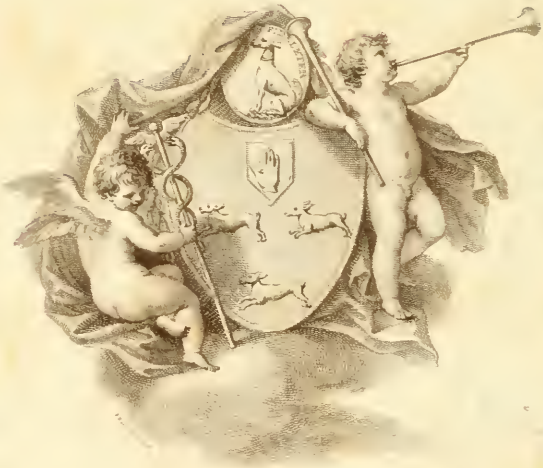

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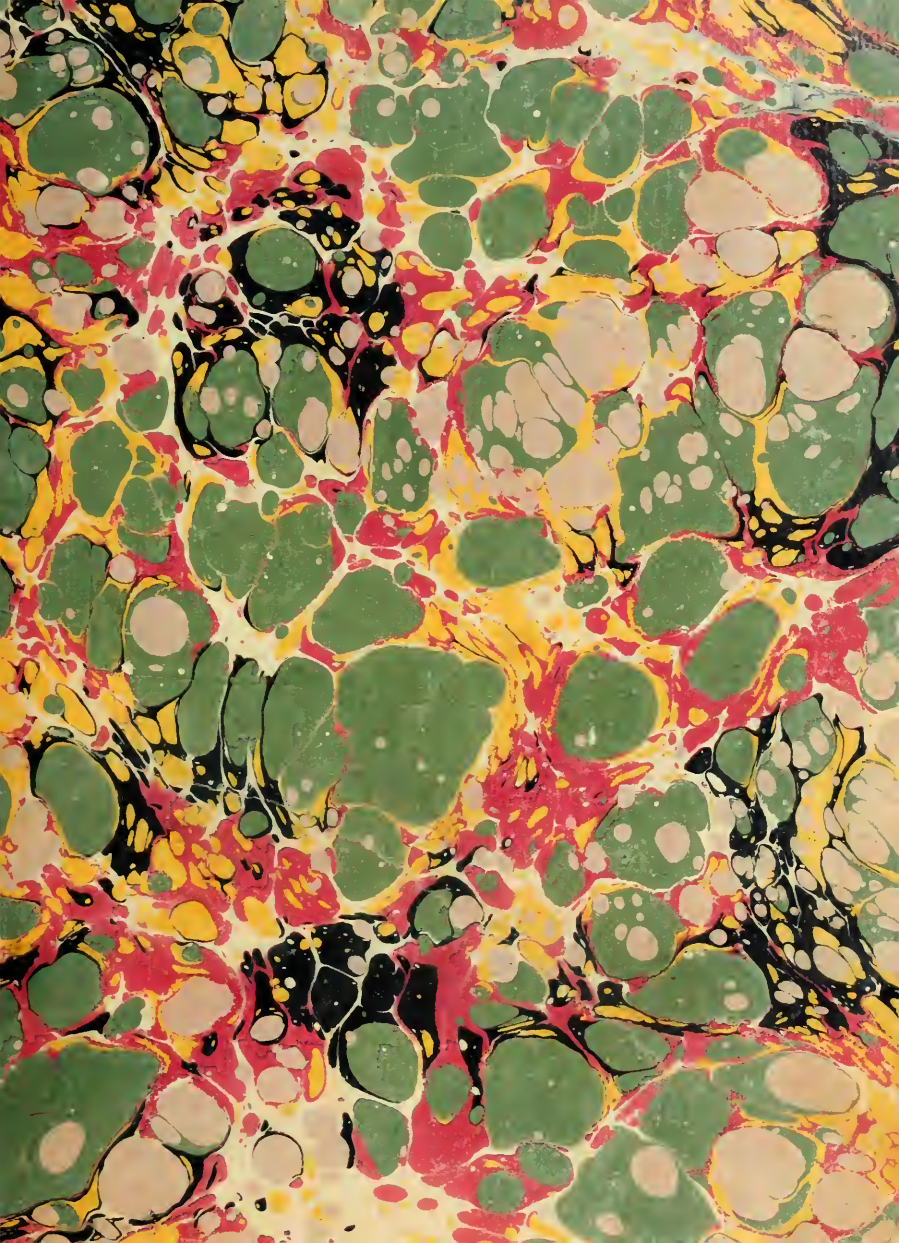

TEMORA,

AN

ANCIENT EPIC POEM,

In EIGHT BOOKS:

Together with ſeveral other POEMS, compoſed by

OSSIAN, the Son of FINGAL.

Tranſlated from the GALIC LANGUAGE,

By JAMES MACPHERSON.

Vultis et his mecum pariter conſidere regnis?
Urbem quam ſtatuo, veſtra eſt. VIRGIL.

Isaac Taylor del et sculp.

LONDON:

Printed for T. BECKET and P. A. DE HONDT, in the Strand.

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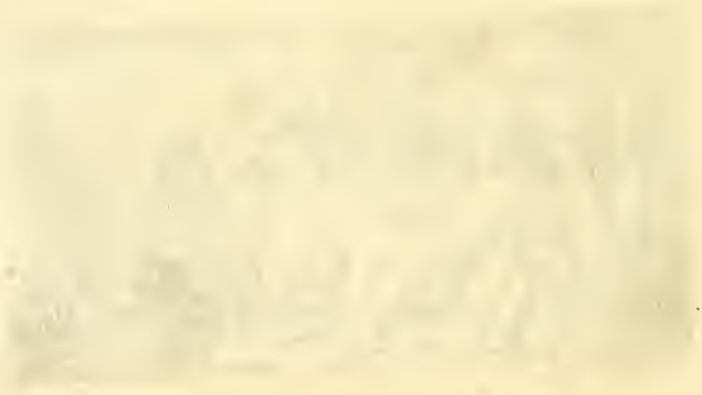

THE FOLLOWING POEMS

ARE INSCRIBED TO

THE EARL OF BUTE,

IN OBEDIENCE TO WHOSE COMMANDS,

THEY WERE TRANSLATED,

FROM THE ORIGINAL GALIC OF

OSSIAN, THE SON OF FINGAL,

BY HIS LORDSHIP's

MOST OBEDIENT,

AND MOST OBLIGED,

HUMBLE SERVANT,

JAMES MACPHERSON

A

DISSERTATION.

NATIONS, ſmall in their beginnings and ſlow in their progreſs to maturity, cannot, with any degree of certainty, be traced to their ſource. The firſt hiſtorians, in every country, are, therefore, obſcure and unſatisfactory. Swayed by a national partiality, natural to mankind, they adopted uncertain legends and ill-fancied fictions, when they ſerved to ſtrengthen a favourite ſyſtem, or to throw luſtre on the antient ſtate of their country. Without judgment or diſcernment to ſeparate the probable and more antient traditions, from ill-digeſted tales of late invention, they jumbled the whole together, in one maſs of anachroniſms and inconſiſtencies. Their accounts, however, though deduced from æras too remote to be known, were received with that partial credulity which always diſtinguiſhes an unpoliſhed age. Mankind had neither abilities nor inclination to diſpute the truth of relations, which, by throwing luſtre on their anceſtors, flattered their own vanity.—Such were the hiſtorians of Europe, during the dark ages, which ſucceeded the ſubverſion of the Roman empire. When learning began to revive, men looked into antiquity with leſs prejudiced eyes. They choſe rather to truſt their national fame to late and well-atteſted tranſactions, than draw it from ages, dark and involved in fable.

The Romans give the firſt and, indeed, the only authentic accounts of the northern nations. Deſtitute of the uſe of letters, they themſelves had no means of tranſmitting their hiſtory to poſterity. Their traditions and ſongs were loſt, or altogether corrupted, in their revolutions and migrations, which were ſo frequent and univerſal, that no kingdom in Europe is now poſſeſſed by its original inhabitants. Societies were formed, and kingdoms erected, from a mixture of nations, who, in proceſs of time, loſt all knowlege of their own origin.

If tradition could be depended upon, it is only among a people, from all time, free of intermixture with foreigners. We are to look for theſe among the mountains and inacceſſible parts of a country: places, on account of their barrenneſs, uninviting to an enemy, or whoſe natural ſtrength enabled the natives to repel invaſions. Such are the inhabitants of the mountains of Scotland. We, accordingly, find, that they differ materially from thoſe who poſſeſs the low and more fertile part of the kingdom. Their language is pure and original, and their manners are thoſe of an antient and unmixed race of men. Conſcious of their own antiquity, they long deſpiſed others, as a new and mixed people. As they lived in a country only fit for paſture, they were free of that toil and buſineſs, which engroſs the attention of a commercial people. Their amuſement conſiſted in hearing or repeating their ſongs and traditions, and theſe intirely turned on the antiquity of their nation, and the exploits of their forefathers. It is no wonder, therefore, that there are more remains of antiquity among them, than among any other people in Europe. Traditions, however, concerning remote periods, are only to be regarded, in ſo far as they co-incide with cotemporary writers of undoubted credit and veracity.

No writers began their accounts from a more early period, than the hiſtorians of the Scotch nation. Without records, or even tradition itſelf, they give a long liſt of antient kings, and a detail of their tranſactions, with a ſcrupulous exactneſs. One might naturally ſuppoſe, that, when they had no authentic annals, they ſhould, at leaſt, have recourſe to the traditions of their country, and have reduced them into a regular ſyſtem of hiſtory. Of both they ſeem to have been equally deſtitute. Born in the low country, and ſtrangers to the antient language of their nation, they contented themſelves with copying from one another, and retailing the ſame fictions, in a new colour and dreſs.

JOHN FORDUN was the firſt who collected thoſe fragments of the Scotch hiſtory, which had eſcaped the brutal policy of Edward I. and reduced them into order. His accounts, in ſo far as they concerned recent tranſactions, deſerved credit: beyond a certain period, they were fabulous and unſatisfactory. Some time before Fordun wrote, the king of England, in a letter to the pope, had run up the antiquity of his nation to a very remote æra. Fordun, poſſeſſed of all the national prejudice of the age, was unwilling that his country ſhould yield, in point of antiquity, to a people, then its rivals and enemies. Deſtitute of annals in Scotland, he had recourſe to Ireland, which, according to the vulgar errors of the times, was reckoned the firſt habitation of the Scots. He found, there, that the Iriſh bards had carried their pretenſions to antiquity as high, if not beyond any nation in Europe. It was from them he took thoſe improbable fictions, which form the firſt part of his hiſtory.

THE writers that ſucceeded Fordun implicitly followed his ſyſtem, tho' they ſometimes varied from him in their relations of particular tranſactions, and the order of ſucceſſion of their kings.

As they had no new lights, and were, equally with him, unacquainted with the traditions of their country, their hiſtories contain little information concerning the origin of the Scots. Even Buchanan himſelf, except the elegance and vigour of his ſtile, has very little to recommend him. Blinded with political prejudices, he ſeemed more anxious to turn the fictions of his predeceſſors to his own purpoſes, than to detect their miſrepreſentations, or inveſtigate truth amidſt the darkneſs which they had thrown round it. It therefore appears, that little can be collected from their own hiſtorians, concerning the firſt migration of the Scots into Britain.

That this iſland was peopled from Gaul admits of no doubt. Whether colonies came afterwards from the north of Europe is a matter of mere ſpeculation. When South-Britain yielded to the power of the Romans, the unconquered nations to the north of the province were diſtinguiſhed by the name of *Caledonians*. From their very name, it appears, that they were of thoſe *Celts*, or *Gauls*, who poſſeſſed themſelves originally of Britain. It is compounded of two *Celtic* words, *Caël* ſignifying *Celts*, or *Gauls*, and *Dun* or *Don*, *a hill*; ſo that *Caël-don*, or Caledonians, is as much as to ſay, the *Celts of the hill country*. The Highlanders, to this day, call themſelves *Caël*, and their language *Caëlic*, or *Galic*. This, of itſelf, is ſufficient to demonſtrate, that they are the genuine deſcendents of the antient Caledonians, and not a pretended colony of *Scots*, who ſettled firſt in the north, in the third or fourth century.

From the double meaning of the word *Caël*, which ſignifies *ſtrangers*, as well as *Gauls*, or *Celts*, ſome have imagined, that the anceſtors of the Caledonians were of a different race from the reſt

of

of the Britons, and that they received their name upon that account. This opinion, ſay they, is ſupported by Tacitus, who, from ſeveral circumſtances, concludes, that the Caledonians were of German extraction. A diſcuſſion of a point ſo intricate, at this diſtance of time, could neither be ſatisfactory nor important.

TOWARDS the latter end of the third, and beginning of the fourth century, we meet with the *Scots* in the north. Porphyrius makes the firſt mention of them about that time. As the *Scots* were not heard of before that period, moſt writers ſuppoſed them to have been a colony, newly come to Britain, and that the *Picts* were the only genuine deſcendents of the antient Caledonians. This miſtake is eaſily removed. The Caledonians, in proceſs of time, became naturally divided into two diſtinct nations, as poſſeſſing parts of the country, intirely different in their nature and ſoil. The weſtern coaſt of Scotland is hilly and barren; towards the eaſt the country is plain, and fit for tillage. The inhabitants of the mountains, a roving and uncontrouled race of men, lived by feeding of cattle, and what they killed in hunting. Their employment did not fix them to one place. They removed from one heath to another, as ſuited beſt with their convenience or inclination. They were not, therefore, improperly called, by their neighbours, SCUITE, or, *the wandering nation*; which is evidently the origin of the Roman name of *Scoti*.

St. Hierom. adCteſiphon.

ON the other hand, the Caledonians, who poſſeſſed the eaſt coaſt of Scotland, as their diviſion of the country was plain and fertile, applied themſelves to agriculture, and raiſing of corn. It was from this, that the Galic name of the *Picts* proceeded; for they are called, in that language, *Cruithnich*, i. e. *the wheat or corn-eaters*.

caters. As the Picts lived in a country ſo different in its nature from that poſſeſſed by the Scots, ſo their national character ſuffered a material change. Unobſtructed by mountains, or lakes, their communication with one another was free and frequent. Society, therefore, became ſooner eſtabliſhed among them, than among the Scots, and, conſequently, they were much ſooner governed by civil magiſtrates and laws. This, at laſt, produced ſo great a difference in the manners of the two nations, that they began to forget their common origin, and almoſt continual quarrels and animoſities ſubſiſted between them. Theſe animoſities, after ſome ages, ended in the ſubverſion of the Pictiſh kingdom, but not in the total extirpation of the nation, according to moſt of the Scotch writers, who ſeemed to think it more for the honour of their countrymen to annihilate, than reduce a rival people under their obedience. It is certain, however, that the very name of the Picts was loſt, and thoſe that remained were ſo compleatly incorporated with their conquerors, that they ſoon loſt all memory of their own origin.—

The end of the Pictiſh government is placed ſo near that period, to which authentic annals reach, that it is matter of wonder, that we have no monuments of their language or hiſtory remaining. This favours the ſyſtem I have laid down. Had they originally been of a different race from the Scots, their language of courſe would be different. The contrary is the caſe. The names of places in the Pictiſh dominions, and the very names of their kings, which are handed down to us, are of Galic original, which is a convincing proof, that the two nations were, of old, one and the ſame, and only divided into two governments, by the effect which their ſituation had upon the genius of the people.

THE name of *Picts* was, perhaps, given by the Romans to the Caledonians, who poſſeſſed the eaſt coaſt of Scotland, from their painting their bodies. This circumſtance made ſome imagine, that the Picts were of Britiſh extract, and a different race of men from the Scots. That more of the Britons, who fled northward from the tyranny of the Romans, ſettled in the low country of Scotland, than among the Scots of the mountains, may be eaſily imagined, from the very nature of the country. It was they who introduced painting among the Picts. From this circumſtance proceeded the name of the latter, to diſtinguiſh them from the Scots, who never had that art among them, and from the Britons, who diſcontinued it after the Roman conqueſt.

THE Caledonians, moſt certainly, acquired a conſiderable knowledge in navigation, by their living on a coaſt interſected with many arms of the ſea, and, in iſlands, divided, one from another, by wide and dangerous firths. It is, therefore, highly probable, that they, very early, found their way to the north of Ireland, which is within ſight of their own country. That Ireland was firſt peopled from Britain is certain. The vicinity of the two iſlands; the exact correſpondence of the antient inhabitants of both, in point of manners and language, are ſufficient proofs, even if we had not the teſtimony of authors of undoubted veracity to confirm it. The abettors of the moſt romantic ſyſtems of Iriſh antiquities allow it; but they place the colony from Britain in an improbable and remote æra. I ſhall eaſily admit, that the colony of the *Firbolg*, confeſſedly the *Belgæ* of Britain, ſettled in the ſouth of Ireland, before the *Caël*, or Caledonians, diſcovered the north: but it is not at all likely, that the migration of the Firbolg to Ireland happened many centuries before the incarnation. Dio. Sic. l. 5.

OSSIAN

Temora, Book II.

OSSIAN, in the poem of Temora, throws conſiderable light on this ſubject. His accounts agree ſo well with what the antients have delivered, concerning the firſt population and inhabitants of Ireland, that every unbiaſſed perſon will confeſs them more probable, than the legends handed down, by tradition, in that country. From him, it appears, that, in the days of Trathal, grandfather to Fingal, Ireland was poſſeſſed by two nations; the *Firbolg* or *Belgæ* of Britain, who inhabited the ſouth, and the *Caël*, who paſſed over from Caledonia and the Hebrides to Ulſter. The two nations, as is uſual among an unpoliſhed and lately ſettled people, were divided into ſmall dynaſties, ſubject to petty kings, or chiefs, independent of one another. In this ſituation, it is probable, they continued long, without any material revolution in the ſtate of the iſland, until Crothar, Lord of Atha, a country in Connaught, the moſt potent chief of the *Firbolg*, carried away Conlama, the daughter of Cathmin, a chief of the *Cael*, who poſſeſſed Ulſter.

CONLAMA had been betrothed, ſome time before, to Turloch, a chief of her own nation. Turloch reſented the affront offered him by Crothar, made an irruption into Connaught, and killed Cormul, the brother of Crothar, who came to oppoſe his progreſs. Crothar himſelf then took arms, and either killed or expelled Turloch. The war, upon this, became general, between the two nations: and the Caël were reduced to the laſt extremity.—In this ſituation, they applied, for aid, to Trathal king of Morven, who ſent his brother Conar, already famous for his great exploits, to their relief. Conar, upon his arrival in Ulſter, was choſen king, by the unanimous conſent of the Caledonian tribes, who poſſeſſed that country. The war was renewed with vigour and ſucceſs; but the *Firbolg* appear to have been rather repelled than ſubdued. In ſuc-

ceeding reigns, we learn from epiſodes in the ſame poem, that the chiefs of Atha made ſeveral efforts to become monarchs of Ireland, and to expel the race of Conar.

To Conar ſucceeded his ſon Cormac, who appears to have reigned long. In his latter days he ſeems to have been driven to the laſt extremity, by an inſurrection of the *Firbolg*, who ſupported the pretenſions of the chiefs of Atha to the Iriſh throne. Fingal, who then was very young, came to the aid of Cormac, totally defeated Colc-ulla, chief of Atha, and re-eſtabliſhed Cormac in the ſole poſſeſſion of all Ireland. It was then he fell in love with, and took to wife, Ros-crana, the daughter of Cormac, who was the mother of Oſſian. Book III. Book IV.

Cormac was ſucceeded in the Iriſh throne by his ſon, Cairbre; Cairbre by Artho, his Son, who was the father of that Cormac, in whoſe minority the invaſion of Swaran happened, which is the ſubject of the poem of *Fingal*. The family of Atha, who had not relinquiſhed their pretenſions to the Iriſh throne, rebelled in the minority of Cormac, defeated his adherents, and murdered him in the palace of Temora. Cairbar, lord of Atha, upon this, mounted the throne. His uſurpation ſoon ended with his life; for Fingal made an expedition into Ireland, and reſtored, after various viciſſitudes of fortune, the family of Conar to the poſſeſſion of the kingdom. This war is the ſubject of Temora; the events, tho' certainly heightened and embelliſhed by poetry, ſeem, notwithſtanding, to have their foundation in true hiſtory. Book I.

Ossian has not only preſerved the hiſtory of the firſt migration of the Caledonians into Ireland, he has alſo delivered ſome impor-

tant facts, concerning the firſt ſettlement of the *Firbolg*, or *Belgæ of Britain*, in that kingdom, under their leader Larthon, who was anceſtor to Cairbar and Cathmor, who, ſucceſſively, mounted the Iriſh throne, after the death of Cormac, the ſon of Artho. I forbear to tranſcribe the paſſage, on account of its length. It is the ſong of Book VII. Fonar, the bard; towards the latter end of the ſeventh book of Temora. As the generations from Larthon to Cathmor, to whom the epiſode is addreſſed, are not marked, as are thoſe of the family of Conar, the firſt king of Ireland, we can form no judgment of the time of the ſettlement of the Firbolg. It is, however, probable, it was ſome time before the *Caël*, or Caledonians, ſettled in Ulſter.—One important fact may be gathered from this hiſtory of Oſſian, that the Iriſh had no king before the latter end of the firſt century. Fingal lived, it is certain, in the third century; ſo Conar, the firſt monarch of the Iriſh, who was his grand-uncle, cannot be placed farther back than the cloſe of the firſt. The eſtabliſhing of this fact, lays, at once, aſide the pretended antiquities of the Scotch and Iriſh, and cuts off the long liſt of kings which the latter give us for a millennium before.

Of the affairs of Scotland, it is certain, nothing can be depended upon, prior to the reign of Fergus, the ſon of Erc, who lived in the fifth century. The true hiſtory of Ireland begins ſomewhat later than that period. Sir James Ware, who was indefatigable in his reſearches after the antiquities of his country, rejects, as mere fiction and idle romance, all that is related of the antient Iriſh, before the time of St. Patrick, and the reign of Leogaire. It is from this conſideration, that he begins his hiſtory at the introduction of chriſtianity, remarking, that all that is delivered down, concerning the times of paganiſm, were tales of late invention, ſtrangely

War. de antiq. Hybern. præ. p. 1.

ſtrangely mixed with anachroniſms and inconſiſtencies. Such being the opinion of Ware, who had collected, with uncommon induſtry and zeal, all the real and pretendedly antient manuſcripts, concerning the hiſtory of his country, we may, on his authority, reject the improbable and ſelf-condemned tales of Keating and O'Flaherty. Credulous and puerile to the laſt degree, they have diſgraced the antiquities they meant to eſtabliſh. It is to be wiſhed, that ſome able Iriſhman, who underſtands the language and records of his country, may redeem, ere it is too late, the genuine antiquities of Ireland, from the hands of theſe idle fabuliſts.

By comparing the hiſtory preſerved by Oſſian with the legends of the Scotch and Iriſh writers, and, by afterwards examining both by the teſt of the Roman authors, it is eaſy to diſcover which is the moſt probable. Probability is all that can be eſtabliſhed on the authority of tradition, ever dubious and uncertain. But when it favours the hypotheſis laid down by cotemporary writers of undoubted veracity, and, as it were, finiſhes the figure of which they only drew the out-lines, it ought, in the judgment of ſober reaſon, to be preferred to accounts framed in dark and diſtant periods, with little judgment, and upon no authority.

Concerning the period of more than a century, which intervenes between Fingal and the reign of Fergus, the ſon of Erc or Arcath, tradition is dark and contradictory. Some trace up the family of Fergus to a ſon of Fingal of that name, who makes a conſiderable figure in Oſſian's poems. The three elder ſons of Fingal, Oſſian, Fillan, and Ryno, dying, without iſſue, the ſucceſſion, of courſe, devolved upon Fergus, the fourth ſon and his poſterity. This Fergus, ſay ſome traditions, was the father of Congal, whoſe

ſon was Arcath, the father of Fergus, properly called the firſt king of Scots, as it was in his time the *Caël*, who poſſeſſed the weſtern coaſt of Scotland, began to be diſtinguiſhed, by foreigners, by the name of *Scots*. From thence forward, the Scots and Picts, as diſtinct nations, became objects of attention to the hiſtorians of other countries. The internal ſtate of the two Caledonian kingdoms has always continued, and ever muſt remain, in obſcurity and fable.

It is in this epoch we muſt fix the beginning of the decay of that ſpecies of heroiſm, which ſubſiſted in the days of Oſſian. There are three ſtages in human ſociety. The firſt is the reſult of conſanguinity, and the natural affection of the members of a family to one another. The ſecond begins when property is eſtabliſhed, and men enter into aſſociations for mutual defence, againſt the invaſions and injuſtice of neighbours. Mankind ſubmit, in the third, to certain laws and ſubordinations of government, to which they truſt the ſafety of their perſons and property. As the firſt is formed on nature, ſo, of courſe, it is the moſt diſintereſted and noble. Men, in the laſt, have leiſure to cultivate the mind, and to reſtore it, with reflection, to a primæval dignity of ſentiment. The middle ſtate is the region of compleat barbariſm and ignorance. About the beginning of the fifth century, the Scots and Picts were advanced into the ſecond ſtage, and, conſequently, into thoſe circumſcribed ſentiments, which always diſtinguiſh barbarity.—The events which ſoon after happened did not at all contribute to enlarge their ideas, or mend their national character.

About the year 426, the Romans, on account of domeſtic commotions, entirely forſook Britain, finding it impoſſible to defend ſo diſtant a frontier. The Picts and Scots, ſeizing this favourable

vourable opportunity, made incurſions into the deſerted province. The Britons, enervated by the ſlavery of ſeveral centuries, and thoſe vices, which are inſeparable from an advanced ſtate of civility, were not able to withſtand the impetuous, tho' irregular attacks of a barbarous enemy. In the utmoſt diſtreſs, they applied to their old maſters, the Romans, and (after the unfortunate ſtate of the Empire could not ſpare aid) to the Saxons, a nation equally barbarous and brave, with the enemies of whom they were ſo much afraid. Tho' the bravery of the Saxons repelled the Caledonian nations for a time, yet the latter found means to extend themſelves, conſiderably, towards the South. It is, in this period, we muſt place the origin of the arts of civil life among the Scots. The ſeat of government was removed from the mountains to the plain and more fertile provinces of the South, to be near the common enemy, in caſe of ſudden incurſions. Inſtead of roving thro' unfrequented wilds, in ſearch of ſubſiſtance, by means of hunting, men applied to agriculture, and raiſing of corn. This manner of life was the firſt means of changing the national character.—The next thing which contributed to it was their mixture with ſtrangers.

In the countries which the Scots had conquered from the Britons, it is probable the moſt of the old inhabitants remained. Theſe, incorporating with the conquerors, taught them agriculture, and other arts, which they themſelves had received from the Romans. The Scots, however, in number as well as power, being the moſt predominant, retained ſtill their language, and as many of the cuſtoms of their anceſtors, as ſuited with the nature of the country they poſſeſſed. Even the union of the two Caledonian kingdoms did not much affect the national character. Being originally deſcended from the ſame ſtock, the manners of the Picts and

Scots

Scots were as ſimilar as the different natures of the countries they poſſeſſed permitted.

What brought about a total change in the genius of the Scots nation, was their wars, and other tranſactions with the Saxons. Several counties in the ſouth of Scotland were alternately poſſeſſed by the two nations. They were ceded, in the ninth age, to the Scots, and, it is probable, that moſt of the Saxon inhabitants remained in poſſeſſion of their lands. During the ſeveral conqueſts and revolutions in England, many fled, for refuge, into Scotland, to avoid the oppreſſion of foreigners, or the tyranny of domeſtic uſurpers; in ſo much, that the Saxon race formed perhaps near one half of the Scottiſh kingdom. The Saxon manners and language daily gained ground, on the tongue and cuſtoms of the antient Caledonians, till, at laſt, the latter were entirely relegated to inhabitants of the mountains, who were ſtill unmixed with ſtrangers.

It was after the acceſſion of territory which the Scots received, upon the retreat of the Romans from Britain, that the inhabitants of the Highlands were divided into clans. The king, when he kept his court in the mountains, was conſidered, by the whole nation, as the chief of their blood. Their ſmall number, as well as the preſence of their prince, prevented thoſe diviſions, which, afterwards, ſprung forth into ſo many ſeparate tribes. When the ſeat of government was removed to the ſouth, thoſe who remained in the Highlands were, of courſe, neglected. They naturally formed themſelves into ſmall ſocieties, independent of one another. Each ſociety had its own *regulus*, who either was, or, in the ſucceſſion of a few generations, was regarded as chief of their blood. —The nature of the country favoured an inſtitution of this ſort.

A few

A few valleys, divided from one another by extenſive heaths and impaſſible mountains, form the face of the Highlands. In theſe valleys the chiefs fixed their reſidence. Round them, and almoſt within ſight of their dwellings, were the habitations of their relations and dependents.

The ſeats of the Highland chiefs were neither diſagreeable nor inconvenient. Surrounded with mountains and hanging woods, they were covered from the inclemency of the weather. Near them generally ran a pretty large river, which, diſcharging itſelf, not far off, into an arm of the ſea, or extenſive lake, ſwarmed with variety of fiſh. The woods were ſtocked with wild-fowl; and the heaths and mountains behind them were the natural ſeat of the red-deer and roe. If we make allowance for the backward ſtate of agriculture, the valleys were not unfertile; affording, if not all the conveniences, at leaſt the neceſſaries of life. Here the chief lived, the ſupreme judge and law-giver of his own people; but his ſway was neither ſevere nor unjuſt. As the populace regarded him as the chief of their blood, ſo he, in return, conſidered them as members of his family. His commands, therefore, tho' abſolute and deciſive, partook more of the authority of a father, than of the rigor of a judge.—Tho' the whole territory of the tribe was conſidered as the property of the chief, yet his vaſſals made him no other conſideration for their lands than ſervices, neither burdenſome nor frequent. As he ſeldom went from home, he was at no expence. His table was ſupplied by his own herds, and what his numerous attendants killed in hunting.

In this rural kind of magnificence, the Highland chiefs lived, for many ages. At a diſtance from the ſeat of government, and ſecured,

cured, by the inacceſſibleneſs of their country, they were free and independent. As they had little communication with ſtrangers, the cuſtoms of their anceſtors remained among them, and their language retained its original purity. Naturally fond of military fame, and remarkably attached to the memory of their anceſtors, they delighted in traditions and ſongs, concerning the exploits of their nation, and eſpecially of their own particular families. A ſucceſſion of bards was retained in every clan, to hand down the memorable actions of their forefathers. As the æra of Fingal, on account of Oſſian's poems, was the moſt remarkable, and his chiefs the moſt renowned names in tradition, the bards took care to place one of them in the genealogy of every great family.—That part of the poems, which concerned the hero who was regarded as anceſtor, was preſerved, as an authentic record of the antiquity of the family, and was delivered down, from race to race, with wonderful exactneſs.

The bards themſelves, in the mean time, were not idle. They erected their immediate patrons into heroes, and celebrated them in their ſongs. As the circle of their knowledge was narrow, their ideas were confined in proportion. A few happy expreſſions, and the manners they repreſent, may pleaſe thoſe who underſtand the language; their obſcurity and innacuracy would diſguſt in a tranſlation.—It was chiefly, for this reaſon, that I kept wholly to the compoſitions of Oſſian, in my former and preſent publication. As he acted in a more extenſive ſphere, his ideas are more noble and univerſal; neither has he ſo many of thoſe peculiarities, which are only underſtood in a certain period or country. The other bards have their beauties, but not in that ſpecies of compoſition in which Oſſian excels. Their rhimes, only calculated to kindle a martial

ſpirit

ſpirit among the vulgar, afford very little pleaſure to genuine taſte. This obſervation only regards their poems of the heroic kind; in every other ſpecies of poetry they are more ſucceſsful. They expreſs the tender melancholy of deſponding love, with irreſiſtible ſimplicity and nature. So well adapted are the ſounds of the words to the ſentiments, that, even without any knowledge of the language, they pierce and diſſolve the heart. Succeſsful love is expreſſed with peculiar tenderneſs and elegance. In all their compoſitions, except the heroic, which was ſolely calculated to animate the vulgar, they give us the genuine language of the heart, without any of thoſe affected ornaments of phraſeology, which, tho' intended to beautify ſentiments, diveſt them of their natural force. The ideas, it is confeſſed, are too local, to be admired, in another language; to thoſe, who are acquainted with the manners they repreſent, and the ſcenes they deſcribe, they muſt afford the higheſt pleaſure and ſatisfaction.

It was the locality of his deſcription and ſentiment, that, probably, kept Oſſian ſo long in the obſcurity of an almoſt loſt language. His ideas, tho' remarkably proper for the times in which he lived, are ſo contrary to the preſent advanced ſtate of ſociety, that more than a common mediocrity of taſte is required, to reliſh his poems as they deſerve.—Thoſe who alone were capable to make a tranſlation were, no doubt, conſcious of this, and choſe rather to admire their poet in ſecret, than ſee him received, with coldneſs, in an Engliſh dreſs.

These were long my own ſentiments, and, accordingly, my firſt tranſlations, from the Galic, were merely accidental. The publication, which ſoon after followed, was ſo well received, that I was

obliged to promiſe to my friends a larger collection. In a journey thro' the Highlands and iſles, and, by the aſſiſtance of correſpondents, ſince I left that country, all the genuine remains of the works of Oſſian have come to my hands. In the publication of laſt year compleat poems were only given. Unfiniſhed and imperfect poems were purpoſely omitted; even ſome pieces were rejected, on account of their length, and others, that they might not break in upon that thread of connection, which ſubſiſts in the leſſer compoſitions, ſubjoined to *Fingal*.—That the comparative merit of pieces was not regarded, in the ſelection, will readily appear to thoſe who ſhall read, attentively, the preſent collection.—It is animated with the ſame ſpirit of poetry, and the ſame ſtrength of ſentiment is ſuſtained throughout.

The opening of the poem of Temora made its appearance in the laſt collection. The ſecond book, and ſeveral other epiſodes, have only fallen into my hands lately. The ſtory of the poem, with which I had been long acquainted, enabled me to reduce the broken members of the piece into the order in which they now appear. For the eaſe of the reader, I have divided it myſelf into books, as I had done before with the poem of *Fingal*. As to the merit of the poem I ſhall not anticipate the judgment of the public. My impartiality might be ſuſpected, in my accounts of a work, which, in ſome meaſure, is become my own. If the poem of Fingal met with the applauſe of perſons of genuine taſte, I ſhould alſo hope, that Temora will not diſpleaſe them.

