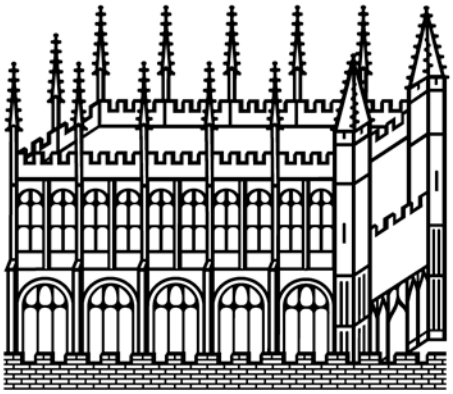

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HELENA CLARA
DENEKE

THE

# POEMS OF OSSIAN.

Edinburgh: Printed by
James Ballantyne.

THE

# POEMS OF OSSIAN,

TRANSLATED

BY

JAMES MACPHERSON, Esq.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

THE

ENGRAVINGS BY

JAMES FITTLER, A.R.A.

FROM PICTURES BY

HENRY SINGLETON.

VOL. III.

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# FINGAL:

AN

## ANCIENT EPIC POEM.

IN SIX BOOKS.

# FINGAL:

AN

## ANCIENT EPIC POEM.

## BOOK III.

### ARGUMENT.

CUTHULLIN, pleased with the story of Carril, insists with that bard for more of his songs. He relates the actions of Fingal in Lochlin, and death of Agandecca, the beautiful sister of Swaran. He had scarce finished, when Calmar, the son of Matha, who had advised the first battle, came wounded from the field, and told them of Swaran's design to surprise the remains of the Irish army. He himself proposes to withstand singly the whole force of the enemy, in a narrow pass, till the Irish should make good their retreat. Cuthullin, touched with the gallant proposal of Calmar, resolves to accompany him, and orders Carril to carry off the few that remained of the Irish. Morning comes; Calmar

dies of his wounds; and, the ships of the Caledonians appearing, Swaran gives over the pursuit of the Irish, and returns to oppose Fingal's landing. Cuthullin, ashamed, after his defeat, to appear before Fingal, retires to the cave of Tura. Fingal engages the enemy, puts them to flight; but the coming on of night makes the victory not decisive. The king, who had observed the gallant behaviour of his grandson Oscar, gives him advices concerning his conduct in peace and war. He recommends to him to place the example of his fathers before his eyes, as the best model for his conduct; which introduces the episode concerning Fainasollis, the daughter of the king of Craca, whom Fingal had taken uuder his protection, in his youth. Fillan and Oscar are dispatched to observe the motions of the enemy by night; Gaul, the son of Morni, desires the command of the army in the next battle; which Fingal promises to give him. Some general reflections of the poet close the third day.

---

"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,

* The second night, since the opening of the poem, continues; and Cuthullin, Connal, and Carril, still sit

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

in the place described in the preceding book. The story of Agandecca is introduced here with propriety, as great use is made of it in the course of the poem, and as it, in some measure, brings about the catastrophe.

* Starno was the father of Swaran as well as Agandecca. His fierce and cruel character is well-marked in other poems concerning the times.

often sung round the circle * 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 hall 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

* This passage most certainly alludes to the religion of Lochlin, and *the stone of power* here mentioned is the image, one of the deities of Scandinavia.

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 daughter of Lochlin; and Morven's * 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 blest the chief of resounding Morven.

The third day, with all its beams, shone bright on the woods of boars. Forth moved the dark-browed Starno; and Fingal, king of shields. Half the day they spent in the chace; the spear

* All the north-west coast of Scotland probably went of old under the name of Morven, which signifies a ridge of very high hills.

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 chace convened. The king's dark brows were like clouds. His eyes like meteors of night. "Bring hither," he said, "Agandecca to her 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 Runan; 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. Shew thy face from a cloud, O moon! light his white sails on the wave: and if any strong spirit * of heaven 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

* This is the only passage in the poem that has the appearance of religion. But Cuthullin's apostrophe to this spirit is accompanied with a doubt; so that it is not easy to determine whether the hero meant a superior being, or the ghosts of deceased warriors, who were supposed, in those times, to rule the storms, and to transport themselves in a gust of wind from one country to another.

bending spear. Feeble is the arm of battle! but strong the soul of 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 son 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, waining 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 chace. 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 clouds burst 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 sun-beam! that mild light of love! the daughter of Craca's * king! I then

* What the Craca here mentioned was, is not, at this

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. Cromala'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

distance of time, easy to determine. The most probable opinion is, that it was one of the Shetland isles. There is a story concerning a daughter of the king of Craca in the sixth book.

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! 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 *, 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 sooth 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

* Gaul, the son of Morni, was chief of a tribe that disputed long the pre-eminence with Fingal himself. They were reduced at last to obedience, and Gaul, from an enemy, turned Fingal's best friend, and greatest hero. His character is something like that of Ajax in the Iliad; a hero of more strength than conduct in battle. He was very fond of military fame, and here he demands the next battle to himself. The poet, by an artifice, removes Fingal, that his return may be the more magnificent.

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-shrowded masts of Lochlin; come to my dreams *, my fair one. Shew 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 Fingal'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

* The poet prepares us for the dream of Fingal in the next book.

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!

# FINGAL:

AN

## ANCIENT EPIC POEM.

## BOOK IV.

### ARGUMENT.

The action of the poem being suspended by night, Ossian takes that opportunity to relate his own actions at the lake of Lego, and his courtship of Everallin, who was the mother of Oscar, and had died some time before the expedition of Fingal into Ireland. Her ghost appears to him, and tells him that Oscar, who had been sent, the beginning of the night, to observe the enemy, was engaged with an advanced party, and almost overpowered. Ossian relieves his son; and an alarm is given to Fingal of the approach of Swaran. The king rises, calls his army together, and, as he had promised the preceding night, devolves the command on Gaul, the son of Morni; while he himself, after

charging his sons to behave gallantly, and defend his people, retires to a hill, from whence he could have a view of the battle. The battle joins; the poet relates Oscar's great actions. But when Oscar, in conjunction with his father, conquered in one wing, Gaul, who was attacked by Swaran in person, was on the point of retreating in the other. Fingal sends Ullin, his bard, to encourage him with a war song; but notwithstanding, Swaran prevails; and Gaul and his army are obliged to give way. Fingal, descending from the hill, rallies them again: Swaran desists from the pursuit, possesses himself of a rising ground, restores the ranks, and waits the approach of Fingal. The king, having encouraged his men, gives the necessary orders, and renews the battle. Cuthullin, who, with his friend Connal, and Carril, his bard, had retired to the cave of Tura, hearing the noise, came to the brow of the hill, which overlooked the field of battle, where he saw Fingal engaged with the enemy. He, being hindered by Connal from joining Fingal, who was himself upon the point of obtaining a complete victory, sends Carril to congratulate that hero on his success.

---

WHO * comes with her songs from the hill, like the bow of the showery Lena! It is the maid

* Fingal being asleep, and the action suspended by night, the poet introduces the story of his courtship of

of the voice of love! The white-armed daughter of Toscar! 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,

Everallin, the daughter of Branno. The episode is necessary, to clear up several passages that follow in the poem; at the same time that it naturally brings on the action of the book, which may be supposed to begin about the middle of the third night from the opening of the poem. This book, as many of Ossian's other compositions, is addressed to the beautiful Malvina, the daughter of Toscar. She appears to have been in love with Oscar, and to have affected the company of the father after the death of the son.

to Lego's sable surge. Twelve of my people were there, the sons of streamy Morven! We came to Branno, friend of strangers! 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 blest 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, unhappy 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 inconstant blast blew hard, The high oak shook its leaves around. Of Everallin were my thoughts, when in all the light of

* The poet returns to his subject. If one could fix the time of the year in which the action of the poem happened, from the scene described here, I should be tempted to place it in autumn. The trees shed their leaves, and the winds are variable; both which circumstances agree with that season of the year.

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 sun 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 sun-beam 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," begun 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 the 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

* The custom of encouraging men in battle with extempore rhymes, has been carried down almost to our own times. Several of these war songs are extant, but the most of them are only a group of epithets, without either beauty or harmony, utterly destitute of poetical merit.

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 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 thousands 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 sun-

beam * 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 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 Lano'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

* Fingal's standard was distinguished by the name of *sun-beam*; probably on account of its bright colour, and its being studded with gold. To begin a battle is expressed, in old composition, by *lifting of the sun-beam*.

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 stopt 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 sun-beam of my soul!"

# FINGAL:

AN

## ANCIENT EPIC POEM.

## BOOK V.

### ARGUMENT.

CUTHULLIN and Connal still remain on the hill. Fingal and Swaran meet; the combat is described. Swaran is overcome, bound, and delivered over as a prisoner to the care of Ossian, and Gaul, the son of Morni; Fingal, his younger sons, and Oscar, still pursue the enemy. The episode of Orla, a chief of Lochlin, who was mortally wounded in the battle, is introduced. Fingal, touched with the death of Orla, orders the pursuit to be discontinued; and, calling his sons together, he is informed that Ryno, the youngest of them, was slain. He laments his death, hears the story of Lamdarg and Gelchossa, and returns towards the place where he had left Swaran. Carril, who had

been sent by Cuthullin to congratulate Fingal on his victory, comes in the mean time to Ossian. The conversation of the two poets closes the action of the fourth day.

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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. They then 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 sun-beam; 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 chuse 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 shew 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 Fillan, 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. Fillan, 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?" begun 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 * in this place: dumb is Ullin, king of swords: And who, soft smiling from her cloud, shews 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 sooth

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

my soul after war. Silent is the hall of my joy! I hear not the voice of the bard. Bran * 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 †, the grey-haired son

* Bran is a common name of grey-hounds to this day. It is a custom in the north of Scotland, to give the names of the heroes mentioned in this poem to their dogs; a proof that they are familiar to the ear, and their fame generally known.

† Allad is a druid: he is called the son of the rock, from his dwelling in a cave: and the circle of stones here mentioned, is the pale of the druidical temple. He is here consulted as one who had a supernatural knowledge of things. From the druids, no doubt, came the ridiculous notion of the second sight, which prevailed in the Highlands and isles.

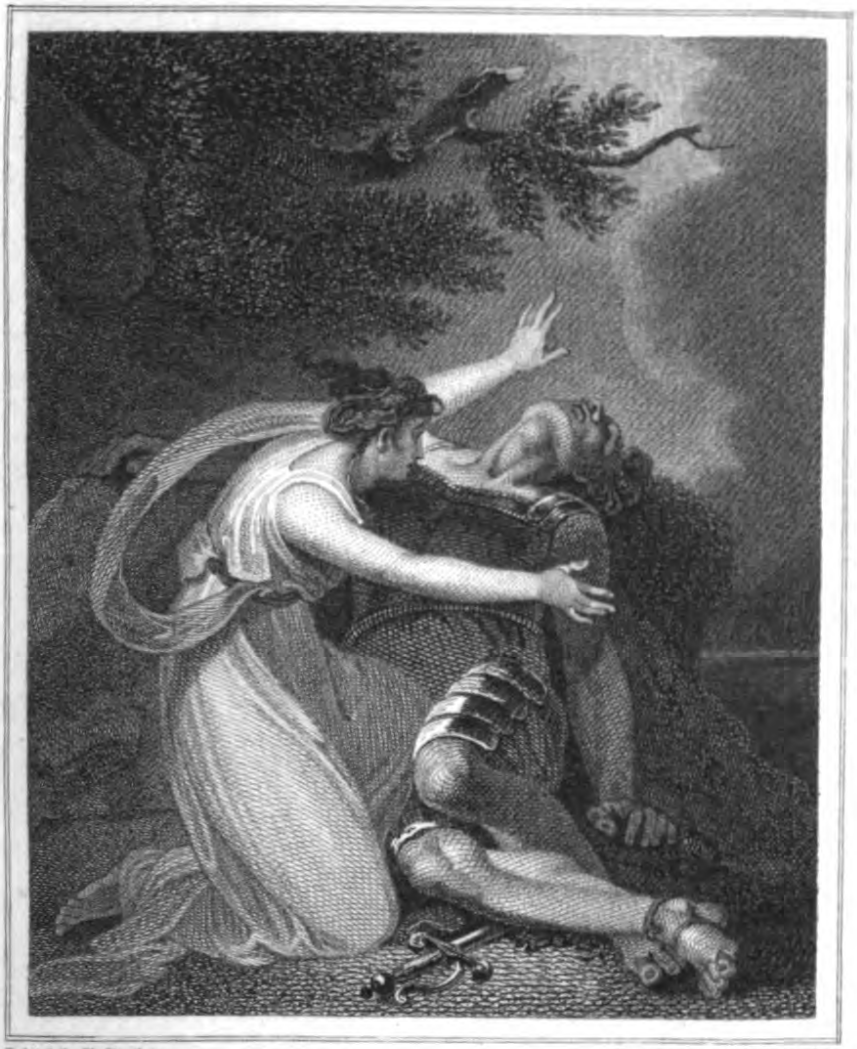
of the rock. His dwelling is in the circle of stones. He may know of the bright Gelchossa!

"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



*Painted by H. Singleton.* *Engraved by Ja.s Fittler A.R.A.*

# FINGAL.

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TAYLOR INST.
OXFORD

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 sun-beam 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 Evirallin. Thou too hast often joined my voice, in Branno's hall of generous shells. And often, amidst our voices, was heard the mildest Evirallin. One day she sung 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 Brano!"

"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!"

# FINGAL:

AN

# ANCIENT EPIC POEM.

## BOOK VI.

### ARGUMENT.

NIGHT comes on. Fingal gives a feast to his army, at which Swaran is present. The king commands Ullin, his bard, to give the *song of peace*; a custom always observed at the end of a war. Ullin relates the actions of Trenmor, great-grandfather to Fingal, in Scandinavia, and his marriage with Inibaca, the daughter of a king of Lochlin, who was ancestor to Swaran; which consideration, together with his being brother to Agandecca, with whom Fingal was in love in his youth, induced the king to release him, and permit him to return, with the remains of his army, into Lochlin, upon his promise of never returning to Ireland in a hostile manner. The night is spent in set-

tling Swaran's departure, in songs of bards, and in a conversation, in which the story of Grumal is introduced by Fingal. Morning comes. Swaran departs; Fingal goes on a hunting party, and finding Cuthullin in the cave of Tura, comforts him, and sets sail, the next day, for Scotland; which concludes the poem.

THE clouds of night come rolling down. Darkness rests on the steeps of Cromla. The stars of the north arise over the rolling of Erin's waves: they shew 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 * 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 sooth my soul from war! Let mine ear forget,

* 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. The Caledonians, in their frequent incursions to the province, might become acquainted with those conveniences of life, and introduce them into their own country, among the booty which they carried from South Britain.

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*," 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 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

* Trenmor was great-grandfather to Fingal. The story is introduced to facilitate the dismission of Swaran.

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, sun-beam 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 dropt 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," begun 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 chuse 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 Gor-

mal." "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 re-

nowned. 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*, 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

* This passage alludes to the religion of the king of Craca.

the great Fingal, " raise high the price 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? 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 Comla'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 chace. 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 chace 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 chace! "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 * had fled, and joy returned to the hill of hinds!" "Many are thy words, Cuthullin," said Connan † of small renown. "Thy

* This is the only passage in the poem wherein the wars of Fingal against the Romans are alluded to: the Roman emperor is distinguished in old composition by the title of *king of the world.*

† Connan was of the family of Morni. He is mentioned in several other poems, and always appears with the same character. The poet passed him over in silence till now, and his behaviour here deserves no better usage.

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 flyest to thy cave of grief, and Connan fights 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*; to hear the song of the sea! the sound of thy distant harp!"

* The practice of singing, when they row, is universal among the inhabitants of the north-west coast of Scotland and the isles. It deceives time, and inspirits the rowers.

"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 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.

# LATHMON:

## A POEM.

# ARGUMENT.

LATHMON, a British prince, taking advantage of Fingal's absence on an expedition in Ireland, made a descent on Morven, and advanced within sight of Selma, the royal residence. Fingal arrived in the mean time, and Lathmon retreated to a hill, where his army was surprised by night, and himself taken prisoner by Ossian and Gaul the son of Morni. The poem opens, with the first appearance of Fingal on the coast of Morven, and ends, it may be supposed, about noon the next day.

# LATHMON:

## A POEM.

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:

* It is said by tradition, that it was the intelligence of Lathmon's invasion, that occasioned Fingal's return from Ireland; though Ossian, more poetically, ascribes the cause of Fingal's knowledge to his dream.

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

* He alludes to a battle wherein Fingal had defeated Lathmon.

† Morni was chief of a numerous tribe, in the days of Fingal, and his father Comhal. The last mentioned hero was killed in battle against Morni's tribe; but the valour and conduct of Fingal reduced them, at last, to obedience. We find the two heroes perfectly reconciled in this poem.

‡ Stru'-moné, *stream of the hill.* Here the proper name of a rivulet in the neighbourhood of Selma.

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 disperses 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 hands 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 * 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 light-

* Ossian speaks. The contrast between the old and young heroes is strongly marked. The circumstance of the latter's drawing their swords is well imagined, and agrees with the impatience of young soldiers, just entered upon action.

ning 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 sung 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 feast. Our swords are turned on the foe of our land: he melts before

* Ullin had chosen ill the subject of his song. The *darkness which gathered on Morni's brow,* did not proceed from any dislike he had to Comhal's name, though they were foes, but from his fear that the song would awaken Fingal to a remembrance of the feuds which had subsisted of old between the families. Fingal's speech on this occasion abounds with generosity and good sense.

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

* Fingal. † Fingal and Morni.
‡ Suil-mhath, *a man of good eye-sight.*

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 placed in my hand the sword of Morni. We returned to the murmuring stream ;

* Dubh-bhranna, *dark mountain-stream.* A river in Scotland, which falls into the sea at Banff, still retains the name of Duvran. If that is meant in this passage, Lathmon must have been a prince of the Pictish nation, or those Caledonians who inhabited of old the eastern coast of Scotland.

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

* It was thought, in Ossian's time, that each person had his attending spirit. The traditions concerning this opinion are dark and unsatisfactory.

TAYLOR INST.
OXFORD

*Painted by H. Singleton.* *Engraved by Ja.s Fittler A.R.A.*

# LATHMORE.

Vol. 3.d Page 95.

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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 look 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 tombs 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!"

# DAR-THULA:

## A POEM.

# ARGUMENT.

It may not be improper here, to give the story which is the foundation of this poem, as it is handed down by tradition. Usnoth lord of Etha, which is probably that part of Argyleshire which is near Loch Eta, an arm of the sea in Lorn, had three sons, Nathos, Althos, and Ardan, by Slissáma, the daughter of Semo, and sister to the celebrated Cuthullin. The three brothers, when very young, were sent over to Ireland, by their father, to learn the use of arms, under their uncle, Cuthullin, who made a great figure in that kingdom. They were just landed in Ulster when the news of Cuthullin's death arrived. Nathos, though very young, took the command of Cuthullin's army, made head against Cairbar the usurper, and defeated him in several battles. Cairbar at last having found means to murder Cormac, the lawful king, the army of Nathos shifted sides, and he himself was obliged to return into Ulster, in order to pass over into Scotland.

