field. Thy voice was a stream after rain; like thunder on distant hills. Many fell by thy arm; they were consumed in the flames of thy wrath. But when thou didst return from war, how peaceful was thy brow! Thy face was like the sun after rain; like the moon in the silence of night;

calm as the breast of the lake when the loud wind is laid.

Narrow is thy dwelling now! dark the place of thine abode! With three steps I compass thy grave, O thou wast so great before! Four stones, with their heads of moss, are the only memorial of thee. A tree with scarce a leaf, long grass, which whistles in the wind, mark to the hunter's eye the grave of the mighty Morar. Morar! thou art low indeed. Thou hast no mother to mourn thee; no maid with her tears of love. Dead is she that brought thee forth. Fallen is the daughter of Morglan.

Who on his staff is this? Who is this, whose head is white with age? whose eyes are red with tears? who quakes at every step? It is thy father, O Morar! the father of no son but thee. He heard of thy fame in war; he heard of foes dispersed. He heard of Morar's renown; why did he not hear of his wound? Weep, thou father of Morar! weep; but thy son heareth thee not. Deep is the sleep of the dead; low their pillow of dust. No more shall he hear thy voice; no more awake at thy call. When shall it be morn in the grave, to bid the slumberer awake? Farewell thou bravest of men! thou conqueror in the field! but the field shall see thee no more; nor the dark wood be lightened with the splendour of thy steel. Thou hast left no son. The song shall preserve thy name. Future times shall hear of thee; they shall hear of the fallen Morar!

The grief of all arose, but most the bursting sigh of Armin. He remembers the death of his son, who fell in the days of his youth. Carmor was near the hero, the chief of the echoing Galmal. Why bursts the sigh of Armin, he said? Is there a cause to mourn? The song comes with its music to melt and please the soul. It is like soft mist, that, rising from a lake, pours on the silent vale; the green flowers are filled with dew, but the sun returns in his strength, and the mist is gone. Why art thou sad, O Armin! chief of sea-surrounded Gorma?

Sad I am! nor small is my cause of woe! Carmor, thou hast lost no son; thou hast lost no daughter of beauty, Colgar the valiant lives; and Annira, fairest maid. The boughs of thy house ascend, O Carmor! but Armin is the last of his race. Dark is thy bed, O Daura! deep thy sleep in the tomb! When shalt thou awake with thy songs? with all thy voice of music?

Arise, winds of autumn, arise; blow along the heath! streams of the mountains roar! roar, tempests, in the groves of my oaks! walk through broken clouds, O moon! show thy pale face, at intervals! bring to my mind the night when all my children fell; when Arindal the mighty fell; when Daura the lovely failed! Daura, my daughter! thou wert fair; fair as the moon on Fura; white as the driven snow; sweet as the breathing gale. Arindal, thy bow was strong. Thy spear was swift in the field. Thy look was like mist on the wave: thy shield a red cloud in

a storm. Armar, renowned in war, came, and sought Daura's love. He was not long refused: fair was the hope of their friends!

Erath, son of Odgal, repined: his brother had been slain by Armar. He came disguised like a son of the sea: fair was his skiff on the wave; white his locks of age; calm his serious brow. Fairest of women, he said, lovely daughter of Armin! a rock not distant in the sea, bears a tree on its side; red shines the fruit afar! There Armar waits for Daura. I come to carry his love! She went; she called on Armar. Nought answered, but the son of the rock,[1] Armar, my love! my love! why tormentest thou me with fear? Hear, son of Arnart, hear: it is Daura who calleth thee! Erath the traitor fled laughing to the land. She lifted up her voice; she called for her brother and her father. Arindal! Armin! none to relieve your Daura!

Her voice came over the sea. Arindal my son descended from the hill; rough in the spoils of the chase. His arrows rattled by his side; his bow was in his hand; five dark grey dogs attend his steps. He saw fierce Erath on the shore: he seized and bound him to an oak. Thick wind the thongs of the hide around his limbs; he loads the wind with his groans. Arindal ascends the deep in his boat, to bring Daura to land. Armar came in his wrath, and let fly the

[1] The son of the rock.—The echoes were supposed to be the voices of spirits within the rocks, whence called *mac talla; son who dwells in the rock.*

grey-feathered shaft. It sung; it sunk in thy heart, O Arindal my son! for Erath the traitor thou diedst. The oar is stopped at once; he panted on the rock and expired. What is thy grief, O Daura, when round thy feet is poured thy brother's blood! The boat is broken in twain. Armar plunges into the sea, to rescue his Daura, or die. Sudden a blast from the hill came over the waves. He sunk, and he rose no more.

Alone, on the sea-beat rock, my daughter was heard to complain. Frequent and loud were her cries. What could her father do? All night I stood on the shore. I saw her by the faint beam of the moon. All night I heard her cries. Loud was the wind; the rain beat hard on the hill. Before morning appeared, her voice was weak. It died away like the evening breeze among the grass of the rocks. Spent with grief she expired; and left thee, Armin, alone. Gone is my strength in war! fallen my pride among women! When the storms aloft arise: when the north lifts the wave on high; I sit by the sounding shore, and look on the fatal rock. Often by the setting moon, I see the ghosts of my children. Half-viewless, they walk in mournful conference together. Will none of you speak in pity! They do not regard their father. I am sad, O Carmor, nor small is my cause of woe!

Such were the words of the bards in the days of song; when the king heard the music of harps, the tales of other times! The chiefs gathered from all

their hills, and heard the lovely sound. They praised the voice of Cona! the first among a thousand bards! But age is now on my tongue; my soul has failed! I hear at times the ghosts of bards, and learn their pleasant song. But memory fails on my mind. I hear the call of years! They say, as they pass along, why does Ossian sing? Soon shall he lie in the narrow house, and no bard shall raise his fame! Roll on, ye dark-brown years; ye bring no joy on your course! Let the tomb open to Ossian, for his strength has failed. The sons of song are gone to rest. My voice remains, like a blast, that roars, lonely, on a sea-surrounded rock, after the winds are laid. The dark moss whistles there; the distant mariner sees the waving trees!