But what renders Temora infinitely more valuable than Fingal, is the light it throws on the hiſtory of the times. The firſt population of Ireland, its firſt kings, and ſeveral circumſtances, which regard

regard its connection of old with the ſouth and north of Britain, are preſented to us, in ſeveral epiſodes. The ſubject and cataſtrophe of the poem are founded upon facts, which regarded the firſt peopling of that country, and the conteſts between the two Britiſh nations, which originally inhabited it.—In a preceding part of this diſſertation, I have ſhewn how ſuperior the probability of Oſſian's traditions is to the undigeſted fictions of the Iriſh bards, and the more recent and regular legends of both Iriſh and Scotch hiſtorians. I mean not to give offence to the abettors of the high antiquities of the two nations, tho' I have all along expreſſed my doubts, concerning the veracity and abilities of thoſe who deliver down their antient hiſtory. For my own part, I prefer the national fame, ariſing from a few certain facts, to the legendary and uncertain annals of ages of remote and obſcure antiquity. No kingdom, now eſtabliſhed in Europe, can pretend to equal antiquity with thoſe of Ireland and Scotland, even according to my ſyſtem, ſo that it is altogether needleſs to fix their origin a fictitious millennium before. This ſubject I have only lightly touched upon, as it is to be diſcuſſed, with more perſpicuity, and at a much greater length, by a gentleman, who has thoroughly examined the antiquities of Britain and Ireland.

Since the publication of the laſt collection of Oſſian's poems, many inſinuations have been made, and doubts ariſen, concerning their authenticity. I ſhall, probably, hear more of the ſame kind after the preſent poems ſhall make their appearance. Whether theſe ſuſpicions are ſuggeſted by prejudice, or are only the effects of ignorance of facts, I ſhall not pretend to determine.—To me they give no concern, as I have it always in my power to remove them. An incredulity of this kind is natural to perſons, who confine all

merit to their own age and country. Theſe are generally the weakeſt, as well as the moſt ignorant, of the people. Indolently confined to a place, their ideas are narrow and circumſcribed.—It is ridiculous enough to ſee ſuch people as theſe are, branding their anceſtors, with the deſpicable appellation of barbarians. Sober reaſon can eaſily diſcern, where the title ought to be fixed, with more propriety.

As prejudice is always the effect of ignorance, the knowing, the men of true taſte, deſpiſe and diſmiſs it. If the poetry is good, and the characters natural and ſtriking, to them it is a matter of indifference, whether the heroes were born in the little village of Angles in Juteland, or natives of the barren heaths of Caledonia. That honour which nations derive from anceſtors, worthy, or renowned, is merely ideal. It may buoy up the minds of individuals, but it contributes very little to their importance in the eyes of others.—But of all thoſe prejudices which are incident to narrow minds, that which meaſures the merit of performances by the vulgar opinion, concerning the country which produced them, is certainly the moſt ridiculous. Ridiculous, however, as it is, few have the courage to reject it; and, I am thoroughly convinced, that a few quaint lines of a Roman or Greek epigrammatiſt, if dug out of the ruins of Herculaneum, would meet with more cordial and univerſal applauſe, than all the moſt beautiful and natural rhapſodies of all the Celtic bards and Scandinavian Scalders that ever exiſted.

While ſome doubt the authenticity of the compoſitions of Oſſian, others ſtrenuouſly endeavour to appropriate them to the Iriſh nation. Tho' the whole tenor of the poems ſufficiently contradict ſo abſurd an opinion, it may not be improper, for the ſatisfaction of ſome, to examine the narrow foundation, on which this extraordinary claim is built.

Of

Of all the nations deſcended from the antient *Celtæ*, the Scots and Iriſh are the moſt ſimilar in language, cuſtoms, and manners. This argues a more intimate connection between them, than a remote deſcent from the great Celtic ſtock. It is evident, in ſhort, that, at ſome one period or other, they formed one ſociety, were ſubject to the ſame government, and were, in all reſpects, one and the ſame people. How they became divided, which the colony, or which the mother nation, does not fall now to be diſcuſſed. The firſt circumſtance that induced me to diſregard the vulgarly-received opinion of the Hibernian extraction of the Scotch nation, was my obſervations on their antient language. That dialect of the Celtic tongue, ſpoken in the north of Scotland, is much more pure, more agreeable to its mother language, and more abounding with primitives, than that now ſpoken, or even that which has been writ for ſome centuries back, amongſt the moſt unmixed part of the Iriſh nation. A Scotchman, tolerably converſant in his own language, underſtands an Iriſh compoſition, from that derivative analogy which it has to the *Galic* of North-Britain. An Iriſhman, on the other hand, without the aid of ſtudy, can never underſtand a compoſition in the *Galic* tongue.—This affords a proof, that the *Scotch Galic* is the moſt original, and, conſequently, the language of a more antient and unmixed people. The Iriſh, however backward they may be to allow any thing to the prejudice of their antiquity, ſeem inadvertently to acknowledge it, by the very appellation they give to the dialect they ſpeak.—They call their own language *Caëlic Eirinach*, i. e. *Caledonian Iriſh*, when, on the contrary, they call the dialect of North-Britain *a Chaëlic*, or the *Caledonian tongue*, emphatically. A circumſtance of this nature tends more to decide which is the moſt antient nation, than the united

teſtimonies

teſtimonies of a whole legion of ignorant bards and ſenachies, who, perhaps, never dreamed of bringing the Scots from Spain to Ireland, till ſome one of them, more learned than the reſt, diſcovered, that the Romans called the firſt *Iberia*, and the latter *Hibernia*. On ſuch a ſlight foundation were probably built thoſe romantic fictions, concerning the Mileſians of Ireland.

FROM internal proofs it ſufficiently appears, that the poems publiſhed under the name of Oſſian, are not of Iriſh compoſition. The favourite chimæra, that Ireland is the mother-country of the Scots, is totally ſubverted and ruined. The fictions, concerning the antiquities of that country, which were forming for ages, and growing, as they came down, on the hands of ſucceſſive *ſenachies* and *ſileas*, are found, at laſt, to be the ſpurious brood of modern and ignorant ages. To thoſe who know how tenacious the Iriſh are, of their pretended *Iberian* deſcent, this alone is proof ſufficient, that poems, ſo ſubverſive of their ſyſtem, could never be produced by an Hibernian bard.—But when we look to the language, it is ſo different from the Iriſh dialect, that it would be as ridiculous to think, that Milton's Paradiſe Loſt could be wrote by a Scotch peaſant, as to ſuppoſe, that the poems aſcribed to Oſſian were writ in Ireland.

THE pretenſions of Ireland to Oſſian proceed from another quarter. There are handed down, in that country, traditional poems, concerning the *Fiona*, or the heroes of *Fion Mac Comnal*. This *Fion*, ſay the Iriſh annaliſts, was general of the militia of Ireland, in the reign of Cormac, in the third century. Where Keating and O'Flaherty learned, that Ireland had an *embodied* militia ſo early, is not eaſy for me to determine. Their information certainly did not

come from the Iriſh poems, concerning *Fion*. I have juſt now, in my hands, all that remain, of thoſe compoſitions; but, unluckily for the antiquities of Ireland, they appear to be the work of a very modern period. Every ſtanza, nay almoſt every line, affords ſtriking proofs, that they cannot be three centuries old. Their alluſions to the manners and cuſtoms of the fifteenth century, are ſo many, that it is matter of wonder to me, how any one could dream of their antiquity. They are entirely writ in that romantic taſte, which prevailed two ages ago.—Giants, enchanted caſtles, dwarfs, palfreys, witches and magicians form the whole circle of the poet's invention. The celebrated *Fion* could ſcarcely move from one hillock to another, without encountering a giant, or being entangled in the circles of a magician. Witches, on broomſticks, were continually hovering round him, like crows; and he had freed enchanted virgins in every valley in Ireland. In ſhort, *Fion*, great as he was, had but a bad ſort of life of it.—Not only had he to engage all the miſchiefs in his own country, foreign armies invaded him, aſſiſted by magicians and witches, and headed by kings, as tall as the main-maſt of a firſt rate.—It muſt be owned, however, that *Fion* was not inferior to them in height.

A chos air *Cromleach*, druim-ard,
Chos eile air Crom-meal dubh,
Thoga *Fion* le lamh mhoir
An d'uiſge o *Lubhair* na ſruth.

"*Fion*, ſays the Iriſh bard, ſometimes placed one foot on the mountain *Cromleach*, his other foot on the hill of *Crommal*, and, in that poſition, waſhed his hands, in the river *Lubar*, which ran thro' the intermediate valley." The property of ſuch a monſter as this *Fion*, I ſhould

I ſhould never have diſputed with any nation. But the bard himſelf, in the poem, from which the above quotation is taken, cedes him to Scotland.

FION O ALBIN, ſiol nan laoich.

FION *from* ALBION, *race of heroes!*

Were it allowable to contradict the authority of a bard, at this diſtance of time, I ſhould have given, as my opinion, that this enormous *Fion* was of the race of the Hibernian giants, of Ruanus, or ſome other celebrated name, rather than a native of Caledonia, whoſe inhabitants, now at leaſt, are not remarkable for their ſtature.

IF *Fion* was ſo remarkable for his ſtature, his heroes had alſo other extraordinary properties. *In weight all the ſons of ſtrangers* yielded to the celebrated Ton-ioſal; and for hardneſs of ſkull, and, perhaps, for thickneſs too, the valiant Oſcar ſtood *unrivalled and alone.* Oſſian himſelf had many ſingular and leſs delicate qualifications, than playing on the harp; and the brave Cuchullin was of ſo diminutive a ſize, as to be taken for a child of two years of age, by the gigantic Swaran. To illuſtrate this ſubject, I ſhall here lay before the reader, the hiſtory of ſome of the Iriſh poems, concerning *Fion Mac Connal.* A tranſlation of theſe pieces, if well executed, might afford ſatisfaction to the public. But this ought to be the work of a native of Ireland. To draw forth, from obſcurity, the poems of my own country, has afforded ample employment to me; beſides, I am too diffident of my own abilities, to undertake ſuch a work. A gentleman in Dublin accuſed me to the public, of committing blunders and abſurdities, in tranſlating the language of my own

own country, and that before any tranſlation of mine appeared *. How the gentleman came to ſee my blunders before I committed them, is not eaſy to determine; if he did not conclude, that, as a Scotſman, and, of courſe, deſcended of the Mileſian race, I might have committed ſome of thoſe overſights, which, perhaps very unjuſtly, are ſaid to be peculiar to them.

From the whole tenor of the Iriſh poems, concerning the *Fiona*, it appears, that *Fion Mac Comnal* flouriſhed in the reign of Cormac, which is placed, by the univerſal conſent of the ſenachies, in the third century. They even fix the death of Fingal in the year 286, yet his ſon Oſſian is made cotemporary with St. Patrick, who preached the goſpel in Ireland about the middle of the fifth age. Oſſian, tho', at that time, he muſt have been two hundred and fifty years of age, had a daughter young enough to become wife to the ſaint. On account of this family connection, *Patrick of the Pſalms*, for ſo the apoſtle of Ireland is emphatically called in the poems, took great delight in the company of Oſſian, and in hearing

* In Faulkner's Dublin Journal, of the 1ſt December, 1761, appeared the following Advertiſement:

Speedily will be publiſhed, by a Gentleman of this kingdom, who hath been, for ſome time paſt, employed in tranſlating and writing Hiſtorical Notes to

FINGAL, A Poem,

Originally wrote in the Iriſh or Erſe language. In the preface to which, the tranſlator, who is a perfect maſter of the Iriſh tongue, will give an account of the manners and cuſtoms of the antient Iriſh or Scotch; and, therefore, moſt humbly intreats the public, to wait for his edition, which will appear in a ſhort time, as he will ſet forth all the blunders and abſurdities in the edition now printing in London, and ſhew the ignorance of the Engliſh tranſlator, in his knowlege of Iriſh grammar, not underſtanding any part of that accidence.

the great actions of his family. The ſaint ſometimes threw off the auſterity of his profeſſion, drunk freely, and had his ſoul properly warmed with wine, in order to hear, with becoming enthuſiaſm, the poems of his father-in-law. One of the poems begins with this piece of uſeful information.

Lo don rabh PADRIC na mhúr,
Gun *Sailm* air uidh, ach a gól,
Ghluais é thigh *Oſſian* mhic *Fhion*,
O ſan leis bu bhinn a ghloir.

The title of this poem is, *Teantach mor na Fiona*. It appears to have been founded on the ſame ſtory with the *battle of Lora*, one of the poems of the genuine Oſſian. The circumſtances and cataſtrophe in both are much the ſame; but the *Iriſh Oſſian* diſcovers the age in which he lived, by an unlucky anachroniſm. After deſcribing the total route of Erragon, he very gravely concludes with this remarkable anecdote, that none of the foe eſcaped, but a few, who were allowed to go on a pilgrimage to the *Holy Land*. This circumſtance fixes the date of the compoſition of the piece ſome centuries after the famous croiſade; for, it is evident, that the poet thought the time of the croiſade ſo antient, that he confounds it with the age of Fingal.—Erragon, in the courſe of this poem, is often called,

Riogh *Lochlin* an do ſhloigh,
King of Denmark of two nations,

which alludes to the union of the kingdoms of Norway and Denmark, a circumſtance which brings down the date of the piece to an

an æra, not far remote. Modern, however, as this pretended Oſſian was, it is certain, he lived before the Iriſh had dreamed of appropriating *Fion*, or *Fingal*, to themſelves. He concludes the poem, with this reflection:

Na fagha ſe comlıthróm nan n' arm,
Eragon Mac Annir nan lánn glas
'San n' ALBIN ni n' abairtair Triath
Agus ghlaoite an n' *Fhiona* as.

"Had Erragon, ſon of Annir of gleaming ſwords, avoided the equal conteſt of arms (ſingle combat) no chief ſhould have afterwards been numbered in ALBION, and the heroes of Fion ſhould no more be named."

THE next poem that falls under our obſervation is *Cath-cabhra*, or, *The death of Oſcar*. This piece is founded on the ſame ſtory which we have in the firſt book of Temora. So little thought the author of *Cath-cabhra* of making Oſcar his countryman, that, in the courſe of two hundred lines, of which the poem conſiſts, he puts the following expreſſion thrice in the mouth of the hero:

ALBIN an ſa d' roina m' arach.——
ALBION *where I was born and bred.*

The poem contains almoſt all the incidents in the firſt book of Temora. In one circumſtance the bard differs materially from Oſſian. Oſcar, after he was mortally wounded by Cairbar, was carried by his people to a neighbouring hill, which commanded a proſpect of

the ſea. A fleet appeared at a diſtance, and the hero exclaims with joy,

Loingeas mo ſhean-athair at' án
'S iad a tiächd le cabhair chugain,
O ALBIN na n' ioma ſtuagh.

" It is the fleet of my grandfather, coming with aid to our field, from ALBION of many waves!"——The teſtimony of this bard is ſufficient to confute the idle fictions of Keating and O'Flaherty; for, tho' he is far from being antient, it is probable, he flouriſhed a full century before theſe hiſtorians.—He appears, however, to have been a much better chriſtian than chronologer; for *Fion*, tho' he is placed two centuries before St. Patrick, very devoutly recommends the ſoul of his grandſon to his Redeemer.

Duan a Gharibh Mac-Starn is another Iriſh poem in high repute. The grandeur of its images, and its propriety of ſentiment, might have induced me to give a tranſlation of it, had not I ſome expectations of ſeeing it in the collection of the Iriſh Oſſian's poems, promiſed, more than a year ſince, to the public. The author deſcends ſometimes from the region of the ſublime to low and indecent deſcription; the laſt of which, the Iriſh tranſlator, no doubt, will chooſe to leave in the obſcurity of the original.—In this piece Cuchullin is uſed with very little ceremony, for he is oft called, the *dog of Tara*, in the county of Meath. This ſevere title of the *redoubtable Cuchullin*, the moſt renowned of Iriſh champions, proceeded from the poet's ignorance of etymology. CU, *voice*, or *commander*, ſignifies alſo a *dog*. The poet choſe the laſt, as the moſt noble appellation for his hero.

THE

THE ſubject of the poem is the ſame with that of the epic poem of Fingal. *Garibh Mac-Starn* is the ſame with Oſſian's Swaran, the ſon of Starno. His ſingle combats with, and his victory over all the heroes of Ireland, excepting the *celebrated dog of Tara*, i. e. Cuchullin, afford matter for two hundred lines of tolerable poetry. *Garibh*'s progreſs in ſearch of Cuchullin, and his intrigue with the gigantic Emir-bragal, that hero's wife, enables the poet to extend his piece to four hundred lines. This author, it is true, makes Cuchullin a native of Ireland; the gigantic Emir-bragal he calls, *the guiding ſtar of the women of Ireland.* The property of this enormous lady I ſhall not diſpute with him, or any other. But, as he ſpeaks with great tenderneſs of the *daughters of the convent*, and throws out ſome hints againſt the Engliſh nation, it is probable he lived in too modern a period to be intimately acquainted with the genealogy of Cuchullin.

ANOTHER Iriſh Oſſian (for there were many, as appears from their difference in language and ſentiment) ſpeaks very dogmatically of *Fion Mac Comnal*, as an Iriſhman. Little can be ſaid for the judgment of this poet, and leſs for his delicacy of ſentiment. The hiſtory of one of his epiſodes may, at once, ſtand as a ſpecimen of his want of both. Ireland, in the days of *Fion*, happened to be threatned with an invaſion, by three great potentates, the kings of Lochlin, Sweden, and France. It is needleſs to inſiſt upon the impropriety of a French invaſion of Ireland; it is ſufficient for me to be faithful to the language of my author. *Fion*, upon receiving intelligence of the intended invaſion, ſent Ca-olt, Oſſian, and Oſcar, to watch the bay, in which, it was apprehended, the enemy was to land. Oſcar was the worſt choice of a ſcout that could be made, for, brave as he was, he had the bad property of falling very often aſleep on his poſt, nor was it poſſible to awake

 him,

him, without cutting off one of his fingers, or dashing a large stone against his head. When the enemy appeared, Oscar, very unfortunately, was asleep. Ossian and Ca-olt consulted about the method of wakening him, and they, at last, fixed on the stone, as the less dangerous expedient.

Gun thog Caoilte a chlach, nach gán,
Agus a n' aighai' chean gun bhuail;
Tri mil an tulloch gun chri', &c.

"Ca-olt took up a heavy stone, and struck it against the hero's head. The hill shook for three miles, as the stone rebounded and rolled away." Oscar rose in wrath, and his father gravely desired him to spend his rage on his enemies, which he did to so good purpose, that he singly routed a whole wing of their army. The confederate kings advanced, notwithstanding, till they came to a narrow pass, possessed by the celebrated Ton-iosal. This name is very significant of the singular property of the hero who bore it. Ton-iosal, tho' brave, was so heavy and unwieldy, that, when he sat down, it took the whole force of an hundred men to set him upright on his feet again. Luckily for the preservation of Ireland, the hero happened to be standing when the enemy appeared, and he gave so good an account of them, that *Fion*, upon his arrival, found little to do, but to divide the spoil among his soldiers.

All these extraordinary heroes, Fion, Ossian, Oscar and Ca-olt, says the poet, were

Siol Erin na gorm lánn.
The sons of Erin *of blue steel.*

Neither

Neither ſhall I much diſpute the matter with him: He has my conſent alſo to appropriate to Ireland the celebrated Ton-ioſal. I ſhall only ſay, that they are different perſons from thoſe of the ſame name, in the Scotch poems; and that, tho' the ſtupenduous valour of the firſt is ſo remarkable, they have not been equally lucky with the latter, in their poet. It is ſomewhat extraordinary, that *Fion*, who lived ſome ages before St. Patrick, ſwears like a very good chriſtian:

Air an Dia do chum gach *caſe*.
By God, who ſhaped every caſe.

It is worthy of being remarked, that, in the line quoted, Oſſian, who lived in St. Patrick's days, ſeems to have underſtood ſomething of the Engliſh, a language not then ſubſiſting. A perſon, more ſanguine for the honour of his country than I am, might argue, from this circumſtance, that this pretendedly Iriſh Oſſian was a native of Scotland; for my countrymen are univerſally allowed to have an excluſive right to the ſecond-ſight.

From the inſtances given, the reader may form a compleat idea of the Iriſh compoſitions concerning the *Fiona*. The greateſt part of them make the heroes of *Fion*,

Siol Albin a n'nioma caoile.
The race of Albion *of many firths.*

The reſt make them natives of Ireland. But, the truth is, that their authority is of little conſequence on either ſide. From the inſtances I have given, they appear to have been the work of a very

modern period. The pious ejaculations they contain, their alluſions to the manners of the times, fix them to the fifteenth century. Had even the authors of theſe pieces avoided all alluſions to their own times, it is impoſſible that the poems could paſs for ancient, in the eyes of any perſon tolerably converſant with the Iriſh tongue. The idiom is ſo corrupted and ſo many words borrowed from the Engliſh, that that language muſt have made conſiderable progreſs in Ireland before the poems were writ.

It remains now to ſhew, how the Iriſh bards begun to appropriate Oſſian and his heroes to their own country. After the Engliſh conqueſt, many of the natives of Ireland, averſe to foreign yoke, either actually were in a ſtate of hoſtility with the conquerors, or at leaſt, paid little regard to their government. The Scots, in thoſe ages, were often in open war, and never in cordial friendſhip with the Engliſh. The ſimilarity of manners and language, the traditions concerning their common origin, and above all, their having to do with the ſame enemy, created a free and friendly intercourſe between the Scotch and Iriſh nations. As the cuſtom of retaining bards and ſenachies was common to both; ſo each, no doubt, had formed a ſyſtem of hiſtory, it matters not how much ſoever fabalous, concerning their reſpective origin. It was the natural policy of the times, to reconcile the traditions of both nations together, and, if poſſible, to deduce them from the ſame original ſtock.

The Saxon manners and language had, at that time, made great progreſs in the ſouth of Scotland. The ancient language, and the traditional hiſtory of the nation, became confined entirely to the inhabitants of the Highlands, then fallen, from ſeveral concurring circumſtances, into the laſt degree of ignorance and barbariſm. The Iriſh, who,

for ſome ages before the conqueſt, had poſſeſſed a competent ſhare of that kind of learning, which then prevailed in Europe, found it no difficult matter to impoſe their own fictions on the ignorant Highland ſenachies. By flattering the vanity of the Highlanders, with their long liſt of Heremonian kings and heroes, they, without contradiction, aſſumed to themſelves the character of being the mother-nation of the Scots of Britain. At this time, certainly, was eſtabliſhed that Hibernian ſyſtem of the original of the Scots, which afterwards, for want of any other, was univerſally received. The Scots, of the low-country, who, by loſing the language of their anceſtors, loſt, together with it, their national traditions, received, implicitly, the hiſtory of their country, from Iriſh refugees, or from Highland ſenachies, perſuaded over into the Hibernian ſyſtem.

These circumſtances, are far from being ideal. We have remaining many particular traditions, which bear teſtimony to a fact, of itſelf abundantly probable. What makes the matter inconteſtible is, that the antient traditional accounts of the genuine origin of the Scots, have been handed down without interruption. Tho' a few ignorant ſenachies might be perſuaded out of their own opinion, by the ſmoothneſs of an Iriſh tale, it was impoſſible to eradicate, from among the bulk of the people, their own national traditions. Theſe traditions afterwards ſo much prevailed, that the Highlanders continue totally unacquainted with the pretended Hibernian extract of the Scots nation. Ignorant chronicle writers, ſtrangers to the antient language of their country, preſerved only from falling to the ground, ſo improbable a ſtory.

It was, during the period I have mentioned, that the Iriſh became acquainted with, and carried into their country, the compoſitions of Oſſian. The ſcene of many of the pieces being in Ireland, ſuggeſted firſt to them a hint, of making both heroes and poet na-

tives of that Iſland. In order to do this effectually, they found it neceſſary, to reject the genuine poems, as every line was pregnant with proofs of their Scotch original, and to dreſs up a fable, on the ſame ſubject, in their own language. So ill qualified, however, were their bards to effectuate this change, that amidſt all their deſires to make the *Fiona* Iriſhmen, they every now and then call *Siol Albin*. It was, probably, after a ſucceſſion of ſome generations, that the bards had effrontery enough to eſtabliſh an Iriſh genealogy for *Fion*, and deduce him from the Mileſian race of kings. In ſome of the oldeſt Iriſh poems, on the ſubject, the great-grand-father of *Fion* is made a Scandinavian; and his heroes are often called SIOL LOCHLIN NA BEUM; *i. e. the race of Lochlin of wounds.* The only poem that runs up the family of *Fion* to Nuades Niveus, king of Ireland, is evidently not above a hundred and fifty years old; for, if I miſtake not, it mentions the Earl of Tyrone, ſo famous in Elizabeth's time.

THIS ſubject, perhaps, is purſued further than it deſerves; but, a diſcuſſion of the pretenſions of Ireland to Oſſian, was become in ſome meaſure neceſſary. If the Iriſh poems, concerning the *Fiona*, ſhould appear ridiculous, it is but juſtice to obſerve, that they are ſcarcely more ſo than the poems of other nations, at that period. On other ſubjects, the bards of Ireland have diſplayed a genius worthy of any age or nation. It was, alone, in matters of antiquity, that they were monſtrous in their fables. Their love-ſonnets, and their elegies on the death of perſons worthy or renowned, abound with ſuch beautiful ſimplicity of ſentiment, and wild harmony of numbers, that they become more than an attonement for their errors, in every other ſpecies of poetry. But the beauty of theſe pieces, depend ſo much on a certain *curioſa felicitas* of expreſſion in the original, that they muſt app ar much to diſadvantage in another language.

CON-

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE poem that ſtands firſt in this collection had its name from TEMORA, the royal palace of the firſt Iriſh kings of the Caledonian race, in the province of Ulſter.

TEMORA:

AN

EPIC POEM.

BOOK FIRST.

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 fleet 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 Moilena. 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 Cathmor 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 Moilena, in Ulſter.

TEMORA:

AN

EPIC POEM*.

BOOK FIRST.

THE blue waves of Ullin roll in light. The green hills 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

* The firſt book of Temora made its appearance in the collection of leſſer pieces, which were ſubjoined to the epic poem of Fingal. When that collection was printed, little more than the opening of the preſent poem came, in a regular connection, to my hands. The ſecond book, in particular, was very imperfect and confuſed. By means of my friends, I have ſince collected all the broken fragments of Temora, that I formerly wanted; and the ſtory of the poem, which was accurately preſerved by many, enabled me to reduce it into that order in which it now appears. The title of Epic was impoſed on the poem by myſelf. The technical terms of criticiſm were totally unknown to Oſſian. Born in a diſtant age, and in a country remote from the ſeats of learning, his knowledge did not extend to Greek and Roman literature. If therefore, in the form of his poems, and in ſeveral paſſages of his diction, he reſembles Homer, the ſimilarity muſt proceed from nature, the original from which both drew their ideas. It is from this conſideration that I have avoided, in this publication, to give parallel paſſages from other authors, as I had done, in ſome

of a ſtream is there; on its banks ſtood Cairbar* of Atha. ——His ſpear ſupports the king: the red eyes of his fear are ſad. Cormac riſes in his ſoul, with all his ghaſtly wounds. The grey form of the youth appears in darkneſs; blood pours from his airy ſides.—Cairbar thrice threw his ſpear on earth; and thrice he ſtroked

of my notes, on the former collection of Oſſian's poems. It was far from my intention to raiſe my author into a competition with the celebrated names of antiquity. The extenſive field of renown affords ample room to all the poetical merit which has yet appeared in the world, without overturning the character of one poet, to raiſe that of another on its ruins. Had Oſſian even ſuperior merit to Homer and Virgil, a certain partiality, ariſing from the fame deſervedly beſtowed upon them by the ſanction of ſo many ages, would make us overlook it, and give them the preference. Tho' their high merit does not ſtand in need of adventitious aid, yet it muſt be acknowledged, that it is an advantage to their fame, that the poſterity of the Greeks and Romans, either do not at all exiſt, or are not now objects of contempt or envy to the preſent age.

Tho' this poem of Oſſian has not perhaps all the *minutiæ*, which Ariſtotle, from Homer, lays down as neceſſary to the conduct of an epic poem, yet, it is preſumed, it has all the grand eſſentials of the epopœa. Unity of time, place, and action is preſerved throughout. The poem opens in the midſt of things; what is neceſſary of preceding tranſactions to be known, is introduced by epiſodes afterwards; not formally brought in, but ſeemingly riſing immediately from the ſituation of affairs. The circumſtances are grand, and the diction animated; neither deſcending into a cold meanneſs, nor ſwelling into ridiculous bombaſt.

The reader will find ſome alterations in the ſtyle of this book. Theſe are drawn from more correct copies of the original which came to my hands, ſince the former publication. As the moſt part of the poem is delivered down by tradition, the ſtyle is ſometimes various and interpolated. After comparing the different readings, I always made choice of that which agreed beſt with the ſpirit of the context.

* Cairbar, the ſon of Borbar-duthul, was deſcended lineally from Larthon the chief of the Firbolg, the firſt colony who ſettled in the ſouth of Ireland. The Caël 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.

his

his beard. His ſteps are ſhort; he often ſtops: and toſſes his ſinewy arms. He is like a cloud in the deſart; that varies its form to every blaſt: the valleys are ſad around, and fear, by turns, the ſhower.

THE king, at length, reſumed his ſoul, and took his pointed ſpear. He turned his eyes 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, and called his gloomy chiefs.

THE ſounding ſteps of his warriors came. They drew, at once, their ſwords. There Morlath * 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 too 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; and his red eye deſpiſes danger. Theſe and a thouſand other chiefs ſurrounded car-borne Cairbar, when the ſcout of ocean came, Mor-annal †, from ſtreamy Moi-lena.—His eyes hang forward from his face, his lips are trembling, pale.

* Mór-lath, *great in the day of battle.* Hidalla', *mildly looking hero.* Cor-mar, *expert at ſea.* Málth os, *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 confident, 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.

Do the chiefs of Erin ſtand, he ſaid, ſilent 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, Cairbar. 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 thro' a ſtorm.—Then came Oſſian king of ſongs; and 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

* Mor-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.

‡ In ſome traditions Fergus the ſon of Fingal, and Uſnoth chief of Etha, immediately follow Fillan in the liſt of the chiefs of Morven; but as they are not afterwards mentioned at all in the poem, I look upon the whole ſentence to be an interpolation, and have therefore rejected it.

ſword

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 the ſtrength of his courſe, and ſtop this mighty ſtream.—My ſpear is covered with the blood of the valiant; my ſhield is like the wall of Tura.

SHALL Foldath * alone meet the foe? replied the dark-browed Malthos. Are they not numerous on our coaſt, like the waters of many ſtreams? Are not theſe the chiefs who vanquiſhed Swaran, when the ſons of Erin fled? And 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, and like the tempeſts of the deſart;

* 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.

† 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.

they

they meet the rocks without fear, and overturn the woods.—But let us move in our ſtrength, flow 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, and ſee his flying fame.—The ſteps of his chiefs will ceaſe in Morven: the moſs of years ſhall grow in Selma.

CAIRBAR heard their words, in ſilence, like the cloud of a ſhower: it ſtands dark on Cromla, till the lightning burſts its ſide: the valley gleams with red light; the ſpirits of the ſtorm rejoice. ——So ſtood the ſilent king of Temora; at length his words are heard.

SPREAD the feaſt on Moi-lena: let my hundred bards attend. Thou, red-hair'd Olla, take the harp of the king. Go to Oſcar chief of ſwords, and bid him to our feaſt. 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 have ſung to his ghoſt.—Tell him that Cairbar has heard his fame at the ſtream of reſounding Carun †. Cathmor ‡ is not here, Borbar-duthul's generous race. He

* 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 Inis-thona*, 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 inſurrection of the Firbolg, paſſed over into Inis-huna, ſup-

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 ſhall fight with Oſcar, chiefs of the 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. We heard * the voice of joy on the coaſt: we thought that mighty Cath-

poſed 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 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 poſſeſſed of this hoſpitable diſpoſition to an extravagant degree; and the bards, perhaps upon a private account, never failed to recommend it, in their eulogiums. *Ceann uia' na dail'*, or *the point to which all the roads of the ſtrang-*

Cathmor came. Cathmor the friend of ſtrangers! the brother of red-haired Cairbair. Their ſouls were not the ſame. The light

ers 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.

We have a ſtory of this hoſpitable nature, handed down by tradition, concerning one of the firſt Earls of Argyle. This nobleman, hearing that an Iriſhman, of great quality, intended to make him a viſit, with a very numerous retinue of his friends and dependants, burnt the caſtle of Dunora, the ſeat of his family, leſt it ſhould be too ſmall to entertain his gueſts, and received the Iriſh in tents on the ſhore. Extravagant as this behaviour might ſeem in our days, it was admired and applauded in thoſe times of hoſpitality, and the Earl acquired conſiderable fame by it, in the ſongs of the bards.

The open communication with one another, which was the conſequence of their hoſpitality, did not a little tend to improve the underſtanding and enlarge the ideas of the ancient Scots. It is to this cauſe, we muſt attribute that ſagacity and ſenſe, which the common people, in the highlands, poſſeſs, ſtill, in a degree ſuperior even to the vulgar of more poliſhed countries. When men are crowded together in great cities they ſee indeed many people, but are acquainted with few. They naturally form themſelves into ſmall ſocieties, and their knowledge ſcarce extends beyond the alley or ſtreet they live in: add to this that the very employment of a mechanic tends to contract the mind. The ideas of a peaſant are ſtill more confined. His knowledge is circumſcribed within the compaſs of a few acres; or, at moſt, extends no further than the neareſt market-town. The manner of life among the inhabitants of the highlands is very different from theſe. As their fields are barren, they have ſcarce any domeſtic employment. Their time is ſpent therefore in an extenſive wilderneſs, where they feed their cattle, and theſe, by ſtraying far and wide, carry their keepers after them, at times, to all the different ſettlements of the clans. There they are received with hoſpitality and good cheer, which, as they tend to diſplay the minds of the hoſts, afford an opportunity to the gueſts to make their obſervations on the different characters of men; which is the true ſource of knowledge and acquired ſenſe. Hence it is that a common highlander is acquainted with a greater number of characters, than any of his own rank living in the moſt populous cities.

of

of heaven was in the boſom of Cathmor. His towers roſe on the banks of Atha: ſeven paths led to his halls. Seven chiefs ſtood on the paths, and called the ſtranger to the feaſt! But Cathmor dwelt in the wood to avoid 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, amidſt the feaſt of ſhells.

MY ſon raiſed high the ſpear of Cormac: an hundred bards met him with ſongs. Cairbar concealed with ſmiles the death that was dark in his ſoul. The feaſt is ſpread, the ſhells reſound: joy brightens the face of the hoſt. But it was like the parting beam of the ſun, when he is to hide his red head, in a ſtorm.