Dar-thula, the daughter of Colla, with whom Cairbar was in love, resided, at that time, in Selâma, a

eastle in Ulster: she saw, fell in love, and fled with Nathos; but a storm rising at sea, they were unfortunately driven back on that part of the coast of Ulster, where Cairbar was encamped with his army. The three brothers, after having defended themselves, for some time, with great bravery, were overpowered and slain, and the unfortunate Dar-thula killed herself upon the body of her beloved Nathos.

The poem opens, on the night preceding the death of the sons of Usnoth, and brings in, by way of episode, what passed before. It relates the death of Dar-thula differently from the common tradition: this account is the most probable, as suicide seems to have been unknown in those early times; for no traces of it are found in the old poetry.

# DAR-THULA:

## A POEM.

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 thy-

self 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

* Nathos signifies *youthful;* Ailthos, *exquisite beauty;* Ardan, *pride.*

† Cairbar, who murdered Cormac king of Ireland, and usurped the throne. He was afterwards killed by Oscar, the son of Ossian, in a single combat. The poet, upon other occasions, gives him the epithet of red-haired.

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.

* Dar-thúla, or Dart-'huile, *a woman with fine eyes.* She was the most famous beauty of antiquity. To this day, when a woman is praised for her beauty, the common phrase is, that *she is as lovely as Dar-thula.*

Thy words were the gale of the reeds; the gliding 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 *, 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 ‡! that I might rejoice in the presence of Nathos! Blest are the rocks of Etha! they will behold his steps at the chace! they will see his white bosom, when the winds

* The word signifies either *beautiful to behold*, or a place *with a pleasant or wide prospect*. In early times, they built their houses upon eminences, to command a view of the country, and to prevent their being surprized: many of them, on that account, were called Seláma. The famous Selma of Fingal is derived from the same root.

† Cormac, the young king of Ireland, who was privately murdered by Cairbar.

‡ That is, of the love of Cairbar.

lift his flowing hair!" Such were thy words, Dar-thula, in Selâma's mossy towers. But, now, the night is around thee. 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 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 watry 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 past 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 * 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,

* It was the custom of ancient times, that every warrior at a certain age, or when he became unfit for the field, fixed his arms, in the great hall, where the tribe feasted upon joyful occasions. He was afterwards never to appear in battle; and this stage of life was called the *time of fixing of the arms.*

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 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 echo-

* Lona, *a marshy plain.* Cairbar had just provided an entertainment for his army, upon the defeat of Truthil the son of Colla, and the rest of the party of Cormac, when Colla and his aged warriors arrived to give him battle.

† The poet, by an artifice, avoids the description of the battle of Lona, as it would be improper in the mouth of a woman, and could have nothing new, after the numerous descriptions, of that kind, in the rest of the poems. He, at the same time, gives an opportunity to Dar-thula to pass a fine compliment on her lover.

ing 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 Seláma'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 Seláma. 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 Seláma'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-bo-

* Oscar, the son of Ossian, had long resolved on the expedition into Ireland, against Cairbar, who had assassinated his friend Cathol, the son of Moran, an Irishman of noble extraction, and in the interest of the family of Cormac.

somed 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 Selá-ma! 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 sudden 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 Slissáma ‡, 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. Mourn-

* Lamh-mhor, *mighty hand.*

† Temora was the residence of the supreme kings of Ireland. It is here called mournful, on account of the death of Cormac, who was murdered there by Cairbar, who usurped his throne.

‡ Slis-seamha, *soft bosom.* She was the wife of Usnoth, and daughter of Semo the chief of the *isle of mist.*

ful 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 Caithbat. The heroes gathered around with joy, and shook their beamy spears. Corlath was near with his host, the friend of carborne 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, vanished 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."

* Althos had just returned from viewing the coast of Lena, whither he had been sent by Nathos, the beginning of the night.

† Cairbar had gathered an army, to the coast of Ulster, in order to oppose Fingal, who prepared for an expedition into Ireland, to re-establish the house of Cormac on the throne, which Cairbar had usurped. Between the wings of Cairbar's army was the bay of Tura, into which the ship of the sons of Usnoth was driven: so that there was no possibility of their escaping.

"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!

* Semo was grand-father to Nathos by the mother's side. The spear mentioned here was given to Usnoth on his marriage, it being the custom then for the father of the lady to give his arms to his son-in-law.

we meet the foe ; call to battle gloomy Cairbar. O that he came in his sounding steel, to meet the son of Usnoth ! Darthula ! 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.

* Usnoth.

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

* By the spirit of the mountain is meant that deep and melancholy sound which precedes a storm; well known to those who live in a high country.

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 Arden?"

"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,

* He alludes to the flight of Cairbar from Selama.

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 * 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

* Truthil was the founder of Dar-thula's family.

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!

THE

# DEATH OF CUTHULLIN:

## A POEM.

# ARGUMENT.

CUTHULLIN, after the arms of Fingal had expelled Swaran from Ireland, continued to manage the affairs of that kingdom as the guardian of Cormac, the young king. In the third year of Cuthullin's administration, Torlath, the son of Cantéla, rebelled in Connaught; and advanced to Temora to dethrone Cormac. Cuthullin marched against him, came up with him at the lake of Lego, and totally defeated his forces. Torlath fell in battle by Cuthullin's hand: but as he too eagerly pressed on the enemy, he was mortally wounded. The affairs of Cormac, though, for some time, supported by Nathos, as mentioned in the preceding poem, fell into confusion at the death of Cuthullin. Cormac himself was slain by the rebel Cairbar; and the re-establishment of the royal family of Ireland by Fingal, furnishes the subject of the epic poem of Temora.

THE

# DEATH OF CUTHULLIN:

## A POEM.

"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 *, since thou hast been in the roar

* Togormo, *i. e. the island of blue waves,* one of the Hebrides, was subject to Connal, the son of Caith-

of battles, and Bragéla distant far! Hills of the isle of mist! when will ye answer to his hounds? But ye are dark in your clouds. Sad Bragéla calls in vain! Night comes rolling down. The face of ocean fails. The heath-cock's head is beneath his wing. The hind sleeps, 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 war's?"

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

bat, Cuthullin's friend. He is sometimes called the son of Colgar, from one of that name, who was the founder of the family. Connal, a few days before the news of Torlath's revolt came to Temora, had sailed to Togorma, his native isle; where he was detained by contrary winds during the war in which Cuthullin was killed.

thousands spread on the heath. A hundred oaks burn, in the midst. The feast of shells is smoaking 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 Togormo, 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 its 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

* The royal palace of the Irish kings; Teamhrath, according to some of the bards.

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 Cantéla †?"

"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 bards were the heralds of ancient times; and their persons were sacred on account of their office. In latter times they abused that privilege: and as their persons were inviolable, they satirized and lampooned so freely those who were not liked by their patrons, that they became a public nuisance. Screened under the character of heralds, they grossly abused the enemy when he would not accept the terms they offered.

† Cean-teola', *head of a family.*

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 watry 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 val-

* Slia'mor, *great hill.*

leys 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

* Calmar, the son of Matha. His death is related at large in the third book of Fingal. He was the only son of Matha; and the family was extinct in him. The seat of the family was on the banks of the river Lara, in the neighbourhood of Lego, and probably near the place where Cuthullin lay; which circumstance suggested to him, the lamentation of Alclétha over her son.

leaned on his father's shield: the song of Laro 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 towards 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 † 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,

* Ald-cla'tha, *decaying beauty*: probably a poetical name given the mother of Calmar, by the bard himself.

† Alcletha speaks. Calmar had promised to return, by a certain day, and his mother and his sister Alona are represented as looking, with impatience, towards that quarter where they expected Calmar should make his first appearance.

‡ Aluine, *exquisitely beautiful*.

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

* Alcletha speaks.

† She addresses herself to Larnir, Calmar's friend, who had returned with the news of his death.

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? Wouldest 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 art 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

thousands, 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

* Loda, in the third book of Fingal, is mentioned as a place of worship in Scandinavia: by the *spirit of Loda*, the poet probably means Odin, the great deity of the northern nations. He is described here with all his terrors.

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 waining 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 roaring 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 cloathed 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 Dunscäi. Thy spouse is left alone in her youth. The son * of thy love is alone! He shall come to Bragéla, 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

* Conloch, who was afterwards very famous for his great exploits in Ireland. He was so remarkable for his dexterity in handling the javelin, that when a good marksman is described, it has passed into a proverb, in the north of Scotland, *He is unerring as the arm of Conloch.*

mighty fell? Did the seas of Cogormo 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. Luäth *, at a distance lies. The song of bards rose over the dead.

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 Dunscäi! Thou hast not fallen by the sword of the

* It was of old the custom to bury the favourite dog near the master. This was not peculiar to the ancient Scots; for we find it practised by many other nations in their ages of heroism.—There is a stone shewn still at Dunscäi, in the isle of Sky, to which Cuthullin commonly bound his dog Luath. The stone goes by his name to this day.

† This is the song of the bards over Cuthullin's tomb. Every stanza closes with some remarkable title of the hero, which was always the custom in funeral elegies.

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 shield is ceased: his foes are gathering round. Soft be thy rest in thy cave, chief of Erin's wars! Bragéla 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 see the arms of him that is no more. Thine eyes are full of tears, daughter of carborne Sorglan! Blest be thy soul in death, O chief of shady Tura!"

THE

# BATTLE OF LORA:

## A POEM.

# ARGUMENT.

FINGAL, on his return from Ireland, after he had expelled Swaran from that kingdom, made a feast to all his heroes; he forgot to invite Ma-ronnan and Aldo, two chiefs, who had not been along with him in his expedition. They resented his neglect, and went over to Erragon, king of Sora, a country of Scandinavia, the declared enemy of Fingal. The valour of Aldo soon gained him a great reputation in Sora: and Lorma, the beautiful wife of Erragon, fell in love with him. He found means to escape with her, and to come to Fingal, who resided then in Selma, on the western coast. Erragon invaded Scotland, and was slain in battle by Gaul, the son of Morni, after he had rejected terms of peace offered him by Fingal. In this war Aldo fell, in a single combat, by the hands of his rival Erragon, and the unfortunate Lorma afterwards died of grief.

THE

# BATTLE OF LORA:

## A POEM.

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 of 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

* Alluding to the religious hymns of the Culdees.

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 *; this thy narrow house: the sound of thy shells has 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 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. 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,

* Erragon, or Ferg-thonn, signifies *the rage of the waves*; probably a poetical name given him by Ossian himself; for he goes by the name of Annir in tradition

† This was at Fingal's return from his war against Swaran.

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!"

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 chace. 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

* Comhal, the father of Fingal, was slain in battle, against the tribe of Morni, the very day that Fingal was born; so that he may, with propriety, be said to have been *born in the midst of battles*.

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 chace, 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

† Neart-mór, *great strength.* Lora, *noisy.*

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 *, maid of streamy Morven! Nartmor, take the steeds of the strangers. Attend the daughter of Fingal! Let 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

* Bos-mhina, *soft and tender hand.* She was the youngest of Fingal's children.

by thy side. Chusest 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 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 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

* Sanctified girdles, till very lately, were kept in many families in the north of Scotland; they were bound about women in labour, and were supposed to alleviate their pains, and to accelerate the birth. They were impressed with several mystical figures, and the ceremony of binding them about the woman's waist, was accompanied with words and gestures which shewed the custom to have come originally from the Druids.

† The Roman emperors.

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 down-cast 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 chace 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 * shewed 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

* Fear-cuth, the same with Fergus, *the man of the word*, or a commander of an army.

glitters on his side. The clang of armour is mournful. He meets with Erragon in the strife! Behold the battle of the chiefs! It is like the contending 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 chace ? 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 watry 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!

* The poet addresses himself to the Culdee.

† Be thou on a moon-beam, O Morna, near the window of my rest; when my thoughts are of peace; and the din of arms is past. FINGAL, B. I.

# TEMORA:

## AN EPIC POEM.

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### BOOK I.

#### ARGUMENT.

CAIRBAR, the son of Borbar-duthul, lord of Atha in Connaught, the most potent chief of the race of the Firbolg, having murdered at Temora, the royal palace, Cormac, the son of Artho, the young king of Ireland, usurped the throne. Cormac was lineally descended from Conar, the son of Trenmor, the great grandfather of Fingal, king of those Caledonians who inhabited the western coast of Scotland. Fingal resented the behaviour of Cairbar, and resolved to pass over into Ireland, with an army, to re-establish the royal family on the Irish throne. Early intelligence of his designs coming to Cairbar, he assembled some of his tribes in Ulster, and at the same time ordered his brother Cathmor to follow him speedily with an army, from Temora. Such was the situation of affairs when the Caledonian invaders appeared on the coast of Ulster.

The poem opens in the morning. Cairbar is represented as retired from the rest of the army, when one

of his scouts brought him news of the landing of Fingal. He assembles a council of his chiefs. Foldath, the chief of Moma, haughtily despises the enemy; and is reprimanded warmly by Malthos. Cairbar, after hearing their debate, orders a feast to be prepared, to which, by his bard Olla, he invites Oscar, the son of Ossian; resolving to pick a quarrel with that hero, and so have some pretext for killing him. Oscar came to the feast; the quarrel happened; the followers of both fought, and Cairbar and Oscar fell by mutual wounds. The noise of the battle reached Fingal's army. The king came on, to the relief of Oscar, and the Irish fell back to the army of Cathmor, who was advanced to the banks of the river Lubar, on the heath of Moi-lena. Fingal, after mourning over his grandson, ordered Ullin, the chief of his bards, to carry his body to Morven, to be there interred. Night coming on, Althan, the son of Conachar, relates to the king the particulars of the murder of Cormac. Fillan, the son of Fingal, is sent to observe the motions of Cathmar by night, which concludes the action of the first day. The scene of this book is a plain, near the hill of Mora, which rose on the borders of the heath of Moi-lena, in Ulster.

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 side. Cairbar thrice threw his spear on earth. Thrice he stroaked 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 vallies 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

* Cairbar, the son of Borbar-duthul, was descended lineally from Lathon, the chief of the Firbolg, the first colony who settled in the south of Ireland. The Cael were in possession of the northern coast of that kingdom, and the first monarchs of Ireland were of their race. Hence arose those differences between the two nations, which terminated, at last, in the murder of Cormac, and the usurpation of Cairbar, lord of Atha, who is mentioned in this place.

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, Mor-annal†, from streamy Moi-lena. His eyes hang forward from his face. His lips are trembling, pale!

"Do the chiefs of Erin stand," he said, "si-

* Mór-lath, *great in the day of battle.* Hidalla', *mildly looking hero.* Cor-mar, *expert at sea.* Málthos, *slow to speak.* Foldath, *generous.*

Foldath, who is here strongly marked, makes a great figure in the sequel of the poem. His fierce, uncomplying character is sustained throughout. He seems, from a passage in the second book, to have been Cairbar's greatest confidant, and to have had a principal hand in the conspiracy against Cormac, king of Ireland. His tribe was one of the most considerable of the race of the Fir-bolg.

† Mór-annal, *strong breath;* a very proper name for a scout.

lent as the grove of 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 *. 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. 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

* Mór-annal here alludes to the particular appearance of Fingal's spear. If a man, upon his first landing in a strange country, kept the point of his spear forward, it denoted, in those days, that he came in a hostile manner, and accordingly he was treated as an enemy; if he kept the point behind him, it was a token of friendship, and he was immediately invited to the feast, according to the hospitality of the times.

† This was the famous sword of Fingal, made by Luno, a smith of Lochlin, and after him poetically called the *son of Luno*: it is said of this sword, that it killed a man at every stroke; and that Fingal never used it but in times of the greatest danger.

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

* The opposite characters of Foldath and Malthos are strongly marked in subsequent parts of the poem. They appear always in opposition. The feuds between their families, which were the source of their hatred to one another, are mentioned in other poems.

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."

† That is, who has heard my vaunting? He intended the expression as a rebuke to the self-praise of Foldath.

‡ Hidalla was the chief of Clonra, a small district on the banks of the lake of Lego. The beauty of his person, his eloquence and genius for poetry, are afterwards mentioned.

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 *; that bards gave his friend to the winds. Tell him that Cairbar has heard of his fame, at the stream of resounding Carun †. Cathmor ‡ my

* Cathol, the son of Maronnan, or Moran, was murdered by Cairbar, for his attachment to the family of Cormac. He had attended Oscar to the *war of Inisthona,* where they contracted a great friendship for one another. Oscar, immediately after the death of Cathol, had sent a formal challenge to Cairbar, which he prudently declined, but conceived a secret hatred against Oscar, and had beforehand contrived to kill him at the feast, to which he here invites him.

† He alludes to the battle of Oscar against Caros, *king of ships ;* who is supposed to be the same with Carausius the usurper.

‡ Cathmor, *great in battle,* the son of Borbar-duthul, and brother of Cairbar, king of Ireland, had, before the

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

insurrection of the Firbolg, passed over into Inis-huna, supposed to be a part of South Britain, to assist Conmor, king of that place, against his enemies. Cathmor was successful in the war; but, in the course of it, Conmor was either killed, or died a natural death. Cairbar, upon intelligence of the designs of Fingal to dethrone him, had dispatched a messenger for Cathmor, who returned into Ireland a few days before the opening of the poem.

Cairbar here takes advantage of his brother's absence, to perpetrate his ungenerous designs against Oscar; for the noble spirit of Cathmor, had he been present, would not have permitted the laws of that hospitality, for which he was so renowned himself, to be violated. The brothers form a contrast: we do not detest the mean soul of Cairbar more, than we admire the disinterested and generous mind of Cathmor.

* Fingal's army heard the joy that was in Cairbar's camp. The character given of Cathmor is agreeable to

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

the times. Some, through ostentation, were hospitable; and others fell naturally into a custom handed down from their ancestors. But what marks strongly the character of Cathmor, is his aversion to praise; for he is represented to dwell in a wood to avoid the thanks of his guests; which is still a higher degree of generosity than that of Axylus in Homer: for the poet does not say, but the good man might, at the head of his own table, have heard with pleasure the praise bestowed on him by the people he entertained.

No nation in the world carried hospitality to a greater length than the ancient Scots. It was even infamous, for many ages, in a man of condition, to have the door of his house shut at all, LEST, as the bards express it, THE STRANGER SHOULD COME AND BEHOLD HIS CONTRACTED SOUL. Some of the chiefs were possesed of this hospitable disposition to an extravagant degree; and the bards, perhaps upon a private account, never failed to recommend it, in their eulogiums. *Cean uia' na dia'*, or, *the point to which all the roads of the strangers lead*, was an invariable epithet given by them to the chiefs; on the contrary, they distinguished the inhospitable by the title of *the cloud which the strangers shun*. This last, however, was so uncommon, that in all the old poems I have ever met with, I found but one man branded with this ignominious appellation; and that, perhaps, only founded upon a private quarrel, which subsisted between him and the patron of the bard, who wrote the poem.

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 feast 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; and rising seized his

* When a chief was determined to kill a person already in his power, it was usual to signify that his death was intended, by the sound of a shield struck with the blunt end of a spear; at the same time, that a bard at a distance raised the death song.

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: neïther 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

* Cormac, the son of Arth, had given the spear, which is here the foundation of the quarrel, to Oscar, when he came to congratulate him upon Swaran's being expelled from Ireland.

† Ti'mór-i', *the house of the great king*, the name of the royal palace of the supreme kings of Ireland.

‡ *Hundred* here is an indefinite number, and is only intended to express a great many. It was probably the hyperbolical phrases of bards, that gave the first hint to the Irish Senachies to place the origin of their monarchy in so remote a period as they have done.

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 of mist before the winds of Atha*!" "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†! why that tear? He is not fallen yet. Many were the deaths of his arm before my hero fell:

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

† Malvina, the daughter of Toscar, to whom is addressed that part of the poem which related to the death of Oscar, her lover.

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 * falls! The

* The Irish historians place the death of Cairbar in the latter end of the third century: they say, he was killed in battle against Oscar the son of Ossian, but deny that he fell by his hand.

It is, however, certain, that the Irish bards disguise, in some measure, this part of their history. An Irish poem on this subject, which, undoubtedly, was the source of their information, concerning the battle of Gabhra, where Cairbar fell, is just now in my hands. As a translation of the poem (which, though evidently no very ancient composition, does not want poetical merit) would extend this note to too great a length, I shall only give the story of it in brief, with some extracts from the original Irish.

Oscar, says the Irish bard, was invited to a feast, at Temora, by Cairbar, king of Ireland. A dispute arose between the two heroes, concerning the exchange of spears, which was usually made, between the guests and their host, upon such occasions. In the course of their altercation, Cairbar said, in a boastful manner, that he

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 vallied 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

would hunt on the hills of Albion, and carry the spoils of it into Ireland, in spite of all the efforts of its inhabitants. The original words are:

Briathar buan sin; Briathar buan
A bheireadh an Cairbre rua',
Gu tuga' se sealg, agus creach
A h'ALBIN an la'r na mhaireach.

Oscar replied, that, the next day, he himself would carry into Albion the spoils of the five provinces of Ireland, in spite of the opposition of Cairbar.

Briathar eile an aghaí sin
A bheirea' an t' Oscar, og, calma
Gu'n tugadh se sealg agus creach
Do dh'ALBIN an la'r na mhaireach, &c.

Oscar, in consequence of his threats, began to lay waste Ireland; but as he returned with the spoil into Ulster, through the narrow pass of Gabhra *(Caoil ghlen Ghabhra)* he was met by Cairbar, and a battle ensued, in which both the heroes fell by mutual wounds. The bard gives a very curious list of the followers of Oscar, as they marched to battle. They appear to have been five hundred in number, commanded, as the poet expresses it, by *five heroes of the blood of kings*. This poem mentions Fingal, as arriving from Scotland, before Oscar died of his wounds.

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

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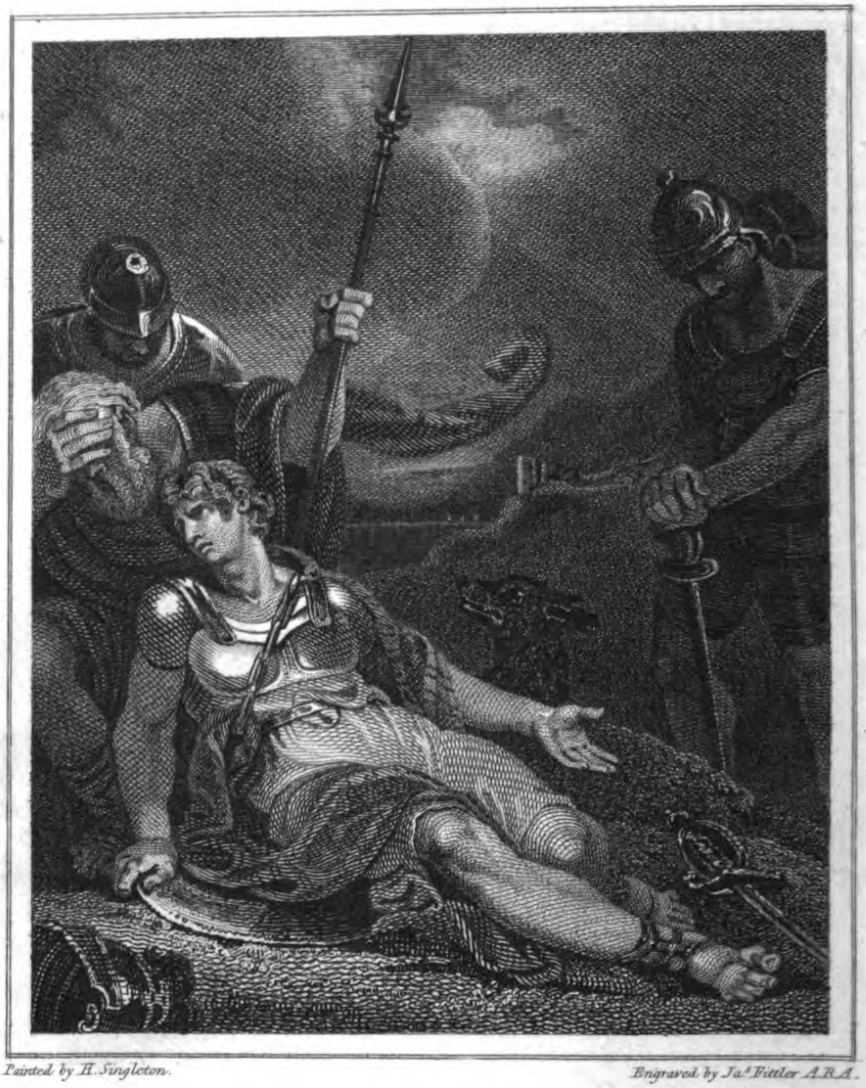

*Painted by H. Singleton.* *Engraved by Ja.s Fittler A.R.A.*

# TEMORA.

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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 * is howling at his feet: gloomy Luäth is sad; for he had often led them to the chace; 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: 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

* Bran was one of Fingal's dogs. Bran signifies *a mountain stream.*

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: 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-haired 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 * stood in the midst. He told the tale of

* Althan, the son of Conachar, was the chief bard of Arth, king of Ireland. After the death of Arth, Althan attended his son Cormac, and was present at his death. He had made his escape from Cairbar, by the means of Cathmor, and

fallen Cormac. Althan, the son of Conachar, the friend of car-borne Cuthullin. He dwelt with Cormac in windy Temora, when Semo's son fell at Lego's stream. The tale of Althan was mournful. The tear was in his eye, when he spoke.

* "The setting sun was yellow on Dora †. 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 ‡ was in the hand of the king. He looked with joy

coming to Fingal, related, as here, the death of his master Cormac.

* Althan speaks.

† Doira, *the woody side of a mountain;* it is here a hill in the neighbourhood of Temora.

‡ Arth, or Artho, the father of Cormac, king of Ireland.

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 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 chief is low! Shall I not rush to

* Cuthullin is called the king of Tura, from a castle of that name on the coast of Ulster, where he dwelt, before he undertook the management of the affairs of Ireland, in the minority of Cormac.

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 †. He told of 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 fire, 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? The people rise

* That prophetic sound, mentioned in other poems, which the harps of the bards emitted before the death of a person worthy and renowned. It is here an omen of the death of Cormac, which, soon after, followed.

† Slimora, a hill in Connaught, near which Cuthullin was killed.

‡ Usnoth, chief of Etha, a district on the western coast of

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 † 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 Cuthul-

Scotland, had three sons, Nathos, Althos, and Ardan, by Slissáma, the sister of Cuthullin. The three brothers, when very young, were sent over to Ireland by their father, to learn the use of arms under their uncle, whose military fame was very great in that kingdom. They had just arrived in Ulster when the news of Cuthullin's death arrived. Nathos, the eldest of the three brothers, took the command of Cuthullin's army, and made head against Cairbar, the chief of Atha. Cairbar having, at last, murdered young king Cormac, at Temora, the army of Nathos shifted sides, and the brothers were obliged to return into Ulster, in order to pass over into Scotland. The sequel of their mournful story is related, at large, in the poem of Dar-thula.

* Caithbat was grandfather to Cuthullin; and his shield was made use of to alarm his posterity to the battles of the family.

† That is, they saw a manifest likeness between the person of Nathos and Cuthullin.

lin. His voice was pleasant in mine ear. Often have we moved, on Dora, to the chace 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 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?"

* Nathos, the son of Usnoth.

† Geal-lamha, *white handed*.

‡ From this expression, we understand, that Cairbar had entered the palace of Temora, in the midst of Cormac's speech.

"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 smoaking 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 ‡, though his soul was dark. Long we pined alone! At length, the noble Cathmor || came. He heard our voice from

* Althan speaks.

† That is, himself and Carril, as it afterwards appears.

‡ The persons of the bards were so sacred, that even he, who had just murdered his sovereign, feared to kill them.

|| Cathmor appears the same disinterested hero upon every

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 aid the red-haired Cairbar.

occasion. His humanity and generosity were unparalleled: in short, he had no fault, but too much attachment to so bad a brother as Cairbar. His family connection with Cairbar prevails, as he expresses it, over every other consideration, and makes him engage in a war, of which he does not approve.

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.

# TEMORA:

## AN EPIC POEM.

## BOOK II.

### ARGUMENT.

THIS book opens, we may suppose, about midnight, with a soliloquy of Ossian, who had retired, from the rest of the army, to mourn for his son Oscar. Upon hearing the noise of Cathmor's army approaching, he went to find out his brother Fillan, who kept the watch, on the hill of Mora, in the front of Fingal's army. In the conversation of the brothers, the episode of Conar, the son of Trenmor, who was the first king of Ireland, is introduced, which lays open the origin of the contests between the Caël and Firbolg, the two nations who first possessed themselves of that island. Ossian kindles a fire on Mora; upon which Cathmor desisted from the design he had formed of surprising the army of the Caledonians. He calls a council of his chiefs; reprimands Foldath for advising a night-attack, as the Irish army were so much superior in number to the enemy. The bard Fonar introduces the story of Crothar, the ancestor of the king, which throws further light on the history of Ireland, and the original pretensions of the family of Atha to the throne of that king-

dom. The Irish chiefs lie down to rest, and Cathmor himself undertakes the watch. In his circuit, round the army, he is met by Ossian. The interview of the two heroes is described. Cathmor obtains a promise from Ossian, to order a funeral elegy to be sung over the grave of Cairbar; it being the opinion of the times, that the souls of the dead could not be happy, till their elegies were sung by a bard. Morning comes. Cathmor and Ossian part; and the latter, casually meeting with Carril, the son of Kinfena, sends that bard, with a funeral song, to the tomb of Cairbar.

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* FATHER of heroes! O Trenmor! High dweller of eddying winds! where the dark-red thunder marks the troubled clouds! Open thou thy stormy

* Though this book has little action, it is not the least important part of Temora. The poet, in several episodes, runs up the cause of the war to the very source. The first population of Ireland, the wars between the two nations who originally possessed that island, its first race of kings, and the revolutions of its government, are important facts, and are delivered by the poet, with so little mixture of the fabulous, that one cannot help preferring his accounts to the improbable fictions of the Scotch and Irish historians. The Milesian fables bear about them the marks of a late invention. To trace their legends to their source would be no difficult task; but a disquisition of this sort would extend this note too far.

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

* We understand, from the preceding book, that Cathmor was near with an army. When Cairbar was killed, the tribes who attended him fell back to Cathmor; who, as it afterwards appears, had taken a resolution to surprise Fingal by night. Fillan was dispatched to the hill of Mora, which was in the front of the Caledonians, to observe the motions of Cathmor. In this situation were affairs when Ossian, upon hearing the noise of the approaching enemy, went to find out his brother. Their conversation naturally introduces the episode, concerning Conar, the son of Trenmor, the first Irish

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 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.

monarch, which is so necessary to the understanding the foundation of the rebellion and usurpation of Cairbar and Cathmor. Fillan was the youngest of the sons of Fingal, then living. He and Bosmina, mentioned in the battle of Lora, were the only children of the king, by Clatho, the daughter of Cathulla, king of Inis-tore, whom he had taken to wife, after the death of Ros-crana, the daughter of Cormac Mac-Conar, king of Ireland.

* That is, two sons in Ireland. Fergus, the second son of

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 * crowd around the shield of generous 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

Fingal, was, at that time, on an expedition, which is mentioned in one of the lesser poems. He, according to some traditions, was the ancestor of Fergus, the son of Erc or Arcath, commonly called *Fergus the second* in the Scotch histories. The beginning of the reign of Fergus over the Scots, is placed, by the most approved annals of Scotland, in the fourth year of the fifth age; a full century after the death of Ossian. The genealogy of his family is recorded thus by the Highland Senachies: *Fergus Mac-Arcath, Mac-Chongael, Mac-Fergus, Mac-Fiongael na buai'; i. e.* Fergus the son of Arcath, the son of Congal, the son of Fergus, the son of Fingal *the victorious*. This subject is treated more at large, in the dissertation annexed to the poem.

* The southern parts of Ireland went, for some time, under the name of Bolga, from the Fir-bolg, or Belgæ, of Britain, who settled a colony there. *Bolg* signifies *a quiver*, from which proceeds *Fir-bolg*, i. e. *bow-men*; so called from their using bows more than any of the neighbouring nations.

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 of mor-

* After this passage, Oscar is not mentioned in all Temora. The situations of the characters who act in the poem are so interesting, that others, foreign to the subject, could not be introduced with any lustre. Though the episode, which follows, may seem to flow naturally enough from the conversation of the brothers, yet I have shewn, in a preceding note, and, more at large, in the dissertation annexed to this collection, that the poet had a farther design in view.

† Conar, the first king of Ireland, was the son of Trenmor, the great-grand-father of Fingal. It was on account of this family-connection, that Fingal was engaged in so many wars in the cause of the race of Conar. Though few of the actions of Trenmor are mentioned, he was the most renowned name of antiquity. The most probable opinion concerning him is, that he was the first, who united the tribes of the Caledonians, and commanded them, in chief, against the incursions of the Romans. The genealogists of the North have traced his family far back, and given a list of his an-

tal 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 Ullin, and they blessed the king; the king of the race of their fathers, from the land of Selma.

The chiefs * of the south were gathered, in the darkness of their pride. In the horrid cave of Muma 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.

cestors to *Cuan-mór nan lan*, or Conmor of the swords, who, according to them, was the first who crossed the *great sea*, to Caledonia, from which circumstance his name proceeded, which signifies *Great ocean*. Genealogies of so ancient a date, however, are little to be depended upon.

* The chiefs of the Fir-bolg, who possessed themselves of the south of Ireland, prior, perhaps, to the settlement of the *Caël* of Caledonia, and the Hebrides, in Ulster. From the sequel, it appears that the Fir-bolg were, by much, the most powerful nation; and it is probable that the Caël must have submitted to them, had they not received succours from their mother-country, under the command of Conar.

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 the white-bosomed Solin-corma.

As Trenmor, cloathed 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

* Colg-er, *fiercely-looking warrior*. Sulin-corma, *blue eyes*. Colgar was the eldest of the sons of Trathal: Comhal, who was the father of Fingal, was very young when the present expedition to Ireland happened. It is remarkable, that, of all the ancestors of Fingal, tradition makes the least mention of Comhal; which, probably, proceeded from the unfortunate life and untimely death of that hero. From some passages, concerning him, we learn, indeed, that he was brave, but he wanted conduct.

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 †

* The poem begins here to mark strongly the character of Fillan, who is to make so great a figure in the sequel. He has the impatience, the ambition, and fire, which are peculiar to a young hero. Kindled with the fame of Colgar, he forgets his untimely fall. From Fillan's expressions in this passage, it would seem, that he was neglected by Fingal, on account of his youth.

† Cathmor is distinguished, by this honourable title, on ac-

of strangers! The winds lift his heavy locks. Thou art the tallest of the race of Erin, king of streamy Atha!

"First of bards," said Cathmor, "Fonar*, call the chiefs of Erin. Call red-haired Cormar: dark-browed Malthos: the side-long-looking gloom of Maronnan. Let the pride of Foldath appear. The red-rolling eye of Turlotho. Nor let Hidalla 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!"

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†, when the meteor lights it, before the nightly stran-

count of his generosity to strangers, which was so great as to be remarkable even in those days of hospitality.

* Fónar, *the man of song*. Before the introduction of Christianity, a name was not imposed upon any person, till he had distinguished himself by some remarkable action, from which his name should be derived.

† Brumo was a place of worship (Fing. b. 6.) in Craca, which is supposed to be one of the isles of Shetland. It was thought, that the spirits of the deceased haunted it, by night, which adds more terror to the description introduced here. *The horrid circle of Brumo, where often, they said, the ghosts of the dead howled round the stone of fear.*

ger. 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-Duthul!"

"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

* From this passage, it appears, that it was Foldath who had advised the night attack. The gloomy character of Foldath is properly contrasted to the generous, the open Cathmor.

† By this exclamation, Cathmor intimates that he intends to revenge the death of his brother Cairbar.

‡ To have no funeral elegy sung over his tomb, was, among the Celtæ, reckoned the greatest misfortune that could befal a man; as his soul could not otherwise be admitted to the *airy hall of his fathers.*

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. 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: that beam of light, with wandering locks, from Lumon of the roes. At distance rose the voice of Fonar, with the deeds of the days of old. The song fails, at times, in Lubar's growing roar!

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

* By *the stranger of Inis-huna*, is meant Sulmalla, the daughter of Conmor, king of Inis-huna, the ancient name of that part of South Britain, which is next to the Irish coast. She had followed Cathmor in disguise. Her story is related at large in the fourth book.

† Crothar was the ancestor of Cathmor, and the first of his family who had settled in Atha. It was in his time that the first wars were kindled between the Fir-bolg and Caël. The propriety of the episode is evident; as the contest which originally rose between Crothar and Conar subsisted afterwards between their posterity, and was the foundation of the story of the poem.

‡ From this circumstance we may learn, that the art of building with stone was not known in Ireland so early as the days of Crothar. When the colony were long settled in the country, the arts of civil life began to increase among them; for we find mention made of the *towers of Atha* in the time of Cathmor, which could not well be applied to wooden buildings. In Caledonia they began very early to build with stone. None of the houses of Fingal, excepting Ti-foirmal, were of wood. Ti-foirmal was the great hall where the bards met to repeat their compositions annually, before they submitted them to the judgment of the king in Selma. By some accident or other, this wooden house happened to

mountains, 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 * was the warrior honoured: the first of the race of Bolga.

"He pursued the chace 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, midst 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

be burnt, and an ancient bard, in the character of Ossian, has left us a curious catalogue of the furniture which it contained. The poem is not just now in my hands, otherwise I would lay here a translation of it before the reader. It has little poetical merit, and evidently bears the marks of a later period.