CAIRBAR roſe in his arms; darkneſs gathered on his brow. The hundred harps ceaſed at once. The clang * of ſhields was heard. Far diſtant on the heath Olla raiſed his ſong of woe. My ſon knew the ſign of death; and riſing ſeized his ſpear.

OSCAR! ſaid the dark-red Cairbar, I behold the ſpear † of Inis-

* 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*. A ceremony of another kind was long uſed in Scotland upon ſuch occaſions. Every body has heard that a bull's head was ſerved up to Lord Douglas in the caſtle of Edinburgh, as a certain ſignal of his approaching death.

† 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.

fail. 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, O Cairbar, neither to the weak in ſoul. The darkneſs of thy face is no ſtorm to me; nor are thine eyes the flames of death. Do I fear thy clanging ſhield? Tremble I at Olla's ſong? No: Cairbar, frighten the feeble; Oſcar is a rock.

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

WERE he who fought with little men near Atha's darkening chief: Atha's chief would yield green Erin to avoid his rage. Speak not of the mighty, O Cairbar! but turn thy ſword on me. Our ſtrength is equal: but Fingal is renowned! the firſt of mortal men!

W. * Ti'-mór-ri', *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.

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

THEIR

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!—Behold they fall before my ſon like the groves in the deſart, 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; and creeps in darkneſs behind his ſtone. He lifted the ſpear in ſecret, and pierced 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 poet means Malvina, the daughter of Toſcar, to whom he addreſſed that part of the poem, which related to the death of Oſcar her lover.

† 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. As they have nothing to go upon but the traditions of their bards, the tranſlator thinks that the account of Oſſian is as probable: at the worſt, it is but oppoſing one tradition to another.

It is, however, certain, that the Iriſh hiſtorians 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. The circumſtances are leſs to the diſadvantage of the character of Cairbar, than thoſe related by Oſſian. As a tranſlation of the poem (which, tho' 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

The ſteel pierced his forehead, and divided his red hair behind. He lay, like a ſhattered rock, which Cromla ſhakes from its ſhaggy ſide. But never more ſhall Oſcar riſe! he leans on his boſſy ſhield. His ſpear is in his terrible hand: Erin's ſons ſtood diſtant and dark. Their ſhouts aroſe, like crowded ſtreams, and Moi-lena echoed wide.

FINGAL heard the ſound; and took his father's ſpear. 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, and the light of his ſhield is terrible.

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 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 aghai' 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, thro' 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.

The

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; and 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 his ſon. His words are mixed with ſighs.

AND art thou fallen, 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 beholds, but 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 ſhall be the laſt of his race. The fame which I have received ſhall paſs away: my age will be without friends. I ſhall ſit a grey cloud in my hall: nor ſhall I hear the return of a ſon, in the midſt of 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 was low! Bran * is howling at his feet: gloomy Luäth

* Bran was one of Fingal's dogs.—He was ſo remarkable for his fleetneſs, that the poet, in a piece which is not juſt now in the tranſlator's hands, has given him the ſame properties with Virgil's Camilla. Bran ſignifies *a mountain-ſtream*.

is

is ſad, for he had often led them to the chace; to the bounding roe of the deſart.

When Oſcar ſaw his friends around, his white breaſt roſe with ſighs.—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 the deer, and my ſword within my narrow dwelling.—The torrent hereafter may raiſe the earth: the hunter may find the ſteel and ſay, "This has been Oſcar's "ſword."

And falleſt thou, ſon of my fame! And ſhall I never ſee thee, Oſcar! When others hear of their ſons, I ſhall not hear of thee. The moſs is on thy four grey ſtones; the mournful wind is there. The battle ſhall be fought without him: he ſhall 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; and a beam of joy will riſe in my ſoul.

The 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; or pour our tears in Ullin? The mighty will not return. Oſcar ſhall not riſe in his ſtrength.

The valiant muſt fall one day, and be no more known on his hiils. —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 day, the terror of other times. Thus ſhall we paſs, O warriors, 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.

ULLIN, my aged bard! take the ſhip of the king. Carry Oſcar to Selma of harps. Let the daughters of Morven weep. We ſhall fight in Erin for the race of fallen Cormac. The days of my years begin to fail: I feel the weakneſs of my arm. My fathers bend from their clouds, to receive their grey-hair'd ſon. But, before I go hence, one beam of fame ſhall riſe: ſo ſhall my days end, as my years begun, in fame: my life ſhall be one ſtream of light to bards of other times.

ULLIN rais'd his white ſails: the wind of the ſouth came forth. He bounded on the waves towards 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: but no ſong is raiſed over the chief; for his ſoul had been dark and bloody. The bards remembered the fall of Cormac! what could they ſay in Cairbar's praiſe?

THE night came rolling down. The light of an hundred oaks aroſe. Fingal ſat beneath a tree. Old Althan † ſtood in the midſt. He

* The poet ſpeaks in his own perſon.

† Althan, the ſon of Conachar, was the chief bard of Arth king of Ireland. After the death of Arth, Althan attended his ſon

He told the tale of fallen Cormac. Althan the ſon of Conachar, the friend of car-borne Cuchullin: he dwelt with Cormac in windy Temora, when Semo's ſon fought with generous Torlath.—The tale of Althan was mournful, and the tear was in his eye.

* The ſetting ſun was yellow on Dora †. Grey evening began to deſcend. Temora's woods ſhook with the blaſt of the unconſtant wind. A cloud, at length, gathered in the weſt, and a red ſtar looked from behind its edge.—I ſtood in the wood alone, and 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.—The ſword of Artho ‡ was in the hand of the king; and he looked with joy on its poliſhed ſtuds: thrice he attempted to draw it, and thrice he failed; his yellow locks are ſpread on his ſhoulders: his cheeks of youth are red.—I mourned over the beam of youth, for he was ſoon to ſet.

Althan! he ſaid, with a ſmile, haſt thou beheld 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

Cormac, and was preſent at his death.—He had made his eſcape from Cairbar, by the means of Cathmor, and 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.

would

would I have met, like Cuchullin, 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 chief of high Temora? He might have returned with his fame; for he promiſed to return to-night. My bards wait him with ſongs; my feaſt is ſpread in Temora.

I HEARD the king in ſilence. My tears began to flow. I hid them with my aged locks; but he perceived my grief.

SON of Conachar! he ſaid, is the king of Tura* low? Why burſts thy ſigh in ſecret? And why deſcends the tear?—Comes the car-borne Torlath? Or the ſound of the red-haired Cairbar?——They come!—for I behold thy grief. Moſſy Tura's king is low!—Shall I not ruſh to battle?—But I cannot lift the ſpear!—O had mine arm the ſtrength of Cuchullin, 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

* Cuchullin 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.

† 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 Cuchullin was killed.

death of Cuchullin, and 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, come like the bounding roes? their ſtature is like the young trees of the plain, growing in a ſhower:—Soft and ruddy are their cheeks; but fearleſs ſouls look forth from their eyes?——Who but the ſons of Uſnoth *, the car-borne chiefs of Etha? The people riſe on every ſide, like the ſtrength of an half-extinguiſhed fire, when the winds come, ſudden, from the deſart, on their ruſtling wings.—The ſound of Caithbat's † ſhield was heard. The heroes ſaw Cuchullin ‡ 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!

And ſoon may I behold the chief! replied the blue-eyed king. But my ſoul is ſad for Cuchullin; his voice was pleaſant in mine

* Uſnoth chief of Etha, a diſtrict on the weſtern coaſt of Scotland, had three ſons, Nathos, Althos and Ardan, by Slisſama the ſiſter of Cuchullin. 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 Cuchullin's death arrived. Nathos, the eldeſt of the three brothers, took the command of Cuchullin'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, publiſhed in the former collection.

† Caithbait was grandfather to Cuchullin; 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 Cuchullin.

ear.

ear.—Often have we moved, on Dora, to the chace of the dark-brown hinds: his bow was unerring on the mountains.—He ſpoke of mighty men. He told of the deeds of my fathers; and I felt my joy.—But ſit thou at the feaſt, O bard, I have often heard thy voice. Sing in the praiſe of Cuchullin; and of that mighty ſtranger *.

DAY roſe on woody Temora, with all the beams of the eaſt. Trathin came to the hall, the ſon of old Gelláma †.—I behold, he ſaid, a dark cloud in the deſart, king of Innisfail! a cloud it ſeemed at firſt, but now a croud 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 king of Erin. My hall is the houſe of ſtrangers, ſon of the generous Gelláma!—Perhaps it is the chief of Etha, coming in the ſound of his renown.—Hail, mighty ‡ ſtranger, art thou of the friends of Cormac?—But Carril, he is dark, and unlovely; and he draws his ſword. Is that the ſon of Uſnoth, bard of the times of old?

IT is not the ſon of Uſnoth, ſaid Carril, but the chief of Atha.——Why comeſt thou in thy arms to Temora, Cairbar of the gloomy brow? Let not thy ſword riſe againſt Cormac! Whither doſt thou turn thy ſpeed?

HE paſſed on in his darkneſs, and ſeized the hand of the king. Cormac foreſaw his death, and the rage of his eyes aroſe.—Retire,

* 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.

thou

thou gloomy chief of Atha: Nathos comes with battle.—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.

And art thou fallen in thy halls *, O ſon of noble Artho? The ſhield of Cuchullin 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.

My words came to the ears of Cairbar, and he cloſed us † in the midſt of darkneſs. He feared to ſtretch his ſword to the bards ‡, though his ſoul was dark. Long had we pined alone: at length, the noble Cathmor || came.—He heard our voice from the cave; he turned the eye of his wrath on Cairbar.

Chief of Atha! he ſaid, how long wilt thou pain my ſoul? Thy heart is like the rock of the deſart; and thy thoughts are dark.—But thou art the brother of Cathmor, and he will fight thy battles.——But Cathmor's ſoul is not like thine, thou feeble hand of war! The light of my boſom is ſtained with thy deeds: the 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

* 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 occaſion. His humanity and generoſity were unparallelled: 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 did not approve.

ſilence:

ſilence: my fame ſhall not be heard.—Cairbar! looſe the bards: they are the ſons of other 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 liſt 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 Ullin; to aid the red-haired Cairbar: and now he comes to revenge his death, O king of woody Morven.——

AND let him come, replied the king; I love a foe like Cathmor. His ſoul is great; 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 the ſong. Fingal is amidſt 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, whiſtling, ſtrides along.

RAISE the ſong of joy, ye bards of Morven, that our ſouls may forget the paſt.—The red ſtars look on us from the clouds, and ſilently deſcend. Soon ſhall the grey beam of the morning riſe, and ſhew us the foes of Cormac.——Fillan! take the ſpear of the king; go to Mora's dark-brown ſide. Let thine eyes travel over the heath, like flames of fire. Obſerve the foes of Fingal, and

the courſe of generous Cathmor. I hear a diſtant ſound, like the falling of rocks in the deſart.——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, and I dread the fall of my renown.

The voice of the bards aroſe. The king leaned on the ſhield of Trenmor.—Sleep deſcended on his eyes, and his future battles roſe in his dreams. The hoſt are ſleeping around. Dark-haired Fillan obſerved the foe. His ſteps are on a diſtant hill: we hear, at times, his clanging ſhield.

TEMORA:

AN

EPIC POEM.

BOOK SECOND.

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 kingdom. 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.

TEMORA:

AN

EPIC POEM.

BOOK SECOND.

*FATHER of heroes, Trenmor! dweller of eddying winds! where the dark-red courſe of thunder marks the troubled clouds! Open thou thy ſtormy halls, and let the bards of old be near: let them draw near, with their ſongs and their half viewleſs harps. No dweller of miſty valley comes; no hunter unknown

* Addreſſes to the ſpirits of deceaſed warriors are common, in the compoſitions of Oſſian. He, however, expreſſes them in ſuch language as prevents all ſuſpicion of his paying divine honours to the dead, as was uſual among other unenlightened nations.—From the ſequel of this apoſtrophe, it appears, that Oſſian had retired from the reſt of the army to mourn, in ſecret, over the death of his ſon Oſcar. This indirect method of narration has much of the nature of the Drama, and is more forcible than a regular hiſtorical chain of circumſtances. The abrupt manner of Oſſian may often render him obſcure to inattentive readers. Thoſe who retain his poems, on memory, ſeem to be ſenſible of this; and uſually give the hiſtory of the pieces minutely before they begin to repeat the poetry.

Tho' 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

known at his ſtreams; but the car-borne Oſcar from the folds of war. Sudden is thy change, my ſon, from what thou wert on dark Moilena! 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 ſtreamy 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 Morven is alone.—Alone thou ſhalt not be, my father, while I can lift the ſpear.

I rose, in my rattling arms; and liſtened to the wind of night. The ſhield of Fillan * is not heard. I ſhook for the ſon of Fingal. Why

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 of thoſe gentlemen 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.

* 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 ſurprize 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 monarch, which is ſo neceſſary to the underſtanding the foundation of the rebellion and uſurpation of Cairbar, and Cathmor.—Fillan was the

Why ſhould the foe come, by night; and 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 forſee 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; and the joy of his ſoul aroſe. He heard my ſounding tread, and turned his lifted ſpear.

COMEST thou, ſon of night, in peace? Or doſt thou meet my wrath? The foes of Fingal are mine. Speak, or fear my ſteel.—I ſtand not, in vain, the ſhield of Morven's race.

NEVER mayſt thou ſtand in vain, ſon of blue eyed Clatho. Fingal begins to be alone; darkneſs gathers on the laſt of his days. Yet he has two * ſons who ought to ſhine in war. Who ought to be two beams of light, near the ſteps of his departure.

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 Fingal, was, at that time, on an expedition, which is mentioned in one of the leſſer poems of Oſſian. 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-Fion-gäel na buäi': 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 prefixed to the poem.

SON

Son of Fingal, replied the youth, it is not long ſince I could lift the ſpear. Few are the marks of my ſword in battle, but my 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 of night I ſhall view their gleaming tribes.—Why, Fillan, didſt thou ſpeak of Oſcar, to call forth 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.

Conar ‡ was the brother of Trathal, firſt of mortal men. His battles were on every coaſt. A thouſand ſtreams rolled down the

* 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. *Bo'g* ſignifies *a quiver*, from which proceeds *Fir-bo'g*, i. e. *bow-men*; ſo called from their uſing bows, more than any of the neighbouring nations.

† It is remarkable, that, 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. Tho' 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 prefixed to this collection, that the poet had a farther deſign in view. It is highly probable, tho' the Iriſh annaliſts do not agree with Oſſian in other particulars, that the Conar here mentioned is the ſame with their *Conar-mór*, i. e. *Conar the great*, whom they place in the firſt century.

‡ Conar, the firſt king of Ireland, was the ſon of Trenmor, the great-grand-father of Fingal. It was on account of this fa-

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 hinds.

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, and reminding them of the honor of Bolga.—Why ſhould Conar reign, the ſon of ſtreamy Morven?

THEY came forth, like the ſtreams of the deſart, with the roar of their hundred tribes. Conar was a rock before them: broken they rolled on every ſide. But often they returned, and the ſons of Ullin fell. The king ſtood, among the tombs of his warriors, and darkly bent his mournful face. His ſoul was rolled into itſelf; and he had marked the place, where he was to fall; when Trathal

family-connection, that Fingal was engaged in ſo many wars in the cauſe of the race of Conar. Tho' few of the actions of Trenmor are mentioned in Oſſian's poems, yet, from the honourable appellations beſtowed on him, we may conclude that he was, in the days of the poet, 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 anceſtors to *Cuan-mér 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.

came, in his ſtrength, the chief of cloudy Morven.—Nor did he come alone; Colgar * was at his ſide; Colgar the ſon of the king and of 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, and his blue waves bore the king to Morven: then he remembered his ſon, and poured the ſilent tear. Thrice did the bards, at the cave of Furmono, call the ſoul of Colgar. They called him to the hills of his land; and 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-ſtream-

* 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 his anceſtors, the poet 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, and, as Oſſian expreſſes it, *his ſoul was dark*. This impartiality, with reſpect to a character ſo near him, reflects honour on the poet.

† The poet begins here to mark ſtrongly the character of Fillan, who is to make ſo great a figure in the ſequel of the Poem. 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.

ing 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.

SUDDEN I turned on my ſpear, and raiſed the flame of an oak on high. I ſpread it large, on Mora's wind. Cathmor ſtopt in his courſe.—Gleaming he ſtood, like a rock, on whoſe ſides are the wandering of blaſts; which ſeize its echoing ſtreams and clothe them over with ice. So ſtood the friend * of ſtrangers. 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-hair'd Cormar, dark-browed Malthos, the ſide-long-looking gloom of Maronan. Let the pride of Foldath appear: and the red-rolling eye of Turlotho. Nor let Hidalla be forgot; his voice, in danger, is like the ſound of a ſhower, when it falls in the blaſted vale, near Atha's failing ſtream.

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.—

* Cathmor is diſtinguiſhed, by this honourable title, on account 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. Hence it is that the names in the poems of Oſſian, ſuit ſo well with the characters of the perſons who bear them.

Dreadful ſhone they to the light; like the fall of the ſtream of Brumo *, when the meteor lights it, before the nightly ſtranger. Shuddering, he ſtops in his journey, and looks up for the beam of the morn.

† WHY delights Foldath, ſaid the king, to pour the blood of foes, by night? Fails his arm in battle, in the beams of day? Few are the foes before us, why ſhould we clothe us in miſt? 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.

* 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.* Fing. p. 80.

† 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. Oſſian is peculiarly happy in oppoſing different characters, and, by that means, in heightening the features of both. Foldath appears to have been the favourite of Cairbar, and it cannot be denied but he was a proper enough miniſter to ſuch a prince. He was cruel and impetuous, but ſeems to have had great martial merit.

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

—But

—But his ſtone was raiſed without a tear? No bard ſung * over Erin's king; and 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 the chief of Atha; doſt thou think that he can fall, without his fame, in Erin? Could the bards be ſilent, at the tomb of the mighty Fingal? The ſong would burſt in ſecret; and the ſpirit of the king rejoice.—It is when thou ſhalt fall, that the bard ſhall forget the ſong. Thou art dark, chief of Moma, tho' 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 the 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 ſtranger † of Inis-huna: that beam of light, with wandering locks,

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

† By *the ſtranger of Inis-huna*, is meant Sulmalla, the daughter of Conmor king of Inis-

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 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

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 begun 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 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 period much later, than that wherein Fingal lived.

‡ Alnecma, or Alnecmacht, was the ancient name of Connaught. Ullin is ſtill the

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-lama. 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 her dreams.

THREE days feaſted Crothar with Cathmin. On the fourth they awaked the hinds. Con-lama moved 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; and joy dwelt round the daugther of Ullin.

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, and the ſigh of his people roſe.——Silent and tall, acroſs the ſtream, came the dark-ening ſtrength of Crothar: he rolled the foe from Alnecma, and 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 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*. Turloch, *man of the quiver*. Cormul, *blue eye*.

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 deſart, 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, tho' bright, is ſad.

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

* The delicacy of the bard, with regard to Crothar, is remarkable. 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.

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 of the hinds.

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 ſhall pour; then be thy buckler heard. Awake the king on his heath, leſt his fame ſhould ceaſe.

I STRODE, in all my rattling arms; wide-bounding over a ſtream that darkly-winded, in the field, before the king of Atha. Green Atha's king, with lifted ſpear, came forward on my courſe.—Now would we have mixed in horrid fray, like two contending ghoſts, that bending forward, from two clouds, ſend forth the roaring winds; did not Oſſian behold, on high, the helmit of Erin's kings. The Eagle's wing ſpread above it, ruſtling in the breeze. A red ſtar looked thro' 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

At once he dropt the gleaming lance. Growing before me ſeemed the form. He ſtretched his hand in night; and 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 feaſts.—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.

AND ſhall it 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 field of their wars.—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: and Lubar's ſtream roll quite away! then ſhall the traveller come, and bend here, perhaps, in reſt. When the darkened moon is rolled over his head, our ſhadowy forms may come, and, mixing with his dreams, remind him of this place. But why turneſt thou ſo dark away, ſon of Borbar-duthul *?

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

* 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 Colcul-la, who is mentioned in the epiſode which begins the fourth book.

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 houſe*. My hatred flies, on eagle-wing, from the foe that is low.—He ſhall hear the ſong of bards; Cairbar ſhall rejoice on his wind.

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 folds of the morning miſt? The drops of heaven are on his head. His ſteps are

* The grave, often poetically called a houſe. This reply of Oſſian abounds with the moſt exalted ſentiments of a noble mind. Tho', 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.*

† The morning of the ſecond day, from the opening of the poem comes on.—After the death of Cuchullin, 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 Cairbar.—The whole of this paſſage, together with the addreſs of Carril to the ſun, is a lyric meaſure, and was, undoubtedly, intended as a relief to the mind, after the long narrative which preceded it. Tho' the lyric pieces, ſcattered through the poems of Oſſian, are certainly very beautiful in the original, yet they muſt appear much to diſadvantage, ſtripped of numbers, and the harmony of rhime. In the recitative or narrative part of the poem,

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, thro' the thin folds of miſt. There, perhaps, Cuchullin ſits, on the blaſt which bends its trees. Pleaſant is the ſong of the morning from the bard of Erin!

THE waves crowd away for fear: they hear the ſound of thy coming forth, O ſun!——Terrible is thy beauty, ſon of heaven, when death is folded in thy locks; when thou rolleſt thy vapors before thee, over the blaſted hoſt. But pleaſant is thy beam to the hunter, ſitting by the rock in a ſtorm, when thou lookeſt from thy 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, thro' heaven? I ſee the deaths of heroes dark-wandering over thy face!——Why wander the words of Carril! does the ſun 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 dun robe * may ſeize thee, ſtruggling, in thy ſky.

PLEASANT is the voice of the ſong, O Carril, to Oſſian's ſoul! It is like the ſhower of the morning, when it comes through the ruſtling vale, on which the ſun looks thro' miſt, juſt riſing from his rocks.——But this is no time, O bard, to ſit down, at the ſtrife of ſong. Fingal is in arms on the vale.

the original is rather a meaſured ſort of proſe, than any regular verſification; but it has all that variety of cadences, which ſuit the different ideas, and paſſions of the ſpeakers.——This book takes up only the ſpace of a few hours.

* By the *dun robe* of the ſun, is probably meant an eclipſe.

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 THIRD.

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 Tur-lathon, 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 recalls 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.

TEMORA:

AN

EPIC POEM.

BOOK THIRD.

*WHO is that, at blue-ſtreaming Lubar; by the bending hill of the 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

* This ſudden apoſtrophe, concerning Fingal, the attitude of the king, and the ſcenery in which he is placed, tend to elevate the mind to a juſt conception of the ſucceeding battle. The ſpeech of Fingal is full of that magnanimous generoſity which diſtinguiſhes his character throughout. The groupe of figures, which the poet places around his father, are picturesque, and deſcribed with great propriety. The ſilence of Gaul, the behaviour of Fillan, and the effect which both have on the mind of Fingal, are well imagined.—His ſpeech upon the occaſion is very beautiful in the original. Broken and unequal, the numbers repreſent the agitation of his mind, divided between the admiration excited by the ſilence of Gaul, (when others boaſted of their own actions) and his natural affection for Fillan, which the behaviour of that valiant youth had raiſed to the higheſt pitch.

the

the dark rolling of foes.—Doſt thou hear the voice of the king? It is like the burſting of a ſtream, in the deſart, when it comes, between its echoing rocks, to the blaſted field of the ſun.

WIDE-SKIRTED comes down the foe! Sons of woody Morven, ariſe. Be ye like the rocks of my land, on whoſe brown ſides are the rolling of waters. A beam of joy comes on my ſoul; I ſee them mighty before me. It is when the foe is feeble, that the ſighs of Fingal are heard; leſt death ſhould come, without renown, and darkneſs dwell on his tomb.—Who ſhall lead the war, againſt the hoſt of Alnecma? It is, only when danger grows, that my ſword ſhall ſhine.—Such was the cuſtom, heretofore, of Trenmor the ruler of winds: and thus deſcended to battle the blue-ſhielded Trathal.

THE chiefs bend towards the king: each darkly ſeems to claim the war. They tell, by halves, their mighty deeds: and turn their eyes on Erin. But far before the reſt the ſon of Morni ſtood: ſilent he ſtood, 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 *.

ON

* 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 ad-

ON his ſpear ſtood the ſon of Clatho *, in the wandering of his locks. Thrice he raiſed his eyes to Fingal: his voice thrice failed him, as he ſpoke.—Fillan could not boaſt of battles: at once he ſtrode away. Bent over a diſtant ſtream he ſtood: the tear hung in his eye. He ſtruck, at times, the thiſtle's head, with his inverted ſpear.

addreſs to the ſpirit of the deceaſed hero, is the only part now remaining, of a poem of Oſſian, on the ſubject. I ſhall here lay it before the reader.

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 miſt of the deſart, O king of Strumon, hear!

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 Ros crána, the daughter of Cormac, king of Ireland.

Clatho was the mother of Ryno, Fillan, and Boſmina, mentioned in the *battle of Lora*, one of the leſſer poems publiſhed in the former collection. Fillan is often called the ſon of Clatho, to diſtinguiſh him from thoſe ſons which Fingal had by Ros-crána.

NOR is he unſeen of Fingal. Sidelong he beheld his ſon. He beheld him, with burſting joy; and turned, amidſt his crowded ſoul. In ſilence turned the king towards Mora of woods. He hid 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 king. 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; Morven, 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, the ſeat of miſt, on the deep, for many dark-brown years: ſo terrible is the ſound of the hoſt, wide-moving over the field.

* Gaul, the ſon of Morni, next to Fingal, is the moſt renowned character introduced by Oſſian in his poems. He is, like Ajax in the Iliad, diſtinguiſhed by his manly taciturnity. The honourable epithets beſtowed on him here, by Fingal, are amazingly expreſſive in the original. There is not a paſſage in all Temora, which loſes ſo much in the tranſlation as this. The firſt part of the ſpeech is rapid and irregular, and is peculiarly calculated to animate the ſoul to war.—Where the king addreſſes Fillan, the verſification changes to a regular and ſmooth meaſure. The firſt is like torrents ruſhing over broken rocks; the ſecond like the courſe of a full flowing river, calm but majeſtic. This inſtance ſerves to ſhew, how much it aſſiſts a poet to alter the meaſure, according to the particular paſſion, that he intends to excite in his reader.

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

Gaul is tall before them: the ſtreams glitter within his ſtrides. The bards raiſed the ſong by his ſide; he ſtruck his ſhield between. On the ſkirts of the blaſt, the tuneful voices roſe.

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

WHO riſes, from his car, on Clutha? The hills are troubled before the king! The dark woods echo round, and lighten at his ſteel. See him, amidſt the foe, like Colgach's * ſportful ghoſt; when he ſcatters the clouds, and rides the eddying winds! It is Morni † of the bounding ſteeds! Be like thy father, Gaul!

* 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; tho' I believe it a matter of mere conjecture, that the Colgach here mentioned was the ſame with that hero.—I cannot help obſerving, with how much propriety the ſong of the bards is conducted. 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 poem, on which the tradition was founded, is now loſt.

* SELMA is opened wide. Bards take the trembling harps. Ten youths carry 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 ſo ſilent, Morven?—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, Fillan.

THEY moved beneath the ſong.—High waved their arms, as ruſhy fields, beneath autumnal winds. On Mora ſtood the king in arms. Miſt flies round his buckler broad; as, aloft, it hung on a bough, on Cormul's moſſy rock.—In ſilence I ſtood by Fingal, and turned my eyes on Cromla's † wood: leſt I ſhould behold the hoſt, and ruſh amidſt 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: towards 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? Fol-" dath lead my people forth. Thou art a beam of fire."

FORTH-ISSUED the chief of Moma, like a cloud, the robe of ghoſts. He drew his ſword, a flame, from his ſide; and bade the

* Oſſian is peculiarly happy, in his deſcriptions of ſtill life; and theſe acquire double force, by his placing them near buſy and tumultuous ſcenes. This antitheſis ſerves to animate and heighten the features of poetry.

† The mountain Cromla was in the neighbourhood of the ſcene of this poem; which was nearly the ſame with that of Fingal.

battle

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 called the chief of Dunratho *; and his words were heard.

CORMUL, thou beholdeſt that path. It winds green behind the foe. Place thy people there; leſt Morven ſhould eſcape from my ſword.—Bards of green-valleyed Erin, let no voice of yours ariſe. The ſons of Morven muſt fall without ſong. They are the foes of Cairbar. Hereafter ſhall the traveller meet their dark, thick miſt on Lena, where it wanders, with their 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 Moruth; as his eye purſued the courſe of the dark-eyed king of Dunratho.

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, amidſt the ridge of ſhields.

THE ſign of death aroſe: the dreadful ſound of Morni's ſhield. Gaul poured his voice between. Fingal roſe, high on Mora. He

* 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 well with the character of Foldath, which is, throughout, haughty and preſumptuous. Towards the latter end of this ſpeech, we find the opinion of the times, concerning the unhappineſs of the ſouls of thoſe who were buried without the funeral ſong. This doctrine, no doubt, was inculcated by the bards, to make their order reſpectable and neceſſary.

ſaw.

ſaw them, from wing to wing, bending in the ſtrife. Gleaming, on his own dark hill, the ſtrength * of Atha ſtood.—They† were like two ſpirits of heaven, ſtanding each on his gloomy cloud; when they pour abroad the winds, and lift the roaring ſeas. The blue-tumbling of waves is before them, marked with the paths of whales. Themſelves are calm and bright; and the gale lifts their locks of miſt.

WHAT beam of light hangs high in air? It is Morni's dreadful ſword.—Death is ſtrewed on thy paths, O Gaul; thou foldeſt them together in thy rage.—Like a young oak falls Tur-lathon ‡, with his branches round him. His high-boſomed ſpouſe ſtretches her white arms, in dreams, to the returning king, as ſhe ſleeps by gurgling Moruth, in her diſordered locks. It is his ghoſt, Oichoma; the chief is lowly laid. Hearken not to the winds for Tur-lathon's echoing ſhield.—It is pierced, by his ſtreams, and 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 laid in blood! The blaſted tree bends above thee: thy ſhield lies broken

* By the *ſtrength of Atha*, is meant Cathmor. The expreſſion is common in Homer, and other ancient poets.

† The two kings.

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

near.

near. Thy blood mixes with the ſtream; thou breaker of the ſhields!

* I TOOK the ſpear, in my wrath; but Gaul ruſhed forward on the foe. 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, and ſtretched it large before the king. Foldath ſent his ſhout abroad, and kindled all the field: as a blaſt that lifts the broad-winged flame, over Lumon's ‡ echoing groves.

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

HIS terrible voice roſe on the wind, the hoſt bend forward in the fight. Often had they heard him, at Strumon, when he called them to the chace of the hinds.—Himſelf ſtood tall, amidſt the war, as an oak in the ſkirts of a ſtorm, which now is clothed,

* The poet ſpeaks in his own perſon.

† 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. The poet being intent upon the main action, paſſes over ſlightly this feat of Fillan.

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

on

on high, in miſt: then ſhews its broad, waving head; the muſing hunter lifts his eye from his own ruſhy field.

My ſoul purſues thee, O Fillan, thro' the path of thy fame. Thou rolledſt the foe before thee.—Now Foldath, perhaps, would fly; but night came down with its clouds; and Cathmor's horn was heard from high. The ſons of Morven heard the voice of Fingal, from Mora's gathered miſt. The bards poured their ſong, like dew, on the returning war.

Who comes from Strumon, they ſaid, amidſt her wandering locks? She is mournful in her ſteps, and lifts her blue eyes towards 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 lifted the ſword in wrath: they ſhrunk before blue-ſhielded Gaul!

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

As the rolling of thunder on hills, when Lara's fields are ſtill and dark, ſuch are the ſteps of Morven 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

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

the

the bounding hind. Your fathers rejoice from their clouds, ſons of ſtreamy Cona.

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 ruſhed thro' night. Long looked the king in ſilence round: at length, his words were heard.

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 he 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, in the folds of the mountain-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

* From this, and ſeveral other paſſages, in this poem, it appears, that the kings of Morven 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; which cuſtom, probably, he had borrowed, from the former monarchs of Ireland, of the race of the Caël or Caledonians.

† After the death of Comhal, 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

mixed with mine. In one day Duthcaron firſt ſtrung our bows, againſt the roes of Dun-lora.

MANY, I ſaid, are our paths to battle, in green-hilled Inisfail. Often did our ſails ariſe, over the blue-tumbling waves; when we came, in other days, to aid the race of Conar.

THE ſtrife roared once in Alnecma, at the foam-covered ſtreams of Duth-úla*. With Cormac deſcended to battle Duth-caron from cloudy Morven. Nor deſcended Duth-caron 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 a ſtream, 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, like the meeting of two ſtormy ſeas. Cormac ‡ ſhone in his own ſtrife, bright as the forms

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 contells between the Caël and Firbolg; and is the more valuable upon that account.

* Duth-úla, a river in Connaught; it ſignifies, *dark-rufhing 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. From ſeveral epiſodes and poems, it appears, that 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

forms of his fathers. But, far before the reſt, Duth-caron hewed down the foe. Nor ſlept the arm of Connal, by his father's ſide. Atha prevailed on the plain: like ſcattered miſt, fled the people of Ullin *.

THEN roſe the ſword of Duth-caron, 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-ula: ſilent ſtrode the chiefs over the field. A mountain-ſtream roared acroſs the path, nor could Duth-caron bound over its courſe.—Why ſtands my father? ſaid Connal.—I hear the ruſhing foe.

FLY, Connal, he ſaid; thy father's ſtrength begins to fail.—I come wounded from battle; here let me reſt in night.—"But thou ſhalt not remain alone, ſaid Connal's burſting ſigh. My ſhield is an eagle's wing to cover the king of Dun-lora." He bends dark above the chief; the mighty Duth-caron dies.

DAY roſe, and night returned. No lonely bard appeared, deep-muſing on the heath: and could Connal leave the tomb of his fa-

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 theſe petty princes aſſumed, at times, the title of king of Ireland, and, on account of his ſuperior force, or in caſes of publick 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.

ther, till he ſhould receive his fame?—He bent the bow againſt the roes of Duth-ula; 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 vapor of reedy Lego.—At length the ſteps of Colgan * came, the bard of high Temora. Duth-

* Colgan, the ſon of Cathmul, was the principal bard of Cormac Mac-Conar, king of Ireland. Part of an old poem, on the loves of Fingal and Ros-crana, is ſtill preſerved, and goes under the name of this Colgan; but whether it is of his compoſition, or the production of a latter age, I ſhall not pretend to determine. Be that as it will, it appears, from the obſolete phraſes which it contains, to be very ancient; and its poetical merit may perhaps excuſe me, for laying a tranſlation of it before the reader. What remains of the poem is a dialogue, in a lyric meaſure, between Fingal and Ros-crâna, the daughter of Cormac. She begins with a ſoliloquy, which is overheard by Fingal.

ROS-CRANA.

By night, came a dream to Ros-crâna! 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 ſtreamy 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-crana, 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 thro' 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 deſart: the light of Ros-crâna is here.

FINGAL.

It was the light tread of a ghoſt, the fair dweller of eddying winds. Why deceiveſt

Duth-caron 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, thro' the broad-headed groves of the hill: raiſe ſtones, beneath its beams, to all the fallen in war.—Tho' 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

ceiveſt 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 Morven, my ſoul is thine. Ah me! what clanging of armour!—Colc-ulla of Atha is near!—

Fingal, as we learn from the epiſode, with which the fourth book begins, undertook an expedition into Ireland, to aid Cormac Mac-conar againſt the inſurrections of the Fir-bolg. It was then he ſaw, fell in love with, and married Ros-crána, the daughter of Cormac.——Some traditions give this poem to Oſſian; but, from ſeveral circumſtances, I conclude it to be an imitation, but a very happy one, of the manner of that poet.——The elegance of the ſentiment, and beauty of the imagery, however, refer the compoſition of it to an æra of remote antiquity; for the nearer we approach to our own times, the leſs beautiful are the compoſitions of the bards.

behind him. Silence dwells in the vales of Moi-lena, where each, with its own dark ſtream, 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, and 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; and 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 gathered cloud.—Thou art brave, ſon of Clatho; but headlong in the ſtrife: So did not Fingal advance, tho' 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 thy fathers. The memory of the paſt returns, my deeds in other years: when firſt I deſcended from ocean on the green-valleyed iſle.—We bend towards the voice of the king. The moon looks abroad from her cloud. The grey-ſkirted miſt is near, the dwelling of the ghoſts.

TEMORA:

AN

EPIC POEM.

BOOK FOURTH.

ARGUMENT.

THE ſecond night continues. Fingal relates, at the feaſt, his own firſt expedition into Ireland, and his marriage with Ros-crána, 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 foretels the iſſue of the war.—The ſoliloquy of the king. He diſcovers Sul-malla. Morning comes. Her ſoliloquy cloſes the book.

TEMORA:

AN

EPIC POEM.

BOOK FOURTH.

*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, and turned away his eyes; for he remembered the ſteps of his father, on his own green hills. I darkened in my place: duſky thoughts rolled over my ſoul. The kings of Erin roſe before me. I half-unſheathed my 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: it was, to them, a wind from heaven to roll the miſt away.

* 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.

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 the night came down, I ſtruck, at times, the warning boſs: I ſtruck, and looked on high, for fiery-haired Ul-erin *.

NOR wanting 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, avoided the ſtrength of Colc-ulla. Nor he alone avoids the foe: the blue eye of Ros-crana is there: Ros-crana †, 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

* 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. We find, from this paſſage, that navigation was conſiderably advanced, at this time, among the Caledonians.

† Ros crána, *the beam of the riſing ſun*; ſhe was the mother of Oſſian. The Iriſh bards relate ſtrange fictions concerning this princeſs. The character given of her here, and in other poems of Oſſian, does not tally with their accounts. 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.

is thy fame my ſon: but ſtrong are the foes of Erin. They are like the roar of ſtreams in the land, ſon of car-borne Comhal.

YET they may be rolled * away, I ſaid in my riſing ſoul. We are not of the race of the feeble, king of blue-ſhielded hoſts. Why ſhould fear come amongſt us, like a ghoſt of night? The ſoul of the valiant grows, as 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, I roll no cloud before thee. Thou burneſt in the fire of thy fathers. I behold thy fame. It marks thy courſe in battles, like a ſtream of light.—— But wait the coming of Cairbar †: my ſon muſt join thy ſword. He calls the ſons of Ullin, from all their diſtant ſtreams."

WE came to the hall of the king, where it roſe in the midſt of rocks: rocks, on whoſe dark ſides, were the marks of ſtreams of old. Broad oaks bend around with their moſs: the thick birch waves its green head. Half-hid, in her ſhady grove, Ros-crana raiſed the ſong. Her white hands roſe on the harp. I beheld her blue-roll-

* 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 Cairbar the ſon of Borbar-duthul happened. See more of Ferad artho in the eighth book.

ling eyes. She was like a ſpirit * of heaven half-folded in the ſkirt of a cloud.

THREE days we feaſted at Moi-lena: ſhe roſe bright amidſt my troubled ſoul.—Cormac beheld me dark. He gave the white-boſomed maid.—She came with bending eye, amidſt the wandering of her heavy locks.—She came.——Straight the battle roared.—Colc-ulla came: I took my ſpear. My ſword roſe, with my people, againſt the ridgy foe. Alneema fled. Colc-ulla fell. Fingal returned with fame.

* The attitude of Ros-crana is aptly 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.* I ſhall here tranſlate a paſſage of an old ſong, where both theſe beautiful images are mentioned together.

A chief who lived three centuries ago, returning from the war, underſtood that his wife or miſtreſs was dead. The 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 ſmoak of my hall. No grey dog bounds at my ſtreams. Silence dwells in the valley of trees.

"Is that a rain bow on Crunath? It flies:—and the ſky is dark. Again, thou moveſt, bright, on the heath, thou ſun-beam 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-crana 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.

He is renowned, O Fillan, who fights, in the ſtrength of his people. The bard purſues his ſteps, thro' 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 tufts of graſs.

Such were the words of Fingal, on Mora of the roes. Three bards, from the rock of Cormul, poured down the pleaſant ſong. Sleep deſcended, in the ſound, on the broad-ſkirted hoſt. Carril returned, with the bards, from the tomb of Dun-lora's king. The voice of morning ſhall not come, to the duſky bed of the hero. 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 gathered Erin, around the gleaming form of Atha's king. He, tall in the midſt, careleſs lifts, at times, his ſpear: as ſwells or falls the ſound of Fonar's diſtant harp.

† Near him leaned, againſt a rock, Sul-malla ‡ of blue eyes, the white-boſomed daughter of Conmor king of Inis-huna. To his aid

* The poet changes the ſcene to the Iriſh camp. The images introduced here are magnificent, and have that ſort of *terrible beauty*, if I may uſe the expreſſion, which occurs ſo frequently in the compoſitions of Oſſian. The troubled motion of the army, and the ſedate and careleſs attitude of Cathmor, form a contraſt, which, as I have before remarked, heightens the features of deſcription, and is calculated to enliven poetry.

† In order to illuſtrate this paſſage, I ſhall give, here, the hiſtory on which it is founded, as I have gathered it from other

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

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, and Fithil * came from Erin of the ſtreams. He told of the lifting up of the ſhield † on Morven, and

other poems. 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. Con-mor, 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 Conmor. 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 Con-mor. 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 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 failed for Ireland, and arrived in Ulſter a few days before the death of Cairbar.

* 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. The traditions, which are handed down with the poem, ſay, that 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, by Oſſian, in one of his leſſer poems. A bard, at midnight, went to the hall, where the tribes feaſted upon

and the danger of red-haired Cairbar. Cathmor raiſed the ſail at Cluba: but the winds were in other lands. Three days he remained on the coaſt, and turned his eyes on 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-maila: 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; or, fair on a rock, ſtretched her white hand to the wind; to feel its courſe from Inis-fail, the green dwelling of her love. He had promiſed to return, with his white-boſomed ſails.——The maid is near thee, king of Atha, leaning on her rock.

THE tall forms of the chiefs ſtood around; all but dark-browed Foldath *. He ſtood beneath a diſtant tree, rolled into his haughty

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 convene the tribes; or, as Oſſian expreſſes it, *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.

* The ſurly attitude of Foldath is a proper preamble to his after-behaviour. Chaffed with the diſappointment of the victory which he promiſed himſelf, he becomes paſſionate and over-bearing. The quarrel which ſucceeds between him and Malthos was, no doubt, introduced by the poet, to raiſe the character of Cathmor, whoſe ſuperior worth ſhines forth, in his manly manner of ending the difference between the chiefs.

ſoul.

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; when he touched the harp, in the hall, near his roaring ſtreams.

KING of Erin, ſaid the youth, now is the time of feaſts. Bid the voice of bards ariſe, and roll the night away. The ſoul returns, from ſong, more terrible to war.—Darkneſs ſettles on Inis-fail: from hill to hill bend the ſkirted clouds. Far and grey, on the heath, the dreadful ſtrides of ghoſts are ſeen: the ghoſts of thoſe who fell bend forward to their ſong.——Bid thou the harps to riſe, and brighten the dead, on their wandering blaſts.

BE all the dead forgot, ſaid Foldath's burſting wrath. Did not I fail in the field, and ſhall I hear the ſong? Yet was not my courſe harmleſs in battle: blood was a ſtream around my ſteps. But the feeble were behind me, and the foe has eſcaped my ſword.—In Clon-ra's vale touch thou the harp; let Dura anſwer to thy voice; while ſome maid looks, from the wood, on thy long, yellow locks.—— Fly from Lubar's echoing plain: it is the field of heroes.

KING of Temora †, 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

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

† This ſpeech of Malthos is, throughout, a ſevere reprimand to the bluſtering be-

thou haſt paſt over hoſts, and laid them low in blood; but who has heard thy words returning from the field?——The wrathful delight in death: their remembrance reſts on the wounds of their ſpear. Strife is folded in their thoughts: their words are ever heard.——Thy courſe, chief of Moma, was like a troubled ſtream. The dead were rolled on thy path: but others alſo lift the ſpear. We were not feeble behind thee; but the foe was ſtrong.

THE king 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 thro' 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 towards its reedy pool.

behaviour of Foldath. It abounds with that laconic eloquence, and indirect manner of addreſs, which is ſo juſtly admired in the ſhort ſpeech of Ajax, in the ninth book of the Iliad.

* The poet could ſcarcely find, in all nature, a compariſon ſo favourable as this, 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."

SILENT ſat the chiefs at the feaſt. They looked, at times, on Atha's king, where he ſtrode, on his rock, amidſt his ſettling ſoul.—The hoſt lay, at length, on the field; ſleep deſcended on Moi-lena. —The voice of Fonar roſe alone, beneath his diſtant tree. It roſe 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.

CAIRBAR came to his dreams, half-ſeen from his low-hung cloud. Joy roſe darkly in his face: he had heard the ſong of Carril †.——A blaſt ſuſtained his dark-ſkirted cloud; which he ſeized in

Mgr. M. * Lear-thon, *ſea-wave*, the name of the chief of that colony of the Fir-bolg, 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 Fir-bolg.——The poet preſerves the character of Cathmor throughout. 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*. Tho' 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 the bards. The good effects which an high opinion of its ruler has upon a community, are too obvious to require explanation; on the other hand, diſtruſt of the abilities of leaders produce the worſt conſequences.

† Carril, the ſon Kinſena, by the orders of Oſſian, ſung the funeral elegy at the tomb of Cairbar. See the ſecond book, towards the end. In all the poems of Oſſian, the viſit of ghoſts, to their living friends, are ſhort, and their language 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 fortels the death of Cathmor, by enumerating thoſe

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 Moilena. 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 winds thro' the deſart, 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 his blaſt. The old oak felt his departure, and ſhook its whiſtling head. The king ſtarted from reſt, and took his deathful ſpear. He lifts his eyes around. He ſees but dark-ſkirted night.

* IT was the voice of the king; but now his form is gone. Unmarked is your path in the air, ye children of the night. Often,

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.

* The ſoliloquy of Cathmor abounds with that magnanimity and love of fame which conſtitute the hero. Tho' 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.

like a reflected beam, are ye seen in the desart 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 wings, to seize my beam of fame.——In the lonely vale of streams, abides the little * 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 rolled on the vapour of the fenny field. Its course is never on hills, or 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.

* From this passage we learn in what extreme contempt an indolent and unwarlike life was held in those days of heroism. 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 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.

My

My iſſuing forth was with kings, and my joy in dreadful plains; where broken hoſts are rolled away, like ſeas before the wind.

So ſpoke the king of Alnecma, brightening in his riſing ſoul: valour, like a pleaſant flame, is gleaming within his breaſt. Stately is his ſtride on the heath: the beam of eaſt is poured around. He ſaw his grey hoſt on the field, wide-ſpreading their ridges in light. He rejoiced, like a ſpirit of heaven, whoſe ſteps come forth on his 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 coaſt.

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 was on the field: grey ſtreams leapt down from the rocks, and the breezes, in ſhadowy waves, fly over the ruſhy fields. There is the ſound that prepares for the chace; and the moving of warriors from the hall.——But tall above the reſt is 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 Atha's warrior 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 ſigh aroſe: his tears came down. But ſtraight he

* The diſcovery which ſucceeds this circumſtance is well imagined, and naturally conducted. The ſilence of Cathmor upon this occaſion is more expreſſive of the emotions of his ſoul, than any ſpeech which the poet could put into his mouth.

turned

turned away.—This is no time, king of Atha, to wake 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-wings.—Sul-malla ſtarted from ſleep, in her diſordered locks. She ſeized the helmet from earth, and trembled in her place. Why ſhould they know in Erin of the daughter of Inis-huna? for ſhe remembered the race of kings, and 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 rolled away 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, but no beam appears to light my path. I behold my warrior low; for the broad-

* In order to underſtand this paſſage, it is neceſſary to look to the deſcription of Cathmor's ſhield, which the poet has given us 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.

‡ Of all paſſages in the works of Oſſian theſe lyric pieces loſe moſt, by a literal proſe tranſlation, as the beauty of them does not ſo much depend, on the ſtrength of thought, as on the elegance of expreſſion and harmony of numbers. It has been obſerved, that an author is put to the ſevereſt teſt, when he is ſtript of the ornaments of verſification, and delivered down in another language in proſe. Thoſe, therefore, who have ſeen how awkward a figure even Homer and Virgil make, in a verſion of this ſort, will think the better of the compoſitions of Oſſian.

ſhielded king is near; he that overcomes in danger; Fingal of the ſpears.—Spirit of departed Conmor, are thy ſteps on the boſom of winds? Comeſt thou, at times, to other lands, father of ſad Sulmalla? Thou doſt come, for I have heard thy voice at night; while yet I roſe on the wave to ſtreamy Inis-fail. The ghoſt of fathers, they ſay *, can ſeize the ſouls of their race, while they behold them lonely in the midſt of woe. Call me, my father, when the king is low on earth; for then I ſhall be lonely in the midſt of woe.

* Con-mor, 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 gave more univerſal credit to apparitions, and the viſits of the ghoſts of the deceaſed to their friends, than the common highlanders. 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 deſarts, 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 waterfalls. 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 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 highlanders are more credulous than their neighbours.

TEMORA:

AN

EPIC POEM.

BOOK FIFTH.

ARGUMENT.

OSSIAN, 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 towards 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.

TEMORA:

AN

EPIC POEM.

BOOK FIFTH.

*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

* Theſe abrupt addreſſes give great life to the poetry of Oſſian. They are all in a lyric meaſure. The old men, who retain, on memory, the compoſitions of Oſſian, ſhew much ſatisfaction when they come to thoſe parts of them, which are in rhime, and take great pains to explain their beauties, and inculcate the meaning of their obſolete phraſes, on the minds of their hearers. This attachment does not proceed from the ſuperior beauty of theſe lyric pieces, but rather from a taſte for rhime which the modern bards have eſtabliſhed among the highlanders. Having no genius themſelves for the ſublime and pathetic, they placed the whole beauty of poetry in the returning harmony of ſimilar ſounds. The ſeducing charms of rhime ſoon weaned their countrymen from that attachment they long had to the recitative of Oſſian: and, tho' they ſtill admired his compoſitions, their admiration was founded more on his antiquity, and the detail of facts which he gave, than on his poetical excellence. Rhiming, in proceſs of time, became ſo much reduced into a ſyſtem, and was ſo univerſally underſtood, that every cow-herd compoſed tolerable

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 Cona, my ſoul returns, like a breeze, which the ſun brings back to the vale, where dwelt the lazy miſt.

† LUBAR is bright before me, in the windings of its vale. On either ſide, on their hills, riſe the tall forms of the kings; their people are poured around them, bending forward to their words; as if their fathers ſpoke, deſcending from their winds.—But the

verſes. Theſe poems, it is true, were a deſcription of nature; but of nature in its rudeſt form; a group of unintereſting ideas dreſſed out in the flowing harmony of monotonous verſes. Void of merit as thoſe vulgar compoſitions were, they fell little ſhort of the productions of the regular bards; for when all poetical excellence is confined to ſounds alone, it is within the power of every one poſſeſſed of a good ear.

* 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; tho' 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 Lona; 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. At ſome diſtance, but within ſight of Mora, towards the weſt, Lubar iſſued from the mountain of Crommal, and, after a ſhort courſe thro' 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 Conar, lived concealed in a cave, during the uſurpation of Cairbar, the ſon of Borbar-duthul.

kings

kings were like two rocks in the midſt, each with its dark head of pines, when they are ſeen in the deſart, above low-ſailing miſt. High on their face are ſtreams, which ſpread their foam on blaſts.

BENEATH the voice of Cathmor poured Erin, like the ſound of flame. Wide they came down to Lubar; before them is the ſtride of Foldath. But Cathmor retired to his hill, beneath his bending oaks. The tumbling of a ſtream is near the king: he liſts, at times, his gleaming ſpear. It was a flame to his people, in the midſt of war. Near him ſtood the daughter of Con-mor, leaning on her rock. She did not rejoice over the ſtrife: her ſoul delighted not in blood. A valley * ſpreads green behind the hill, with its three blue ſtreams. The ſun is there in ſilence; and the dun mountain-roes come down. On theſe are turned the eyes of Inis-huna's white-boſomed maid.

FINGAL beheld, on high, the ſon of Borbar-duthul: he ſaw the deep-rolling of Erin, on the darkened plain. He ſtruck that warning boſs, which bids the people obey; when he ſends his chiefs before them, to the field of renown. Wide roſe their ſpears to the ſun; their echoing ſhields reply around.—Fear, like a vapor, did not wind among the hoſt: for he, the king, was near, the ſtrength of ſtreamy Morven.—Gladneſs brightened the hero, we heard his words of joy.

LIKE the coming forth of winds, is the ſound of Morven's ſons! They are mountain waters, determined in their courſe. Hence is Fingal renowned, and his name in other lands. He was not a

* It was to this valley Sul-malla retired, during the laſt and deciſive battle between Fingal and Cathmor. It is deſcribed in the ſeventh book, where it is called the vale of Lona, and the reſidence of a Druid.

lonely beam in danger; for your ſteps were always near.—But never was I a dreadful form, in your preſence, darkened into wrath. My voice was no thunder to your ears: mine eyes ſent forth no death. —When the haughty appeared, I beheld them not. They were forgot at my feaſts: like miſt they melted away.——A young beam is before you: few are his paths to war. They are few, but he is valiant; defend my dark-haired ſon. Bring him 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 ſon of Clatho: 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. As, ſlow, I liſted my ſteps behind; 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 ſhall fall, let my tomb be hid in the field; for fall I muſt without my fame: mine arm cannot liſt 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?

* The rock of Cormul roſe on the hill of Mora, and commanded a proſpect of the field of battle. The ſpeech of Fingal, which immediately precedes this paſſage, is worthy of being remarked, as the language, not only, of a warlike but a good king. The mutual confidence which ſubſiſted between him and his people, the reſult of his clemency and their dutiful behaviour towards him, is worthy of being imitated in a more poliſhed age than that in which he lived.

† 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

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 forſake their ſouls of fire. 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, amidſt the mountain-wind.

In two dark ridges bend the hoſts, towards each other, at Lubar. Here Foldath roſe a pillar of darkneſs: there brightened the youth of Fillan. Each, with his ſpear in the ſtream, ſent forth the voice of war.—Gaul ſtruck the ſhield of Morven; at once they plunge in battle.—Steel poured 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, ſilent, ſhades his friends. Fingal ſaw the approaching fight; and all his ſoul aroſe.—But as the ſtone of Loda † falls, ſhook,

* Roth-mar, *the ſound of the ſea before a ſtorm.* Druman-ard, *high ridge.* Culmin, *ſoft-haired.* Cull-allin, *beautiful locks.* Struthа, *ſtreamy river.*

† By the ſtone of Loda, as I have remarked in my notes on ſome other poems of Oſſian, is meant a place of worſhip among the Scandinavians. Oſſian, in his many expeditions to Orkney and Scandinavia, became acquainted with ſome of the rites of the religion which prevailed in thoſe countries, and frequently alludes to them in his poems. There are ſome ruins, and circular pales of ſtone, remaining ſtill in

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, doſt thou ruſh on that beam * of light: it is a fire that conſumes.—Youth of Strutha 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:

in Orkney, and the iſlands of Shetland, which retain, to this day, the name of *Leda* or *Leden*. 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. Haquin, of Norway, built one, near Drontheim, little inferior to the former; and it went always under the name of Loden. *Mallet, introduction a l'hiſtoire de Dannemarc.*

* The poet, metaphorically, calls Fillan a beam of light. Culmin, mentioned here, was the ſon of Clonmar, chief of Strutha, 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 antient poetry. *Mar Chul-aluin Strutha nan ſian*; is a line of Oſſian in another poem; *i. e. 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 un-

place: his ſhield is bloody in the hall.—" Art thou fallen, my fair-haired ſon, in Erin's diſmal war?"

As a roe, pierced in ſecret, lies panting, by her wonted ſtreams, the hunter looks over her feet of wind, and 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 wandered on his ſhield. Still his hand held the ſword, that failed him in the midſt of danger.—Thou art fallen, ſaid Fillan, ere yet thy fame was heard.—Thy father ſent thee to war: he expects to hear thy deeds. He is grey, perhaps, at his ſtreams, and his eyes are towards Moi-lena. But thou ſhalt not return, with the ſpoil of the fallen foe.

FILLAN poured the flight of Erin before him, over the echoing 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 * ſtood before him in wrath: the ſons of Cona gather round. But his ſhield is cleft by Foldath, and his people poured over the heath.

THEN ſaid the foe, in his pride, They have fled, and my fame begins. Go, Malthos, and bid the king † to guard the dark-rolling of

underſtand that her ſon is killed; in which ſhe is confirmed by the appearance of his ghoſt.—Her ſudden and ſhort exclamation, on the occaſion, is more affecting than if ſhe had extended her complaints to a greater length. The attitude of the fallen youth, and Fillan's reflexions over him, are natural and judicious, and 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.

* This Dermid is, probably, the ſame with *Dermid O duine*, who makes ſo great a figure in the fictions of the Iriſh bards.

† Cathmor.

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, and looked up to the king on his hill; then, darkly turning, he plunged his ſword in war.

IN Clono's * narrow vale, where bent two trees above the ſtream, dark in his grief ſtood Duthno's ſilent ſon. The blood poured

* 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, thro' 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*, (to uſe the words of the poet) *Lethmal deſcended in the dreams of Clono; and told him that danger was near.* For the reader's amuſement I ſhall tranſlate the viſion, which does not want poetical merit.

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 hear thee;

poured from his thigh: his ſhield lay broken near. His ſpear leaned 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 low! I will call thee forth, O Foldath, and meet thee yet in fight.

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

HE

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.

* The brevity of the ſpeech of Gaul, and the laconic reply of Dermid, are judicious and well ſuited to the hurry of the occaſion. The incidents which Oſſian has choſen to diverſify his battles, are intereſting, and never fail to awaken our attention. I know that want of particularity in the wounds, and diverſity in the fall of thoſe that are ſlain, have been among the objections, ſtarted, to the poetical merit of Oſſian's poems. The criticiſm, without partiality I may ſay it, is unjuſt, for our poet has introduced as great a variety of this ſort, as he, with propriety, could within the compaſs of ſo ſhort poems. It is confeſſed, that Homer has a greater variety of deaths than any other

He ſlowly roſe againſt the hill, and ſaw the troubled field. The gleaming ridges of the fight, disjoined and broken round.—As diſtant fires, on heath by night, now ſeem as loſt in ſmoak, then rearing their red ſtreams on the hill, as blow or ceaſe the winds: ſo met the intermitting war the eye of broad-ſhielded Dermid.—Thro' the hoſt are the ſtrides of Foldath, like ſome dark ſhip on wintry waves, when it iſſues from between two iſles, to ſport on echoing ſeas.

Dermid, with rage, beheld his courſe. He ſtrove to ruſh along. But he failed in the midſt of his ſteps; and the big tear came down.—He ſounded his father's horn; and thrice ſtruck his boſſy ſhield. He called thrice the name of Foldath, from his roaring tribes.—Foldath, with joy, beheld the chief: he lifted high 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 form of Moma.

The hoſt, on either ſide, withdrew from the contending of kings.—They raiſed, at once, their gleaming points.—Ruſhing came Fillan of Moruth *. Three paces back Foldath withdrew;

poet that ever appeared. His great knowledge in anatomy can never be diſputed; but, I am far from thinking, that his battles, even with all their novelty of wounds, are the moſt beautiful parts of his poems. The human mind dwells with diſguſt upon a protracted ſcene of carnage; and, tho' the introduction of the terrible is neceſſary to the grandeur of heroic poetry, yet I am convinced, that a medium ought to be obſerved.

* The rapidity of this verſe, which indeed is but faintly imitated in the tranſlation, is amazingly expreſſive in the original. One hears the very rattling of the armour of Fillan. The intervention of Fillan is neceſſary here; for, as Dermid was wounded before, it is not to be ſuppoſed, he could be a match for Foldath. Fillan is often, poetically, called the *ſon of Moruth*, from a ſtream of that name in Morven, near which he was born.

daz-

dazzled with that beam of light, which came, as iſſuing from a cloud, to ſave the wounded hero.—Growing in his pride he ſtood, and called forth all his ſteel.

As meet two broad-winged eagles, in their ſounding ſtriſe, on the winds: ſo ruſhed the two chiefs, on Moi-lena, into gloomy fight.——By turns are the ſteps of the kings * forward on their rocks; for now the duſky war ſeemed to deſcend on their ſwords. —Cathmor feels the joy of warriors, on his moſſy hill: their joy in ſecret when dangers riſe equal to their ſouls. His eye is not turned on Lubar, but on Morven's dreadful king; for he beheld him, on Mora, riſing in his arms.

FOLDATH † fell on his ſhield; the ſpear of Fillan pierced the king. Nor looked the youth on the fallen, but onward rolled the war.

* 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. I ſhall, here, tranſlate the anſwer of *the ghoſts of his anceſtors*, as it is handed down by tradition. Whether the legend is really ancient, or the invention of a late age, I ſhall not pretend to determine, tho', from the phraſeology, I ſhould ſuſpect the laſt.

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*,

war. The hundred voices of death aroſe.—" Stay, ſon of Fingal, ſtay thy ſpeed. Beholdeſt thou not that gleaming form, a dreadful ſign of death? Awaken not the king of Alnecma. Return, ſon of blue-eyed Clatho."

Malthos * ſaw Foldath low. He darkly ſtood above the king. Hatred was rolled from his ſoul. He ſeemed a rock in the deſart, on whoſe dark ſide are the trickling of waters, when the ſlow-failing miſt has left it, and 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 the ſun looks, in ſecret, on the blue ſtreams of Dalrutho ‡? There are the ſteps of thy daughter, blue-eyed Dardu-lena.

Re-

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 latent ſignification of the word *Clon-cath*, that the deception lay. My principal reaſon for introducing this note, is, that if this tradition is equally ancient with the poem, which, by the bye, is doubtful, it ſerves to ſhew, that the religion of the Fir-b lg 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 well ſuſtained. They were both dark and furly, 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-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,

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 vales of Moma, and came to Dardu-lena'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, from the ſkirts of the wood, her wounded father came. He appeared, at times, then ſeemed as hid 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, blue-eyed Dardu-lena!

WIDE-SPREADING over echoing Lubar, the flight of Bolga is rolled along. Fillan hung forward on their ſteps; and ſtrewed, with dead, the heath. Fingal rejoiced over his ſon.—Blue-ſhielded Cathmor roſe.—— * Son of Alpin, bring the harp: give Fillan's praiſe to

led, 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.

* Theſe ſudden tranſitions from the ſubject are not uncommon in the compoſitions of Oſſian. That in this place has a peculiar beauty and propriety. The ſuſpence, in which the mind of the reader is left, conveys the idea of Fillan's danger more forcibly home, than any deſcription the poet could introduce. There is a ſort of elo-

to the wind: raiſe high his praiſe, in my hall, while yet he ſhines in war.

LEAVE, blue-eyed Clatho, leave thy hall. Behold that early beam of thine. The hoſt is withered in its courſe. No further look—it is dark.——Light-trembling from the harp, ſtrike, virgins, ſtrike the ſound.—No hunter he deſcends, from the dewy haunt of the bounding roe. He bends not his bow on the wind; or ſends his grey arrow abroad.

DEEP-FOLDED in red war, the battle rolls againſt his ſide. Or, ſtriding midſt the ridgy ſtrife, he pours the deaths of thouſands forth. Fillan is like a ſpirit of heaven, that deſcends from the ſkirt of his blaſt. 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.

quence, 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 addreſs to Clatho, the mother of Fillan, which concludes this book, if we regard the verſification of the original, is one of the moſt beautiful paſſages in the poem. The wild ſimplicity and harmony of its cadences are inimitably beautiful. It is ſung ſtill by many in the north, and is diſtinguiſhed by the name of *Laoi chaon Chlatho*: i. e. *The harmonious hymn of Clatho.* The book ends in the afternoon of the third day, from the opening of the poem.

TEMORA:

TEMORA:

AN

EPIC POEM.

BOOK SIXTH.

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 reflexions 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.

TEMORA:

AN

EPIC POEM.

BOOK SIXTH.

*CATHMOR riſes on his echoing 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, daughter of Iniſtore. I ſhall not quench thy early beam; it ſhines along

* I have, in a preceding note, obſerved that the abrupt manner of Oſſian partakes much of the nature of the Drama. The opening of this book is a confirmation of the juſtneſs of this obſervation. Inſtead of a long detail of circumſtances delivered by the poet himſelf, about the deſcent of Cathmor from the hill, whereon he ſat to behold the battle, he puts the narration in the mouth of Fingal. The relation acquires importance from the character of the ſpeaker. The concern which Fingal ſhews, when he beholds the *riſing of Cathmor*, raiſes our ideas of the valour of that hero to the higheſt pitch. The apoſtrophes's which are crowded on one another, are expreſſive of the perturbation of Fingal's ſoul, and of his fear for his ſon, who was not a match for the king of Ireland. The conduct of the poet in removing Fingal from the ſight of the engagement, is very judicious; for the king might

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 bright tumbling of waters. Father of Oſcar lift the ſpear; defend the young in arms. Conceal thy ſteps from Fillan's eyes.—He muſt not know that I doubt his ſteel.—No cloud of mine ſhall riſe, my ſon, upon thy ſoul of fire!

He ſunk behind his rock, amidſt 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 ſmoak, from the fields.

might be induced, from ſeeing the inequality of the combat between Fillan and Cathmor, to come to battle himſelf, and ſo bring about the cataſtrophe of the poem prematurely. The removal of Fingal affords room to the poet for introducing thoſe affecting ſcenes which immediately ſucceed, and are among the chief beauties of the poem.—They who can deny art to Oſſian, in conducting the cataſtrophe of Temora, are certainly more prejudiced againſt the age he lived in, than is conſiſtent with good ſenſe. I cannot finiſh this note, without obſerving the delicacy and propriety of Fingal's addreſs to Oſſian. By the appellation of the *father of Oſcar*, he raiſes, at once, in the mind of the hero, all that tenderneſs for the ſafety of Fillan, which a ſituation ſo ſimilar to that of his own ſon, when he fell, was capable to ſuggeſt.

* 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. After the death of Oſcar we find it always in the hands of Oſſian. It is ſaid, in another poem, that it was preſerved, as a relique, at Temora, from the days of Conar, the ſon of Trenmor, the firſt king of Ireland.

Now

* Now is the coming forth of Cathmor, in the armour of kings! Dark-rolled the eagle's wing, above his helmet of fire. Unconcerned are his ſteps, as if they were to the chace of Atha. He raiſed, at times, his terrible voice; Erin, abaſhed, gathered round. —Their ſouls returned back, like a ſtream: they wondered at the ſteps of their fear: for 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 took the ſpear from her hand; half-bent ſhe looſed the lance: but then are her eyes on the king, from amidſt her wandering locks.—No friendly ſtrife is before thee; no light contending of bows, as when the youth of Cluba † came forth beneath the eye of Conmor.

* The appearance of Cathmor is magnificent: his unconcerned gait, and the effect which his very voice has upon his flying army, are circumſtances calculated to raiſe our ideas of his ſuperior merit and valour. Oſſian is very impartial, with regard to his enemies: this, however, cannot be ſaid of other poets of great eminence and unqueſtioned merit. Milton, of the firſt claſs of poets, is undoubtedly the moſt irreprehenſible in this reſpect; for we always pity or admire his Devil, but ſeldom deteſt him, even tho' he is the arch enemy of our ſpecies. Mankind generally take ſides with the unfortunate and daring. It is from this diſpoſition that many readers, tho' otherwiſe good chriſtians, have almoſt wiſhed ſucceſs to Satan, in his deſperate and daring voyage from hell, through the regions of chaos and night.

† 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 we learn from her ſoliloquy, at the cloſe of the fourth book, was dead before the departure of his daughter.

As the rock of Runo, which takes the paſſing clouds for its robe, ſeems growing, in gathered darkneſs, over the ſtreamy heath; ſo ſeemed the chief of Atha taller, as gathered his people round. —As different blaſts fly over the ſea, each behind its dark-blue wave, ſo Cathmor's words, on every ſide, poured his warriors forth. —Nor ſilent on his hill is Fillan; he mixed 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 bent forward in battle: death's hundred voices roſe; for the kings, on either ſide, were like fires on the ſouls of the people.—I bounded along; high rocks and trees ruſhed tall between the war and me.—But I heard the noiſe of ſteel, between my clanging arms. Riſing, gleaming, on the hill, I beheld 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, thro' gleams of ſteel, are ſeen the ſtriving heroes.—I ruſhed.—My fears for Fillan flew, burning acroſs my ſoul.

I CAME; nor Cathmor fled; nor yet advanced: he ſidelong ſtalked along. An icy rock, cold, tall he ſeemed. I called forth all my ſteel.—Silent awhile we ſtrode, on either ſide of a ruſhing ſtream: then, ſudden turning, all at once, we raiſed our pointed ſpears.—We raiſed our ſpears, but night came down. It is dark

* Lutha was the name of a valley in Morven, in the days of Oſſian. 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*.

and

and ſilent round; but where the diſtant ſteps of hoſts are ſounding over the heath.