* Alnecma, or Alnecmacht, was the ancient name of Connaught. Ullin is still the Irish name of the province of Ulster. To avoid the multiplying of notes, I shall here give the signification of the names in this episode. Drumardo, *high ridge*. Cathmin, *calm in battle*. Cón-lamha, *soft hand*. Turioch, *man of the quiver*. Cormul, *blue eye*.

to the chace, 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.

" 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

* The delicacy here, with regard to Crothar, is proper. As he was the ancestor of Cathmor, to whom the episode is addressed, the bard softens his defeat, by only mentioning that his *people fled*. Cathmor took the song of Fonar in an unfavourable light. The bards being of the order of the Druids, who pretended to a foreknowledge of events, were supposed to have some supernatural prescience of futurity. The king thought, that the choice of Fonar's song proceeded from his foreseeing the unfortunate issue of the war; and that his own fate was shadowed out, in that of his ancestor Crothar. The attitude of the bard, after the reprimand of his patron, is picturesque and affecting. We admire the speech of Cathmor, but lament the effect it has on the feeling soul of the good old poet.

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 come 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 Mora'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 con-

tending 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 Borbarduthul *?"

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

* Borbar-duthul, *the surly warrior of the dark-brown eyes.* That his name suited well with his character, we may easily conceive, from the story delivered concerning him, by Malthos, toward the end of the sixth book. He was the brother of that Colculla, who is mentioned in the episode which begins the fourth book.

† This reply abounds with the sentiments of a noble mind. Though, of all men living, he was the most injured by Cairbar, yet he lays aside his rage as the *foe was low.* How different is this from the behaviour of the heroes of other ancient poems? *Cynthius aurem vellit.*

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 coming forth, O sun! Terrible is thy beauty, son

* The morning of the second day, from the opening of the poem, comes on. After the death of Cuthullin, Carril, the son of Kinfena, his bard, retired to the cave of Tura, which was in the neighbourhood of Moi-lena, the scene of the poem of Temora. His casual appearance here enables Ossian to fulfil immediately the promise he had made to Cathmor, of causing the *funeral song* to be pronounced over the tomb of Cairbair. This book takes up only the space of a few hours.

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 the 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 through the rustling vale, on which the sun looks through 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!"

# TEMORA:

## AN EPIC POEM.

## BOOK III.

### ARGUMENT.

MORNING coming on, Fingal, after a speech to his people, devolves the command on Gaul, the son of Morni; it being the custom of the times, that the king should not engage, till the necessity of affairs required his superior valour and conduct. The king and Ossian retire to the rock of Cormul, which overlooked the field of battle. The bards sing the war-song. The general conflict is described. Gaul, the son of Morni, distinguishes himself; kills Turlathon, chief of Moruth, and other chiefs of lesser name. On the other hand, Foldath, who commanded the Irish army (for Cathmor, after the example of Fingal, kept himself from battle) fights gallantly; kills Connal, chief of Dun-lora, and advances to engage Gaul himself. Gaul, in the mean time, being wounded in the hand, by a random arrow, is covered by Fillan, the son of Fingal, who performs prodigies of valour. Night comes on. The horn of Fingal recals his army. The bards meet them, with a congratulatory song, in which the praises of Gaul and Fillan are particularly celebrated. The chiefs sit down at a feast; Fingal misses Connal. The episode of

Connal and Duth-caron is introduced; which throws further light on the ancient history of Ireland. Carril is dispatched to raise the tomb of Connal. The action of this book takes up the second day, from the opening of the poem.

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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, hereto-

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

The chiefs bend toward 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, when the strength of Morni failed *.

* Strumon, *stream of the hill,* the name of the seat of the family of Gaul, in the neighbourhood of Selma. During Gaul's expedition to Tromathon, mentioned in the *poem of Oithona,* Morni his father died. Morni ordered the *sword of Strumon,* (which had been preserved, in the family, as a relique, from the days of Colgach, the most renowned of his ancestors) to be laid by his side, in the tomb: at the same time, leaving it in charge to his son, not to take it from thence, till he was reduced to the last extremity. Not long after, two of his brothers being slain, in battle, by Coldaronnan, chief of Clutha, Gaul went to his father's tomb to take the sword. His address to the spirit of the deceased hero, is the subject of the following short poem.

Gaul. "Breaker of echoing shields, whose head is deep in shades; hear me from the darkness of Clora, O son of Colgach, hear!

"No rustling, like the eagle's wing, comes over the course of my streams. Deep-bosomed in the midst of the desert, O king of Strumon, hear!

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

" Dwellest thou in the shadowy breeze, that pours its dark wave over the grass? Cease to strew the beard of the thistle; O chief of Clora, hear!

" Or ridest thou on a beam, amidst the dark trouble of clouds? Pourest thou the loud wind on seas, to roll their blue waves over isles? hear me, father of Gaul; amidst thy terrors, hear!

" The rustling of eagles is heard, the murmuring oaks shake their heads on the hills: dreadful and pleasant is thy approach, friend of the dwelling of heroes.

Morni. " Who awakes me, in the midst of my cloud, where my locks of mist spread on the winds? Mixed with the noise of streams, why rises the voice of Gaul?

Gaul. " My foes are around me, Morni: their dark ships descend from their waves. Give the sword of Strumon, that beam which thou hidest in thy night.

Morni. " Take the sword of resounding Strumon; I look on thy war, my son; I look, a dim meteor, from my cloud; blue-shielded Gaul, destroy."

* Clatho was the daughter of Cathulla, king of Inistore. Fingal, in one of his expeditions to that island, fell in love with Clatho, and took her to wife, after the death of Roscrana, the daughter of Cormac, king of Ireland.

Clatho was the mother of Ryno, Fillan, and Bosmina, mentioned in the battle of Lora. Fillan is often called the son of Clatho, to distinguish him from those sons which Fingal had by Ros-crana.

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 toward 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 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

* Ullin being sent to Morven with the body of Oscar, Ossian attends his father, in quality of chief bard.

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 burst 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 * sportful ghost: when he

* There are some traditions, but, I believe, of late invention, that this Colgach was the same with the Galgacus of Tacitus. He was the ancestor of Gaul, the son of Morni, and appears, from some, really ancient, traditions, to have been king, or Vergobret, of the Caledonians; and hence proceeded the pretensions of the family of Morni to the throne, which created a good deal of disturbance, both to Comhal and his son Fingal. The first was killed in battle by that tribe; and it was after Fingal was grown up, that they were reduced to obedience. Colgach signifies *fiercely-looking*; which is a very proper name for a warrior, and is probably the origin of Galgacus; though I believe it a matter of mere conjecture, that the Colgach here mentioned was

scatters 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 round 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

the same with that hero. I cannot help observing, that the song of the bards is conducted with propriety. Gaul, whose experience might have rendered his conduct cautious in war, has the example of his father, just rushing to battle, set before his eyes. Fillan, on the other hand, whose youth might make him impetuous and unguarded in action, is put in mind of the sedate and serene behaviour of Fingal upon like occasions.

* The expedition of Morni to Clutha, alluded to here, is handed down in tradition.

† The mountain Cromla was in the neighbourhood of the

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 Dunratho *; and his words were heard.

scene of this poem; which was nearly the same with that of Fingal.

* Dun-ratho, *a hill, with a plain on its top.* Corm-uil, *blue eye.* Foldath dispatches here Cormul, to lie in ambush behind the army of the Caledonians. This speech suits with the character of Foldath, which is, throughout, haughty and presumptuous. Towards the latter end of this speech, we

"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-vallied 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 ghosts, 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

find the opinion of the times, concerning the unhappiness of the souls of those who were buried without the funeral song. This doctrine was inculcated by the bards, to make their order respectable and necessary.

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 Turlathon *, 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 Turlathon's echoing shield. It is pierced, by his streams. Its sound is past 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

* Tur-lathon, *broad trunk of a tree.* Móruth, *great stream.* Oichaoma, *mild maid.* Dun-lora, *the hill of the noisy stream.* Duth-caron, *dark-brown man.*

*Painted by H. Singleton.* *Engraved by Ja.s Fittler A.R.A.*

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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 deathful 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

* Fillan had been dispatched by Gaul to oppose Cormul, who had been sent by Foldath to lie in ambush behind the Caledonian army. It appears that Fillan had killed Cormul, otherwise, he could not be supposed to have possessed himself of the shield of that chief.

† Lumon, *bending hill*; a mountain in Inis-huna, or that part of South-Britain which is over-against the Irish coast.

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 chace of the hinds. He stands tall, amid the war, as an oak in the skirts of a storm, which is now cloathed on high, in mist: then shew 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 toward Erin. Why art thou sad, Evir-choma * ? 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!

* Evir-choama, *mild and stately maid,* the wife of Gaul. She was the daughter of Casdu-conglass, chief of I-dronlo, one of the Hebrides.

" 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.

* The kings of Caledonia and Ireland had a plume of eagle's feathers, by way of ornament, in their helmets. It was from this distinguished mark that Ossian knew Cathmor, in the second book.

" 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 Duth-caron first strung our bows, against the roes of Dun-lora.

" Many," I said, " are our paths to battle, in green vallied Erin. Often did our sails arise, over the blue tumbling waves; when we came, in other

* After the death of Combal, and during the usurpation of the tribe of Morni, Fingal was educated in private by Duth-caron. It was then he contracted that intimacy with Connal, the son of Duth-caron, which occasions his regretting so much his fall. When Fingal was grown up, he soon reduced the tribe of Morni; and, as it appears from the subsequent episode, sent Duth-caron and his son Connal to the aid of Cormac, the son of Conar, king of Ireland, who was driven to the last extremity, by the insurrections of the Firbolg. This episode throws farther light on the contests between the Caol and Firbolg.

days, to aid the race of Conar. The strife roared once in Alnecma, at the foam-covered streams of Duth-úla *. 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 † was before them, the chief of blue-streaming Atha. The battle was mixed on the plain. Cormac ‡ shone in his

* Duth-úla, a river in Connaught; it signifies, *dark-rushing water.*

† Colc-ulla, *firm look in readiness*; he was the brother of Borbar-duthul, the father of Cairbar and Cathmor, who, after the death of Cormac, the son of Artho, successively mounted the Irish throne.

‡ Cormac, the son of Conar, the second king of Ireland, of the race of the Caledonians. This insurrection of the Firbolg happened towards the latter end of the long reign of Cormac. He never possessed the Irish throne peaceably. The party of the family of Atha had made several attempts to overturn the succession in the race of Conar, before they effected it, in the minority of Cormac, the son of Artho. Ireland, from the most ancient accounts concerning it, seems to have been always so disturbed by domestic commotions, that it is difficult to say, whether it ever was, for any length of time, subject to one monarch. It is certain, that every province, if not every small district, had its own king. One of

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

these petty princes assumed, at times, the title of king of Ireland, and, on account of his superior force, or in cases of public danger, was acknowledged by the rest as such; but the succession, from father to son, does not appear to have been established. It was the divisions amongst themselves, arising from the bad constitution of their government, that, at last, subjected the Irish to a foreign yoke.

* The inhabitants of Ullin or Ulster, who were of the race of the Caledonians, seem, alone, to have been the firm friends to the succession in the family of Conar. The Firbolg were only subject to them by constraint, and embraced every opportunity to throw off their yoke.

shield is an eagle's wing to cover the king of Dunlora." 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 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 * Colgan came, the bard of high Te-

* Colgan, the son of Cathmul, was the principal bard of Cormac, king of Ireland. The following dialogue, on the loves of Fingal and Ros-crána, may be ascribed to him:

Ros-crana. By night, came a dream to Ros-crána! I feel my beating soul. No vision of the forms of the dead came to the blue eyes of Erin. But, rising from the wave of the north, I beheld him bright in his locks. I beheld the son of the king. My beating soul is high. I laid my head down in night; again ascended the form. Why delayest thou thy coming, young rider of stormy waves!

But, there, far-distant, he comes; where seas roll their green ridges in mist! Young dweller of my soul; why dost thou delay—

Fingal. It was the soft voice of Moi-lena! the pleasant breeze of the valley of roes! But why dost thou hide thee in shades? Young love of heroes rise. Are not thy steps covered with light? In thy groves thou appearest, Ros-

mora. 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, be-

crána, like the sun in the gathering of clouds. Why dost thou hide thee in shades? Young love of heroes rise.

Ros-crana. My fluttering soul is high: Let me turn from the steps of the king. He has heard my secret voice, and shall my blue eyes roll in his presence? Roe of the hill of moss, toward thy dwelling I move. Meet me, ye breezes of Mora! as I move through the valley of winds. But why should he ascend his ocean? Son of heroes, my soul is thine! My steps shall not move to the desert: the light of Ros-crána is here.

Fingal. It was the light tread of a ghost, the fair dweller of eddying winds. Why deceivest thou me, with thy voice? Here let me rest in shades. Shouldst thou stretch thy white arm from thy grove, thou sun-beam of Cormac of Erin!

Ros-crana. He is gone; and my blue eyes are dim; faint-rolling, in all my tears. But, there, I behold him, alone; king of Selma, my soul is thine. Ah me! what clanging of armour! Colc-ulla of Atha is near!

neath 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 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-vallied 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!

# TEMORA:

## AN EPIC POEM.

### BOOK IV.

#### ARGUMENT.

THE second night continues. Fingal relates, at the feast, his own first expedition into Ireland, and his marriage with Roscrána, the daughter of Cormac, king of that island. The Irish chiefs convene in the presence of Cathmor. The situation of the king described. The story of Sul-malla, the daughter of Conmor, king of Inis-huna, who, in the disguise of a young warrior, had followed Cathmor to the war. The sullen behaviour of Foldath, who had commanded in the battle of the preceding day, renews the difference between him and Malthos; but Cathmor, interposing, ends it. The chiefs feast, and hear the song of Fonar the bard. Cathmor returns to rest, at a distance from the army. The ghost of his brother Cairbar appears to him in a dream; and obscurely foretells the issue of the war. The soliloquy of the king. He discovers Sul-malla. Morning comes. Her soliloquy closes the book.

* "BENEATH an oak," said the king, "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

* This episode has an immediate connection with the story of Connal and Duth-caron, in the latter end of the third book. Fingal, sitting beneath an oak, near the palace of Selma, discovers Connal just landing from Ireland. The danger which threatened Cormac, king of Ireland, induces him to sail immediately to that island. The story is introduced, by the king, as a pattern for the future behaviour of Fillan, whose rashness in the preceding battle is reprimanded.

high, for fiery-haired Ul-erin *. 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 †, 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.

* Ul-erin, *the guide to Ireland,* a star known by that name in the days of Fingal, and very useful to those who sailed, by night, from the Hebrides, or Caledonia, to the coast of Ulster.

† Ros-crána, *the beam of the rising sun;* she was the mother of Ossian. The Irish bards relate strange fictions concerning this princess. Their stories, however, concerning Fingal, if they mean him by *Fion Mac-Comnal,* are so inconsistent and notoriously fabulous, that they do not deserve to be mentioned; for they evidently bear, along with them, the marks of late invention.

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 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."

* Cormac had said that the foes were *like the roar of streams*, and Fingal continues the metaphor. The speech of the young hero is spirited, and consistent with that sedate intrepidity, which eminently distinguishes his character throughout.

† Cairbar, the son of Cormac, was afterwards king of Ireland. His reign was short. He was succeeded by his son Artho, the father of that Cormac who was murdered by Cairbar the son of Borbar-duthul. Cairbar, the son of Cormac, long after his son Artho was grown to man's estate, had, by his wife Beltanno, another son, whose name was Ferad-artho. He was the only one remaining of the race of Conar, the first king of Ireland, when Fingal's expedition against Cair-

"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 feast at Moi-lena. She rises

bar, the son of Borbar-duthul, happened. See more of Ferad-artho in the eighth book.

† The attitude of Ros-crána is illustrated by this simile; for the ideas of those times, concerning the spirits of the deceased, were not so gloomy and disagreeable, as those of succeeding ages. The spirits of women, it was supposed, retained that beauty, which they possessed while living, and transported themselves, from place to place, with that gliding motion, which Homer ascribes to the gods. The descriptions which poets, less ancient than Ossian, have left us of those beautiful figures, that appeared sometimes on the hills, are elegant and picturesque. They compare them to the *rain-bow on streams*; or, *the gliding of sun-beams on the hills.*

A chief who lived three centuries ago, returning from the war, understood that his wife or mistress was dead. A bard introduces him speaking the following soliloquy, when he came within sight of the place, where he had left her, at his departure:

"My soul darkens in sorrow. I behold not the smoke of my hall. No grey dog bounds at my streams. Silence dwells in the valley of trees.

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

"Is that a rain-bow on Crunath? It flies: and the sky is dark. Again, thou movest, bright, on the heath, thou sunbeam cloathed in a shower! Hah! it is she, my love! her gliding course on the bosom of winds!"

In succeeding times the beauty of Ros-crána passed into a proverb; and the highest compliment, that could be paid to a woman, was to compare her person with *the daughter of Cormac.*

'S tu fein an Ros-crána.
Siol Chormaec na n'ioma lan.

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 Duthcaron. 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

* In order to illustrate this passage, I shall give, here, the history on which it is founded, as I have gathered it from tradition. The nation of the Firbolg, who inhabited the south of Ireland, being originally descended from the Belgæ, who possessed the south and south-west coast of Britain, kept up, for many ages, an amicable correspondence with their mother-country; and sent aid to the British Belgæ, when they were pressed by the Romans or other new-comers from the continent. Conmor, king of Inis-huna (that part of South Britain which is over against the Irish coast) being attacked, by what enemy is not mentioned, sent for aid to Cairbar, lord of Atha, the most potent chief of the Firbolg. Cairbar dispatched his brother Cathmor to the assistance of Con-mor. Cathmor, after various vicissitudes of fortune, put an end to the war, by the total defeat of the enemies of Inis-huna, and returned in triumph to the residence of Conmor. There, at a feast, Sul-malla, the daughter of Con-mor, fell desperately in love with Cathmor, who, before her passion was disclosed, was recalled to Ireland by his brother

leaned, against a rock, Sul-malla * of blue eyes, the white-bosomed daughter of Conmor, king of Inis-huna. 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 Cair-

Cairbar, upon the news of the intended expedition of Fingal, to re-establish the family of Conar on the Irish throne. The wind being contrary, Cathmor remained, for three days, in a neighbouring bay, during which time Sul-malla disguised herself in the habit of a young warrior, and came to offer him her service in the war. Cathmor accepted of the proposal, sailed for Ireland, and arrived in Ulster a few days before the death of Cairbar.

* Sul-malla, *slowly-rolling eyes.* Caon-mór, *mild and tall.* Inis-huna, *green island.*

* Fithil, *an inferior bard.* It may either be taken here for the proper name of a man, or, in the literal sense, as the bards were the heralds and messengers of those times. Cathmor, it is probable, was absent, when the rebellion of his brother Cairbar, and the assassination of Cormac, king of Ireland, happened. Cathmor and his followers had only arrived from Inis-huna three days before the death of Cairbar ; which sufficiently clears his character from any imputation of being concerned in the conspiracy with his brother.

† The ceremony which was used by Fingal, when he prepared for an expedition, is related thus in tradition : A bard,

bar. 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 Conmor'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 its course from Erin, the green dwelling of her love.

at mid-night, went to the hall, where the tribes feasted upon solemn occasions, raised the *war song*, and thrice called the spirits of their deceased ancestors to come, *on their clouds*, to behold the actions of their children. He then fixed the *shield of Trenmor* on a tree on the rock of Selma, striking it, at times, with the blunt end of a spear, and singing the war-song between. Thus he did for three successive nights; and, in the mean time, messengers were dispatched to call together the tribes; or, to use an ancient expression, *to call them from all their streams*. This phrase alludes to the situation of the residences of the clans, which were generally fixed in valleys, where the torrents of the neighbouring mountains were collected into one body, and became *large streams*, or rivers. *The lifting up of the shield* was the phrase for beginning a war.

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 Clon-ra †, 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

* The surly attitude of Foldath is a proper preamble to his after-behaviour. Chased with the disappointment of the victory which he promised himself, he becomes passionate and overbearing. The quarrel which succeeds between him and Malthos, is introduced to raise the character of Cathmor, whose superior worth shines forth in the manly manner of ending the difference between the chiefs.

† Claon-rath, *winding field*. The *th* are seldom pronounced audibly in the Gaelic language.

grey, on the heath, the dreadful strides of ghosts are seen: the ghosts of those who bend forward to their song. 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 Clon-ra'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

* This speech of Malthos is, throughout, a severe reprimand to the blustering behaviour of Foldath.

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.

* This comparison is favourable to the superiority of Cathmor over his two chiefs. I shall illustrate this passage with another from a fragment of an ancient poem, just now in my hands. "As the sun is above the vapours, which his beams have raised ; so is the soul of the king above the sons of fear. They roll dark below him ; he rejoices in the robe of his beams. But when feeble deeds wander on the soul of the king, he is a darkened sun rolled along the sky ; the valley is sad below ; flowers wither beneath the drops of the night."

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 sustain-

* Lear-thon, *sea wave*, the name of the chief of that colony of the Firbolg, which first migrated into Ireland. Larthon's first settlement in that country is related in the seventh book. He was the ancestor of Cathmor; and is here called *Larthon of Lumon*, from a high hill of that name in Inis-huna, the ancient seat of the Firbolg. The character of Cathmor is preserved. He had mentioned, in the first book, the aversion of that chief to praise; and we find him here lying at the side of a stream, that the noise of it might drown the voice of Fonar, who, according to the custom of the times, sung his eulogium in his *evening song*. Though other chiefs, as well as Cathmor, might be averse to hear their own praise, we find it the universal policy of the times, to allow the bards to be as extravagant as they pleased in their encomiums on the leaders of armies, in the presence of their people. The vulgar, who had no great ability to judge for themselves, received the characters of their princes entirely upon the faith of their bards.

† Carril, the son of Kinfena, by the orders of Ossian, sung the funeral elegy at the tomb of Cairbar. See the second book, towards the end. In all these poems, the visits of ghosts, to their living friends, are short, and their language

ed 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

obscure, both which circumstances tend to throw a solemn gloom on these supernatural scenes. Towards the latter end of the speech of the ghost of Cairbar, he foretels the death of Cathmor, by enumerating those signals, which, according to the opinion of the times, preceded the death of a person renowned. It was thought that the ghosts of deceased bards sung, for three nights preceding the death (near the place where his tomb was to be raised), round an unsubstantial figure, which represented the body of the person who was to die.

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 †

* The soliloquy of Cathmor suits the magnanimity of his character. Though staggered at first with the prediction of Cairbar's ghost, he soon comforts himself with the agreeable prospect of his future renown; and, like Achilles, prefers a short and glorious life, to an obscure length of years in retirement and ease.

† An indolent and unwarlike life was held in extreme contempt. Whatever a philosopher may say, in praise of quiet and retirement, I am far from thinking, but they weaken and debase the human mind. When the faculties of the soul are not exerted, they lose their vigour, and low and circumscribed notions take the place of noble and enlarged ideas. Action, on the contrary, and the vicissitudes of fortune which

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

attend it, call forth, by turns, all the powers of the mind, and, by exercising, strengthen them. Hence it is, that in great and opulent states, when property and indolence are secured to individuals, we seldom meet with that strength of mind which is so common in a nation not far advanced in civilization. It is a curious, but just observation, that great kingdoms seldom produce great characters; which must be altogether attributed to that indolence and dissipation, which are the inseparable companions of too much property and security. Rome, it is certain, had more real great men within it, when its power was confined within the narrow bounds of Latium, than when its dominion extended over all the known world; and one petty state of the Saxon heptarchy had, perhaps, as much genuine spirit in it, as the two British kingdoms united. As a state, we are much more powerful than our ancestors, but we would lose by comparing individuals with them.

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 chace. 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 *, 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 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 chace 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 de-

* In order to understand this passage, it is necessary to look to the description of Cathmor's shield in the seventh book. This shield had seven principal bosses, the sound of each of which, when struck with a spear, conveyed a particular order from the king to his tribes. The sound of one of them, as here, was the signal for the army to assemble.

† This was not the valley of Lona to which Sul-malla afterwards retired.

parted 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 of the streams. The ghost of fathers, they say *, call away the souls of their race, while

* Conmor, the father of Sul-malla, was killed in that war, from which Cathmor delivered Inis-huna. Lormar his son succeeded Conmor. It was the opinion of the times, when a person was reduced to a pitch of misery, which could admit of no alleviation, that the ghosts of his ancestors *called his soul away*. This supernatural kind of death was called *the voice of the dead;* and is believed by the superstitious vulgar to this day.

There is no people in the world, perhaps, who give more universal credit to apparitions and the visits of the ghosts of the deceased to their friends, than the ancient Scots. This is to be attributed as much, at least, to the situation of the country they possess, as to that credulous disposition which distinguishes an unenlightened people. As their business was feeding of cattle, in dark and extensive deserts, so their journeys lay over wide and unfrequented heaths, where often they were obliged to sleep in the open air, amidst the whistling of winds, and roar of water-falls. The gloominess of the scenes around them was apt to beget that melancholy disposition of mind, which most readily receives impressions of the extraordinary and supernatural kind. Falling asleep in this gloomy mood, and their dreams being disturbed by the noise of the elements around, it is no matter of wonder, that they thought they heard the *voice of the dead*. This *voice of the dead*, however, was perhaps no more than a shriller

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!"

whistle of the winds in an old tree, or in the chinks of a neighbouring rock. It is to this cause I ascribe those many and improbable tales of ghosts, which we meet with in the Highlands: for, in other respects, we do not find that the inhabitants are more credulous than their neighbours.

# TEMORA:

## AN EPIC POEM.

### BOOK V.

#### ARGUMENT.

The poet, after a short address to the harp of Cona, describes the arrangement of both armies on either side of the river Lubar. Fingal gives the command to Fillan; but, at the same time, orders Gaul, the son of Morni, who had been wounded in the hand in the preceding battle, to assist him with his counsel. The army of the Fir-bolg is commanded by Foldath. The general onset is described. The great actions of Fillan. He kills Rothmar and Culmin. But when Fillan conquers in one wing, Foldath presses hard on the other. He wounds Dermid, the son of Duthno, and puts the whole wing to flight. Dermid deliberates with himself, and, at last, resolves to put a stop to the progress of Foldath, by engaging him in single combat. When the two chiefs were approaching one another, Fillan came suddenly to the relief of Dermid; engaged Foldath, and killed him. The behaviour of Malthos towards the fallen Foldath. Fillan puts the whole army of the Fir-bolg to flight. The book closes with an address to Clatho, the mother of that hero.

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

* Lora is often mentioned; it was a small and rapid stream in the neighbourhood of Selma. There is no vestige of this name now remaining; though it appears from a very old song, which the translator has seen, that one of the small rivers on the north-west coast was called Lora some centuries ago.

† From several passages in the poem, we may form a distinct idea of the scene of the action of Temora. At a small distance from one another rose the hills of Mora and Lora; the first possessed by Fingal, the second by the army of Cathmor. Through the intermediate plain ran the small river Lubar, on the banks of which all the battles were fought, excepting that between Cairbar and Oscar, related in the first book. This last mentioned engagement happened to the north of the hill of Mora, of which Fingal took possession, after the army of Cairbar fell back to that of Cathmor.

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,

At some distance, but within sight of Mora, towards the west, Lubar issued from the mountain of Crommal, and, after a short course through the plain of Moi-lena, discharged itself into the sea near the field of battle. Behind the mountain of Crommal ran the small stream of Lavath, on the banks of which Ferad-artho, the son of Cairbre, the only person remaining of the race of Cona, lived concealed in a cave, during the usurpation of Cairbar, the son of Borbarduthul.

* It was to this valley Sul-malla retired, during the last and decisive battle between Fingal and Cathmor. It is de-

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 chiefs 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

scribed in the seventh book, where it is called the vale of Lona, and the residence of a Druid.

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?"

* It is necessary to remember, that Gaul was wounded; which occasions his requiring here the assistance of Ossian to bind his shield on his side.

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! Deaths sit on blasts around him! Warriors strew thy paths, O Fillan!

Rothmar *, 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,

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

silent, shades his friends. Fingal saw the approaching fight. The hero's soul arose. But as the stone of Loda * falls, shook, at once, from rocking Druman-ard, when 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 sun-beam flew over the fern. Why, son of Cul-allin! Why, Culmin, dost thou rush on

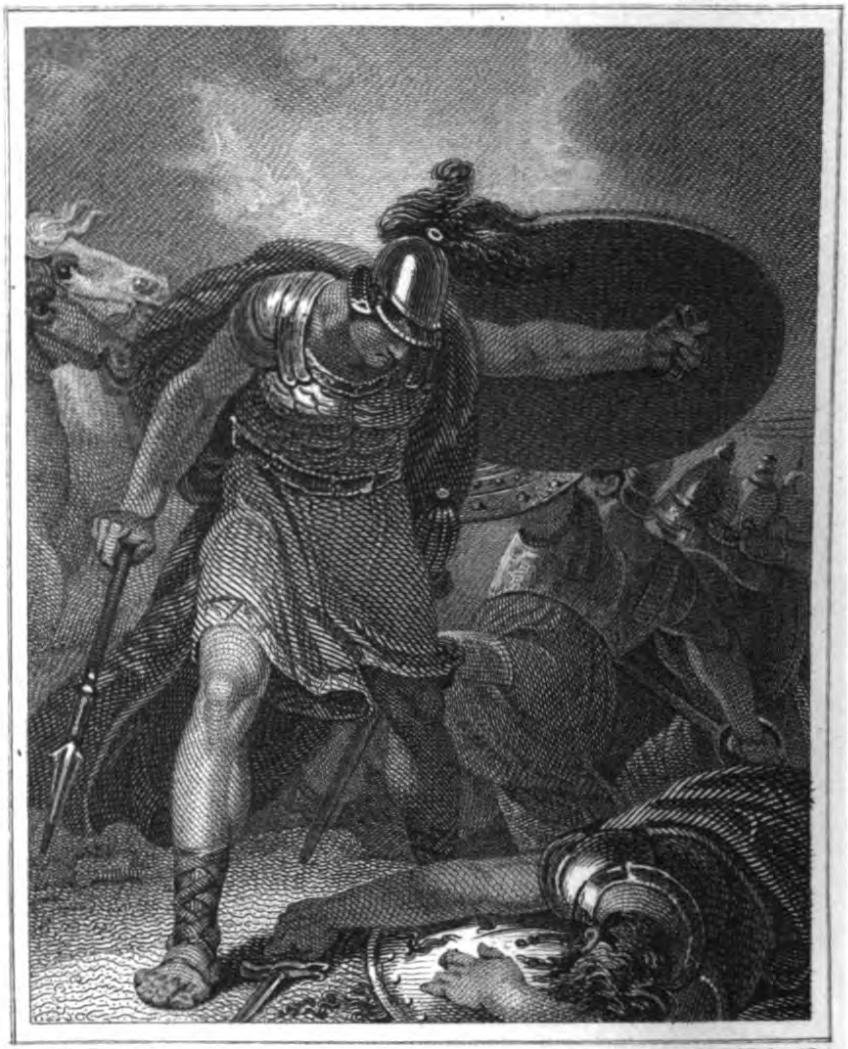
* By the stone of Loda is meant a place of worship among the Scandinavians. The Caledonians, in their many expeditions to Orkney and Scandinavia, became acquainted with some of the rites of the religion which prevailed in those countries, and the ancient poetry frequently alludes to them. There are some ruins, and circular pales of stone, remaining still in Orkney, and the islands of Shetland, which retain, to this day, the name of *Loda*, or *Loden*. They seem to have differed materially, in their construction, from those Druidical monuments which remain in Britain, and the western isles. The places of worship among the Scandinavians were originally rude and unadorned. In after ages, when they opened a communication with other nations, they adopted their manners, and built temples. That at Upsal, in Sweden, was amazingly rich and magnificent. Harquin, of Norway, built one, near Drontheim, little inferior to the former; and it went always under the name of Loden. *Mallet, introduction à l'histoire de Dannemarc.*

that beam * 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 † 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

* The poet, metaphorically, calls Fillan a beam of light. Culmin, mentioned here, was the son of Clonmar, chief of Strutho, by the beautiful Cul-allin. She was so remarkable for the beauty of her person, that she is introduced, frequently, in the similies and allusions of ancient poetry. *Mar Chulaluin Strutha nan sian; Lovely as Cul-allin of Strutha of the storms.*

† Dogs were thought to be sensible of the death of their master, let it happen at ever so great a distance. It was also the opinion of the times, that the arms which warriors left at home became bloody, when they themselves fell in battle. It was from those signs that Cul-allin is supposed to understand that her son is killed; in which she is confirmed by the appearance of his ghost. Her sudden and short exclamation is more jndicious in the poet, than if she had extended her complaints to a greater length. The attitude of the fallen youth, and Fillan's reflections over him, come forcibly back on the mind, when we consider, that the supposed situation of the father of Culmin, was so similar to that of Fingal, after the death of Fillan himself.



*Painted by H. Singleton* *Engraved by Jas Fittler A.R.A.*

# TEMORA.

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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 hand holds the sword, that failed him in the midst of danger. "Thou art fallen," said Fillan, "ere yet thy fame was heard. Thy fathers 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 * narrow vale, where bend two trees

* This valley had its name from Clono, son of Lethmal of Lora, one of the ancestors of Dermid, the son of Duthno. His history is thus related in an old poem. In the days of Conar, the son of Trenmor, the first king of Ireland, Clono passed over into that kingdom, from Caledonia, to aid Conar against the Fir-bolg. Being remarkable for the beauty of his person, he soon drew the attention of Sulmin, the young wife of an Irish chief. She disclosed her passion, which was not properly returned by the Caledonian. The lady sickened, through disappointment; and her love for Clono came to the ears of her husband. Fired with jealousy, he vowed revenge. Clono, to avoid his rage, departed from Temora, in order to pass over into Scotland; and, being benighted in the valley mentioned here, he laid him down to sleep. *There Lethmal descended in the dreams of Clono, and told him that danger was near.*

GHOST OF LETHMAL. "Arise from thy bed of moss; son of low-laid Lethmal, arise. The sound of the coming of foes descends along the wind.

CLONO. "Whose voice is that, like many streams, in the season of my rest?

GHOST OF LETHMAL. "Arise, thou dweller of the souls of the lovely; son of Lethmal, arise.

CLONO. "How dreary is the night! The moon is darkened in the sky; red are the paths of ghosts along its sullen face! Green-skirted meteors set around. Dull is the roaring of streams, from the valley of dim forms. I hear thee, spirit of my father, on the eddying course of the wind. I

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 slow on the heath; and no shield is mine. Shall he then prevail? It is then after Dermid is slow! 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 shouldst 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."

hear thee; but thou bendest not, forward, thy tall form, from the skirts of night."

As Clono prepared to depart, the husband of Sulmin came up, with his numerous attendants. Clono defended himself, but, after a gallant resistance, he was overpowered and slain. He was buried in the place where he was killed, and the valley was called after his name. Dermid, in his request to Gaul, the son of Morni, which immediately follows this paragraph, alludes to the tomb of Clono, and his own connection with that unfortunate chief.

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 seem 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 Moi-

lena, into gloomy fight. By turns are the steps of the kings * 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 Fil-

* Fingal and Cathmor.

† The fall of Foldath, if we may believe tradition, was predicted to him, before he had left his own country to join Cairbar, in his designs on the Irish throne. He went to the cave of Moma, to enquire of the spirits of his fathers, concerning the success of the enterprise of Cairbar. The responses of oracles are always attended with obscurity, and liable to a double meaning: Foldath, therefore, put a favourable interpretation on the prediction, and pursued his adopted plan of aggrandizing himself with the family of Atha.

FOLDATH, *addressing the spirits of his fathers.*

"Dark, I stand in your presence; fathers of Foldath, hear. Shall my steps pass over Atha, to Ullin of the roes?

*The answer.*

"Thy steps shall pass over Atha, to the green dwelling of kings. There shall thy stature arise, over the fallen, like a pillar of thunder-clouds. There, terrible in darkness, shalt thou stand, till the *reflected beam*, or *Clon-cath* of Moruth, come; Moruth of many streams, that roars in distant lands."

Cloncath, or *reflected beam*, say my traditional authors, was the name of the sword of Fillan; so that it was, in the

lan 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 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 † woody land? where

latent signification of the word *Cloncath*, that the deception lay. My principal reason for introducing this note, is, that this tradition serves to shew, that the religion of the Fir-bolg differed from that of the Caledonians, as we never find the latter enquiring of the spirits of their deceased ancestors.

* The characters of Foldath and Malthos are sustained. They were both dark and surly, but each in a different way. Foldath was impetuous and cruel; Malthos stubborn and incredulous. Their attachment to the family of Atha was equal; their bravery in battle the same. Foldath was vain and ostentatious; Malthos unindulgent, but generous. His behaviour here, towards his enemy Foldath, shews, that a good heart often lies concealed under a gloomy and sullen character.

† Moma was the name of a country in the south of Connaught, once famous for being the residence of an Arch-

the sun looks, in secret, on the blue streams of Dalruthо * ? 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 Dardulena's dreams, where she slept, by Dalrutho's stream, returning from the chace of the hinds. Her bow is near the maid, unstrung. The breezes fold her long hair on her breasts. Cloathed in the beauty of youth, the love of heroes lay. Dark-bending,

Druid. The cave of Moma was thought to be inhabited by the spirits of the chiefs of the Fir-bolg, and their posterity sent to enquire there, as to an oracle, concerning the issue of their wars.

* Dal-ruäth, *parched or sandy field.* The etymology of Dardu-lena is uncertain. The daughter of Foldath was, probably, so called, from a place in Ulster, where her father had defeated part of the adherents of Artho, king of Ireland. Dor-du-lena, *the dark wood of Moi-lena.* As Foldath was proud and ostentatious, it would appear, that he transferred the name of a place, where he himself had been victorious, to his daughter.