I CAME to the place where Fillan * fought. Nor voice, nor ſound is there. A broken helmet lay on earth; a buckler cleft in twain. Where, Fillan, where art thou, young chief of echoing Morven? He heard me leaning againſt a rock, which bent its grey head over the ſtream. He heard; but ſullen, dark he ſtood. 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 voice of Carril's harp. Carry joy to the aged, young breaker of the ſhields.

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

SON of blue-eyed Clatho, why doſt thou awake my ſoul? Wert thou not a burning fire before him; and ſhall he not rejoice?——

* The ſcenery of the place where Fillan fought, and the ſituation of that hero, are picturesque and affecting. The diſtreſs, which ſucceeds, is heightened by Oſſian's being ignorant, for ſome time, that his brother was wounded. This kind of ſuſpence is frequent in Oſſian's poems. The more unexpected a thing is, the greater impreſſion it makes on the mind when it comes.

Such

Such fame belonged not to Oſſian; yet was the king ſtill a ſun to me. He looked on my ſteps, with joy: ſhadows never roſe 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 early-fallen Fillan *?

Is

* In this, as well as the former publication, I have only admitted into the text compleat poems, or independent epiſodes: the fragments which remain of the compoſitions of Oſſian, I have choſen to throw, occaſionally, into the notes. I ſhall here give a tranſlation of a part of a poem concerning the death of Fillan. It is a dialogue between Clatho the mother, and Bos-mina the ſiſter, of that hero.

Clatho.

"Daughter of Fingal, ariſe: thou light between thy locks. Liſt thy fair head from reſt, ſoft-gliding ſun-beam 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 deſart of ſtreams. Haſt thou ſeen thy fathers, Bos-mina, 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 Bos-mina, 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. Liſt 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 thro'

Is thy ſpirit on the eddying winds, blue-eyed king of ſhields? Joy purſue my hero, thro' 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 miſty wreaths. —Joy meet thee my brother.——But we are dark and ſad. I behold the foe round the aged, and the waſting away of his fame. Thou art left alone in the field, 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 liſtened: no ſound is heard: for the warrior ſlept.——As lightning on a cloud, a thought came ruſhing over my ſoul.—My eyes rolled in fire: my ſtride was in the clang of ſteel.

I WILL find thee, chief of Atha, in the gathering of thy thouſands. Why ſhould that cloud eſcape, that quenched our early beam? Kindle your meteors on your hills, my fathers, to light

thro' 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 moſs!—But ſhall a young eagle return from the field where the heroes fall!

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 he not return? * * * * *

my daring ſteps. I will conſume in wrath *——Should I not return! the king is without a ſon, grey-haired amidſt his foes. His arm is not as in the days of old: his fame grows dim in Erin. Let me not behold him from high, 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."—I will meet the foe.—Green Inisfail, 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 deſart, and ſpoiled of half his wings.

† DISTANT, round the king, on Mora, the broken ridges of Morven are rolled. They turned their eyes: each darkly bends, on

* Here the ſentence is deſignedly left unfiniſhed by the poet. The ſenſe is, that he was reſolved, like a deſtroying fire, to conſume 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 accompliſh, they naturally blame themſelves, as the chief cauſe of their diſappointment. The compariſon, with which the poet concludes his ſoliloquy, is very fanciful; and well adapted to the ideas of thoſe, who live in a country, where lightning is extremely common.

† This ſcene is ſolemn. The poet always places his chief character amidſt objects which favour the ſublime. The face

of

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

Where

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.

* The abaſhed behaviour of the army of Fingal proceeds 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 independence. It is an advanced ſtate of civilization that moulds the mind to that ſubmiſſion to govern[illegible] 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

WHERE is the ſon of Selma, he who led in war? I behold not his ſteps, among my people, returning from the field. Fell the young bounding roe, who was ſo ſtately on my hills?—He fell;—for ye are ſilent. The ſhield of war is broke.——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 flamed to the wind. The grey ſkirts of miſt are rolled around; thither ſtrode the king in his wrath.

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 according 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 latter period ——In an old poem, which begins with *Maz-Arcath na ceud frôl*, this cuſtom of retiring from the army, before an engagement, is numbered, among the wiſe inſtitutions of Fergus, the ſon of Arc or Arcath, 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;*

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 Fingal's wrath 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 cloaths, 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 glittered, beneath the moon, and, low-humming, ſtill rolled on the field.—Alone are the ſteps of Cathmor, before them on the heath; he hung forward, with all his arms, on Morven's flying hoſt. Now had he come to the moſſy cave, where Fillan lay in night. One tree was bent above the ſtream, which glittered over the rock.——There ſhone to the moon the broken ſhield of Clatho's ſon; and near it, on graſs, lay hairy-footed Bran *. He had miſſed the chief on

ſtranger; with morn he ſhall ruſh abroad. When, or by whom, this poem was writ, is uncertain. It has much of the ſpirit of the ancient compoſition of the Scottiſh bards; and ſeems to be a cloſe imitation of the manner of Oſſian.

* This circumſtance, concerning Bran, the favourite dog of Fingal, is, perhaps, one of the moſt affecting paſſages in the poem. I remember to have met with an old poem, compoſed long after the time of Oſſian, 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

on Mora, and ſearched him along the wind. He thought that the blue-eyed hunter ſlept; he lay upon his ſhield. No blaſt came over the heath, unknown to bounding Bran.

CATHMOR ſaw the white-breaſted dog; he ſaw the broken ſhield. Darkneſs is blown back on his ſoul; he remembers the falling away of the people. They come, a ſtream; are rolled away; another race ſucceeds.—"But ſome mark the fields, as they paſs, with their own mighty names. The heath, thro' 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

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 poem is not juſt now in my hands; otherwiſe its poetical merit might induce me to preſent the reader with a tranſlation of it. The ſtanza concerning the dog, whoſe name was Du-chos, or *Black-foot*, is very deſcriptive.

"Dark-ſided Du-chos! 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 Du-chos thinks, that Ullin's voice is there. But ſtill he beholds him ſilent, laid amidſt the waving heath. Dark-ſided Du-chos, his voice no more ſhall ſend thee over the heath!"

* 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, thro' which ran the river Lubar.

again in their hoſt. Cathmor was that beam from heaven which ſhone when his people were dark. He was honoured in the midſt. Their ſouls roſe trembling 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 heared that Calmar fell: Calmar, who aided the race of Ullin, from Lara of the ſtreams.—Often did he feel, with his hands, the ſteel which, they ſaid, had pierced his foe. He felt it

bar. 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.*

* Borbar-duthul, the father of Cathmor, was the brother of that Colc-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.

with

with his hands, for Borbar-duthul's eyes had failed.—Yet was the king a ſun to his friends; a gale to lift their branches round. Joy was around him in his halls: he loved the ſons of Bolga. His name remains in Atha, like the awful memory of ghoſts, whoſe preſence was terrible, but they blew the ſtorm away.—Now let the voices * of Erin raiſe the ſoul of the king; he that ſhone when war was dark, and laid the mighty low.—Fonar, from that grey-browed rock, pour the tale of other times: pour it on wide-ſkirted Erin, as it ſettles round.

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

LIKE waves, blown back by ſudden winds, Erin retired, at the voice of the king. Deep-rolled into the field of night, they ſpread their humming tribes. Beneath his own tree, at intervals, each † bard ſat down with his harp. They raiſed the ſong, and touched the

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

† Not only the kings, but every petty chief, had their bards attending them, in the field, in the days of Oſſian; and theſe 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

the ſtring: each to the chief he loved.—Before a burning oak Sul-malla touched, at times, the harp. She touched the harp, and heard, between, the breezes in her hair.—In darkneſs near, lay the king of Atha, beneath an aged tree. The beam of the oak was turned from him; he ſaw the maid, but was not ſeen. His ſoul poured forth, in ſecret, when he beheld her fearful eye.—But battle is before thee, ſon of Borbar-duthul.

AMIDST the harp, at intervals, ſhe liſtened whether the warrior ſlept. Her ſoul was up; ſhe longed, in ſecret, to pour her own ſad ſong. The field is ſilent. On their wings, the blaſts of night retire. The bards had ceaſed; and meteors came, red-winding with their ghoſts.—The ſky grew dark: the forms of the dead were blended with the clouds. But heedleſs bends the daughter of Conmor, over the decaying flame. Thou wert alone in her ſoul, car-borne chief of Atha. She raiſed the voice of the ſong, and touched the harp between.

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 *Cliêre*, which is, probably, derived from the latin Clericus. The *Cliêre*, 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 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 came; ſhe miſſed the maid.—Where art thou, beam of light? Hunters, from the moſſy rock, ſaw you the blue-eyed fair?—Are her ſteps on graſſy Lumon; near the bed of roes? —Ah me! I behold her bow in the hall. Where art thou, beam of light?

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

* Clun-galo, *white knee*, the wife of Connor, king of Inis-huna, and the mother of Sul-malla. She is here repreſented, as miſſing her daughter, after ſhe had fled with Cathmor. This ſong is very beautiful in the original. The expreſſive cadences of the meaſure are inimitably ſuited to the ſituation of the mind of Sul-malla.

† Sul-malla replies to the ſuppoſed queſtions of her mother. Towards the middle of this paragraph ſhe calls Cathmor *the ſun of her ſoul*, and continues the metaphor throughout. Thoſe, who deliver this ſong down by tradition, ſay that there is a part of the original loſt.—This book ends, we may ſuppoſe, about the middle of the third night, from the opening of the poem.

TEMORA:

AN

EPIC POEM.

BOOK SEVENTH.

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

TEMORA:

AN

EPIC POEM.

BOOK SEVENTH.

*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 thro' its folds. With this, clothe the ſpirits of old their ſudden geſtures

* No poet departs leſs from his ſubject than Oſſian. No far-fetched ornaments are introduced; the epiſodes riſe from, and are indeed eſſential to, the ſtory of the poem. Even his lyric ſongs, where he moſt indulges the extravagance of fancy, naturally ſpring from his ſubject. Their propriety and connection with the reſt of the poem, ſhew that the Celtic bard was guided by judgment, amidſt the wildeſt flights of imagination. It is a common ſuppoſition among mankind, that a genius for poetry and ſound ſenſe ſeldom centre in the ſame perſon. The obſervation is far from being juſt; for true genius and judgment muſt be inſeparable. The wild flights of fancy, without the guidance of judgment, are, as Horace obſerves, like the dreams of

tures on the wind, when they ſtride, from blaſt to blaſt, along the duſky night. Often, blended with the gale, to ſome warrior's grave,

of a ſick man, irkſome and confuſed. Fools can never write good poems. A warm imagination, it is true, domineers over a common portion of ſenſe; and hence it is that ſo few have ſucceeded in the poetical way. But when an uncommon ſtrength of judgment, and a glowing fancy, are properly tempered together, they, and they only, produce genuine poetry.

The preſent book is not the leaſt intereſting part of Temora. The awful images, with which it opens, are calculated to prepare the mind for the ſolemn ſcenes which are to follow. Oſſian, always, throws an air of conſequence on every circumſtance which relates to Fingal. The very ſound of his ſhield produces extraordinary effects; and theſe are heightened, one above another, in a beautiful climax. The diſtreſs of Sul-malla, and her conference with Cathmor, are very affecting. The deſcription of his ſhield is a curious piece of antiquity; and is a proof of the early knowledge of navigation among the inhabitants of Britain and Ireland. Oſſian, in ſhort, throughout this book, is often ſublime, and always pathetic.

As a ſpecimen of the harmony of Galic verſification without rhime, I ſhall lay a few lines, of the opening of this book, before thoſe who underſtand the original. The words are not, after the Iriſh manner, briſtled over with unneceſſary quieſcent conſonants, ſo diſagreeable to the eye, and which rather embaraſs than aſſiſt the reader.

O linna doir-choillé na Liego,
Air uair, eri' ceo-taobh-ghorm nan tón;
Nuair dhunus dorſa na h'oicha,
Air illuir-huil Greina na ſpeur.
Tomhail mo Lara na ſruth,
Thaomus du-nial, as doricha cruaim:
Mar ghlas-ſcia', roi taoma na nial,
Snamh hairis, 'ta Gellach na h'oicha.
Le ſo edibh taiſin o-ſhean
An dlu-ghléus a meaſc na gaoith;
'S iad leumnach, o óſſaic gu oſſaic,
Air du-aghai' oicha na ſian. &c.

Lego, ſo often mentioned by Oſſian, was a lake, in Connaught, in which the river Lara emptied itſelf. On the banks of this lake dwelt Branno, the father-in-law of Oſſian, whom the poet often viſited before and after the death of Evir-allin. This circumſtance, perhaps, occaſioned the partiality, with which he always mentions Lego and Lara; and accounts for his drawing ſo many of his images from them. The ſignification of Leigo, is, *the lake of diſeaſe*, probably ſo called, on account of the moraſſes which ſurrounded it.

As the miſt, which roſe from the lake of Lego, occaſioned diſeaſes and death, the bards feigned, as here, that it was the reſidence of the ghoſts of the deceaſed, during the interval between their death, and

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

A SOUND came from the deſart; it was Conar, king of Inisfail. He poured his miſt on the grave of Fillan, at blue-winding Lubar.—Dark and mournful ſat the ghoſt, in his grey ridge of ſmoak. 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 is * 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

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, according to Oſſian, performing this office for Fillan, as it was in the cauſe of the family of Conar, that that hero was killed. The deſcription of the appearance of the ghoſt is picturesque and ſolemn, impoſing a ſtill attention to the ſpeech that follows it, which, with great propriety, is ſhort and awful.

* It has been obſerved, that Oſſian takes great delight in deſcribing night-ſcenes. This, in ſome meaſure, is to be attributed to his melancholy diſpoſition, which delighted to dwell upon ſolemn objects. Even other poets, of a leſs ſerious turn than Oſſian, have beſt ſucceeded in deſcriptions of this ſort. Solemn ſcenes make the moſt laſting impreſſions on the imagination; gay and light objects only touch the ſurface of the ſoul, and vaniſh. The human mind is naturally ſerious: levity and chearfulneſs may be amiable, but they are too often the characteriſtics of weakneſs of judgment, and a deplorable ſhallowneſs of ſoul.—The night-deſcriptions of Oſſian were in high repute among ſucceeding bards. One of them delivered a ſentiment, in a diſtich, more favourable to his taſte for poetry, than to his galantry towards the ladies. I ſhall here give a tranſlation of it.

" More pleaſant to me is the night of Cona, dark-ſtreaming from Oſſian's harp; more pleaſant it is to me, than a white-boſomed

his ſhield. His eyes were half-cloſed in ſleep; the voice of Fillan came. "Sleeps the huſband of Clatho? Dwells the father of the fallen in reſt? Am I forgot in the folds of darkneſs; lonely in the ſeaſon of night?"

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

THE king took his deathful ſpear, and ſtruck the deeply-ſounding ſhield: his ſhield* that hung high in night, the diſmal ſign

boſomed dweller between my arms; than a fair-handed daughter of heroes, in the hour of reſt."

Tho' 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. He lived (in what age is uncertain) in one of the weſtern iſles, and his name was Turloch Ciabh-glas, or *Turloch of the grey-locks*.

* Succeeding bards have recorded many fables, concerning this wonderful ſhield. They ſay, that Fingal, in one of his expeditions into Scandinavia, met, in one of the iſlands of Juteland, with Luno, a celebrated magician. This Luno was the Vulcan of the north, and had made compleat ſuits of armour for many of the heroes of Scandinavia. One diſagreeable circumſtance was, that every perſon who wanted to employ Luno to make armour for him, was obliged to overcome him at his own magic art.—Fingal, unſkilled in ſpells or enchantments, effected with dint of proweſs, what others failed in, with all their ſupernatural art. When Luno demanded a trial of ſkill from Fingal, the king drew his ſword, cut off the ſkirts of the magician's robe, and obliged him, bare as he was, to fly before him. Fingal purſued, but Luno, coming to the ſea, by his magic art, walked upon the waves. Fingal purſued him in his ſhip, and, after a chace of ten days, came up with him, in the iſle of Sky, and obliged him to erect a furnace, and make him this ſhield, and his famous ſword, poetically called, *the ſon of Luno*. —Such are the ſtrange fictions which the modern Scotch and Iriſh bards have formed on the original of Oſſian.

of

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 people. The wide-tumbling ſtrife is gleaming over their ſouls. Blue-ſhielded kings deſcend to war. Backward-looking armies fly; and mighty deeds are half-hid, in the bright gleams of ſteel.

BUT when the third ſound aroſe: deer ſtarted from the clefts of their rocks. The ſcreams of fowl are heard, in the deſart, as each flew, frighted, on his blaſt.—The ſons of Morven 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, amidſt the night.

* It was the opinion of the 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 uſe Oſſian's expreſſion, 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 deaths*, 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.

† A bard, ſeveral ages more modern than Oſſian, was ſo ſenſible of the beauty of this paſſage, as to give a cloſe imitation of it, in a poem, concerning the great actions of Keneth Mac-Alpin, king of Scot-

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

land, againſt the Picts. As the poem is long, I ſhall only give here the ſtory of it, with a tranſlation of that paragraph, which bears the neareſt reſemblance to the paſſage of Temora juſt now before me. When Keneth was making preparations for that war, which terminated in the ſubverſion of the Pictiſh kingdom, Flathal, his ſiſter, had demanded permiſſion from him, of attending him in the expedition; in order to have a ſhare in revenging the death of her father Alpin, who had been barbarouſly murdered by the Picts. The king, tho' he, perhaps, approved of the gallant diſpoſition of his ſiſter, refuſed, on account of her ſex, to grant her requeſt. The heroine, however, dreſſed herſelf in the habit of a young warrior; and, in that diſguiſe, attended the army, and performed many gallant exploits. On the night preceding the final overthrow of the Picts, Keneth, as was the cuſtom among the kings of Scots, retired to a hill, without the verge of the camp, to meditate on the diſpoſitions he was to make in the approaching battle. Flathal, who was anxious about the ſafety of her brother, went, privately, to the top of an adjoining rock, and kept watch there to prevent his being ſurprized by the enemy.——Keneth fell aſleep, in his arms; and Flathal obſerved a body of the Picts ſurrounding the hill, whereon the king lay.—The ſequel of the ſtory may be gathered from the words of the bard.

" Her eyes, like ſtars, roll over the plain. She trembled for Alpin's race. She ſaw the gleaming foe. Her ſteps aroſe: ſhe ſtopt.—" Why ſhould he know of Flathal? he the king men!—But hark! the ſound is high.—It is but the wind of night, lone-whiſtling in my locks.—I hear the echoing ſhields!"—Her ſpear fell from her hand. The lofty rock reſounds.—He roſe, a gathered cloud.

" Who wakes Conad of Albion, in the midſt of his ſecret hill? I heard the ſoft voice of Flathal. Why, maid, doſt thou ſhine in war? The daughters roll their blue eyes, by the ſtreams. No field of blood is theirs.

" Alpin of Albion was mine, the father of Flathal of harps. He is low, mighty Conad, and my ſoul is fire. Could Flathal, by the ſecret ſtream, behold the blood of her foes? I am a young eagle, on Dura, king of Drum-albin of winds."—

In the ſequel of the piece, the bard does not imitate Oſſian, and his poem is ſo much the worſe for it.—Keneth, with his ſiſter's aſſiſtance, forced his way thro' the ad-

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 the dream of his reſt, daughter of Inis-huna."

MORE dreadful rung the ſhield. Sul-malla ſtarts. Her helmet falls. Loud-echoed Lubar's rock, as over it rolled the ſteel.—Burſting from the dreams of night, Cathmor half-roſe, beneath his tree. He ſaw the form of the maid, above him, on the rock. A red ſtar, with twinkling beam, looked thro' her floating hair.

* WHO comes thro' night to Cathmor, in the ſeaſon of his dreams? Bring'ſt thou ought of war? Who art thou, ſon of night? —Stand'ſt thou before me, a form of the times of old? A voice from the fold of a cloud, to warn me of Erin's danger?

NOR lonely ſcout am I, nor voice from folded cloud: 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.

advanced parties of the enemy, and rejoined his own army. The bard has given a catalogue of the Scotch tribes, as they marched to battle; but, as he did not live near the time of Keneth, his accounts are to be little depended on.

* The rapid manner of Oſſian does not often allow him to mark the ſpeeches with the names of the perſons who ſpeak them. To prevent the obſcurity, which this might occaſion, I have, ſometimes, uſed the freedom to do it in the tranſlation. In the preſent dialogue between Cathmor and Sul-malla, the ſpeeches are ſo much marked with the characters of the ſpeakers, that no interpolation is neceſſary to diſtinguiſh them from one another.

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

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

LIKE a dropping rock, in the deſart, 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, when 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.

* 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, *Fiön-ghal 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, perhaps, tho' that is not mentioned, a tranſlation from the Welſh language.

BE-

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

A LIGHT fell on the ſoul of the maid; it roſe kindled before the king. She turned her face to Cathmor, from amidſt her waving locks. Sooner ‡ ſhall the eagle of heaven be torn, from the

* Claon-mal, *crooked eye-brow*. From the retired life of this perſon, it appears, 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.

† By this circumſtance, the poet inſinuates, that the valley of Lona was very near the field of battle. In this indirect manner of narration, conſiſts the great difference between poetical and hiſtorical ſtile.

‡ In after ages, the alluſions of the bards, to particular paſſages of the works of Oſſian, were very numerous. I have met with a poem, which was writ three centuries ago, in which the bard recommends, to a lady of his own times, the behaviour of Sul-malla, in this place. The poem has little to recommend it, excepting the paſſage, of which I am to give a tranſlation here. The bards, when they alluded to the works of Oſſian, ſeem to have caught ſome portion of his fire: upon other occaſions, their compoſitions are little more than a group of epithets reduced into meaſure. Only their poems, upon martial ſubjects, fall under this cenſure. Their love ſonnets, and paſtoral verſes, are far from wanting their beauties; but a great deal of theſe depend upon a certain *curioſa felicitas* of expreſſion in the original; ſo that they would appear greatly to their diſadvantage in another language. What the modern bards are moſt inſupportable in, are their nauſeous panegyrics upon their patrons. We ſee, in them, a petty tyrant, whoſe name was never heard, beyond the contracted limits of his own valley, ſtalking forth in all the trappings of a ſo-

the ſtream of his roaring wind, when he ſees the dun prey, before him, the young ſons of the bounding roe, than thou, O Cathmor, be turned from the ſtrife of renown.——Soon may I ſee thee, warrior, from the ſkirts of the evening miſt, when it is rolled around me, on Lona of the ſtreams. While yet thou art diſtant far, ſtrike, Cathmor, ſtrike the ſhield, that joy may return to my darkened ſoul, as I lean on the moſſy rock. But if thou ſhould fall——I am in the land of ſtrangers;—O ſend thy voice, from thy cloud, to the maid of Inis-huna.

a finiſhed hero. From their frequent alluſions, however, to the entertainments which he gave, and the *ſtrength of his cups*, we may eaſily gueſs from whence proceeded the praiſe of an indolent and effeminate race of men: for the bards, from the great court paid, originally, to their order, became, at laſt, the moſt flagitious and diſpirited of all mortals. Their compoſitions, therefore, on this ſide of a certain period, are dull and trivial to the higheſt degree. By laviſhing their praiſes upon unworthy objects, their panegyricks became common and little regarded; they were thruſt out of the houſes of the chiefs, and wandered about, from tribe to tribe, in the double capacity of poet and harper. Galled with this uſage, they betook themſelves to ſatire and lampoon, ſo that the compoſitions of the bards, for more than a century back, are almoſt altogether of the ſarcaſtical kind. In this they ſucceeded well; for, as there is no language more copious than the Galic, ſo there is ſcarcely any equally adapted to thoſe quaint turns of expreſſion which belong to ſatire. —Tho' the chiefs diſregarded the lampoons of the bards, the vulgar, out of mere fear, received them into their habitations, entertained them, as well as their circumſtances would allow, and kept exiſting, for ſome years, an order, which, by their own miſmanagement, had deſervedly fallen into contempt.

To return to the old poem, which gave occaſion to this note. It is an addreſs to the wife of a chief, upon the departure of her huſband to war. The paſſage, which alludes to Sul-malla, is this:——

"Why art thou mournful on rocks; or lifting thine eyes on waves? His ſhip has bounded towards battle. His joy is in the murmur of fields. Look to the beams of old, to the virgins of Oſſian of harps. Sul-malla keeps not her eagle, from the field of blood. She would not tear thee, O Cathmor, from the ſounding courſe of renown."

YOUNG

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 bounded from 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

* Són-mor, *tall handſome man.* He was the father of Borbar-duthul, chief of Atha, and grandfather to Cathmor himſelf. The propriety of this epiſode is evident. But, tho' it appears here to be only introduced as an example to Sul-mulla; the poet probably had another deſign in view, which was further to illuſtrate the antiquity of the quarrel between the Firbolg and Caël.

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

‡ Suil alluin, *beautiful eye*, the wife of Son-mor.

Atha.

Atha. But when the roar of battle roſe; when hoſt was rolled on hoſt; when Son-mor burnt, like the fire of heaven in clouds, with her ſpreading hair came Sul-allin; for ſhe trembled for her king. —He 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,

* The poet returns to his ſubject. The deſcription of the ſhield of Cathmor is valuable, on account of the light it throws on the progreſs of arts in thoſe early times. Thoſe who draw their ideas of remote antiquity from their obſervations on the manners of modern ſavage nations, will have no high opinion of the workmanſhip of Cathmor's ſhield. To remove ſome part of their prejudice, I ſhall only obſerve, that the Belgæ of Britain, who were the anceſtors of the Firbolg, were a commercial people; and commerce, we might prove, from many ſhining examples of our own times, is the proper inlet of arts and ſciences, and all that exalts the human mind. To avoid multiplying notes, I ſhall give here the ſignification of the names of the ſtars, engraved on the ſhield. Ceanmathon, *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 Ceanmathon, 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

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. Laughing, on its own blue wave, Reldurath half-ſinks its weſtern light. The red eye of Berthin looks, thro' 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-thena, 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 Inisfail; 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 laughed from her parted cloud. Larthon † bleſſed the well-known beam, as it faint-gleamed on the deep.

BE-

* *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. The author of it, probably, took the hint from the epiſode in this book, relating to the firſt diſcovery of Ireland by Larthon. It abounds with thoſe romantic fables of giants and magicians, which diſtinguiſh the compoſitions 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, thro' ocean, like a whale thro' the burſting of

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 deſart, from the rock of roes.

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

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

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 hills; as the wave that roll's by thy ſide. But the ſilent green iſle is before thee, with 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.

* Lumon, as I have remarked in a preceding

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

Now he dares to call the winds, and to mix with the miſt of ocean. Blue Inis-fail roſe, in ſmoak; 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

ceding note, 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. We have there hinted to us only Larthon's firſt voyage to Ireland; here his ſtory is related, at large, and a curious deſcription of his invention of ſhip-building. This conciſe, but expreſſive, epiſode has been much admired in the original. Its brevity is remarkably ſuited to the hurry of the occaſion.

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

did he forget green-headed Lumon; he often bounded over his ſeas, to 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. Valleys 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

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

† The original of this lyric ode is one of the moſt beautiful paſſages of the poem. The harmony and variety of its verſification prove, that the knowledge of muſic was conſiderably advanced in the days of Oſſian.

Puail teŭd, mhic Alpain nam fón
Ambail ſolas an clarſach na neöl?
Taom air Oſſian, agus oſſun gu tróm;
'Ta anam a ſnamh an eëo.
Chualas ú, bhaird, a m'oicha.
Ach ſiubhla' fón edrom uaim ſein, &c.
A dhreŭn uaina thulloch nan tais
A thaomas do chean air gaoith oicha, &c.

ſkirt now ruſtling in thy leaves? Often are the ſteps of the dead, in the dark-eddying blaſts; when the moon, a dun ſhield, from the eaſt, is rolled along the ſky.

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

TEMORA:

AN

EPIC POEM.

BOOK EIGHTH.

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, thro' 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 Fir-bolg. 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 Trenmor* 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 a hundred bards.—The poem cloſes, with a ſpeech of Fingal.

TEMORA:

AN

EPIC POEM.

BOOK EIGHTH.

* AS when the wintry winds have ſeized the waves of the mountain-lake, have ſeized them, in ſtormy night, and cloathed 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

* In the courſe of my notes, I have made it more my buſineſs to explain, than to examine, critically, the works of Oſſian. The firſt is my province, as the perſon beſt acquainted with them, the ſecond falls to the ſhare of others. I ſhall, however, obſerve, that all the precepts, which Ariſtotle drew from Homer, ought not to be applied to the compoſition of a Celtic bard; nor ought the title of the latter to the *epopæa* to be diſputed, even if he ſhould differ, in ſome circumſtances, from a Greek poet. —Some allowance ſhould be made for the different manners of nations. The genius of the Greeks and Celtæ was extremely diſſimilar. The firſt were lively and loquacious; a manly conciſeneſs of expreſſion diſtinguiſhed the latter. We find, accordingly, that the compoſitions of Homer and Oſſian are marked with the general and oppoſite characters of their reſpective nations, and, conſequently, it is improper to compare the *minutiæ* of their poems together. There are, however, general rules,

T in

boughs and tufts of grafs, which fhake and whiftle to the wind, over their grey feats of froft.—So filent fhone to the morning the ridges of Morven's hoft, as each warrior looked up from his helmet towards

in the conduct of an epic poem, which, as they are natural, are, likewife, univerfal. In thefe the two poets exactly correfpond. This fimilarity, which could not poffibly proceed from imitation, is more decifive, with refpect to the grand eſſentials of the *epopæa*, than all the precepts of Ariftotle.

Offian is now approaching to the grand cataftrophe. The preparations he has made, in the preceding book, properly introduce the magnificence of defcription, with which the prefent book opens, and tend to fhew that the Celtic bard had more art, in working up his fable, than fome of thofe, who clofely imitated the perfect model of Homer. The tranfition from the pathetic to the fublime is eafy and natural. Till the mind is opened, by the firft, it fcarcely can have an adequate comprehenfion of the fecond. The foft and affecting fcenes of the feventh book form a fort of contraft to, and conſequently heighten, the features of the more grand and terrible images of the eighth.

The fimile, with which this book opens, is, perhaps, the longeft, and the moft minutely defcriptive, of any in the works of Offian. The images of it are only familiar to thofe who live in a cold and mountainous country. They have often feen a lake fuddenly frozen over, and ſtrewed with withered grafs, and boughs torn, by winds, from the mountains, which form its banks; but, I believe, few of them would be of the mind of the ancient bard, who preferred thefe winter-fcenes to the irriguous vales of May.—*To me*, fays he, *bring back my woods, which ſtrew their leaves on blaſts: ſpread the lake below, with all its frozen waves. Pleaſant is the breeze on the bearded ice; when the moon is broad in heaven, and the ſpirit of the mountain roars. Roll away the green vales of May; they are thoughts of maids*, &c. Such are the words of this winter poet, but what he afterwards adds, gives us to underſtand, that thofe frigid fcenes were not his ſole delight: for he ſpeaks, with great tendernefs, of the *cak-lighted hall of the chief*; and the *ſtrength of the ſhells, at night, when the courſe of winds is abroad.*

If the fimile of a frozen lake aptly illuſtrates the ſtillneſs and filent expectation of an army, lying under arms, waiting for the coming of their king, ſo the compariſon of the ſudden riſing of waves, around a ſpirit, is alſo very expreſſive of the tumultuous joy of Fingal's army, upon the appearance of that hero.—— An ancient bard, ſenſible of the beauty of this paſſage, has happily imitated it, in a poem, concerning Kenneth Mac Alpin, king

wards 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 ſhuned 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

king of Scotland.—I had occaſion to quote this piece, in a note in the preceding book. Kenneth had retired privately, by night, to a hill, in the neighbourhood of his army, and, upon his return, next morning, the bard ſays, *that he was like the form of a ſpirit, returning to his ſecret bay. In the ſkirt of a blaſt he ſtands. The waves lift their roaring heads. Their green backs are quivering round. Rocks echo back their joy.*

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 fight, 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 on 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 an expedition, in the ſouth of Ireland. A falſe report was brought to his father, that he was

broad-ſhielded Cairbar, from Ullin of the roes. He liſtens to the voice of Condan, as, grey, he bends in feeble light. He liſtens, for his foes dwell in the echoing halls of Temora. He comes, at times, abroad, in the ſkirts of miſt, to pierce the bounding roes. When the ſun looks on the field, nor by the rock, nor ſtream, is he! He ſhuns the race of Bolga, who dwell in his father's hall. Tell him, that Fingal lifts the ſpear, and that his foes, perhaps, may fail.

LIFT up, O Gaul, the ſhield before him. Stretch, Dermid, Temora's ſpear. Be thy voice in his ear, O Carril, with the deeds of his fathers. Lead him to green Moilena, to the duſky field of

was killed.—*Cairbar*, to uſe the words of the poem on the ſubject, *darkened for his fair-haired ſon. He turned to the young beam of light, the ſon of Beltanno of Connachar. 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 palace 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. All theſe particulars, concerning Ferad-artho, may be gathered from the compoſitions of Oſſian: A bard, leſs ancient, 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."

ghoſts;

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 folds 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 heard no more,

* Oſcar and Fillan are here, emphatically called *the warriors*. Oſſian was not forgetful of them, *when*, to uſe his own expreſſion, *peace returned to the land*. His plaintive poems, concerning the death of theſe young heroes, were very numerous. I had occaſion, in a preceding note, to give a tranſlation of one of them, (a dialogue between Clatho and Bos-mina) in this I ſhall lay before the reader a fragment of another. The greateſt, and, perhaps, the moſt intereſting part of the poem, is loſt. What remains, is a ſoliloquy of Malvina, the daughter of Toſcar, ſo often mentioned in Oſſian's compoſitions. She, ſitting alone, in the vale of Moi-lutha, is repreſented as deſcrying, at a diſtance, the ſhip which carried the body of Oſcar to Morven.

"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

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.

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 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 thro' the ridges of ocean? How art thou ſo ſudden, Oſcar, from the heath of ſhields?"———

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

Now

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

WHITE-BREASTED Bran came bounding with joy to the known path of Fingal. He came, and looked towards the cave, where the blue-eyed hunter lay, for he was wont to ſtride, with morning, to the dewy bed of the roe.—It was then the tears of the king came down, and all his ſoul was dark.—But as the riſing wind rolls away the ſtorm of rain, and leaves the white ſtreams to the ſun, and high hills with their heads of graſs: ſo the returning war brightened the mind of Fingal. He bounded *, on his ſpear, over Lubar,

* The poetical hyperboles of Oſſian were, afterwards, taken in the literal ſenſe, by the ignorant vulgar; and they firmly believed, that Fingal, and his heroes, were of a gigantic ſtature. There are many extravagant fictions founded, upon the circumſtance of Fingal leaping at once over the river Lubar. Many of them are handed down in tradition. 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 him on thoſe occaſions,

Lubar, and ſtruck his ecchoing ſhield. His ridgy hoſt bend forward, at once, with all their pointed ſteel.