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 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.

* The suspense, in which the mind of the reader is left here, conveys the idea of Fillan's danger more forcibly home, than any description that could be introduced. There is a sort of eloquence, in silence with propriety. A minute detail of the circumstances of an important scene is generally cold and insipid. The human mind, free and fond of thinking for itself, is disgusted to find every thing done by the poet. It is, therefore, his business, only to mark the most striking out-lines, and to allow the imaginations of his readers to finish the figure for themselves.

The book ends in the afternoon of the third day, from the opening of the poem.

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!"

# TEMORA:

## AN EPIC POEM.

## BOOK VI.

### ARGUMENT.

THIS book opens with a speech of Fingal, who sees Cathmor descending to the assistance of his flying army. The king dispatches Ossian to the relief of Fillan. He himself retires behind the rock of Cormul, to avoid the sight of the engagement between his son and Cathmor. Ossian advances. The descent of Cathmor described. He rallies the army, renews the battle, and, before Ossian could arrive, engages Fillan himself. Upon the approach of Ossian, the combat between the two heroes ceases. Ossian and Cathmor prepare to fight; but night coming on, prevents them. Ossian returns to the place where Cathmor and Fillan fought. He finds Fillan mortally wounded, and leaning against a rock. Their discourse. Fillan dies: his body is laid, by Ossian, in a neighbouring cave. The Caledonian army return to Fingal. He questions them about his son, and, understanding that he was killed, retires, in silence, to the rock of Cormul. Upon the retreat of the army of Fingal, the Fir-bolg advance. Cathmor finds Bran, one of the dogs of Fingal, lying on the

shield of Fillan, before the entrance of the cave, where the body of that hero lay. His reflections thereupon. He returns, in a melancholy mood, to his army. Malthos endeavours to comfort him, by the example of his father Borbar-duthul. Cathmor retires to rest. The song of Sul-malla concludes the book, which ends about the middle of the third night, from the opening of the poem.

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* "CATHMOR rises on his hill! Shall Fingal take the sword of Luno? But what should 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!"

* Fingal speaks.

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 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 chace 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

* The *spear of Temora* was that which Oscar had received, in a present, from Cormac, the son of Artho, king of Ireland. It was of it that Cairbar made the pretext for quarrelling with Oscar, at the feast, in the first book.

bows, as when the youth of * Inis-huna came 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 warrior 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 † 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, be-

* Clu-ba, *winding bay;* an arm of the sea in Inis-huna, or the western coast of South-Britain. It was in this bay that Cathmor was wind-bound when Sul-malla came, in the disguise of a young warrior, to accompany him in his voyage to Ireland. Conmor, the father of Sul-malla, as is insinuated at the close of the fourth book, was dead before the departure of his daughter.

† Lutha was the name of a valley in Morven. There dwelt Toscar, the son of Conloch, the father of Malvina, who, upon that account, is often called *the maid of Lutha.* Lutha signifies *swift stream.*

tween 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 chiefs 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.

"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 breakers 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 *!"

* A dialogue between Clatho, the mother, and Bosmina, the sister, of Fillan:

"Is thy spirit on the eddying winds, O Fillan, young breaker of shields! Joy pursue my hero,

CLATHO. "Daughter of Fingal arise! thou light between thy locks. Lift thy fair head from rest, soft-gliding sunbeam of Selma! I beheld thy arms, on thy breast, white tossed amidst thy wandering locks; when the rustling breeze of the morning came from the desert of streams. Hast thou seen thy fathers, Bosmina, descending in thy dreams? Arise, daughter of Clatho; dwells there aught of grief in thy soul?

BOS-MINA. "A thin form passed before me, fading as it flew: like the darkening wave of a breeze, along a field of grass. Descend, from thy wall, O harp, and call back the soul of Bosmina, it has rolled away, like a stream. I hear thy pleasant sound. I hear thee, O harp, and my voice shall rise.

"How often shall ye rush to war, ye dwellers of my soul? Your paths are distant, kings of men, in Erin of blue streams. Lift thy wing, thou southern breeze, from Clono's darkening heath: spread the sails of Fingal towards the bays of his land.

"But who is that, in his strength, darkening in the presence of war? His arm stretches to the foe, like the beam of the sickly sun: when his side is crusted with darkness; and he rolls his dismal course through the sky. Who is it, but the father of Bos-mina? Shall he return till danger is past!

"Fillan, thou art a beam by his side; beautiful, but terrible, is thy light. Thy sword is before thee, a blue fire of night. When shalt thou return to thy roes; to the streams of thy rushy fields? When shall I behold thee from Mora, while winds strew my long locks on their blasts! But shall a young eagle return from the field where the heroes fall!

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 *.

CLATHO. "Soft, as the song of Loda, is the voice of Selma's maid. Pleasant to the ear of Clatho is the name of the breaker of shields. Behold, the king comes from ocean: the shield of Morven is borne by bards. The foe has fled before him, like the departure of mist. I hear not the sounding wings of my eagle; the rushing forth of the son of Clatho. Thou art dark, O Fingal; shall the warrior never return?" * * * *

* Here the sentence is designedly left unfinished. The sense is, that he was resolved, like a destroying fire, to con-

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!"

sume Cathmor, who had killed his brother. In the midst of this resolution, the situation of Fingal suggests itself to him, in a very strong light. He resolves to return to assist the king in prosecuting the war. But then his shame for not defending his brother, recurs to him. He is determined again to go and find out Cathmor. We may consider him, as in the act of advancing towards the enemy, when the horn of Fingal sounded on Mora, and called back his people to his presence. This soliloquy is natural: the resolutions which so suddenly follow one another, are expressive of a mind extremely agitated with sorrow and conscious shame; yet the behaviour of Ossian, in his execution of the commands of Fingal, is so irreprehensible, that it is not easy to determine where he failed in his duty. The truth is, that when men fail in designs which they ardently wish to ac-

Distant *, round the king, on Moro, 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 †.

complish, they naturally blame themselves, as the chief cause of their disappointment.

* "This scene," says an ingenious writer, and a good judge, "is solemn. The poet always places his chief character amidst objects which favour the sublime. The face of the country, the night, the broken remains of a defeated army, and, above all, the attitude and silence of Fingal himself, are circumstances calculated to impress an awful idea on the mind. Ossian is most successful in his night descriptions. Dark images suited the melancholy temper of his mind. His poems were all composed after the active part of his life was over, when he was blind, and had survived all the companions of his youth: we therefore find a veil of melancholy thrown over the whole."

† I owe the first paragraph of the following note to the same pen:

"The abashed behaviour of the army of Fingal proceeds

"Where is the son of Selma, he who led in war?
I behold not his steps, among my people, returning

rather from shame than fear. The king was not of a tyrannical disposition: *He*, as he professes himself in the fifth book, *never was a dreadful form, in their presence, darkened into wrath. His voice was no thunder to their ears: his eye sent forth no death.* The first ages of society are not the times of arbitrary power. As the wants of mankind are few, they retain their independance. It is an advanced state of civilization that moulds the mind to that submission to government, of which ambitious magistrates take advantage, and raise themselves into absolute power."

It is a vulgar error, that the common Highlanders lived, in abject slavery, under their chiefs. Their high ideas of, and attachment to, the heads of their families, probably led the unintelligent into this mistake. When the honour of the tribe was concerned, the commands of the chief were obeyed, without restriction; but, if individuals were oppressed, they threw themselves into the arms of a neighbouring clan, assumed a new name, and were encouraged and protected. The fear of this desertion, no doubt, made the chiefs cautious in their government. As their consequence, in the eyes of others, was in proportion to the number of their people, they took care to avoid every thing that tended to diminish it.

It was but very lately that the authority of the laws extended to the Highlands. Before that time the clans were governed, in civil affairs, not by the verbal commands of the chief, but by what they called *Clechda*, or the traditional precedents of their ancestors. When differences happened between individuals, some of the oldest men in the tribe were chosen umpires between the parties, to decide accord-

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

ing to the *Clechda*. The chief interposed his authority, and, invariably, enforced the decision. In their wars, which were frequent, on account of family-feuds, the chief was less reserved in the execution of his authority; and even then, he seldom extended it to the taking the life of any of his tribe. No crime was capital, except murder; and that was very unfrequent in the Highlands. No corporal punishment, of any kind, was inflicted. The memory of an affront of this sort would remain for ages in a family, and they would seize every opportunity to be revenged, unless it came immediately from the hands of the chief himself; in that case it was taken, rather as a fatherly correction, than a legal punishment for offences.

* This rock of Cormul is often mentioned in the preceding part of the poem. It was on it Fingal and Ossian stood to view the battle. The custom of retiring from the army, on the night prior to their engaging in battle, was universal among the kings of the Caledonians. Trenmor, the most renowned of the ancestors of Fingal, is mentioned as the first who instituted this custom. Succeeding bards attributed it to a hero of a later period. In an old poem, which begins with *Mac-Arcath na ceud frol*, this custom of retiring from the army, before an engagement, is numbered, among the wise institutions of Fergus, the son of Arch or Arcath,

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

the first king of Scots. I shall here translate the passage: in some other note I may, probably, give all that remains of the poem. *Fergus of the hundred streams, son of Arcath, who fought of old: thou didst first retire at night: when the foe rolled before thee, in echoing fields. Nor bending in rest is the king: he gathers battles in his soul. Fly, son of the stranger! with morn he shall rush abroad.* When, or by whom, this poem was written, is uncertain.

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

* I remember to have met with an old poem, wherein a story of this sort is very happily introduced. In one of the invasions of the Danes, Ullin-clundu, a considerable chief, on the western coast of Scotland, was killed in a rencounter with a flying party of the enemy, who had landed, at no great distance, from the place of his residence. The few followers who attended him were also slain. The young wife of Ullin-clundu, who had not heard of his fall, fearing the worst, on account of his long delay, alarmed the rest of his tribe, who went in search of him along the shore They did not find him; and the beautiful widow became disconsolate. At length he was discovered, by means of his dog, who sat on a rock beside the body, for some days. The stanza concerning the dog, whose name was Du-chos, or *Blackfoot*, is descriptive.

"Dark-sided Duchos! feet of wind! cold is thy seat on rocks. He (the dog) sees the roe; his ears are high; and half he bounds away. He looks around; but Ullin sleeps; he droops again his head. The winds come past; dark Duchos thinks that Ullin's voice is there. But still he beholds him silent, laid amidst the waving heath. Dark-sided Duchos, his voice no more shall send thee over the heath!"

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,

* In order to illustrate this passage, it is proper to lay before the reader the scene of the two preceding battles. Between the hills of Mora and Lona lay the plain of Moi-lena, through which ran the river Lubar. The first battle, wherein Gaul, the son of Morni, commanded on the Caledonian side, was fought on the banks of Lubar. As there was little advantage obtained on either side, the armies, after the battle, retained their former positions.

In the second battle, wherein Fillan commanded, the Irish, after the fall of Foldath, were driven up the hill of Lona; but, upon the coming of Cathmor to their aid, they regained their former situation, and drove back the Caledonians, in their turn: so that *Lubar winded again in their host.*

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: Cal-

* Borbar-duthul, the father of Cathmor, was the brother of that Col-ulla, who is said, in the beginning of the fourth book, to have rebelled against Cormac, king of Ireland. Borbar-duthul seems to have retained all the prejudice of his family against the succession of the posterity of Conar, on the Irish throne. From this short episode we learn some facts which tend to throw light on the history of the times. It appears that, when Swaran invaded Ireland, he was only opposed by the Caël, who possessed Ulster, and the north of that island. Calmar, the son of Matha, whose gallant behaviour and death are related in the third book of Fingal, was the only chief of the race of the Fir-bolg, that joined the Caël, or Irish Caledonians, during the invasion of Swaran. The indecent joy, which Borbar-duthul expressed, upon the death of Calmar, is well suited with that spirit of revenge, which subsisted, universally, in every country where the feudal system was established. It would appear that some person had carried to Borbar-duthul that weapon, with which, it was pretended, Calmar had been killed.

mar, 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 weakened 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

* *The voices of Erin,* a poetical expression for the bards of Ireland.

† Not only the kings, but every petty chief, had anciently

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,

their bards attending them in the field ; and those bards, in proportion to the power of the chiefs, who retained them, had a number of inferior bards in their train. Upon solemn occasions, all the bards, in the army, would join in one chorus ; either when they celebrated their victories, or lamented the death of a person, worthy and renowned, slain in the war. The words were of the composition of the arch-bard, retained by the king himself, who generally attained to that high office on account of his superior genius for poetry. As the persons of the bards were sacred, and the emoluments of their office considerable, the order, in succeeding times, became very numerous and insolent. It would appear, that, after the introduction of Christianity, some served in the double capacity of bards and clergymen. It was, from this circumstance, that they had the name of *Chlére*, which is, probably, derived from the Latin Clericus. The *Chlére*, be their name derived from what it will, became, at last, a public nuisance ; for, taking advantage of their sacred character, they went about, in great bodies, and lived, at discretion, in the houses of the chiefs ; till another party, of the same order, drove them away by mere dint of satire. Some of the indelicate disputes of these worthy poetical combatants are handed down, by tradition, and shew how much the bards, at last, abused the privileges, which the admiration of their countrymen had conferred on the order. It was this insolent behaviour that induced the chiefs to retrench their number, and to take away those privileges which

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 drew 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* 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

they were no longer worthy to enjoy. Their indolence, and disposition to lampoon, extinguished all the poetical fervour, which distinguished their predecessors, and makes us the less regret the extinction of the order.

* Clun-galo, the wife of Conmor, king of Inis-huna, and the mother of Sul-malla. She is here represented as missing her daughter, after she had fled with Cathmor.

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, son 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!"

* * * * * *

† Sul-malla replies to the supposed questions of her mother. Towards the middle of this paragraph she calls Cathmor *the son of her soul*, and continues the metaphor throughout. This book ends, we may suppose, about the middle of the third night, from the opening of the poem.

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# TEMORA.

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# TEMORA:

## AN EPIC POEM.

## BOOK VII.

### ARGUMENT.

This book begins about the middle of the third night from the opening of the poem. The poet describes a kind of mist, which rose, by night, from the lake of Lego, and was the usual residence of the souls of the dead, during the interval between their decease and the funeral song. The appearance of the ghost of Fillan above the cave where his body lay. His voice comes to Fingal, on the rock of Cormul. The king strikes the shield of Trenmor, which was an infallible sign of his appearing in arms himself. The extraordinary effect of the sound of the shield. Sul-malla, starting from sleep, awakes Cathmor. Their affecting discourse. She insists with him to sue for peace; he resolves to continue the war. He directs her to retire to the neighbouring valley of Lona, which was the residence of an old Druid, until the battle of the next day should be over. He awakes his army with the sound of his shield. The shield described. Fonar, the bard, at the desire of Cathmor, relates the first settlement of the

Fir-bolg in Ireland, under their leader Larthon. Morning comes. Sul-malla retires to the valley of Lona. A lyric song concludes the book.

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 *, they roll the mist, a grey dwelling to his ghost, until the songs arise.

* As the mist, which rose from the lake of Lego, occasioned diseases and death, the bards feigned that it was the residence of the ghosts of the deceased, during the interval between their death, and the pronouncing of the funeral elegy over their tombs; for it was not allowable, without that ceremony was performed, for the spirits of the dead to mix with their ancestors, *in their airy halls*. It was the business of the spirit of the nearest relation to the deceased, to take the mist of Lego, and pour it over the grave. We find here Conar, the son of Trenmor, the first king of Ireland, performing this office for Fillan, as it was in the cause of the family of Conar that that hero was killed.

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

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

* The following is the singular sentiment of a frigid bard:

"More pleasing to me is the night of Cona, dark-streaming from Ossian's harp; more pleasant it is to me, than a white-bosomed dweller between my arms; than a fair-handed daughter of heroes, in the hour of rest."

Though tradition is not very satisfactory concerning the history of this poet, it has taken care to inform us, that he was *very old* when he wrote the distich; a circumstance, which we might have supposed, without the aid of tradition.

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 * of the bards, untouched, sound mournful over the hill.

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.

* It was the opinion of ancient times, that, on the night preceding the death of a person worthy and renowned, the harps of those bards, who were retained by his family, emitted melancholy sounds. This was attributed to *the light touch of ghosts*; who were supposed to have a fore-knowledge of events. The same opinion prevailed long in the north, and the particular sound was called, *the warning voice of the dead*. *The voice of death*, mentioned in the preceding sentence, was of a different kind. Each person was supposed to have an attendant spirit, who assumed his form and voice, on the night preceding his death, and appeared, to some, in the attitude in which the person was to die. The VOICES OF DEATH were the foreboding shrieks of those spirits.

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 through her floating hair.

"Who comes through night to Cathmor, in the

season of his dreams ? Bringest thou aught of war ? Who art thou, son of night ? Standest 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 !"

* Fingal is said to have never been overcome in battle. From this proceeded that title of honour which is always bestowed on him in tradition, *Fion gal na buai'*, FINGAL OF VICTORIES. In a poem, just now in my hands, which celebrates some of the great actions of Arthur, the famous British hero, that appellation is often bestowed on him. The poem, from the phraseology, appears to be ancient ; and is,

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-

perhaps, though that is not mentioned, a translation from the Welsh language.

* Claon-mal, *crooked eye-brow*. From the retired life of this person, is insinuated, that he was of the order of the Druids; which supposition is not, at all, invalidated by the appellation of *king of harps*, here bestowed on him; for all agree that the bards were of the number of the Druids originally.

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 boundig 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

* Són-mor, *tall handsome man.* He was the father of Borbar-duthul, chief of Atha, and grandfather to Cathmor himself.

† Cluan-er, *man of the field.* This chief was killed in battle by Cormac Mac-Conar, king of Ireland, the father of Ros-crána, the first wife of Fingal. The story is alluded to in some ancient poems.

‡ Suil-alluin, *beautiful;* the wife of Són-mor.

her spreading hair came Sul-allin; for she trembled for her king. He stopt 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,

* To avoid multiplying notes, I shall give here the signification of the names of the stars, engraved on the shield. Cean-mathon, *head of the bear.* Col-derna, *slant and sharp beam.* Ul-oicho, *ruler of night.* Cathlin, *beam of the wave.* Reul-durath, *star of the twilight.* Berthin, *fire of the hill.* Tonthéna, *meteor of the waves.* These etymologies, excepting that of Cean-mathon, are pretty exact. Of it I am not so certain; for it is not very probable, that the Firbolg had distinguished a constellation, so very early as the days of Larthon, by the name of the Bear.

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 cloudless 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 † blessed the well-known beam, as it faint-gleamed on the deep.

* *To travel on the winds*, a poetical expression for sailing.

† Larthon is compounded of *Lear*, sea, and *thon*, wave. This name was given to the chief of the first colony of the Firbolg, who settled in Ireland, on account of his knowledge in navigation. A part of an old poem is still extant, concerning this hero. It abounds with those romantic fables of giants and magicians, which distinguished the compositions

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

of the less ancient bards. The descriptions, contained in it, are ingenious, and proportionable to the magnitude of the persons introduced; but, being unnatural, they are insipid and tedious. Had the bard kept within the bounds of probability, his genius was far from being contemptible. The exordium of his poem is not destitute of merit; but it is the only part of it that I think worthy of being presented to the reader.

"Who first sent the black ship, through ocean, like a whale through the bursting of foam? Look, from thy darkness, on Cronath, Ossian of the harps of old! Send thy light on the blue-rolling waters, that I may behold the king. I see him dark in his own shell of oak! Sea-tossed Larthon, thy soul is strong. It is careless as the wind of thy sails; as the wave that rolls by thy side. But the silent green isle is before thee, wi its sons, who are tall as woody Lumon; Lumon, which sends from its top, a thousand streams, white-wandering down its sides."

It may, perhaps, be for the credit of this bard, to translate no more of this poem; for the continuation of his description of the Irish giants betrays his want of judgment.

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 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-

* Lumon was a hill in Inis-huna, near the residence of Sul-malla. This episode has an immediate connection with what is said of Larthon, in the description of Cathmor's shield.

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 *, 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

* Samla, *apparitions*, so called from the vision of Larthon, concerning his posterity.

where white-handed Flathal * 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. Vallies shew, 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 whither 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.

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

* Flathal, *heavenly, exquisitely beautiful.* She was the wife of Larthon.

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?

# TEMORA:

## AN EPIC POEM.

### BOOK VIII.

#### ARGUMENT.

THE fourth morning, from the opening of the poem, comes on. Fingal, still continuing in the place, to which he had retired on the preceding night, is seen, at intervals, through the mist, which covered the rock of Cormul. The descent of the king is described. He orders Gaul, Dermid, and Carril the bard, to go to the valley of Cluna, and conduct, from thence, to the Caledonian army, Ferad-artho, the son of Cairbre, the only person remaining of the family of Conar, the first king of Ireland. The king takes the command of the army, and prepares for battle. Marching towards the enemy, he comes to the cave of Lubar, where the body of Fillan lay. Upon seeing his dog Bran, who lay at the entrance of the cave, his grief returns. Cathmor arranges the Irish army in order of battle. The appearance of that hero. The general conflict is described. The actions of Fingal and Cathmor. A storm. The total rout of the Firbolg. The two kings engage, in a column of mist, on the banks of Lubar. Their attitude and conference after the combat. The death of Cathmor. Fingal resigns *the spear of Tren-*

*mor* to Ossian. The ceremonies observed on that occasion. The spirit of Cathmor, in the mean time, appears to Sul-malla, in the valley of Lona. Her sorrow. Evening comes on. A feast is prepared. The coming of Ferad-artho is announced by the songs of an hundred bards. The poem closes with a speech of Fingal.

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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 chace 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 *, blue-eyed king, the son of broad-

* Ferad-artho was the son of Cairbar Mac-Cormac, king of Ireland. He was the only one remaining of the race of Conar, the son of Trenmor, the first Irish monarch, according to Ossian. In order to make this passage thoroughly understood, it may not be improper to recapitulate some part of what has been said in preceding notes. Upon the death of Conar, the son of Trenmor, his son Cormac succeeded to the Irish throne. Cormac reigned long. His children were, Cairbar, who succeeded him, and Ros-crana, the first wife of Fingal. Cairbar, long before the death of his father Cormac, had taken to wife Bos-gala, the daughter of Colgar, one of the most powerful chiefs in Connaught, and had, by her, Artho, afterwards king of Ireland. Soon after Artho arrived at man's estate, his mother Bos-gala died, and Cairbar married Beltanno, the daughter of Conachar of Ullin, who brought him a son, whom he called Ferad-artho, i. e. *a man in the place of Artho.* The occasion of the name was this: Artho, when his brother was born, was absent on

shielded Cairbar, from Ullin of the roes. He listens to the voice of Condan, as, grey, he bends in

an expedition in the south of Ireland. A false report was brought to his father, that he was killed. *Cairbar*, to use the words of a poem on the subject, *darkened, for his fair-haired son. He turned to the young beam of light, the son of Baltanno of Conachar. Thou shalt be, Ferad-artho, he said, a fire before thy race.* Cairbar, soon after, died, nor did Artho long survive him. Artho was succeeded, in the Irish throne, by his son Cormac, who, in his minority, was murdered by Cairbar, the son of Borbar-duthul. Ferad-artho, says tradition, was very young when the expedition of Fingal, to settle him on the throne of Ireland, happened. During the short reign of young Cormac, Ferad-artho lived at the royal residence of Temora. Upon the murder of the king, Condan, the bard, conveyed Ferad-artho, privately, to the cave of Cluna, behind the mountain Crommal, in Ulster, where they both lived concealed, during the usurpation of the family of Atha. A late bard has delivered the whole history, in a poem just now in my possession. It has little merit, if we except the scene between Ferad-artho, and the messengers of Fingal, upon their arrival, in the valley of Cluna. After hearing of the great actions of Fingal, the young prince proposes the following questions concerning him, to Gaul and Dermid: "Is the king tall as the rock of my cave? Is his spear a fir of Cluna? Is he a rough-winged blast, on the mountain, which takes the green oak by the head, and tears it from its hill? Glitters Lubar within his stride, when he sends his stately steps along. Nor is he tall, said Gaul, as that rock: nor glitter streams within his strides, but his soul is a mighty flood, like the strength of Ullin's seas."

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-Moilena, 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, 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

* Malvina is supposed to speak the following soliloquy:

"Malvina is like the bow of the shower, in the secret valley of streams; it is bright, but the drops of heaven are rolling on its blended light. They say, that I am fair within my locks, but, on my brightness, is the wandering of tears. Darkness flies over my soul, as the dusky wave of the breeze, along the grass of Lutha. Yet have not the roes failed me, when I moved between the hills. Pleasant, beneath my white hand, arose the sound of harps. What then, daughter of Lutha, travels over thy soul, like the dreary path of a ghost along the nightly beam? Should the young warrior fall, in the roar of his troubled fields! Young virgins of Lutha arise, call back the wandering thoughts of Malvina. Awake the voice of the harp, along my echoing vale. Then shall my soul come forth, like a light from the gates of the morn, when clouds are rolled around them, with their broken sides.

"Dweller of my thoughts, by night, whose form ascends in troubled fields, why dost thou stir up my soul, thou far-distant son of the king? Is that the ship of my love, its dark course through the ridges of ocean? How art thou so sudden, Oscar, from the heath of shields?"

The rest of this poem consists of a dialogue between Ullin and Malvina, wherein the distress of the latter is carried to the highest pitch.

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 whirl-

winds 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 winds 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 *,

* The Irish compositions concerning Fingal invariably speak of him as a giant. Of these Hibernian poems there are now many in my hands. From the language, and allusions to the times in which they were writ, I should fix the date of their composition in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. In some passages, the poetry is far from wanting merit, but the fable is unnatural, and the whole conduct of the pieces injudicious. I shall give one instance of the extravagant fictions of the Irish bards, in a poem which they, most unjustly, ascribe to Ossian. The story of it is this: Ireland being threatened with an invasion from some part of Scandinavia, Fingal sent Ossian, Oscar, and Ca-olt, to watch the bay in which it was expected the enemy was to land. Oscar, unluckily, fell asleep, before the Scandinavians appeared; and, great as he was, says the Irish bard, he had one bad property, that no less could waken him, before his time, than cutting off one of his fingers, or throwing a great stone against his head; and it was dangerous to come near

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 Moronnan. 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.

him on those occasions, till he had recovered himself, and was fully awake. Ca-olt, who was employed by Ossian to waken his son, made choice of throwing the stone against his head, as the least dangerous expedient. The stone, rebounding from the hero's head, shook, as it rolled along, the hill for three miles round. Oscar rose in rage, fought bravely, and, singly, vanquished a wing of the enemy's army. Thus the bard goes on, till Fingal put an end to the war, by the total rout of the Scandinavians. Puerile, and even despicable, as these fictions are, yet Keating and O'Flaherty have no better authority than the poems which contain them, for all that they write concerning Fion Mac-comnal, and the pretended militia of Ireland.

As meet two troubled seas, with the rolling of all their waves, when they feel the wings of contending winds, in the rock-sided frith 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.

Moronnan 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 *

* Tla-min, *mildly soft*. The loves of Clonar and Tlamin were rendered famous in the north, by a fragment of a lyric poem. It is a dialogue between Clonar and Tlamin. She begins with a soliloquy, which he overhears.

Tlamin. "Clonar, son of Conglas of I-mor, young hunter of dun-sided roes! where art thou laid, amidst rushes, beneath the passing wing of the breeze? I behold thee, my love, in the plain of thy own dark streams! The clung thorn is rolled by the wind, and rustles along his shield. Bright in his locks he lies: the thoughts of his dreams fly,

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

darkening, over his face. Thou thinkest of the battles of Ossian, young son of the echoing isle!

"Half-hid, in the grove, I sit down. Fly back, ye mists of the hill. Why should ye hide her love from the blue eyes of Tlamin of harps?

CLONAR. "As the spirit, seen in a dream, flies off from our opening eyes, we think, we behold his bright path between the closing hills; so fled the daughter of Clun-gal, from the sight of Clonar of shields. Arise from the gathering of trees; blue-eyed Tlamin, arise.

TLAMIN. "I turn me away from his steps. Why should he know of my love! My white breast is heaving over sighs, as foam on the dark course of streams. But he passes away, in his arms! Son of Conglas, my soul is sad.

CLONAR. "It was the shield of Fingal! the voice of kings from Selma of harps! My path is towards green Erin. Arise, fair light, from thy shades. Come to the field of my soul, there is the spreading of hosts. Arise, on Clonar's troubled soul, young daughter of the blue-shielded Clungal."

Clungal was the chief of I-mor, one of the Hebrides.

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

* Fingal and Cathmor. The conduct here is perhaps proper. The numerous descriptions of single combats have already exhausted the subject. Nothing new, nor adequate to our high idea of the kings, can be said. *A column of mist* is thrown over the whole, and the combat is left to the imagination of the reader. Poets have almost universally failed in their descriptions of this sort. Nor all the strength of Homer could sustain, with dignity, the *minutiæ* of a single combat. The throwing of a spear, and the braying of a shield, as some of our own poets most elegantly express it, convey no magnificent, though they are striking, ideas. Our imagination stretches beyond, and consequently, despises, the description. It were, therefore, well, for some

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, midst 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 *

poets, in my opinion (though it is, perhaps, somewhat singular), to have, sometimes, thrown *mist* over their single combats.

* Fingal is very much celebrated, in tradition, for his knowledge in the virtues of herbs. The Irish poems, concerning him, often represent him curing the wounds which his chiefs received in battle. They fable concerning him, that he was in possession of a cup, containing the essence of herbs, which instantaneously healed wounds. The know-

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 dwell-

ledge of curing the wounded, was, till of late, universal among the Highlanders. We hear of no other disorder, which required the skill of physic. The wholesomeness of the climate, and an active life, spent in hunting, excluded diseases.

* Cathmor reflects, with pleasure, even in his last moments, on the relief he had afforded to strangers. The very tread of their feet was pleasant in his ear. His hospitality was not passed unnoticed by the bards; for, with them, it became a proverb, when they described the hospitable disposition of a hero, *that he was like Cathmor of Atha, the friend of strangers.* It will seem strange, that, in all the Irish poems, there is no mention made of Cathmor. This must be attributed to the revolutions and domestic confusions which happened in that island, and utterly cut off all the real traditions concerning so ancient a period. All that we have related of the state of Ireland before the fifth century is of late invention, and the work of ill-informed senachies and injudicious bards.

ing, 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 *, my fathers shall meet

* The Celtic nations had some idea of rewards, and perhaps of punishments, after death. Those who behaved, in life, with bravery and virtue, were received, with joy, to

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 * in earth, and one bright boss from his

the airy halls of their fathers; but *the dark in soul,* to use the expression of the poet, were spurned away *from the habitation of heroes, to wander on all the winds.* Another opinion which prevailed in those times, tended not a little to make individuals emulous to excel one another in martial atchievements. It was thought, that, in the *hall of clouds,* every one had a seat, raised above others, in proportion as he excelled them in valour when he lived.

* There are some stones still to be seen in the north, which were erected as memorials of some remarkable transactions between the ancient chiefs. There are generally found, beneath them, some pieces of arms, and a bit of half-burnt wood. The cause of placing the last there is not mentioned in tradition.

shield. Dark in thought, a-while, 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 knowest not, feeble man, that fame once shone on Moilena. 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

* The erecting of his standard on the bank of Lubar, was the signal which Fingal, in the beginning of the book, promised to give to the chiefs, who went to conduct Ferad-artho to the army, should he himself prevail in battle. This standard here is called, the *sun-beam*. The reason of this appellation, I gave in my notes on the poem intitled Fingal.

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.

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

* The scene is changed to the valley of Lona, whither Sul-malla had been sent, by Cathmor, before the battle. Clonmal, an aged bard, or rather druid, as he seems here to be endued with a prescience of events, had long dwelt there in a cave. This scene is calculated to throw a melancholy gloom over the mind.

† Cathmor had promised, in the seventh book, to come to the cave of Clonmal, after the battle was over.

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 *.

* Tradition relates, that Ossian, the next day after the decisive battle between Fingal and Cathmor, went to find out Sul-malla, in the valley of Lona. His address to her follows:

"Awake, thou daughter of Conmor, from the fern-skirted cavern of Lona. Awake, thou sun-beam in deserts; warriors one day must fail. They move forth, like terrible lights; but, often, their cloud is near. Go to the valley of

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

streams, to the wandering of herds, on Lumon; there dwells, in his lazy mist, the man of many days. But he is unknown, Sul-malla, like the thistle of the rock of roes; it shakes its grey beard, in the wind, and falls, unseen of our eyes. Not such are the kings of men; their departure is a meteor of fire, which pours its red course from the desert, over the bosom of night.

"He is mixed with the warriors of old, those fires that have hid their heads. At times shall they come forth in song. Not forgot has the warrior failed. He has not seen, Sul-malla, the fall of a beam of his own; no fair-haired son, in his blood, young troubler of the field. I am lonely, young branch of Lumon, I may hear the voice of the feeble, when my strength shall have failed in years, for young Oscar has ceased, on his field."—* * * *

Sul-malla returned to her own country. She makes a considerable figure in another poem; her behaviour in that piece accounts for that partial regard with which the poet ought to speak of her throughout Temora.

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 *.

* Before I finish my notes, it may not be altogether improper to obviate an objection, which may be made to the credibility of the story of Temora. It may be asked, Whether it is probable, that Fingal could perform such actions as are ascribed to him in this book, at an age when his grandson, Oscar, had acquired so much reputation in arms? To this it may be answered, That Fingal was but very young [book 4th] when he took to wife Ros-crana, who soon after became the mother of Ossian. Ossian was also extremely young when he married Evir-allin, the mother of Oscar. Tradition relates, that Fingal was but eighteen years old at the birth of his son Ossian; and that Ossian was much about the same age, when Oscar, his son, was born. Oscar, perhaps, might be about twenty, when he was killed, in the battle of Gabhra [book 1st]; so the age of Fingal, when the decisive battle was fought between him and Cathmor, was just fifty-six years. In those times of activity and health, the natural strength and vigour of a man was little abated, at

" 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 Feradartho 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."

such an age; so that there is nothing improbable in the actions of Fingal, as related in this book.

# CONLATH AND CUTHONA:

## A POEM.

# ARGUMENT.

CONLATH was the youngest of Morni's sons, and brother to the celebrated Gaul. He was in love with Cuthóna, the daughter of Rumar, when Toscar, the son of Kinfena, accompanied by Fercuth, his friend, arrived from Ireland, at Mora, where Conlath dwelt. He was hospitably received, and, according to the custom of the times, feasted three days with Conlath. On the fourth he set sail; and coasting the *island of waves*, one of the Hebrides, he saw Cuthóna hunting, fell in love with her, and carried her away, by force, in his ship. He was forced, by stress of weather, into I-thona, a desert isle. In the mean time Conlath, hearing of the rape, sailed after him, and found him on the point of sailing for the coast of Ireland. They fought; and they and their followers fell by mutual wounds. Cuthóna did not long survive; for she died of grief the third day after. Fingal, hearing of their unfortunate death, sent Stormal, the son of Moran, to bury them, but forgot to send a bard to sing the funeral song over their tombs. The ghost of Conlath comes, long after, to Ossian, to intreat him to transmit to posterity, his and Cuthóna's fame. For it was the opinion of the times, that the souls of the deceased were not happy, till their elegies were composed by a bard.

# CONLATH AND CUTHONA:

## A POEM.

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 chace 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-Ithona *. 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 of 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 † 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

* I-thonn, *island of waves*, one of the uninhabited western isles.

† Cuthóna, the daughter of Rumar, whom Toscar had carried away by force.

against our rocks. The lightning came often, and shewed the blasted fern. Fercuth! I saw the ghost who embroiled the night *. 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 † 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 Selá-ma ‡. 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

* It was long thought, in the north of Scotland, that storms were raised by the ghosts of the deceased. This notion is still entertained by the vulgar; for they think that whirlwinds, and sudden squalls of wind, are occasioned by spirits, who transport themselves, in that manner, from one place to another.

† Ma-ronnan was the brother of Toscar.

‡ Selámath, *beautiful to behold*, the name of Toscar's residence, on the coast of Ulster, near the mountain Crómla.

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 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!

CUTHONA *.

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

* Cu-thona, *the mournful sound of the waves;* a poetical name given her on account of her mourning to the sound of the waves; her name in tradition is Gorm-huil, *the blue-eyed maid.*

Conlath looks over the sea for his only love. The daughters of the chace 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 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!

CUTHONA.

Ha! what cloud is that? It carries the ghosts of my fathers. I see the skirts of their robes, like grey and watry 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.

* The grave.

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 *. She knew that her hero fell. Her 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 watry 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; that sleep may descend at night. O that I could forget my friends: till my foot-steps should cease to be seen! till I come among them with joy! and lay my aged limbs in the narrow house!

* It was the opinion of the times, that the arms left by the heroes at home became bloody the very instant their owners were killed, though at ever so great a distance.

# BERRATHON:

## A POEM.

# ARGUMENT.

FINGAL, in his voyage to Lochlin, whither he had been invited by Starno, the father of Agandecca, touched at Berrathon, an island of Scandinavia, where he was kindly entertained by Larthmor, the petty king of the place, who was a vassal of the supreme kings of Lochlin. The hospitality of Larthmor gained him Fingal's friendship, which that hero manifested, after the imprisonment of Larthmor by his own son, by sending Ossian and Toscar, the father of Malvina, so often mentioned, to rescue Larthmor, and to punish the unnatural behaviour of Uthal. Uthal was handsome, and, by the ladies, much admired. Nina-thoma, the beautiful daughter of Torthóma, a neighbouring prince, fell in love and fled with him. He proved unconstant; for another lady, whose name is not mentioned, gaining his affections, he confined Nina-thoma to a desert island near the coast of Berrathon. She was relieved by Ossian, who, in company with Toscar, landing on Berrathon, defeated the forces of Uthal, and killed him in a single combat. Nina-thoma, whose love not all the bad behaviour of Uthal could erase, hearing of his death, died of grief. In the mean time Larthmor is restored, and Ossian and Toscar return in triumph to Fingal.