NOR Erin heard, with fear, the ſound: wide they came rolling along. Dark Malthos, in the wing of war, looks forward from ſhaggy brows. Next roſe that beam of light Hidalla; then the ſide-long-looking gloom of Maronnan. Blue-ſhielded Clonar liſts the ſpear; Cormar ſhakes his buſhy locks on the wind.—Slowly, from behind a rock, roſe the bright form of Atha. Firſt appeared his two pointed ſpears, then the half of his burniſhed ſhield: like the riſing of a nightly meteor, over the vale of ghoſts. But when he ſhone all abroad: the hoſts plunged, at once, into ſtrife. The gleaming waves of ſteel are poured on either ſide.

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

ſions, 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.

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

NOR did Oſſian forget the ſpear, in the wing of his war. He ſtrewed the field with dead.—Young Hidalla came. Soft voice of

* Tla-min, *mildly-ſoft*. The loves of Clonar and Tlamin were rendered famous in the north, by a fragment of a Lyric poem, ſtill preſerved, which is aſcribed to Oſſian. Be it the compoſition of whom it will, its poetical merit may, perhaps, excuſe me, for inſerting it here. It is a dialogue between Clonar and Tla min. She begins with a ſoliloquy, which he overhears.

" 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 ruſtle along his ſhield. Bright in his locks he lies: the thoughts of his dreams fly, darkening, over his face. Thou thinkeſt of the battles of Oſſian, young ſon of the ecchoing 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 Tla-min 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 blue-ſhielded Clungal."———

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

ſtreamy

ſtreamy Clonra! Why doſt thou lift the ſteel?—O that we met, in the ſtrife of ſong, in thy own ruſhy vale!—Malthos beheld him low, and darkened as he ruſhed along On either ſide of a ſtream, we bend in the echoing ſtrife.—Heaven comes rolling down: around burſt the voices of ſqually winds.—Hills are clothed, at times, in fire. Thunder rolls in wreaths of miſt.—In darkneſs ſhrunk the foe: Morven's warriors ſtood aghaſt.—Still I bent over the ſtream, amidſt my whiſtling locks.

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

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

* Fingal and Cathmor. The conduct of the poet, in this paſſage, is remarkable. His numerous deſcriptions of ſingle combats had already exhauſted the ſubject. Nothing new, nor adequate to our high idea of the kings, could be ſaid. Oſſian, therefore, throws a *column of miſt* over the whole, and leaves the combat to the imagination of the reader.—Poets have almoſt univerſally failed in their deſcriptions of this ſort. Not 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 grand ideas. Our imagination ſtretches beyond, and, conſequently, deſpiſes, the deſcription. It were, therefore, well, for ſome poets, in my opinion, (tho' it is, perhaps, ſomewhat ſingular) to have, ſometimes, like Oſſian, thrown *miſt* over their ſingle combats.

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 deſart, to the ear of Fingal.—Come to my hill of feaſts: the mighty fail, at times. No fire am I to low-laid foes: I rejoice not over the fall of the brave.—To cloſe * the wound is mine: I have known the herbs of the hills. I ſeized their fair heads, on high, as they waved by their ſecret ſtreams.—Thou art dark and ſilent, king of Atha of ſtrangers.

BY Atha of the ſtream, he ſaid, there riſes a moſſy rock. On its head is the wandering of boughs, within the courſe of winds. Dark, in its face, is a cave, with its own loud rill.—There have I heard the tread of ſtrangers †, when they paſſed to my hall of ſhells. Joy

* 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 knowledge 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 wholſomeneſs of the climate, and an active life, ſpent in hunting, excluded diſeaſes.

† The hoſpitable diſpoſition of Cathmor was unparallelled. He 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

Joy roſe, like a flame, on my ſoul: I bleſt the echoing rock. Here be my dwelling, in darkneſs; in my graſſy vale. From this I ſhall mount the breeze, that purſues my thiſtle's beard; or look down, on blue-winding Atha, from its wandering miſt.

WHY ſpeaks the king of the tomb?—Oſſian! the warrior has failed!—Joy meet thy ſoul, like a ſtream, Cathmor, friend of ſtrangers!—My ſon, I hear the call of years; they take my ſpear as they paſs along. Why does not Fingal, they ſeem to ſay, reſt within his hall? Doſt thou always delight in blood? In the tears of the ſad?—No: ye darkly-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 me, at the gates of their

His hoſpitality was not paſſed unnoticed by ſucceeding 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 traditions, 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.

* We ſee, from this paſſage, that, even in the times of Oſſian, and, conſequently, before the introduction of chriſtianity, they had

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 ſhield. Dark in thought, a-while, he bends: his word, at length, come forth.

WHEN thou, O ſtone, ſhall moulder down, and loſe thee, in the moſs of years, then ſhall the traveller come, and whiſtling paſs away.—Thou know'ſt not, feeble man, that fame once ſhone on

had ſome idea of rewards and puniſhments after death.—Thoſe who behaved, in life, with bravery and virtue, were received, with joy, to the airy halls of their fathers; but *the dark in ſoul*, to uſe the 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.—The ſimile in this paragraph is new, and, if I may uſe the expreſſion of a bard, who alludes to it, *beautifully terrible*.

Mar dhubh-reül, an croma nan ſpeur,
A thaomas teina na h'oicha,
Dearg-ſruthach, air h'aighai' ſein.

* 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 piece of arms, and a bit of half-burnt wood. The cauſe of placing the laſt there is not mentioned in tradition.

Moilena.

Moi-lena. Here Fingal reſigned his ſpear, after the laſt of his fields. —Paſs away, thou empty ſhade; in thy voice there is no renown. Thou dwelleſt by ſome peaceful ſtream; yet a few years, and thou art gone. No one remembers thee, thou dweller of thick miſt!— But Fingal ſhall be clothed with fame, a beam of light to other times; for he went forth, in echoing ſteel, to ſave the weak in arms.

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

† 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

* 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 (and in every other part of Oſſian's poems, where it is mentioned) is called, the *ſun-beam*. The reaſon of this appellation, I gave, more than once, in my notes on the former collection of Oſſian's poems.

† The poet changes the ſcene 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.

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 over his ſoul. He ſaw the king of Atha low, beneath his bending tree.

Why art thou dark, ſaid the maid? The ſtrife of arms is paſt. Soon * ſhall he come to thy cave, over thy winding ſtreams. The ſun looks from the rocks of the weſt. The miſts of the lake ariſe. Grey, they ſpread on that hill, the ruſhy dwelling of roes. From the miſt ſhall my king appear!—Behold, he comes in his arms. Come to the cave of Clonmal, O my beſt beloved!

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

Evening

a cave. This ſcene is awful and ſolemn, and 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.

† The abrupt manner, in which Oſſian quits the ſtory of Sul malla, is judicious. His ſubject led him immediately to relate the reſtoration of the family of Conar to the Iriſh throne; which we may conſider effectually done, by the defeat and death of Cathmor, and the arrival of Ferad-artho in the Caledonian army. To purſue, here,

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 deſart, 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

here, the ſtory of the *maid of Inis-huna*, which was foreign to the ſubject, would be altogether inconſiſtent with the rapid manner of Oſſian, and a breach on unity of time and action, one of the fundamental eſſentials of the *epopæa*, the rules of which our Celtic bard gathered from nature, not from the precepts of critics.—Neither did the poet totally deſert the beautiful Sul-malla, deprived of her lover, and a ſtranger, as ſhe was, in a foreign land. 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, which is ſtill preſerved, I here lay before the reader.

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

The reſt of the poem is loſt; from the ſtory of it, which is ſtill preſerved, we underſtand, that Sul-malla returned to her own country. Sul-malla makes a conſiderable figure in another poem of Oſſian; her behaviour in that piece accounts for that partial regard with which the poet ſpeaks of her throughout Temora.

ſtill ſeaſon of night.—It was the voice of Condan, mixed with Carril's trembling harp. They came, with blue-eyed Ferad-artho, to Mora of the ſtreams.

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

SONS of Morven, ſpread the feaſt; ſend the night away on 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 ſtretch-

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

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

FINIS.

CATHLIN OF CLUTHA:

A

POEM.

ARGUMENT.

An addreſs to Malvina, the daughter of Toſcar.—The poet relates the arrival of Cathlin in Selma, to ſolicit aid againſt Duth-carmor of Cluba, who had killed Cathmol, for the ſake of his daughter Lanŭl.—Fingal declining to make a choice among his heroes, who were all claiming the command of the expedition; they retired *each to his hill of ghoſts*; to be determined by dreams. The ſpirit of Trenmor appears to Oſſian and Oſcar: they ſail, from the bay of Carmona, and, on the fourth day, appear off the valley of Rath-col, in Inis-huna, where Duth-carmor had fixed his reſidence.——Oſſian diſpatches a bard to Duth-carmor to demand battle.—Night comes on.—The diſtreſs of Cathlin of Clutha.—Oſſian devolves the command on Oſcar, who, according to the cuſtom of the kings of Morven, before battle, retired to a neighbouring hill.—Upon the coming on of day, the battle joins.—Oſcar and Duth-carmor meet. The latter falls.—Oſcar carries the mail and helmet of Duth-carmor to Cathlin, who had retired from the field. Cathlin is diſcovered to be the daughter of Cathmol, in diſguiſe, who had been carried off, by force, by, and had made her eſcape from, Duth-carmor.

CATHLIN OF CLUTHA:

A

POEM.

* COME, thou beam that art lonely, from watching in the night! The ſqually winds are around thee, from all their echoing hills. Red, over my hundred ſtreams, are the light-covered paths of the dead. They rejoice, on the eddying winds, in the

* The traditions, which accompany this poem, inform us, that both it, and the ſucceeding piece, went, of old, under the name of *Lasi-Oi-lutha*; i. e. the *hymns of the maid of Lutha*. They pretend alſo to fix the time of its compoſition, to the third year after the death of Fingal; that is, during the expedition of Fergus the ſon of Fingal, to the banks of *Uiſca duthon*. In ſupport of this opinion, the Highland ſenachies have prefixed to this poem, an addreſs of Oſſian, to Congal the young ſon of Fergus, which I have rejected, as having no manner of connection with the reſt of the piece.——It has poetical merit; and, probably, it was the opening of one of Oſſian's other poems, tho' the bards injudiciouſly transferred it to the piece now before us.

" Congal, ſon of Fergus of Durath, thou light between thy locks, aſcend to the rock of Selma, to the oak of the breaker of ſhields. Look over the boſom of night, it is ſtreaked with the red paths of the dead: look on the night of ghoſts, and kindle, O Congal, thy ſoul. Be not, like the moon on a ſtream, lonely in the midſt of clouds: darkneſs cloſes around it; and the beam departs.—Depart not, ſon of Fergus, ere thou markeſt the field with thy ſword. Aſcend to the rock of Selma; to the oak of the breaker of ſhields."

ſea-

ſeaſon of night.—Dwells there no joy in ſong, white hand of the harps of Lutha? Awake the voice of the ſtring, and roll my ſoul to me. It is a ſtream that has failed.—Malvina pour the ſong.

I HEAR thee, from thy darkneſs, in Selma, thou that watcheſt, lonely, by night! Why didſt thou with-hold the ſong, from Oſſian's failing ſoul?——As the falling brook to the ear of the hunter, deſcending from his ſtorm-covered hill; in a ſun-beam rolls the echoing ſtream; he hears, and ſhakes his dewy locks: ſuch is the voice of Lutha, to the friend of the ſpirits of heroes.—My ſwelling boſom beats high. I look back on the days that are paſt. ——Come, thou beam that art lonely, from the watching of night.

IN the echoing bay of Carmona * we ſaw, one day, the bounding ſhip. On high, hung a broken ſhield; it was marked with

* Car-mona, *bay of the dark brown hills*, an arm of the ſea, in the neighbourhood of Selma.—In this paragraph are mentioned the ſignals preſented to Fingal, by thoſe who came to demand his aid. The ſuppliants held, in one hand, a ſhield covered with blood, and, in the other, a broken ſpear; the firſt a ſymbol of the death of their friends, the laſt an emblem of their own helpleſs ſituation. If the king choſe to grant ſuccours, which generally was the caſe, he reached to them *the ſhell of feaſts*, as a token of his hoſpitality and friendly intentions towards them.

It may not be diſagreeable to the reader to lay here before him the ceremony of the Cran-tara, which was of a ſimilar nature, and, till very lately, uſed in the Highlands.—When the news of an enemy came to the reſidence of the chief, he immediately killed a goat with his own ſword, dipped the end of an half-burnt piece of wood in the blood, and gave it to one of his ſervants, to be carried to the next hamlet. From hamlet to hamlet this *teſſera* was carried with the utmoſt expedition, and, in the ſpace of a few hours, the whole clan were in arms, and convened in an appointed place; the name of which was the only word that accompanied the delivery of the *Cran-tara*. This ſymbol was the manifeſto of the chief, by which he threatened fire and ſword to thoſe of his clan, that did not immediately appear at his ſtandard.

wan-

wandering blood. Forward came a youth, in armour, and ſtretched his pointleſs ſpear. Long, over his tearful eyes, hung looſe his diſordered locks. Fingal gave the ſhell of kings. The words of the ſtranger aroſe.

In his hall lies Cathmol of Clutha, by the winding of his own dark ſtreams. Duth-carmor ſaw white-boſomed Lanul *, and pierced her father's ſide. In the ruſhy deſart were my ſteps. He fled in the ſeaſon of night. Give thine aid to Cathlin to revenge his father.——I fought thee not as a beam, in a land of clouds. Thou, like that ſun, art known, king of echoing Selma.

Selma's king looked around. In his preſence, we roſe in arms. But who ſhould lift the ſhield? for all had claimed the war. The night came down; we ſtrode, in ſilence; each to his hill of ghoſts: that ſpirits might deſcend, in our dreams, to mark us for the field.

We ſtruck the ſhield of the dead, and raiſed the hum of ſongs. We thrice called the ghoſts of our fathers. We laid us down in dreams.——Trenmor came, before mine eyes, the tall form of other years. His blue hoſts were behind him in half-diſtinguiſhed rows. Scarce ſeen is their ſtrife in miſt, or their ſtretching forward to deaths. I liſtened; but no ſound was there. The forms were empty wind.

† Lanul, *full-eyed*, a ſurname which, according to tradition, was beſtowed on the daughter of Cathmol, on account of her beauty; this tradition, however, may have been founded on that partiality, which the bards have ſhewn to *Cathlin of Clutha*; for, according to them, no *falſhood could dwell in the ſoul of the lovely*.

I STARTED from the dream of ghoſts. On a ſudden blaſt flew my whiſtling hair. Low-ſounding, in the oak, is the departure of the dead. I took my ſhield from its bough. Onward came the rattling of ſteel. It was Oſcar* of Lego. He had ſeen his fathers.

As ruſhes forth the blaſt, on the boſom of whitening waves; ſo careleſs ſhall my courſe be, thro' ocean, to the dwelling of foes. I have ſeen the dead, my father. My beating ſoul is high. My fame is bright before me, like the ſtreak of light on a cloud, when the broad ſun comes forth, red traveller of the ſky.

GRANDSON of Branno, I ſaid; not Oſcar alone ſhall meet the foe. I ruſh forward, thro' ocean, to the woody dwelling of heroes. Let us contend, my ſon, like eagles, from one rock; when they lift their broad wings, againſt the ſtream of winds.—We raiſed our ſails in Carmona. From three ſhips, they marked my ſhield on the wave, as I looked on nightly Ton-thena†, red traveller between the clouds.—Four days came the breeze abroad. Lumon came forward in miſt. In winds were its hundred groves.

* Oſcar is here called *Oſcar of Lego*, from his mother being the daughter of Branno, a powerful chief, on the banks of that lake. It is remarkable that Oſſian addreſſes no poem to Malvina, in which her lover Oſcar was not one of the principal actors. His attention to her, after the death of his ſon, ſhews that delicacy of ſentiment is not confined, as ſome fondly imagine, to our own poliſhed times.

† Ton-thena, *fire of the wave*, was that remarkable ſtar, which, as has been mentioned in the ſeventh book of Temora, directed the courſe of Larthon to Ireland. It ſeems to have been well known to thoſe, who ſailed on that ſea, which divides Ireland from South-Britain. As the courſe of Oſſian was along the coaſt of Inis-huna, he mentions with propriety, that ſtar which directed the voyage of the colony from that country to Ireland.

Sun-

Sun-beams marked, at times, its brown ſide. White, leapt the foamy ſtreams, from all its echoing rocks.

A GREEN field, in the boſom of hills, winds ſilent with its own blue ſtream. Here, midſt the waving of oaks, were the dwellings of kings of old. But ſilence, for many dark-brown years, had ſettled in graſſy Rath-col *; for the race of heroes had failed, along the pleaſant vale.—Duth-carmor was here, with his people, dark rider of the wave. Ton-thena had hid her head in the ſky. He bound his white-boſomed ſails. His courſe is on the hills of Rath-col, to the ſeats of roes.

WE came. I ſent the bard, with ſongs, to call the foe to fight. Duth-carmor heard him, with joy. The king's ſoul was like a beam of fire; a beam of fire, marked with ſmoak, ruſhing, varied thro' the boſom of night. The deeds of Duth-carmor were dark, tho' his arm was ſtrong.

NIGHT came, with the gathering of clouds. By the beam of the oak we ſat down. At a diſtance ſtood Cathlin of Clutha. I ſaw the changing † ſoul of the ſtranger. As ſhadows fly over the field

* Rath-col, *woody field*, does not appear to have been the reſidence of Duth carmor: he ſeems rather to have been forced thither by a ſtorm; at leaſt I ſhould think that to be the meaning of the poet, from his expreſſion, that *Ton-thena had hid her head*, and that *he bound his white-boſomed ſails*; which is as much as to ſay, that the weather was ſtormy, and that Duth-carmor put in to the bay of Rathcol for ſhelter.

† From this circumſtance, ſucceeding bards feigned that Cathlin, who is here in the diſguiſe of a young warrior, had fallen in love with Duth-carmor at a feaſt, to which he had been invited by her father. Her love was converted into deteſtation for him, after he had murdered her father. But *as theſe rain-bows of heaven are changeful*, ſay my authors, ſpeaking of women, ſhe felt the return of her

field of graſs, ſo various is Cathlin's cheek. It was fair, within locks, that roſe on Rath-col's wind. I did not ruſh, amidſt his ſoul, with my words. I bade the ſong to riſe.

Oscar of Lego, I ſaid, be thine the ſecret hill *, to night. Strike the ſhield, like Morven's kings. With day, thou ſhalt lead in war. From my rock, I ſhall ſee thee, Oſcar, a dreadful form aſcending in fight, like the appearance of ghoſts amidſt the ſtorms they raiſe.——Why ſhould mine eyes return to the dim times of old, ere yet the ſong had burſted forth, like the ſudden riſing of winds?——But the years, that are paſt, are marked with mighty deeds. As the nightly rider of waves looks up to Toñ-thena of beams: ſo let us turn our eyes to Trenmor, the father of kings.

Wide, in Caracha's echoing field, Carmal had poured his tribes. They were a dark ridge of waves; the grey-haired bards were like moving foam on their face. They kindled the ſtrife around, with their red-rolling eyes.—Nor alone were the dwellers of rocks;

former paſſion, upon the approach of Duth-carmor's danger.—I myſelf, who think more favourably of the ſex, muſt attribute the agitation of Cathlin's mind to her extream ſenſibility to the injuries done her by Duth-carmor: and this opinion is favoured by the ſequel of the ſtory.

* This paſſage alludes to the well known cuſtom among the ancient kings of Scotland, to retire from their army on the night preceding a battle.——The ſtory which Oſſian introduces in the next paragraph, concerns the fall of the Druids, of which I gave ſome account in the diſſertation prefixed to the former collection.—It is ſaid in many old poems, that the Druids, in the extremity of their affairs, had ſolicited and obtained aid from Scandinavia. Among the auxiliaries there came many pretended magicians, which circumſtance Oſſian alludes to, in his deſcription of the *ſon of Loda*.—Magic and incantation could not, however, prevail; for Trenmor, aſſiſted by the valour of his ſon Trathal, entirely broke the power of the Druids.

a ſon

a ſon of Loda was there; a voice, in his own dark land, to call the ghoſts from high.——On his hill, he had dwelt, in Lochlin, in the midſt of a leafleſs grove. Five ſtones lifted, near, their heads. Loud roared his ruſhing ſtream. He often raiſed his voice to winds, when meteors marked their nightly wings; when the dark-cruſted moon was rolled behind her hill. Nor unheard of ghoſts was he!—They came with the ſound of eagle wings. They turned battle, in fields, before the kings of men.

But, Trenmor, they turned not from battle; he drew forward the troubled war; in its dark ſkirt was Trathal, like a riſing light. —It was dark; and Loda's ſon poured forth his ſigns, on night.— The feeble were not before thee, ſon of other lands!

*Then roſe the ſtrife of kings, about the hill of night; but it was ſoft as two ſummer gales, ſhaking their light wings, on a lake. ——Trenmor yielded to his ſon; for the fame of the king was heard.——Trathal came forth before his father, and the foes failed, in echoing Caracha. The years that are paſt, my ſon, are marked with mighty deeds †.

* * * * * * * * * * *

In clouds roſe the eaſtern light. The foe came forth in arms. The ſtrife is mixed at Rath-col, like the roar of ſtreams. Behold the contending of kings! They meet beſide the oak. In gleams

* Trenmor and Trathal. Oſſian introduced this epiſode, as an example to his ſon, from ancient times.

† Thoſe who deliver down this poem in tradition, lament that there is a great part of it loſt. In particular they regret the loſs of an epiſode, which was here introduced, with the ſequel of the ſtory of Carmal and his Druids. Their attachment to it was founded on the deſcriptions of magical inchantments which it contained.

of ſteel the dark forms are loſt; ſuch is the meeting of meteors, in a vale by night: red light is ſcattered round, and men foreſee the ſtorm.——Duth-carmor is low in blood. The ſon of Oſſian overcame. Not harmleſs in battle was he, Malvina hand of harps!

Nor, in the field, are the ſteps of Cathlin. The ſtranger ſtood by a ſecret ſtream, where the foam of Rath-col ſkirted the moſſy ſtones. Above, bends the branchy birch, and ſtrews its leaves, on winds. The inverted ſpear of Cathlin touched, at times, the ſtream.——Oſcar brought Duth-carmor's mail: his helmet with its eagle-wing. He placed them before the ſtranger, and his words were heard.——"The foes of thy father have failed. They are laid in the field of ghoſts. Renown returns to Morven, like a riſing wind. Why art thou dark, chief of Clutha? Is there cauſe for grief?"

Son of Oſſian of harps, my ſoul is darkly ſad. I behold the arms of Cathmol, which he raiſed in war. Take the mail of Cathlin, place it high in Selma's hall; that thou mayſt remember the hapleſs in thy diſtant land.

From white breaſts deſcended the mail. It was the race of kings; the ſoft-handed daughter of Cathmol, at the ſtreams of Clutha.—Duth-carmor ſaw her bright in the hall, he came, by night, to Clutha. Cathmol met him, in battle, but the hero fell. Three days dwelt the foe, with the maid. On the fourth ſhe fled in arms. She remembered the race of kings, and felt her burſting ſoul.

Why,

WHY, maid of Toſcar of Lutha, ſhould I tell how Cathlin failed? Her tomb is at ruſhy Lumon, in a diſtant land. Near it were the ſteps of Sul-malla, in the days of grief. She raiſed the ſong, for the daughter of ſtrangers, and touched the mournful harp.

COME, from the watching of night, Malvina, lonely beam!

SUL-MALLA

OF

LUMON:

A

POEM.

Z

ARGUMENT.

THIS poem, which, properly ſpeaking, is a continuation of the laſt, opens with an addreſs to Sul-malla, the daughter of the king of Inis-huna, whom Oſſian met, at the chace, as he returned from the battle of Rath-col. Sul-malla invites Oſſian and Oſcar to a feaſt, at the reſidence of her father, who was then abſent in the wars.——Upon hearing their name and family, ſhe relates an expedition of Fingal into Inis-huna. She caſually mentioning Cathmor, chief of Atha, (who then aſſiſted her father againſt his enemies) Oſſian introduces the epiſode of Culgorm and Suran-dronlo, two Scandinavian kings, in whoſe wars Oſſian himſelf and Cathmor were engaged on oppoſite ſides.———The ſtory is imperfect, a part of the original being loſt.—Oſſian, warned, in a dream, by the ghoſt of Trenmor, ſets ſail from Inis-huna.

SUL-MALLA OF LUMON:

A

POEM.

*WHO moves ſo ſtately, on Lumon, at the roar of the foamy waters? Her hair falls upon her heaving breaſt. White is her arm behind, as ſlow ſhe bends the bow. Why doſt thou wander in deſarts, like a light thro' a cloudy field? The

* The expedition of Oſſian to Inis-huna happened a ſhort time before Fingal paſſed over into Ireland, to dethrone Cairbar the ſon of Borbar-duthul. Cathmor, the brother of Cairbar, was aiding Conmor, king of Inis-huna, in his wars, at the time that Oſſian defeated Duth-carmor, in the valley of Rath-col. The poem is more intereſting, that it contains ſo many particulars concerning thoſe perſonages, who make ſo great a figure in Temora.

The exact correſpondence in the manners and cuſtoms of Inis-huna, as here deſcribed, to thoſe of Caledonia, leaves no room to doubt, that the inhabitants of both were originally the ſame people. Some may alledge, that Oſſian might transfer, in his poetical deſcriptions, the manners of his own nation to foreigners. This objection is eaſily anſwered. Why has he not done this with regard to the inhabitants of Scandinavia?—We find the latter very different in their cuſtoms and ſuperſtitions from the nations of Britain and Ireland. The Scandinavian manners are remarkably barbarous and fierce, and ſeem to mark out a nation much leſs advanced in a ſtate of civilization, than the inhabitants of Britain were in the times of Oſſian.

young roes are panting, by their ſecret rocks.——Return, thou daughter of kings; the cloudy night is near.

It was the young branch of Lumon, Sul-malla of blue eyes. She ſent the bard from her rock, to bid us to her feaſt. Amidſt the ſong we ſat down, in Conmor's echoing hall. White moved the hands of Sul-malla, on the trembling ſtrings. Half-heard, amidſt the ſound, was the name of Atha's king: he that was abſent in battle for her own green land.—Nor abſent from her ſoul was he: he came midſt her thoughts by night: Ton-thena looked in, from the ſky, and ſaw her toſſing arms.

The ſound of the ſhells had ceaſed. Amidſt long locks, Sul-malla roſe. She ſpoke with bended eyes, and aſked of our courſe thro' ſeas; "for of the kings of men are ye, tall riders of the wave *."——Not unknown, I ſaid, at his ſtreams is he, the father of our race. Fingal has been heard of at Cluba, blue-eyed daugh-

* Sul-malla here diſcovers the quality of Oſſian and Oſcar, from their ſtature and ſtately gait. Among nations, not far advanced in civilization, a ſuperior beauty and ſtatelineſs of perſon were inſeparable from nobility of blood. It was from theſe qualities, that thoſe of family were known by ſtrangers, not from tawdry trappings of ſtate injudiciouſly thrown round them. The cauſe of this diſtinguiſhing property, muſt, in ſome meaſure, be aſcribed to their unmixed blood. They had no inducement to intermarry with the vulgar: and no low notions of intereſt made them deviate from their choice in their own ſphere. In ſtates, where luxury has been long eſtabliſhed, I am told, that beauty of perſon is, by no means, the characteriſtic of antiquity of family. This muſt be attributed to thoſe enervating vices, which are inſeparable from luxury and wealth. A great family, (to alter a little the words of the hiſtorian) it is true, like a river, becomes conſiderable from the length of its courſe, but, as it rolls on, hereditary diſtempers, as well as property, flow ſucceſſively into it.

ter

ter of kings.—Nor only, at Cona's ſtream, is Oſſian and Oſcar known. Foes trembled at our voice, and ſhrunk in other lands.

Not unmarked, ſaid the maid, by Sul-malla, is the ſhield of Morven's king. It hangs high, in Conmor's hall, in memory of the paſt; when Fingal came to Cluba, in the days of other years. Loud roared the boar of Culdarnu, in the midſt of his rocks and woods. Inis-huna ſent her youths, but they failed; and virgins wept over tombs,—Careleſs went the king to Culdarnu. On his ſpear rolled the ſtrength of the woods.—He was bright, they ſaid, in his looks, the firſt of mortal men.—Nor at the feaſt were heard his words. His deeds paſſed from his ſoul of fire, like the rolling of vapours from the face of the wandering ſun.—Not careleſs looked the blue eyes of Cluba on his ſtately ſteps. In white boſoms roſe the king of Selma, in midſt of their thoughts by night. But the winds bore the ſtranger to the echoing vales of his roes.——Nor loſt to other lands was he, like a meteor that ſinks in a cloud. He came forth, at times, in his brightneſs, to the diſtant dwelling of foes. His fame came, like the ſound of winds, to Cluba's woody vale *.

Dark-

* Too partial to our own times, we are ready to mark out remote antiquity, as the region of ignorance and barbariſm. This, perhaps, is extending our prejudices too far. It has been long remarked, that knowledge, in a great meaſure, is founded on a free intercourſe between mankind; and that the mind is enlarged in proportion to the obſervations it has made upon the manners of different men and nations.—If we look, with attention, into the hiſtory of Fingal, as delivered by Oſſian, we ſhall find that he was not altogether a poor ignorant hunter, confined to the narrow corner of an iſland. His expeditions to all parts of Scandinavia, to the north of Germany, and the different ſtates of Great Britain and Ireland, were very numerous, and performed under ſuch a character, and at ſuch times, as gave him an opportunity to mark the undiſguiſed manners of mankind.—War and an active life, as they call

DARKNESS dwells in Cluba of harps: the race of kings is diſtant far; in battle is Conmor of ſpears; and Lormar * king of ſtreams. Nor darkening alone are they; a beam, from other lands, is nigh: the friend of ſtrangers † in Atha, the troubler of the field. High, from their miſty hills, look forth the blue eyes of Erin; for he is far away, young dweller of their ſouls.—Nor, harmleſs, white hands of Erin! is he in the ſkirts of war; he rolls ten thouſand before him, in his diſtant field.

NOT unſeen by Oſſian, I ſaid, ruſhed Cathmor from his ſtreams, when he poured his ſtrength on I-thorno ‡, iſle of many waves. In ſtrife met two kings in I-thorno, Culgorm and Suran-dronlo: each from his echoing iſle, ſtern hunters of the boar!

call forth, by turns, all the powers of the ſoul, preſent to us the different characters of men: in times of peace and quiet, for want of objects to exert them, the powers of the mind lie concealed, in a great meaſure, and we ſee only artificial paſſions and manners.—It is from this conſideration I conclude, that a traveller of penetration could gather more genuine knowledge from a tour of ancient Gaul, than from the minuteſt obſervation of all the artificial manners, and elegant refinements of modern France.

* Lormar was the ſon of Conmor, and the brother of Sul-malla. After the death of Conmor, Lormar ſucceeded him in the throne.

† Cathmor, the ſon of Borbar-duthul. It would appear, from the partiality with which Sul-malla ſpeaks of that hero, that ſhe had ſeen him, previous to his joining her father's army; tho' tradition poſitively aſſerts, that it was, after his return, that ſhe fell in love with him.

‡ I-thorno, ſays tradition, was an iſland of Scandinavia. In it, at a hunting party, met Culgorm and Suran-dronlo, the kings of two neighbouring iſles. They differed about the honour of killing a boar; and a war was kindled between them.—From this epiſode we may learn, that the manners of the Scandinavians were much more ſavage and cruel, than thoſe of Britain.———It is remarkable, that the names, introduced in this ſtory, are not of Galic original, which circumſtance affords room to ſuppoſe, that it had its foundation in true hiſtory.

THEY

They met a boar, at a foamy ſtream: each pierced it with his ſpear. They ſtrove for the fame of the deed: and gloomy battle roſe. From iſle to iſle they ſent a ſpear, broken and ſtained with blood, to call the friends of their fathers, in their ſounding arms. Cathmor came, from Bolga, to Culgorm, red-eyed king: I aided Suran-dronlo, in his land of boars.

We ruſhed on either ſide of a ſtream, which roared thro' a blaſted heath. High broken rocks were round, with all their bending trees. Near are two circles of Loda, with the ſtone of power; where ſpirits deſcended, by night, in dark-red ſtreams of fire.—— There, mixed with the murmur of waters, roſe the voice of aged men, they called the forms of night, to aid them in their war.

* Heedless I ſtood, with my people, where fell the foamy ſtream from rocks. The moon moved red from the mountain. My ſong, at times, aroſe. Dark, on the other ſide, young Cathmor heard my voice; for he lay, beneath the oak, in all his gleaming arms.——Morning came; we ruſhed to fight: from wing to wing is the rolling of ſtrife. They fell, like the thiſtle's head, beneath autumnal winds.

In armour came a ſtately form: I mixed my ſtrokes with the king. By turns our ſhields are pierced: loud rung our ſteely mails. His helmet fell to the ground. In brightneſs ſhone the foe. His

* From the circumſtance of Oſſian not being preſent at the rites, deſcribed in the preceding paragraph, we may ſuppoſe that he held them in contempt. This difference of ſentiment, with regard to religion, is a ſort of argument, that the Caledonians were not originally a colony of Scandinavians, as ſome have imagined. Concerning ſo remote a period, mere conjecture muſt ſupply the place of argument and poſitive proofs.

eyes, two pleaſant flames, rolled between his wandering locks.—I knew the king of Atha, and threw my ſpear on earth.—Dark, we turned, and ſilent paſſed to mix with other foes.

NOT ſo paſſed the ſtriving kings *. They mixed in echoing fray; like the meeting of ghoſts, in the dark wing of winds. Thro' either breaſt ruſhed the ſpears; nor yet lay the foes on earth. A rock received their fall; and half-reclined they lay in death. Each held the lock of his foe; and grimly ſeemed to roll his eyes. The ſtream of the rock leapt on their ſhields, and mixed below with blood.

THE battle ceaſed in I-thorno. The ſtrangers met in peace: Cathmor from Atha of ſtreams, and Oſſian, king of harps. We placed the dead in earth. Our ſteps were by Runar's bay. With the bounding boat, afar, advanced a ridgy wave. Dark was the rider of ſeas, but a beam of light was there, like the ray of the ſun, in Stromlo's rolling ſmoak. It was the daughter † of Suran-dronlo,

* Culgorm and Suran-dronlo. The combat of the kings and their attitude in death are highly picturesque, and expreſſive of that ferocity of manners, which diſtinguiſhed the northern nations.—The wild melody of the verſification of the original, is inimitably beautiful, and very different from the reſt of the works of Oſſian.

† Tradition has handed down the name of this princeſs. The bards call her Runo-forlo, which has no other ſort of title for being genuine, but its not being of Galic original; a diſtinction, which the bards had not the art to preſerve, when they feigned names for foreigners. The highland ſenachies, who very often endeavoured to ſupply the deficiency, they thought they found in the tales of Oſſian, have given us the continuation of the ſtory of the daughter of Suran-dronlo. The cataſtrophe is ſo unnatural, and the circumſtances of it ſo ridiculouſly pompous, that, for the ſake of the inventors, I ſhall conceal them.

The wildly-beautiful appearance of Runo-forlo, made a deep impreſſion on a chief, ſome ages ago, who was himſelf no con-

dronlo, wild in brightened looks. Her eyes were wandering flames, amidſt diſordered locks. Forward is her white arm, with the ſpear; her high-heaving breaſt is ſeen, white as foamy waves that riſe, by turns, amidſt rocks. They are beautiful, but they are terrible, and mariners call the winds.

Come, ye dwellers of Loda! Carchar, pale in the midſt of clouds! Sluthmor, that ſtrideſt in airy halls! Corchtur, terrible in winds! Receive, from his daughter's ſpear, the foes of Suran-dronlo.

No ſhadow, at his roaring ſtreams; no mildly-looking form was he! When he took up his ſpear, the hawks ſhook their ſounding wings: for blood was poured around the ſteps of dark-eyed Surandronlo.

He lighted me, no harmleſs beam, to glitter on his ſtreams. Like meteors, I was bright, but I blaſted the foes of Surandronlo—— * * * * * *

* * * * * * * *

contemptible poet. The ſtory is romantic, but not incredible, if we make allowances for the lively imagination of a man of genius.—Our chief failing, in a ſtorm, along one of the iſlands of Orkney, ſaw a woman, in a boat, near the ſhore, whom he thought, as he expreſſes it himſelf, *as beautiful as a ſudden ray of the ſun, on the dark-heaving deep.* The verſes of Oſſian, on the attitude of Runo-forlo, which was ſo ſimilar to that of the woman in the boat, wrought ſo much on his fancy, that he fell deſperately in love.—The winds, however, drove him from the coaſt, and, after a few days, he arrived at his reſidence in Scotland.—There his paſſion increaſed to ſuch a degree, that two of his friends, fearing the conſequence, ſailed to the Orkneys, to carry to him the object of his deſire.—Upon enquiry they ſoon found the nymph, and carried her to the enamoured chief; but mark his ſurprize, when, inſtead *of a ray of the ſun*, he ſaw a ſkinny fiſher-woman, more than middle aged, appearing before him.—Tradition here ends the ſtory: but it may be eaſily ſuppoſed that the paſſion of the chief ſoon ſubſided.

NOR unconcerned heard Sul-malla, the praiſe of Cathmor of ſhields. He was within her ſoul, like a fire in ſecret heath, which awakes at the voice of the blaſt, and ſends its beam abroad. Amidſt the ſong removed the daughter of kings, like the ſoft ſound of a ſummer-breeze; when it lifts the heads of flowers, and curls the lakes and ſtreams.

BY night came a dream to Oſſian; without form ſtood the ſhadow of Trenmor. He ſeemed to ſtrike the dim ſhield, on Selma's ſtreamy rock. I roſe, in my rattling ſteel; I knew that war was near. Before the winds our ſails were ſpread; when Lumon ſhewed its ſtreams to the morn.

COME from the watching of night, Malvina, lonely beam!

CATH-

CATH-LODA;

A

POEM.

DUAN FIRST.

ARGUMENT.

Fingal, in one of his voyages to the Orkney iſlands, was driven, by ſtreſs of weather, into a bay of Scandinavia, near the reſidence of Starno, king of Lochlin. Starno invites Fingal to a feaſt. Fingal, doubting the faith of the king, and mindful of his former breach of hoſpitality, [Fingal, b. 3.] refuſes to go.——Starno gathers together his tribes: Fingal reſolves to defend himſelf.——Night coming on, Duth-maruno propoſes to Fingal, to obſerve the motions of the enemy.—The king himſelf undertakes the watch. Advancing towards the enemy, he, accidentally, comes to the cave of Turthor, where Starno had confined Conban-carglas, the captive daughter of a neighbouring chief.——Her ſtory is imperfect, a part of the original being loſt.—Fingal comes to a place of worſhip, where Starno and his ſon, Swaran, conſulted the ſpirit of Loda, concerning the iſſue of the war.—The rencounter of Fingal and Swaran.—The *duän* concludes, with a deſcription of the airy hall of Cruth-loda ſuppoſed to be the Odin of Scandinavia.

CATH-LODA:

A

POEM.

DUAN* FIRST.

A TALE of the times of old!—Why, thou wanderer unſeen, that bendeſt the thiſtle of Lora,—why, thou breeze of the valley, haſt thou left mine ear? I hear no diſtant roar of ſtreams, no ſound of the harp, from the rocks! Come, thou huntreſs of Lutha, roll back his ſoul to the bard.

I LOOK

* The bards diſtinguiſhed thoſe compoſitions, in which the narration is often interrupted, by epiſodes and apoſtrophes, by the name of *Duän*. Since the extinction of the order of the bards, it has been a general name for all ancient compoſitions in verſe.—The abrupt manner in which the ſtory of this poem begins, may render it obſcure to ſome readers; it may not therefore be improper, to give here the traditional preface, which is generally prefixed to it. Two years after he took to wife Ros-crana, the daughter of Cormac, king of Ireland, Fingal undertook an expedition into Orkney, to viſit his friend Cathulla, king of Iniſtore. After ſtaying a few days

at

I LOOK forward to Lochlin of lakes, to the dark, ridgy bay of U-thorno, where Fingal deſcended from Ocean, from the roar of winds. Few are the heroes of Morven, in a land unknown!—Starno ſent a dweller of Loda, to bid Fingal to the feaſt; but the king remembered the paſt, and all his rage aroſe.

NOR Gormal's moſſy towers, nor Starno ſhall Fingal behold. Deaths wander, like ſhadows, over his fiery ſoul. Do I forget that beam of light, the white-handed daughter * of kings? Go, ſon of Loda; his words are but blaſts to Fingal: blaſts, that, to and fro, roll the thiſtle, in autumnal vales.

DUTH-MARUNO †, arm of death! Cromma-glas, of iron ſhields! Struthmor, dweller of battle's wing! Cormar, whoſe ſhips bound

at Carric-thura, the reſidence of Cathulla, the king ſet ſail, to return to Scotland; but, a violent ſtorm ariſing, his ſhips were driven into a bay of Scandinavia, near Gormal, the ſeat of Starno, king of Lochlin, his avowed enemy. Starno, upon the appearance of ſtrangers on his coaſt, ſummoned together the neighbouring tribes, and advanced, in a hoſtile manner, towards the bay of U-thorno, where Fingal had taken ſhelter. Upon diſcovering who the ſtrangers were, and fearing the valour of Fingal, which he had, more than once, experienced before, he reſolved to accompliſh by treachery, what he was afraid he ſhould fail in by open force. He invited, therefore, Fingal to a feaſt, at which he intended to aſſaſſinate him. The king prudently declined to go, and Starno betook himſelf to arms.—The ſequel of the ſtory may be learned from the poem itſelf.

* Agandecca, the daughter of Starno, whom her father killed, on account of her diſcovering to Fingal, a plot laid againſt his life. Her ſtory is related, at large, in the third book of Fingal.

† Duth-maruno is a name very famous in tradition. Many of his great actions are handed down, but the poems, which contained the detail of them, are long ſince loſt. He lived, it is ſuppoſed, in that part of the north of Scotland, which is over againſt Orkney. Duth-maruno, Cromma-glas, Struthmor, and Cormar, are mentioned, as attending Comhal, in his laſt battle againſt the tribe of Morni, in a poem, which

bound on ſeas, careleſs as the courſe of a meteor, on dark-rolling clouds! Ariſe, around me, children of heroes, in a land unknown. Let each look on his ſhield, like Trenmor, the ruler of battles. "Come down, ſaid the king, thou dweller between the harps. Thou ſhalt roll this ſtream away, or dwell with me in earth."

AROUND him they roſe in wrath.—No words came forth: they ſeized their ſpears. Each ſoul is rolled into itſelf.—At length the ſudden clang is waked, on all their echoing ſhields.—Each took his hill, by night; at intervals, they darkly ſtood. Unequal burſts the hum of ſongs, between the roaring wind.—Broad over them roſe the moon.—In his arms, came tall Duth-maruno; he from Croma-charn of rocks, ſtern hunter of the boar. In his dark boat he roſe on waves, when Crumthormoth * awaked its woods. In the chace he ſhone, among foes:—No fear was thine, Duth-maruno.

SON of Comhal, he ſaid, my ſteps ſhall be forward thro' night. From this ſhield I ſhall view them, over their gleaming tribes. Starno, of lakes, is before me, and Swaran, the foe of ſtrangers. Their words are not in vain, by Loda's ſtone of power.—If Duth-maruno returns not, his ſpouſe is lonely, at home, where meet two roaring ſtreams, on Crathmo-craulo's plain. Around are hills,

which is ſtill preſerved. It is not the work of Oſſian; the phraſeology betrays it to be a modern compoſition. It is ſomething like thoſe trivial compoſitions, which the Iriſh bards forged, under the name of Oſſian, in the fifteenth and ſixteenth centuries.—Duth-maruno ſignifies, *black and ſteady*; Cromma glas, *lending and ſwartly*; Struth-mor, *roaring ſtream*; Cormar, *expert at ſea*.

* Crumthormoth, one of the Orkney or Shetland iſlands. The name is not of Galic original. It was ſubject to its own petty king, who is mentioned in one of Oſſian's poems.

with their woods; the ocean is rolling near. My ſon looks on ſcreaming ſea-fowl, young wanderer of the field. Give the head of a boar to Can-dona *, tell him of his father's joy, when the briſtly ſtrength of I-thorno rolled on his lifted ſpear.

* Ccan-daona, *head of the people*, the ſon of Duth-maruno. He became afterwards famous, in the expeditions of Oſſian, after the death of Fingal. The traditional tales concerning him are very numerous, and, from the epithet, in them, beſtowed on him (*Candona of boars*) it would appear, that he applied himſelf to that kind of hunting, which his father, in this paragraph, is ſo anxious to recommend to him. As I have mentioned the traditional tales of the Highlands, it may not be improper here, to give ſome account of them. After the expulſion of the bards, from the houſes of the chiefs, they, being an indolent race of men, owed all their ſubſiſtence to the generoſity of the vulgar, whom they diverted with repeating the compoſitions of their predeceſſors, and running up the genealogies of their entertainers to the family of their chiefs. As this ſubject was, however, ſoon exhauſted, they were obliged to have recourſe to invention, and form ſtories having no foundation in fact which were ſwallowed, with great credulity, by an ignorant multitude. By frequent repeating, the fable grew upon their hands, and, as each threw in whatever circumſtance he thought conducive to raiſe the admiration of his hearers, the ſtory became, at laſt, ſo devoid of all probability, that even the vulgar themſelves did not believe it. They, however, liked the tales ſo well, that the bards found their advantage in turning profeſſed tale-makers. They then launched out into the wildeſt regions of fiction and romance. I firmly believe, there are more ſtories of giants, enchanted caſtles, dwarfs, and palfreys, in the Highlands, than in any country in Europe. Theſe tales, it is certain, like other romantic compoſitions, have many things in them unnatural, and, conſequently, diſguſtful to true taſte, but, I know not how it happens, they command attention more than any other fictions I ever met with.—The extream length of theſe pieces is very ſurpriſing, ſome of them requiring many days to repeat them, but ſuch hold they take of the memory, that few circumſtances are ever omitted by thoſe who have received them only from oral tradition: What is ſtill more amazing, the very language of the bards is ſtill preſerved. It is curious to ſee, that the deſcriptions of magnificence, introduced in theſe tales, is even ſuperior to all the pompous oriental fictions of the kind.

NOT forgeting my fathers, ſaid Fingal, I have bounded over ridgy ſeas: theirs was the times of danger, in the days of old. Nor gathers darkneſs on me, before foes, tho' I am young, in my locks.—Chief of Crathmo-craulo, the field of night is mine.

HE ruſhed, in all his arms, wide-bounding over Turthor's ſtream, that ſent its ſullen roar, by night, thro' Gormal's miſty vale.—A moon-beam glittered on a rock; in the midſt, ſtood a ſtately form; a form with floating locks, like Lochlin's white-boſomed maids.—Unequal are her ſteps, and ſhort: ſhe throws a broken ſong on wind. At times ſhe toſſes her white arms: for grief is in her ſoul.

TORCUL-TORNO *, of aged locks! where now are thy ſteps, by Lulan? thou haſt failed, at thine own dark ſtreams, father of

* Torcul-torno, according to tradition, was king of Crathlun, a diſtrict in Sweden. The river Lulan ran near the reſidence of Torcul-torno. There is a river in Sweden, ſtill called Lula, which is probably the ſame with Lulan. The war between Starno and Torcul-torno, which terminated in the death of the latter, had its riſe at a hunting party. Starno being invited, in a friendly manner, by Torcul-torno, both kings, with their followers, went to the mountains of Stivamor, to hunt. A boar ruſhed from the wood before the kings, and Torcul-torno killed it. Starno thought this behaviour a breach upon the privilege of gueſts, who were always *honoured*, as tradition expreſſes it, *with the danger of the chace*. A quarrel aroſe, the kings came to battle, with all their attendants, and the party of Torcul-torno were totally defeated, and he himſelf ſlain. Starno purſued his victory, laid waſte the diſtrict of Crathlun, and, coming to the reſidence of Torcul-torno, carried off, by force, Conban-carglas, the beautiful daughter of his enemy. Her he confined in a cave, near the palace of Gormal, where, on account of her cruel treatment, ſhe became diſtracted.

The paragraph, juſt now before us, is the ſong of Conban-carglas, at the time ſhe was diſcovered by Fingal. It is in Lyric meaſure, and ſet to muſic, which is wild and ſimple, and ſo inimitably ſuited to the ſituation of the unhappy lady, that few can hear it without tears.

Conban-carglas !——But I behold thee, chief of Lulan, ſporting by Loda's hall, when the dark-ſkirted night is rolled along the ſky.

Thou, ſometimes, hideſt the moon, with thy ſhield. I have ſeen her dim, in heaven. Thou kindleſt thy hair into meteors, and faileſt along the night.—Why am I forgot, in my cave, king of ſhaggy boars? Look, from the hall of Loda, on lonely Conban-carglas.

"Who art thou, ſaid Fingal, voice of night?"——She, trembling, turned away. "Who art thou, in thy darkneſs?"——She ſhrunk into the cave.——The king looſed the thong from her hands; he aſked about her fathers.

Torcul-torno, ſhe ſaid, once dwelt at Lulan's foamy ſtream: he dwelt——but, now, in Loda's hall, he ſhakes the ſounding ſhell. He met Starno of Lochlin, in battle; long fought the dark-eyed kings. My father fell, at length, blue-ſhielded Torcul-torno.

By a rock, at Lulan's ſtream, I had pierced the bounding roe. My white hand gathered my hair, from off the ſtream of winds. I heard a noiſe. Mine eyes were up. My ſoft breaſt roſe on high. My ſtep was forward, at Lulan, to meet thee, Torcul-torno!

It was Starno, dreadful king!——His red eyes rolled on Conban-carglas. Dark waved his ſhaggy brow, above his gathered ſmile. Where is my father, I ſaid, he that was mighty in war? Thou are left alone among foes, daughter of Torcul-torno!

He took my hand. He raiſed the ſail. In this cave he placed me dark. At times, he comes, a gathered miſt. He lifts, before me, my father's ſhield. Often paſſes a beam * of youth, far-diſtant from my cave. He dwells lonely in the ſoul of the daughter of Torcul-torno.

Daughter of Lulan, ſaid Fingal, white-handed Conban-carglas; a cloud, marked with ſtreaks of fire, is rolled along the ſoul. Look not to that dark-robed moon; nor yet to thoſe meteors of heaven; my gleaming ſteel is around thee, daughter of Torcul-torno.

It is not the ſteel of the feeble, nor of the dark in ſoul. The maids are not ſhut in our † caves of ſtreams; nor toſſing their white arms alone. They bend, fair within their locks, above the harps of Selma. Their voice is not in the deſart wild, young light of Torcul-torno.

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Fingal, again, advanced his ſteps, wide thro' the boſom of night, to where the trees of Loda ſhook amidſt ſqually winds. Three ſtones, with heads of moſs, are there; a ſtream, with

* By *the beam of youth*, it afterwards appears, that Conban-carglas means Swaran, the ſon of Starno, with whom, during her confinement, ſhe had fallen in love.

† From this contraſt, which Fingal draws, between his own nation, and the inhabitants of Scandinavia, we may learn, that the former were much leſs barbarous than the latter. This diſtinction is ſo much obſerved throughout the poems of Oſſian, that there can be no doubt, that he followed the real manners of both nations in his own time. At the cloſe of the ſpeech of Fingal, there is a great part of the original loſt.

foaming courſe; and dreadful, rolled around them, is the dark-red cloud of Loda. From its top looked forward a ghoſt, half-formed of the ſhadowy ſmoak. He poured his voice, at times, amidſt the roaring ſtream.—Near, bending beneath a blaſted tree, two heroes received his words: Swaran of the lakes, and Starno foe of ſtrangers.—On their dun ſhields, they darkly leaned: their ſpears are forward in night. Shrill ſounds the blaſt of darkneſs, in Starno's floating beard.

THEY heard the tread of Fingal. The warriors roſe in arms. "Swaran, lay that wanderer low, ſaid Starno, in his pride. Take the ſhield of thy father; it is a rock in war."—Swaran threw his gleaming ſpear: it ſtood fixed in Loda's tree. Then came the foes forward, with ſwords. They mixed their rattling ſteel. Thro' the thongs of Swaran's ſhield ruſhed the blade * of Luno. The ſhield fell rolling on earth. Cleft the helmet † fell down. Fingal ſtopt the lifted ſteel. Wrathful ſtood Swaran, unarmed. He rolled his ſilent eyes, and threw his ſword on earth. Then, ſlowly ſtalking over the ſtream, he whiſtled as he went.

NOR unſeen of his father is Swaran. Starno turned away in wrath. His ſhaggy brows waved dark, above his gathered rage. He ſtruck Loda's tree, with his ſpear; he raiſed the horn of ſongs. —They came to the hoſt of Lochlin, each in his own dark path; like two foam-covered ſtreams, from two rainy vales.

* The ſword of Fingal, ſo called from its maker, Luno of Lochlin.

† The helmet of Swaran. The behaviour of Fingal is always conſiſtent with that generoſity of ſpirit which belongs to a hero. He takes advantage of a free unarmed.

To Turthor's plain Fingal returned. Fair roſe the beam of the eaſt. It ſhone on the ſpoils of Lochlin in the hand of the king. From her cave came forth, in her beauty, the daughter of Torcul-torno. She gathered her hair from wind; and wildly raiſed her ſong. The ſong of Lulan of ſhells, where once her father dwelt.

She ſaw Starno's bloody ſhield. Gladneſs roſe, a light, on her face. She ſaw the cleft helmet of Swaran *; ſhe ſhrunk, darkened, from the king.——" Art thou fallen, by thy hundred ſtreams, O love of Conban-carglas!"——

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U-thorno, that riſeſt in waters; on whoſe ſide are the meteors of night! I behold the dark moon deſcending behind thy echoing woods. On thy top dwells the miſty Loda, the houſe of the ſpirits of men.—In the end of his cloudy hall bends forward Cruth-loda of ſwords. His form is dimly ſeen, amidſt his wavy miſt. His right-hand is on his ſhield: in his left is the half-viewleſs ſhell. The roof of his dreadful hall is marked with nightly fires.

* Conban-carglas, from ſeeing the helmet of Swaran bloody in the hands of Fingal, conjectures that that hero was killed.—A part of the original is loſt. It appears, however, from the ſequel of the poem, that the daughter of Torcul-torno did not long ſurvive her lover, occaſioned by the ſuppoſed death of her lover.—The deſcription of the airy hall of Loda (which is ſuppoſed to be the ſame with that of Odin, the deity of Scandinavia) is more picturesque and deſcriptive, than any in the Edda, or other works of the northern Scalders.

The

THE race of Cruth-loda advance, a ridge of formleſs ſhades. He reaches the ſounding ſhell, to thoſe who ſhone in war; but, between him and the feeble, his ſhield riſes, a cruſt of darkneſs. He is a ſetting meteor to the weak in arms.—Bright, as a rainbow on ſtreams, came white-armed Conban-carglas.——

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CATH-

CATH-LODA;

A

POEM.

DUAN SECOND.

ARGUMENT.

FINGAL returning, with day, devolves the command of the army on Duth-maruno, who engages the enemy, and drives them over the ſtream of Turthor. Fingal, after recalling his people, congratulates Duth-maruno on his ſucceſs, but diſcovers, that that hero was mortally wounded in the engagement.—Duth-maruno dies. Ullin, the bard, in honour of the dead, introduces the epiſode of Colgorm and Strina-dona, with which the *duän* concludes.

CATH-LODA:

A

POEM.

DUAN SECOND.

WHERE art thou, ſon of the king, ſaid dark-haired Duth-maruno? Where haſt thou failed, young beam of Selma? —He returns not from the boſom of night! Morning is ſpread U-thorno: in his miſt is the ſun, on his hill.—Warriors, lift the ſhields, in my preſence. He muſt not fall, like a fire from heaven, whoſe place is not marked on the ground.——He comes, like an eagle, from the ſkirt of his ſqually wind! In his hand are the ſpoils of foes.—King of Selma, our ſouls were ſad.

NEAR us are the foes, Duth-maruno. They come forward, like waves in miſt, when their foamy tops are ſeen, at times, above the low-ſailing vapour.—The traveller ſhrinks on his journey, and knows not whither to fly.—No trembling travellers are we!—Sons

of heroes call forth the ſteel.—Shall the ſword of Fingal ariſe, or ſhall a warrior lead?

* THE deeds of old, ſaid Duth-maruno, are like paths to our eyes, O Fingal. Broad-ſhielded Trenmor, is ſtill ſeen, amidſt his own dim years. Nor feeble was the ſoul of the king. There, no dark deed wandered in ſecret.——From their hundred ſtreams came the tribes, to graſſy Colglan-crona. Their chiefs were before them. Each ſtrove to lead the war. Their ſwords were often half-unſheathed. Red rolled their eyes of rage. Separate they ſtood, and hummed their ſurly ſongs.——"Why ſhould they yield to each other? their fathers were equal in war."

TRENMOR was there, with his people, ſtately in youthful locks. He ſaw the advancing foe. The grief of his ſoul aroſe. He bade

* In this ſhort epiſode we have a very probable account given us, of the origin of monarchy in Caledonia. The *Caël*, or Gauls, who poſſeſſed the countries to the north of the Firth of Edinburgh, were, originally, a number of diſtinct tribes, or clans, each ſubject to its own chief, who was free and independent of any other power. When the Romans invaded them, the common danger might, perhaps, have induced thoſe *reguli* to join together, but, as they were unwilling to yield to the command of one of their own number, their battles were ill-conducted, and, conſequently, unſucceſsful.—Trenmor was the firſt who repreſented to the chiefs, the bad conſequences of carrying on their wars in this irregular manner, and adviſed, that they themſelves ſhould alternately lead in battle. They did ſo, but they were unſucceſsful. When it came to Trenmor's turn, he totally defeated the enemy, by his ſuperior valour and conduct, which gained him ſuch an intereſt among the tribes, that he, and his family after him, were regarded as kings; or, to uſe the poet's expreſſion, *the words of power ruſhed forth from Selma of kings.*—The regal authority, however, except in time of war, was but inconſiderable; for every chief, within his own diſtrict, was abſolute and independent.—From the ſcene of the battle in this epiſode, (which was in the valley of Crona, a little to the north of Agricola's wall) I ſhould ſuppoſe, that the enemies of the Caledonians were the Romans, or provincial Britons.

the chiefs to lead, by turns: they led, but they were rolled away. —From his own moſſy hill, blue-ſhielded Trenmor came down. He led wide-ſkirted battle, and the ſtrangers failed.—Around him the dark-browed warriors came: they ſtruck the ſhield of joy. Like a pleaſant gale, the words of power ruſhed forth from Selma of kings. But the chiefs led, by turns, in war, till mighty danger roſe: then was the hour of the king to conquer in the field.

"Not unknown, ſaid Cromma-glas * of ſhields, are the deeds of our fathers.—But who ſhall now lead the war, before the race of kings? Miſt ſettles on theſe four dark hills: within it let each warrior ſtrike his ſhield. Spirits may deſcend in darkneſs, and mark us for the war."——They went, each to his hill of miſt. Bards marked the ſounds of the ſhields. Loudeſt rung thy boſs, Duth-maruno. Thou muſt lead in war.

* In tradition, this Cromma-glas makes a great figure in that battle which Comhal loſt, together with his life, to the tribe of Morni. I have juſt now, in my hands, an Iriſh compoſition, of a very modern date, as appears from the language, in which all the traditions, concerning that deciſive engagement, are jumbled together. In juſtice to the merit of the poem, I ſhould have here preſented to the reader a tranſlation of it, did not the bard mention ſome circumſtances very ridiculous, and others altogether indecent. Morna, the wife of Comhal, had a principal hand in all the tranſactions previous to the defeat and death of her huſband; ſhe, to uſe the words of the bard, *who was the guiding ſtar of the women of Erin.* The bard, it is to be hoped, miſrepreſented the ladies of his country, for Morna's behaviour was, according to him, ſo void of all decency and virtue, that it cannot be ſuppoſed, they had choſen her for their *guiding ſtar.*——The poem conſiſts of many ſtanzas. The language is figurative, and the numbers harmonious; but the piece is ſo full of anachroniſms, and ſo unequal in its compoſition, that the author, moſt undoubtedly, was either mad, or drunk, when he wrote it.——It is worthy of being remarked, that Comhal is, in this poem, very often called, *Comhal na h'Albin*, or *Comhal of Albion*, which ſufficiently demonſtrates, that the allegations of Keating and O Flaherty, concerning *Fion Mac-Cumnal*, are but of late invention.

LIKE the murmur of waters, the race of U-thorno came down. Starno led the battle, and Swaran of ſtormy iſles. They looked forward from iron ſhields, like Cruth-loda fiery-eyed, when he looks from behind the darkened moon, and ſtrews his ſigns on night.

THE foes met by Turthor's ſtream. They heaved like ridgy waves. Their echoing ſtrokes are mixed. Shadowy death flies over the hoſts. They were clouds of hail, with ſqually winds in their ſkirts. Their ſhowers are roaring together. Below them ſwells the dark-rolling deep.

STRIFE of gloomy U-thorno, why ſhould I mark thy wounds? Thou art with the years that are gone; thou fadeſt on my ſoul. Starno brought forward his ſkirt of war, and Swaran his own dark wing. Nor a harmleſs fire is Duth-maruno's ſword.—Lochlin is rolled over her ſtreams. The wrathful kings are folded in thoughts. They roll their ſilent eyes, over the flight of their land.—The horn of Fingal was heard; the ſons of woody Albion returned. But many lay, by Turthor's ſtream, ſilent in their blood.

CHIEF of Crom-charn, ſaid the king, Duth-maruno, hunter of boars! not harmleſs returns my eagle, from the field of foes. For this white-boſomed Lanul ſhall brighten, at her ſtreams; Candona ſhall rejoice, at rocky Crathmo-craulo.

COLGORM *, replied the chief, was the firſt of my race in Albion; Colgorm, the rider of ocean, thro' its watry vales. He flew his

* The family of Duth-maruno, it appears, came originally from Scandinavia, or, at leaſt, from ſome of the northern iſles, ſubject, in chief, to the kings of Lochlin.

his brother in I-thorno : he left the land of his fathers. He chofe his place, in filence, by rocky Crathmo-craulo. His race came forth, in their years ; they came forth to war, but they always fell. The wound of my fathers is mine, king of echoing iſles !

He drew an arrow from his ſide. He fell pale, in a land unknown. His ſoul came forth to his fathers, to their ſtormy iſle. There they purſued boars of miſt, along the ſkirts of winds.—— The chiefs ſtood ſilent around, as the ſtones of Loda, on their hill. The traveller ſees them, thro' the twilight, from his lonely path. He thinks them the ghoſts of the aged, forming future wars.

Night came down, on U-thorno. Still ſtood the chiefs in their grief. The blaſt hiſſed, by turns, thro' every warrior's hair.—Fingal, at length, burſted forth from the thoughts of his ſoul. He called Ullin of harps, and bade the ſong to riſe.—No falling fire, that is only ſeen, and then retires in night ; no departing meteor was Crathmo-craulo's chief. He was like the ſtrong-beaming ſun, long rejoicing on his hill. Call the names of his fathers, from their dwellings old.

I-thorno *, ſaid the bard, that riſeſt midſt ridgy ſeas ! Why is thy head ſo gloomy, in the ocean's miſt ? From thy vales came forth

Lochlin. The Highland ſenachies, who never miſſed to make their comments on, and additions to, the works of Oſſian, have given us a long liſt of the anceſtors of Duth-maruno, and a particular account of their actions, many of which are of the marvellous kind. One of the tale makers of the north has choſen for his hero, Starnmor, the father of Duth-maruno, and, conſidering the adventures thro' which he has led him, the piece is neither diſagreeable, nor abounding with that kind of fiction, which ſhocks credibility.

* This epiſode is, in the original, extremely

forth a race, fearleſs as thy ſtrong-winged eagles; the race of Colgorm of iron ſhields, dwellers of Loda's hall.

In Tormoth's reſounding iſle, aroſe Lurthan, ſtreamy hill. It bent its woody head above a ſilent vale. There, at foamy Cruruth's ſource, dwelt Rurmar, hunter of boars. His daughter was fair as a ſun-beam, white-boſomed Strina-dona!

Many a king of heroes, and hero of iron ſhields; many a youth of heavy locks came to Rurmar's echoing hall. They came to woo the maid, the ſtately huntreſs of Tormoth wild.—But thou lookeſt careleſs from thy ſteps, high-boſomed Strina-dona!

If on the heath ſhe moved, her breaſt was whiter than the down of Cana *; if on the ſea-beat ſhore, than the foam of the rolling ocean. Her eyes were two ſtars of light; her face was heaven's bow in ſhowers; her dark hair flowed round it, like the ſtreaming clouds.—Thou wert the dweller of ſouls, white-handed Strina-dona!

tremely beautiful. It is ſet to that wild kind of muſic, which ſome of the Highlanders diſtinguiſh, by the title of *Fón Oi-marra*, or, the *Song of mermaids*. Some part of the air is abſolutely infernal, but there are many returns in the meaſure, which are inexpreſſibly wild and beautiful. From the genius of the muſic, I ſhould think it came originally from Scandinavia, for the fictions delivered down concerning the *Oi-marra*, (who are reputed the authors of the muſic) exactly correſpond with the notions of the northern nations, concerning their *dïæ*, or, *goddeſſes of death*.—Of all the names in this epiſode, there is none of a Galic original, except Strina-dona, which ſignifies, the *ſtri'e of heroes*.

* The *Cana* is a certain kind of graſs, which grows plentiful in the heathy moraſſes of the north. Its ſtalk is of the reedy kind, and it carries a tuft of down, very much reſembling cotton. It is exceſſively white, and, conſequently, often introduced by the bards, in their ſimilies concerning the beauty of women.

COLGORM came, in his ſhip, and Corcul-Suran, king of ſhells. The brothers came, from I-thorno, to woo the ſun-beam of Tormoth's iſle. She ſaw them in their echoing ſteel. Her ſoul was fixed on blue-eyed Colgorm.—Ul-lochlin's * nightly eye looked in, and ſaw the toſſing arms of Strina-dona.

WRATHFUL the brothers frowned. Their flaming eyes, in ſilence, met. They turned away. They ſtruck their ſhields. Their hands were trembling on their ſwords. They ruſhed into the ſtrife of heroes, for long-haired Strina-dona.

CORCUL-SURAN fell in blood. On his iſle, raged the ſtrength of his father. He turned Colgorm, from I-thorno, to wander on all the winds.—In Crathmo-craulo's rocky field, he dwelt, by a foreign ſtream. Nor darkened the king alone, that beam of light was near, the daughter of echoing Tormoth, white-armed Strina-dona†.

* * * * *

* * * *

* Ul-lochlin, *the guide to Lochlin*; the name of a ſtar.

† The continuation of this epiſode is juſt now in my hands; but the language is ſo different from, and the ideas ſo unworthy of, Oſſian, that I have rejected it, as an interpolation by a modern bard.

CATH-

CATH-LODA;

A

POEM.

DUAN THIRD.

ARGUMENT.

Ossian, after ſome general reflections, deſcribes the ſituation of Fingal, and the poſition of the army of Lochlin.—The converſation of Starno and Swaran.—The epiſode of Cormar-trunar and Foinar-bragal.—Starno, from his own example, recommends to Swaran, to ſurprize Fingal, who had retired alone to a neighbouring hill. Upon Swaran's refuſal, Starno undertakes the enterprize himſelf, is overcome, and taken priſoner, by Fingal.—He is diſmiſſed, after a ſevere reprimand for his cruelty.

CATH-LODA:

A

POEM.

DUAN THIRD.

WHENCE is the ſtream of years? Whither do they roll along? Where have they hid, in miſt, their many-coloured ſides? I look into the times of old, but they ſeem dim to Oſſian's eyes, like reflected moon-beams, on a diſtant lake. Here riſe the red beams of war!—There, ſilent, dwells a feeble race! They mark no years with their deeds, as flow they paſs along.—Dweller between the ſhields; thou that awakeſt the failing ſoul, deſcend from thy wall, harp of Cona, with thy voices three! Come with that which kindles the paſt: rear the forms of old, on their own dark-brown years!

* UTHORNO, hill of ſtorms, I behold my race on thy ſide. Fingal is bending, in night, over Duth-maruno's tomb. Near him

* The bards, who were always ready to ſupply what they thought deficient in the poems of Oſſian, have inſerted a great many incidents between the ſecond and third

him are the ſteps of his heroes, hunters of the boar.—By Turthor's ſtream the hoſt of Lochlin is deep in ſhades. The wrathful kings ſtood on two hills; they looked forward from their boſſy ſhields. They looked forward on the ſtars of night, red-wandering in the weſt. Cruth-loda bends from high, like a formleſs meteor in clouds. He ſends abroad the winds, and marks them, with his ſigns. Starno foreſaw, that Morven's king was never to yield in war.