The poem opens with an elegy on the death of Malvina, the daughter of Toscar, and closes with presages of Ossian's death.

# BERRATHON:

## A POEM.

BEND thy blue course, O stream! round the narrow plain of Lutha *. Let the green woods hang over it, from their hills: the sun look on it at noon. The thistle is there on its rock, and shakes its beard to the wind. The flower hangs its heavy head, waving, at times, to the gale. "Why dost thou awake me, O gale!" it seems to say, "I am covered with the drops of heaven? The time of my fading is near, the blast that shall scatter my leaves. To-morrow shall the traveller come; he that saw me in my beauty shall come. His eyes will search the field, but they will not find me." So shall they search in vain, for the voice of Cona, after it has failed in the field. The hunter shall come forth in

* Lutha, *swift stream.*

the morning, and the voice of my harp shall not be heard. "Where is the son of car-borne Fingal?" The tear will be on his cheek! Then come thou, O Malvina, with all thy music, come! Lay Ossian in the plain of Lutha: let his tomb rise in the lovely field.

Malvina! where art thou, with thy songs, with the soft sound of thy steps? Son * of Alpin, art thou near? where is the daughter of Toscar? "I passed, O son of Fingal, by Tor-lutha's mossy walls. The smoke of the hall was ceased. Silence was among the trees of the hill. The voice of the chace was over. I saw the daughters of the bow. I asked about Malvina, but they answered not. They turned their faces away: thin darkness covered their beauty. They were like stars, on a rainy hill, by night, each looking faintly through her mist."

Pleasant † be thy rest, O lovely beam! soon hast thou set on our hills! The steps of thy departure were stately, like the moon on the blue trembling wave. But thou hast left us in darkness, first of the maids of Lutha! We sit, at the rock, and there is no voice; no light but the meteor of fire! Soon hast thou set, O Malvina, daughter of generous

* His father was one of Fingal's principal bards, and he had a poetical genius.

† Ossian speaks. He calls Malvina a beam of light, and continues the metaphor throughout the paragraph.

Toscar! But thou risest like the beam of the east, among the spirits of thy friends, where they sit, in their stormy halls, the chambers of the thunder: A cloud hovers over Cona. Its blue curling sides are high. The winds are beneath it, with their wings. Within it is the dwelling * of Fingal. There the hero sits in darkness. His airy spear is in his hand. His shield, half-covered with clouds, is like the darkened moon; when one half still remains in the wave, and the other looks sickly on the field!

His friends sit around the king, on mist! They hear the songs of Ullin: he strikes the half-viewless harp. He raises the feeble voice. The lesser heroes, with a thousand meteors, light the airy hall. Malvina rises, in the midst; a blush is on her cheek. She beholds the unknown faces of her fathers. She turns aside her humid eyes. "Art thou come so soon?" said Fingal, daughter of generous Toscar. "Sadness dwells in the halls of Lutha. My aged

* The description of this ideal palace of Fingal is agreeable to the notions of those times, concerning the state of the deceased, who were supposed to pursue, after death, the pleasures and employments of their former life. The situation of the Celtic heroes, in their separate state, if not entirely happy, is more agreeable, than the notions of the ancient Greeks concerning their departed heroes.

son * is sad : I hear the breeze of Cona, that was wont to lift thy heavy locks. It comes to the hall, but thou art not there. Its voice is mournful among the arms of thy fathers ! Go, with thy rustling wing, O breeze ! sigh on Malvina's tomb. It rises yonder beneath the rock, at the blue stream of Lutha. The maids † are departed to their place. Thou alone, O breeze, mournest there !"

But who comes from the dusky west, supported on a cloud ? A smile is on his grey, watery face. His locks of mist fly on wind. He bends forward on his airy spear. It is thy father, Malvina ! " Why shinest thou, so soon, on our clouds," he says, " O lovely light of Lutha ! But thou wert sad, my daughter. Thy friends had passed away. The sons of little men ‡ were in the hall. None remained of the heroes, but Ossian king of spears !"

And dost thou remember Ossian, car-borne Tos-

* Ossian ; who had a great friendship for Malvina, both on account of her love for his son Oscar, and her attention to himself.

† That is, the young virgins who sung the funeral elegy over her tomb.

‡ Tradition is entirely silent concerning what passed in the north, immediately after the death of Fingal and all his heroes ; by which it would seem that the actions of their successors were not to be compared to those of the renowned Fingalians.

car *, son of Conloch ? The battles of our youth were many. Our swords went together to the field. They saw us coming like two falling rocks. The sons of the stranger fled. " There come the warriors of Cona !" they said. " Their steps are in the paths of the flying !" Draw near, son of Alpin, to the song of the aged. The deeds of other times are in my soul. My memory beams on the days that are past. On the days of mighty Toscar, when our path was in the deep. Draw near, son of Alpin, to the last sound of the voice of Cona !

The king of Morven commanded. I raised my sails to the wind. Toscar, chief of Lutha, stood at my side, I rose on the dark-blue wave. Our course was to sea-surrounded Berrathon †, the isle of many storms. There dwelt, with his locks of age, the stately strength of Larthmor. Larthmor, who spread the feast of shells to Fingal, when he went to Starno's halls, in the days of Agandecca. But when the chief was old, the pride of his son arose ; the pride of fair-haired Uthal, the love of a thousand maids. He bound the aged Larthmor, and dwelt in his sounding halls !

Long pined the king in his cave, beside his roll-

* Toscar was the son of that Conloch, who was also father to the lady, whose unfortunate death is related in the last episode of the second book of Fingal.

† Barrathón, *a promontory in the midst of waves.*

ing sea. Day did not come to his dwelling; nor the burning oak by night. But the wind of ocean was there, and the parting beam of the moon. The red star looked on the king, when it trembled on the western wave. Snitho came to Selma's hall: Snitho, the friend of Larthmor's youth. He told of the king of Berrathon: the wrath of Fingal arose. Thrice he assumed the spear, resolved to stretch his hand to Uthal. But the memory * of his deeds rose before the king. He sent his son and Toscar. Our joy was great on the rolling sea. We often half-unsheathed our swords. For never before had we fought alone, in battles of the spear.

Night came down on the ocean. The winds departed on their wings. Cold and pale is the moon. The red stars lift their heads on high. Our course is slow along the coast of Berrathon. The white waves tumble on the rocks. "What voice is that," said Toscar, "which comes between the sounds of the waves? It is soft but mournful, like the voice of departed bards. But I behold a maid †. She sits on the rock alone. Her head bends on her

* The meaning is, that Fingal remembered his own great actions, and consequently would not sully them by engaging in a petty war against Uthal, who was so far his inferior in valour and power.

† Nina-thoma, the daughter of Torthóma, who had been confined to a desert island by her lover Uthal.

arm of snow. Her dark hair is in the wind. Hear, son of Fingal, her song, it is smooth as the gliding stream." We came to the silent bay, and heard the maid of night.

" How long will ye roll around me, blue-tumbling waters of ocean? My dwelling was not always in caves, nor beneath the whistling tree. The feast was spread in Torthóma's hall. My father delighted in my voice. The youths beheld me in the steps of my loveliness. They blessed the dark-haired Nina-thoma. It was then thou didst come, O Uthal! like the sun of heaven! The souls of the virgins are thine, son of generous Larthmor! But why dost thou leave me alone, in the midst of roaring waters? Was my soul dark with thy death? Did my white hand lift the sword? Why then hast thou left me alone, king of high Finthormo *!"

The tear started from my eye, when I heard the voice of the maid. I stood before her in my arms. I spoke the words of peace! " Lovely dweller of the cave! what sigh is in thy breast? Shall Ossian lift his sword in thy presence, the destruction of thy foes? Daughter of Torthómo, rise. I have heard the words of thy grief. The race of Morven are around thee, who never injured the weak.

* Finthormo, the palace of Uthal. The names in this episode are not of a Celtic original.

Come to our dark-bosomed ship! thou brighter than that setting moon! Our course is to the rocky Berrathon, to the echoing walls of Finthormo." She came in her beauty; she came with all her lovely steps. Silent joy brightened in her face; as when the shadows fly from the field of spring; the blue-stream is rolling in brightness, and the green bush bends over its course!

The morning rose with its beams. We came to Rothma's bay. A boar rushed from the wood: my spear pierced his side, and he fell. I rejoiced over the blood *. I foresaw my growing fame. But now the sound of Uthal's train came, from the high Finthormo. They spread over the heath to the chace of the boar. Himself comes slowly on, in the pride of his strength. He lifts two pointed spears. On his side is the hero's sword. Three youths carry his polished bows. The bounding of five dogs is before him. His heroes move on, at a distance, admiring the steps of the king. Stately was the son of Larthmor! but his soul was dark! Dark as the troubled face of the moon, when it foretells the storms!

* Ossian might have thought that his killing a boar on his first landing in Berrathon, was a good omen of his future success in that island. The present Highlanders look, with a degree of superstition, upon the success of their first action, after they have engaged in any desperate undertaking.

We rose on the heath before the king. He stopt in the midst of his course. His heroes gathered around. A grey-haired bard advanced. "Whence are the sons of the strangers!" began the bard of song. "The children of the unhappy come to Berrathon; to the sword of car-borne Uthal. He spreads no feast in his hall. The blood of strangers is on his streams. If from Selma's walls ye come, from the mossy walls of Fingal, chuse three youths to go to your king to tell of the fall of his people. Perhaps the hero may come and pour his blood on Uthal's sword. So shall the fame of Finthormo arise, like the growing tree of the vale!"

"Never will it rise, O bard," I said in the pride of my wrath. "He would shrink from the presence of Fingal, whose eyes are the flames of death. The son of Comhal comes, and kings vanish before him. They are rolled together, like mist, by the breath of his rage. Shall three tell to Fingal, that his people fell? Yes! they may tell it, bard! but his people shall fall with fame!"

I stood in the darkness of my strength. Toscar drew his sword at my side. The foe came on like a stream. The mingled sound of death arose. Man took man, shield met shield; steel mixed its beams with steel. Darts hiss through air. Spears ring on mails. Swords on broken bucklers bound. As the noise of an aged grove beneath the roaring

wind, when a thousand ghosts break the trees by night, such was the din of arms! But Uthal fell beneath my sword. The sons of Berrathon fled. It was then I saw him in his beauty, and the tear hung in my eye! "Thou art fallen *, young tree," I said, "with all thy beauty round thee. Thou art fallen on thy plains, and the field is bare. The winds come from the desert! there is no sound in thy leaves! Lovely art thou in death, son of car-borne Larthmor."

Nina-thoma sat on the shore. She heard the sound of battle. She turned her red eyes on Leth-mal, the grey-haired bard of Selma. He alone had remained on the coast, with the daughter of Tor-thóma. "Son of the times of old!" she said, "I hear the noise of death. Thy friends have met with Uthal, and the chief is low! O that I had remain-ed on the rock, inclosed with the tumbling waves! Then would my soul be sad, but his death would not reach my ear. Art thou fallen on thy heath, O son of high Finthormo! Thou didst leave me

* To mourn over the fall of their enemies, was a practice universal among the Celtic heroes. This is more agreeable to humanity, than the shameful insulting of the dead, so common in Homer, and after him, servilely copied by all his imitators, the humane Virgil not excepted, who have been more successful in borrowing the imperfections of that great poet, than in their imitations of his beauties.

on a rock, but my soul was full of thee. Son of high Finthormo! art thou fallen on thy heath?"

She rose pale in her tears. She saw the bloody shield of Uthal. She saw it in Ossian's hand. Her steps were distracted on the heath. She flew. She found him. She fell. Her soul came forth in a sigh. Her hair is spread on his face. My bursting tears descend. A tomb arose on the unhappy. My song of woe was heard. "Rest, hapless children of youth! Rest at the noise of that mossy stream! The virgins will see your tomb, at the chace, and turn away their weeping eyes. Your fame will be in song. The voice of the harp will be heard in your praise. The daughters of Selma shall hear it: your renown shall be in other lands. Rest, children of youth, at the noise of the mossy stream!"

Two days we remained on the coast. The heroes of Berrathon convened. We brought Larthmor to his halls. The feast of shells is spread. The joy of the aged was great. He looked to the arms of his fathers; the arms which he left in his hall, when the pride of Uthal rose. We were renowned before Larthmor. He blessed the chiefs of Morven. He knew not that his son was low, the stately strength of Uthal! They had told, that he had retired to the woods, with the tears of grief. They had told it, but he was silent in the tomb of Rothma's heath.

On the fourth day we raised our sails, to the roar of the northern wind. Larthmor came to the coast. His bards exalted the song. The joy of the king was great, he looked to Rothma's gloomy heath. He saw the tomb of his son. The memory of Uthal rose. "Who of my heroes," he said, "lies there? he seems to have been of the kings of men. Was he renowned in my halls, before the pride of Uthal rose? Ye are silent, sons of Berrathon! Is the king of heroes low? My heart melts for thee, O Uthal! though thy hand was against thy father. O that I had remained in the cave! that my son had dwelt in Finthormo! I might have heard the tread of his feet, when he went to the chace of the boar. I might have heard his voice on the blast of my cave. Then would my soul be glad: but now darkness dwells in my halls."

Such were my deeds, son of Alpin, when the arm of my youth was strong. Such the * actions of Toscar, the car-borne son of Conloch. But Toscar is on his flying cloud. I am alone at Lutha. My voice is like the last sound of the wind, when it forsakes the woods. But Ossian shall not be long alone. He sees the mist that shall receive his ghost. He beholds the mist that shall form his robe, when he appears on his hills. The sons of

* Ossian speaks.

feeble men shall behold me, and admire the stature of the chiefs of old. They shall creep to their caves. They shall look to the sky with fear: for my steps shall be in the clouds. Darkness shall roll on my side.

Lead, son of Alpin, lead the aged to his woods. The winds begin to rise. The dark wave of the lake resounds. Bends there not a tree from Mora with its branches bare? It bends, son of Alpin, in the rustling blast. My harp hangs on a blasted branch. The sound of its strings is mournful. Does the wind touch thee, O harp, or is it some passing ghost! It is the hand of Malvina! Bring me the harp, son of Alpin. Another song shall rise. My soul shall depart in the sound. My fathers shall hear it in their airy hall. Their dim faces shall hang, with joy, from their clouds; and their hands receive their son. The aged oak bends over the stream. It sighs with all its moss. The withered fern whistles near, and mixes, as it waves, with Ossian's hair.

"Strike the harp, and raise the song: be near, with all your wings, ye winds. Bear the mournful sound away to Fingal's airy hall. Bear it to Fingal's hall. that he may hear the voice of his son; the voice of him that praised the mighty!

"The blast of north opens thy gates, O king! I behold thee sitting on mist, dimly gleaming in all

thine arms. Thy form now is not the terror of the valiant. It is like a watery cloud ; when we see the stars behind it, with their weeping eyes. Thy shield is the aged moon : thy sword a vapour half-kindled with fire. Dim and feeble is the chief, who travelled in brightness before ! But thy steps * are on the winds of the desert. The storms are darkening in thy hand. Thou takest the sun in thy wrath, and hidest him in thy clouds. The sons of little men are afraid. A thousand showers descend. But when thou comest forth in thy mildness ; the gale of the morning is near thy course. The sun laughs in his blue fields. The grey stream winds in its vale. The bushes shake their green heads in the wind. The roes bound towards the desert.

" There is a murmur in the heath ! the stormy winds abate ! I hear the voice of Fingal. Long has it been absent from mine ear ! ' Come, Ossian, come away,' he says. Fingal has received his fame. We passed away, like flames that had shone for a

* This description of the power of Fingal over the winds and storms, and the image of his taking the sun, and hiding him in the clouds, do not correspond with the preceding paragraph, where he is represented as a feeble ghost, and no more the TERROR OF THE VALIANT ; but it agrees with the notion of the times concerning the souls of the deceased, who, it was supposed, had the command of the winds and storms, but took no concern in the affairs of men.

season. Our departure was in renown. Though the plains of our battles are dark and silent; our fame is in the four grey stones. The voice of Ossian has been heard. The harp has been strung in Selma. 'Come, Ossian, come away,' he says, 'come, fly with thy fathers on clouds.' I come, I come, thou king of men! The life of Ossian fails. I begin to vanish on Cona. My steps are not seen in Selma. Beside the stone of Mora I shall fall asleep. The winds whistling in my grey hair, shall not awaken me. Depart on thy wings, O wind! thou canst not disturb the rest of the bard. The night is long, but his eyes are heavy. Depart, thou rustling blast."

"But why art thou sad, son of Fingal? Why grows the cloud of thy soul? The chiefs of other times are departed. They have gone without their fame. The sons of future years shall pass away. Another race shall arise. The people are like the waves of ocean: like the leaves of woody Morven, they pass away in the rustling blast, and other leaves lift their green heads on high."

"Did thy beauty last, O Ryno *? Stood the

* Ryno, the son of Fingal, who was killed in Ireland, in the war against Swaran, was remarkable for the beauty of his person, his swiftness, and great exploits. Minvâne, the daughter of Morni, and sister to Gaul, was in love with Ryno. Her lamentation over her lover follows:

strength of car-borne Oscar ? Fingal himself departed. The halls of his fathers forgot his steps. Shalt thou then remain, thou aged bard ! when the mighty have failed ? But my fame shall remain,

She blushing sad, from Morven's rocks, bends over the darkly-rolling sea. She sees the youth in all their arms. Where, Ryno, where art thou ?

Our dark looks told that he was low ! That pale the hero flew on clouds ! That in the grass of Morven's hills, his feeble voice was heard in wind !

And is the son of Fingal fallen on Ullin's mossy plains ? Strong was the arm that vanquished him ! Ah me ! I am alone !

Alone I shall not be, ye winds ! that lift my dark-brown hair. My sighs shall not long mix with your stream ; for I must sleep with Ryno.

I see thee not, with beauty's steps, returning from the chace. The night is round Minvâne's love. Dark silence dwells with Ryno.

Where are thy dogs, and where thy bow ? Thy shield that was so strong ? Thy sword like heaven's descending fire ? The bloody spear of Ryno ?

I see them mixed in thy deep ship ; I see them stained with blood. No arms are in thy narrow hall, O darkly-dwelling Ryno !

When will the morning come, and say, " arise, thou king of spears ! arise, the hunters are abroad. The hinds are near thee, Ryno !"

Away, thou fair-haired morning, away ! the slumbering king hears thee not ! The hinds bound over his narrow tomb ; for death dwells round young Ryno.

and grow like the oak of Morven; which lifts its broad head to the storm, and rejoices in the course of the wind!

But I will tread softly, my king! and steal to the bed of thy repose. Minvâne will lie in silence, nor disturb the slumbering Ryno.

The maids shall seek me; but they shall not find me: they shall follow my departure with songs. But I shall not hear you, O maids! I sleep with fair-haired Ryno.

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