He twice ſtruck the tree in wrath. He ruſhed before his ſon. He hummed a ſurly ſong; and heard his hair in wind. Turned * from

duän of Cath-loda. Their interpolations are ſo eaſily diſtinguiſhed from the genuine remains of Oſſian, that it took me very little time to mark them out, and totally to reject them. If the modern Scotch and Iriſh bards have ſhewn any judgment, it is in aſcribing their own compoſitions to names of antiquity, for, by that means, they themſelves have eſcaped that contempt, which the authors of ſuch futile performances muſt, neceſſarily, have met with, from people of true taſte.—I was led into this obſervation, by an Iriſh poem, juſt now before me. It concerns a deſcent made by Swaran, king of Lochlin, on Ireland, and is the work, ſays the traditional preface prefixed to it, of *Oſſian Mac-Fion*. It however appears, from ſeveral pious ejaculations, that it was rather the compoſition of ſome good prieſt, in the fifteenth or ſixteenth century; for he ſpeaks, with great devotion, of pilgrimage, and more particularly, of the *blue-eyed daughters of the convent*. Religious, however, as this poet was, he was not altogether decent, in the ſcenes he introduces between Swaran and the wife of *Congcullion*, both of whom he repreſents as giants. It happening unfortunately, that *Congcullion* was only of a moderate ſtature, his wife, without heſitation, preferred Swaran, as a more adequate match for her own gigantic ſize. From this fatal preference proceeded ſo much miſchief, that the good poet altogether loſt ſight of his principal action, and he ends the piece, with an advice to men, in the choice of their wives, which, however good it may be, I ſhall leave concealed in the obſcurity of the original.

* The ſurly attitude of Starno and Swaran is well adapted to their fierce and uncomplying diſpoſitions. Their characters, at firſt ſight, ſeem little different; but, upon examination, we find, that the poet has dexterouſly

from one another, they ſtood, like two oaks, which different winds had bent; each hangs over its own loud rill, and ſhakes its boughs in the courſe of blaſts.

Annir, ſaid Starno of lakes, was a fire that conſumed of old. He poured death from his eyes, along the ſtriving fields. His joy was in the fall of men. Blood, to him, was a ſummer ſtream, that brings joy to withered vales, from its own moſſy rock.—He came forth to the lake Luth-cormo, to meet the tall Cormantrunar, he from Urlor of ſtreams, dweller of battle's wing.

The chief of Urlor had come to Gormal, with his dark-boſomed ſhips; he ſaw the daughter of Annir, white-armed Foinar-bragal. He ſaw her: nor careleſs rolled her eyes, on the rider of ſtormy waves. She fled to his ſhip in darkneſs, like a moon-beam thro' a nightly vale.—Annir purſued along the deep; he called the winds of heaven.—Nor alone was the king; Starno was by his ſide. Like U-thorno's young eagle, I turned my eyes on my father.

We came to roaring Urlor. With his people came tall Cormantrunar. We fought; but the foe prevailed. In his wrath ſtood Annir of lakes. He lopped the young trees, with his ſword. His eyes rolled red in his rage. I marked the ſoul of the king, and I retired in night.——From the field I took a broken helmet: a ſhield that was pierced with ſteel: pointleſs was the ſpear in my hand. I went to find the foe.

dexterouſly diſtinguiſhed between them. They were both dark, ſtubborn, haughty and reſerved; but Starno was cunning, revengeful, and cruel, to the higheſt degree; the diſpoſition of Swaran, though ſavage, was leſs bloody, and ſomewhat tinctured with generoſity. It is doing injuſtice to Oſſian, to ſay, that he has not a great variety of characters.

On

On a rock ſat tall Corman-trunar, beſide his burning oak; and, near him, beneath a tree, ſat deep-boſomed Foinar-bragal. I threw my broken ſhield before her; and ſpoke the words of peace. —Beſide his rolling ſea, lies Annir of many lakes. The king was pierced in battle; and Starno is to raiſe his tomb. Me, a ſon of Loda, he ſends to white-handed Foinar-bragal, to bid her ſend a lock from her hair, to reſt with her father, in earth.—And thou king of roaring Urlor, let the battle ceaſe, till Annir receive the ſhell, from fiery-eyed Cruth-loda.

* Bursting into tears, ſhe roſe, and tore a lock from her hair; a lock, which wandered, in the blaſt, along her heaving breaſt.—Corman-trunar gave the ſhell; and bade me to rejoice before him. —I reſted in the ſhade of night; and hid my face in my helmet deep.—Sleep deſcended on the foe. I roſe, like a ſtalking ghoſt. I pierced the ſide of Corman-trunar. Nor did Foinar-bragal eſcape. She rolled her white boſom in blood. Why then, daughter of heroes, didſt thou wake my rage?—Morning roſe. The foe were fled, like the departure of miſt. Annir ſtruck his boſſy ſhield. He called his dark-haired ſon. I came, ſtreaked with wandering blood: thrice roſe the ſhout of the king, like the burſting forth of a ſquall of wind, from a cloud, by night.—We rejoiced, three days, above the dead, and called the hawks of heaven. They came, from all their winds, to feaſt on Annir's foes.—Swaran!—

* Oſſian is very partial to the fair ſex. Even the daughter of the cruel Annir, the ſiſter of the revengeful and bloody Starno, partakes not of thoſe diſagreeable characters ſo peculiar to her family. She is altogether tender and delicate. Homer, of all ancient poets, uſes the ſex with leaſt ceremony. His cold contempt is even worſe, than the downright abuſe of the moderns; for to draw abuſe implies the poſſeſſion of ſome merit.

Fingal

Fingal is alone *, on his hill of night. Let thy ſpear pierce the king in ſecret; like Annir, my ſoul ſhall rejoice.

Son of Annir of Gormal, Swaran ſhall not ſlay in ſhades. I move forth in light: the hawks ruſh from all their winds. They are wont to trace my courſe: it is not harmleſs thro' war.

Burning roſe the rage of the king. He thrice raiſed his gleaming ſpear. But, ſtarting, he ſpared his ſon; and ruſhed into the night.—By Turthor's ſtream a cave is dark, the dwelling of Conban-carglas. There he laid the helmet of kings, and called the maid of Lulan, but ſhe was diſtant far, in Loda's reſounding hall.

Swelling in his rage, he ſtrode, to where Fingal lay alone. The king was laid on his ſhield, on his own ſecret hill.—Stern hunter of ſhaggy boars, no feeble maid is laid before thee; no boy, on his ſerny bed, by Turthor's murmuring ſtream. Here is ſpread the couch of the mighty, from which they riſe to deeds of death. Hunter of ſhaggy boars awaken not the terrible.

Starno came murmuring on. Fingal aroſe in arms. "Who art thou, ſon of night?" Silent he threw the ſpear. They mixed their gloomy ſtrife. The ſhield of Starno fell, cleft in twain. He is bound to an oak. The early beam aroſe.—Then Fingal beheld the king of Gormal. He rolled a while his ſilent eyes. He thought

* Fingal, according to the cuſtom of the Caledonian kings, had retired to a hill alone, as he himſelf was to reſume the command of the army the next day. Starno might have ſome intelligence of the king's retiring, which occaſions his requeſt to Swaran, to ſtab him; as he foreſaw, by his art of divination, that he could not overcome him in open battle.

of

of other days, when white-boſomed Agandecca moved like the muſic of ſongs.—He looſed the thong from his hands.—Son of Annir, he ſaid, retire. Retire to Gormal of ſhells; a beam that was ſet returns. I remember thy white-boſomed daughter;—— dreadful king away!——Go to thy troubled dwelling, cloudy foe of the lovely! Let the ſtranger ſhun thee, thou gloomy in the hall!

A TALE of the times of old!

OINA-MORUL:

A

POEM.

ARGUMENT.

AFTER an addreſs to Malvina, the daughter of Toſcar, Oſſian proceeds to relate his own expedition to Fuärfed, an iſland of Scandinavia.—Mal-orchol, king of Fuärfed, being hard preſſed in war, by Ton-thormod, chief of Sar-dronlo, (who had demanded, in vain, the daughter of Mal-orchol in marriage) Fingal ſent Oſſian to his aid.—— Oſſian, on the day after his arrival, came to battle with Ton-thormod, and took him priſoner.—Mal-orchol offers his daughter Oina-morul to Oſſian; but he, diſcovering her paſſion for Ton-thormod, generouſly ſurrenders her to her lover, and brings about a reconciliation between the two kings.

OINA-MORUL:

A

POEM.

AS flies the unconſtant ſun, over Larmon's graſſy hill; ſo paſs the tales of old, along my ſoul, by night. When bards are removed to their place; when harps are hung in Selma's hall; then comes a voice to Oſſian, and awakes his ſoul. It is the voice of years that are gone: they roll before me, with all their deeds. I ſeize the tales, as they paſs, and pour them forth in ſong. Nor a troubled ſtream is the ſong of the king, it is like the riſing of muſic from Lutha of the ſtrings.—Lutha of many ſtrings, not ſilent are thy ſtreamy rocks, when the white hands of Malvina move upon the harp.—Light of the ſhadowy thoughts, that fly acroſs my ſoul, daughter of Toſcar of helmets, wilt thou not hear the ſong! We call back, maid of Lutha, the years that have rolled away.

IT was in the days of the king, while yet my locks were young, that I marked Con-cathlin *, on high, from ocean's nightly wave. My

* Con-cathlin, *mild beam of the wave.* What ſtar was ſo called of old is not eaſily aſcertained. Some now diſtinguiſh the pole-ſtar by that name. A ſong, which is

My courſe was towards the iſle of Fuärfed, woody dweller of ſeas. Fingal had ſent me to the aid of Mal-orchol, king of Fuärfed wild: for war was around him, and our fathers had met, at the feaſt.

In Col-coiled, I bound my ſails, and ſent my ſword to Mal-orchol of ſhells. He knew the ſignal of Albion, and his joy aroſe. He came from his own high hall, and ſeized my hand in grief. "Why comes the race of heroes to a falling king? Ton-thormod of many ſpears is the chief of wavy Sar-dronlo. He ſaw and loved my daughter, white-boſomed Oina-morul. He fought; I denied the maid; for our fathers had been foes.—He came, with battle, to Fuärfed; my people are rolled away.—Why comes the race of heroes to a falling king?"

I come not, I ſaid, to look, like a boy, on the ſtrife. Fingal remembers Mal-orchol, and his hall for ſtrangers. From his waves, the warrior deſcended, on thy woody iſle. Thou wert no cloud before him. Thy feaſt was ſpread with ſongs. For this my ſword ſhall riſe; and thy foes perhaps may fail.—Our friends are not forgot in their danger, tho' diſtant is our land.

Son of the daring Trenmor, thy words are like the voice of Cruth-loda, when he ſpeaks, from his parting cloud, ſtrong dweller

ſtill in repute, among the ſea faring part of the Highlanders, alludes to this paſſage of Oſſian. The author commends the knowledge of Oſſian in ſea affairs, a merit, which, perhaps, few of us moderns will allow him, or any in the age in which he lived.—One thing is certain, that the Caledonians often made their way thro' the dangerous and tempeſtuous ſeas of Scandinavia; which is more, perhaps, than the more poliſhed nations, ſubſiſting in thoſe times, dared to venture.—In eſtimating the degree of knowledge of arts among the ancients, we ought not to bring it into compariſon with the improvements of modern times. Our advantages over them proceed more from accident, than any merit of ours.

of

of the ſky! Many have rejoiced at my feaſt; but they all have forgot Mal-orchol. I have looked towards all the winds; but no white ſails were ſeen.—But ſteel * reſounds in my hall; and not the joyful ſhells.—Come to my dwelling, race of heroes; dark-ſkirted night is near. Hear the voice of ſongs, from the maid of Fuärfed wild.

We went. On the harp aroſe the white hands of Oina-morul. She waked her own ſad tale, from every trembling ſtring. I ſtood in ſilence; for bright in her locks was the daughter of many iſles. Her eyes were like two ſtars, looking forward thro' a ruſhing ſhower. The mariner marks them on high, and bleſſes the lovely beams.—With morning we ruſhed to battle, to Tormul's reſounding ſtream: the foe moved to the ſound of Ton-thormod's boſſy ſhield. From wing to wing the ſtrife was mixed. I met the chief of Sar-dronlo. Wide flew his broken ſteel. I ſeized the king in fight. I gave his hand, bound faſt with thongs, to Mal-orchol, the giver of ſhells. Joy roſe at the feaſt of Fuärfed, for the foe had failed.——Ton-thormod turned his face away, from Oina-morul of iſles.

* There is a ſevere ſatire couched in this expreſſion, againſt the gueſts of Mal-orchol. Had his feaſt been ſtill ſpread, had joy continued in his hall, his former paraſites would not have failed to reſort to him. But as the time of feſtivity was paſt, their attendance alſo ceaſed. The ſentiments of a certain old bard are agreeable to this obſervation. He, poetically, compares a great man to a fire kindled in a deſart place. "Thoſe that pay court to him, ſays he, are rolling large around him, like the ſmoke about the fire. This ſmoke gives the fire a great appearance at a diſtance, but it is but an empty vapour itſelf, and varying its form at every breeze. When the trunk, which fed the fire, is conſumed, the ſmoke departs on all the winds. So the flatterers forſake their chief, when his power declines." I have choſen to give a paraphraſe, rather than a tranſlation, of this paſſage, as the original is verboſe and frothy, notwithſtanding of the ſentimental merit of the author.—He was one of the leſs antient bards, and their compoſitions are not nervous enough to bear a literal tranſlation.

Son of Fingal, begun Mal-orchol, not forgot ſhalt thou paſs from me. A light ſhall dwell in thy ſhip, Oina-morul of ſlow-rolling eyes. She ſhall kindle gladneſs, along thy mighty ſoul. Nor unheeded ſhall the maid move in Selma, thro' the dwelling of kings.

In the hall I lay in night. Mine eyes were half-cloſed in ſleep. Soft muſic came to mine ear: it was like the riſing breeze, that whirls, at firſt, the thiſtle's beard; then flies, dark-ſhadowy, over the graſs. It was the maid of Fuärfed wild: ſhe raiſed the nightly ſong; for ſhe knew that my ſoul was a ſtream, that flowed at pleaſant ſounds.

Who looks, ſhe ſaid, from his rock, on ocean's cloſing miſt? His long locks, like the raven's wing, are wandering on the blaſt. Stately are his ſteps in grief. The tears are in his eyes. His manly breaſt is heaving over his burſting ſoul.—Retire, I am diſtant far; a wanderer in lands unknown. Tho' the race of kings are around me, yet my ſoul is dark.—Why have our fathers been foes, Ton-thormod love of maids!

Soft voice of the ſtreamy iſle, why doſt thou mourn by night? The race of daring Trenmor are not the dark in ſoul. Thou ſhalt not wander, by ſtreams unknown, blue-eyed Oina-morul.—Within this boſom is a voice; it comes not to other ears: it bids Oſſian hear the hapleſs, in their hour of woe.——Retire, ſoft ſinger by night; Ton-thormod ſhall not mourn on his rock.

With morning I looſed the king. I gave the long-haired maid. Mal-orchol heard my words, in the midſt of his echoing halls.——"King of Fuärfed wild, why ſhould Ton-thormod

mourn? He is of the race of heroes, and a flame in war. Your fathers have been foes, but now their dim ghoſts rejoice in death. They ſtretch their arms of miſt to the ſame ſhell in Loda. Forget their rage, ye warriors, it was the cloud of other years."——

Such were the deeds of Oſſian, while yet his locks were young: tho' lovelineſs, with a robe of beams, clothed the daughter of many iſles.—We call back, maid of Lutha, the years that have rolled away!

COLNA-

COLNA-DONA:

A

POEM.

ARGUMENT.

FINGAL diſpatches Oſſian and Toſcar to raiſe a ſtone, on the banks of the ſtream of Crona, to perpetuate the memory of a victory, which he had obtained in that place. When they were employed in that work, Car-ul, a neighbouring chief, invited them to a feaſt.—They went: and Toſcar fell deſperately in love with Colna-dona, the daughter of Car-ul. Colna-dona became no leſs enamoured of Toſcar. An incident, at a hunting-party, brings their loves to a happy iſſue.

COLNA-DONA:

A

POEM.

* COL-AMON of troubled ſtreams, dark wanderer of diſtant vales, I behold thy courſe, between trees, near Car-ul's echoing halls. There dwelt bright Colna-dona, the daughter of the king. Her eyes were rolling ſtars; her arms were white as the foam of ſtreams. Her breaſt roſe ſlowly to ſight, like ocean's heaving wave. Her ſoul was a ſtream of light.—Who, among the maids, was like the love of heroes?

AVON.

* Colna-dona ſignifies *the love of heroes.* Col-amon, *narrow river.* Car-ul, *dark-eyed.* Col amon, the reſidence of Car-ul, was in the neighbourhood of Agricola's wall, towards the ſouth. Car-ul ſeems to have been of the race of thoſe Britons, who are diſtinguiſhed by the name of Maiatæ, by the writers of Rome. Maiatæ is derived from two Gaelic words, MOI, *a plain*, and AITICH, *inhabitants*; ſo that the ſignification of Maiatæ is, *the inhabitants of the plain country*; a name given to the Britons, who were ſettled in the Lowlands, in contradiſtinction to the Caledonians, (i. e. CAEL-DON, *the Gauls of the hills*) who were poſſeſſed of the more mountainous diviſion of North-Britain.

BENEATH the voice of the king, we moved to Crona * of the ſtreams, Toſcar of graſſy Lutha, and Oſſian, young in fields. Three bards attended with ſongs. Three boſſy ſhields were born before us: for we were to rear the ſtone, in memory of the paſt. By Crona's moſſy courſe, Fingal had ſcattered his foes: he had rolled away the ſtrangers, like a troubled ſea. We came to the place of renown: from the mountains deſcended night. I tore an oak from its hill, and raiſed a flame on high. I bade my fathers to look down, from the clouds of their hall; for, at the fame of their race, they brighten in the wind.

I TOOK a ſtone from the ſtream, amidſt the ſong of bards. The blood of Fingal's foes hung curdled in its ooze. Beneath, I placed, at intervals, three boſſes from the ſhields of foes, as roſe or fell the ſound of Ullin's nightly ſong. Toſcar laid a dagger in earth, a mail of ſounding ſteel. We raiſed the mould around the ſtone, and bade it ſpeak to other years.

OOZY daughter of ſtreams, that now art reared on high, ſpeak to the feeble, O ſtone, after Selma's race have failed!—Prone, from the ſtormy night, the traveller ſhall lay him, by thy ſide: thy whiſtling moſs ſhall ſound in his dreams; the years that were paſt

* Crona, *murmuring*, was the name of a ſmall ſtream, which diſcharged itſelf in the river Carron. It is often mentioned by Oſſian, and the ſcenes of many of his poems are on its banks.—The enemies, whom Fingal defeated here, are not mentioned. They were, probably, the provincial Britons. That tract of country between the Firths of Forth and Clyde has been, thro' all antiquity, famous for battles and rencounters, between the different nations, who were poſſeſſed of North and South Britain. Stirling, a town ſituated there, derives its name from that very circumſtance. It is a corruption of the Galic name, STRILA, i. e. *the hill, or rock, of contention.*

ſhall

ſhall return.—Battles riſe before him, blue-ſhielded kings deſcend to war: the darkened moon looks from heaven, on the troubled field.—He ſhall burſt, with morning, from dreams, and ſee the tombs of warriors round. He ſhall aſk about the ſtone, and the aged ſhall reply, " This grey ſtone was raiſed by Oſſian, a chief of other years! "

* From Col-amon came a bard, from Car-ul, the friend of ſtrangers. He bade us to the feaſt of kings, to the dwelling of bright Colna-dona. We went to the hall of harps. There Car-ul brightened between his aged locks, when he beheld the ſons of his friends, like two young trees before him.

Sons of the mighty, he ſaid, ye bring back the days of old, when firſt I deſcended from waves, on Selma's ſtreamy vale. I purſued Duth-mocarglos, dweller of ocean's wind. Our fathers had been foes, we met by Clutha's winding waters. He fled, along the ſea, and my ſails were ſpread behind him.—Night deceived me, on the deep. I came to the dwelling of kings, to

* The manners of the Britons and Caledonians were ſo ſimilar, in the days of Oſſian, that there can be no doubt, that they were originally the ſame people, and deſcended from thoſe Gauls who firſt poſſeſſed themſelves of South-Britain, and gradually migrated to the north. This hypotheſis is more rational than the idle fables of ill-informed ſenachies, who bring the Caledonians from diſtant countries. The bare opinion of Tacitus, (which, by-the-bye, was only founded on a ſimilarity of the perſonal figure of the Caledonians to the Germans of his own time) tho' it has ſtaggered ſome learned men, is not ſufficient to make us believe, that the antient inhabitants of North-Britain were a German colony. A diſcuſſion of a point like this might be curious, but could never be ſatisfactory. Periods ſo diſtant are ſo involved in obſcurity, that nothing certain can be now advanced concerning them. The light which the Roman writers hold forth is too feeble to guide us to the truth, thro' the darkneſs which has ſurrounded it.

Selma of high-boſomed maids.—Fingal came forth with his bards, and Conloch, arm of death. I feaſted three days in the hall, and ſaw the blue-eyes of Erin, Ros-crana, daughter of heroes, light of Cormac's race.—Nor forgot did my ſteps depart: the kings gave their ſhields to Car-ul: they hang, on high, in Col-amon, in memory of the paſt.—Sons of the daring kings, ye bring back the days of old.

CAR-UL placed the oak of feaſts. He took two boſſes from our ſhields. He laid them in earth, beneath a ſtone, to ſpeak to the hero's race. "When battle, ſaid the king, ſhall roar, and our ſons are to meet in wrath. My race ſhall look, perhaps, on this ſtone, when they prepare the ſpear.—Have not our fathers met in peace, they will ſay, and lay aſide the ſhield?"

NIGHT came down. In her long locks moved the daughter of Car-ul. Mixed with the harp aroſe the voice of white-armed Colna-dona.—Toſcar darkened in his place, before the love of heroes. She came on his troubled ſoul, like a beam to the dark-heaving ocean: when it burſts from a cloud, and brightens the foamy ſide of a wave*.

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WITH morning we awaked the woods; and hung forward on the path of the roes. They fell by their wonted ſtreams. We returned thro' Crona's vale. From the wood a youth came forward, with a ſhield and pointleſs ſpear. "Whence, ſaid Toſcar

* Here an epiſode is intirely loſt; or, at leaſt, is handed down ſo imperfectly, that it does not deſerve a place in the poem.

of

of Lutha, is the flying beam? Dwells there peace at Col-amon, round bright Colna-dona of harps?"

By Col-amon of ſtreams, ſaid the youth, bright Colna-dona dwelt. She dwelt; but her courſe is now in deſarts, with the ſon of the king; he that ſeized her ſoul as it wandered thro' the hall.

STRANGER of tales, ſaid Toſcar, haſt thou marked the warrior's courſe? He muſt fall,—give thou that boſſy ſhield!—In wrath he took the ſhield. Fair behind it roſe the breaſts of a maid, white as the boſom of a ſwan, trembling on ſwift-rolling waves. It was Colna-dona of harps, the daughter of the king.—Her blue eyes had rolled on Toſcar, and her love aroſe.

A

SPECIMEN

OF THE

ORIGINAL

OF

TEMORA.

BOOK SEVENTH.

ADVERTISEMENT.

IT is thought proper to give a ſpecimen of the original Galic, for the ſatisfaction of thoſe who doubt the authenticity of Oſſian's poems. The ſeventh book of TEMORA is fixed on, for that purpoſe, not from any other ſuperior merit, than the variety of its verſification. To print any part of the former collection was unneceſſary, as a copy of the originals lay, for many months, in the bookſeller's hands, for the inſpection of the curious. Tho' the erroneous orthography of the bards is departed from, in many inſtances, in the following ſpecimen, yet ſeveral quieſcent conſonants are retained, to ſhew the derivation of the words. This circumſtance may give an uncouth appearance to the language, in the eyes of thoſe who are ſtrangers to its harmony. They ought, however, to conſider, that a language is put to the ſevereſt teſt, when it is ſtripped of its own proper characters; eſpecially, when the power of *one* of them requires, ſometimes, a combination of two or three Roman letters to expreſs it.

A

SPECIMEN

OF THE

ORIGINAL

OF

TEMORA.

BOOK SEVENTH.

O Linna doir-choille na *Leigo*,
Air uair, eri' ceo taobh-ghórm nan tón;
Nuair dhunas dorſa na h'oicha
Air iulluir-ſhuil greina nan ſpeur.
Tomhail, mo *Lara* nan ſruth,
Thaomas du'-nial, as doricha cruaim:
Mar ghlas-ſcia', roi taoma nan nial,
Snamh ſeachad, ta Gellach na h'oicha.

Le ſo edi' taiſin o-ſhean
An dlu'-ghleus, a meaſc na gaoith',
'S iad leamnach, o oſna gu oſna,
Air du'-aghai' oicha nan ſian.
An taobh oitaig, gu palin nan ſeoid,
Taomas iad ceäch nan ſpeur,
Gorm-thalla do thannais nach béo,
Gu ám eri' fón marbh-rán nan teud.

TA torman, a machair nan crán
Se *Conar* ri *Erin* at' án,
A taoma' ceo-tanais gu dlu'
Air *Faolan* aig *Lubhair* nan ſru'
Muladach, ſuigha fo bhrón,
Dh'aom an tais an ceach an loin.
Thaom oſna, eſſin an fein,
Ach phil an cruth aluin, gu diän
Phíl é le chrom-ſhealla mál
Le cheo-leatain, mar ſhuibhal nan ſian.
'S doilleir ſo!
Ata na ſloigh na nſuain, ſan ám,
An truſcan cear na h'oicha:
Dh' ilſich teina an ri, gu ard,
Dh' aom é na aonar, air ſcia'.

Thuit codál, mo ſhuillin a ghaiſcich,
Thanic guth *Fhaolan*, na chluais.

An codal ſo, don' fhear-phoſda aig *Clatho* ?
Am bail coni do m' athair, an ſuain ?
Am bail cuina, 's mi 'ntruſcan nan nial ?
'S mi m' aonar an ám na h'oicha ?

Cur ſon ta ú, a m' aſlin fein ?
Thubhart *Fion-ghael*, 's é'g eri grad.
An dith-chuin, d'omſe, mo mhac,
Na ſhiubhal teina air Rethlan nan laoich ?
Ni marſin, air anam an ri,
Thig gniomh ſeoid aluin na neruai'-bheum.
Ni ndeallan iadſe, a theichas an dubhra
Na h'oicha, 'snach fhág a lorg.
'S cuina liom *Faolan* na ſhuain :
'Ta m'anam aig eri' borb.

Ghluais an ri, le ſleagh, gu grad,
Bhuail e nſcia' as fuaimnach cop,
An ſcia' a dh' aom ſa n'oicha ard,
Bal-moſgla' do cháth nan lót.
Air aomagh du' nan ſliabh,

Air

Air gaoith, theich treud nan tais:
O ghleanan cear nan ioma lúp,
'Mhoſguil guth a bhais.

Bhuail é 'n ſcia, an darra cuairt,
Ghluais coga, an aſlin an t'ſhluaigh:
Bhith comh-ſri nan lán glas—
A dealra' air anam nan ſeoid,
Cian-f heona a truita' gu cath,
Slua' a teicha,—gniomh bu chruai',
Leth-dhoilleir, an deallan na ſtalin.

Nuair dh' erich, an darra fuaim,
Leum feigh, o chós nan cárn
Chluinte a ſcreadan ſcé', ſa n' f haſich——
Gach Ean, air oſna fein.
Leth-erich ſiol *Albin* nam buaigh
Thog iad ſuas gach ſleagh, bu ghlas:
Ach phíl ſachir, air an l' ſhluaigh,
Se bh' án ſcia' *Mhorbhein* na mfras.
Phíl codal, air ſuilin na mfear:
Bu dorcha, tróm a nglean.

Ni mo chodal, duitſe é, ſa nuair,
Nion ſhuil-ghórm *Chonmor* na mbuaigh,—
Chuala *Suil-mhalla* an fhuaim
Dh' erich i, ſa n'oicha, le cruaim:
Ta ceum gu ri *Atha* na ncolg:
Ni moſguil cunart anam borb.
Tróm a ſhéſi,——a ſuilin ſios.
Ta 'nſpeur an loſga nan reul.

Chualas lé ſciath na ncòp.
Ghluais;—ghrad ſhés an Oi:—
Dh' erich a gu'—ach dh' aom é ſios.——
Chuinic ís é, na ſtalin chruai,
A dealra ri loſga nan reul:
Chuinic is é, na leatan thróm.
Aig eri ri oſna nan ſpeur.
Thionta i ceamna, le fiamh,
Curſon dhuiſgimſe Ri *Erin* na m *Bólg*,
Ni n' aſlin do chodal u-fein,
A nion *Inis-uina* na ncólg.

Gu garg a mhoſgul an torman;
On' oi thuit a cean-bhért ſios:
Ta mforum, air carric nan ſruth.

Plaoſga

Plaoſga, o aſlin na h'oicha,
Ghluais *Cathmor* fa' chrán fein.
Chuinic é n' Ci bu tla,
Air carric *Lubhair* nan ſliabh:
Dearg reŭl, a ſealla ſios,—
Meaſc ſiubhal a tróm chíabh.

Cia 'ta roi Oicha gu *Cathmor*
An cear-amſair aſlin fein?
Am bail ſios duit, air ſri na neruai-bheum?
Cia uſſa, mhic dubhra nan ſpeur?
Na ſhés u, am fionas an Ri,
Do chaol-thannais, on n' am o-ſhean;
Na nguth u, o neoil nam fras,
Le cunairt *Erin* na ncolg ſean?

Ni mfear ſiubhail dubhra mi-fhein,
Ni nguth mi, o neol, na cruaim:
Ach ta m' fhocul, le cunairt na h' *Erin*.
An cualas duit coppan na fuaim?
Ni ntais é, Ri *Atha* nan ſruth,
A thaomas an fhuaim air oicha.

Taomagh

Taomagh an ſeod a ghuth fein,
'S ſon clarſich, do *Chathmor* an fhuaim,
Ta aitis, mhic dubhra nan ſpeur,
Loſga air m' anam, gun ghruaim.
Se ceoil chiean-fheona na ncruai-bheum,
A m' oicha, air aſri' nan ſiän,
Nuair laſas anam nan ſón;
A chlán an cruadal do miän.
Ta ſiol-meata a nconi, na mſiamh,
A ngleanan na n' oſna tlá,
Far an aom ceo-maidin, ri ſliabh,
O ghorm-ſhuibhal ſruthan na mblár.

Ni meata, chean-uia nan ſón,
An ſeans'ra', on thuit mi-fein,
Bu choni doigh dubhra nan tón,
An tir fhadda ſiol cholgach na mbeum.
Ach ni nſolas do m' anam tlá
Fuaim mhál a bhais on raoin,
Thig eſſin nach geil gu bráth;
Moſguil bard focuil a ſcaoin.—

Mar charric, 's ſruthan ri taobh,
'M faſich na mſaoin bhean,

Shes *Cathmor*, cean-feona nach maoin,—
An deoir——
Mar oitag, air anam le brón,
Thanic guth caoin na h'oi,
Mofgla cuina talamh nan bean
A caomh-choni aig fruthan na nglean;
Roi n' ám an d' thanic é gu borb
Gu cabhar *Chonmor* na ncolg fiar.

A NION coigrich nan lán,
(Thionta i cean on d' fhón)
'S fadda fa, m' fhuil, an cruai,
Cran flathal *Inis-uina* nan tón:
Ta m' anam, do thubhairt mi-fein,
An trufcan nan fian cear,
Car fon a laffa an dealra fo-f hein,
Gus am pil mi, an sí', on d' fhliabh?

NA ghlas m' aighai', na t' fhionas, a lamh-gheal,
'S tu togmhail do m' eagal an Ri?
'S ám cunairt, annir nan tróm chiabh,
Am do m' anam, mór-thalla na fri!
Attas e, tomhail mar fruth,
A taomagh air *Cael* na ncruaí-bheum.

An taobh carric chofach, air *Lona*,
Mo chaochan, nan fruthan cróm,
Glas, á nciabh na h'aofe,
'Ta *Claon-mhal*, Ri clarfich nam fón.
O s'cion ta cran-darrach na mfuaim,
Agus fiubhal nan rua-bhoc fliom,
'Ta forum na fri' na chluais
'S é 'g aomagh á nfmuina nach tiom:
An fin bith do thalla, *Shul-mhalla*,
Gus an ilfich forum na mbeum:
Gus ám pil mi, an laffa na cruai',
O thrufcan dubhra na bein:
On cheäch do thruffas o *Lona*
Ma choni mo ruin fein.

Thuit gath-foluis air anam na h'oi,
Las i fuas, fa' choir an Ri:
Thionta i á h' aighai ri *Cathmor*,
A ciabh-bhóg ans' na h' ofna á fri?

Reupar iulluir nan fpeür árd,
O mhór-frúth gaoith na nglean;
Nuair chi' é na ruai-bhuic, fa' choir,
Clán elid na mfaoin bhean,

Mu ntionta *Cathmor* na ncruai-bheum,
On d' ſrí mu n' erich dán.—
Faicimſe u, ghasgaich na ngeur lán,
O thruſcan an dubhra dú',
Nuair thogas ceo mu m' choni fein,
Air *Lona* na n'ioma ſrú' ?
Nuair 's fadda, o m' ſhuil, u ſheoid !
Puail coppan na mfuaim árd.
Pillé ſolas, do m' anam, 's é nceö
'S mi aig aoma air carric liom fein.
Ach mo thuit u—mar ri coigrich ata mí !
Thigga' do ghuth o neoil,
Gu oi *Inis-uina*, 's i fán.

Og-gheug *Lumoin* an ſheur,
Com dh' aoma tu, 'nſtrachda nan ſian ?
'S tric thionta *Cathmor* ó nbhlár
Du'-thaomagh air aighai' nan ſliabh.
Mar mhellain, do m' fein, ta ſleagh nan lót,
'S iad prunagh air cós nan ſciath ;
Dh' erim, mo ſholluis, on d' ſhrí ;
Mar thein-oicha, o thaoma nan niäl
Na píl, a dheo-ghreina, on ghlean
Nuair dhluthichas forum na ncolg :

Eagal

Eagal teachá do nabhad o m'lamh,
Mar theich iad, o ſhiean' ſra' na m *Bólg*.

Chualas le *Sonmór* air *Cluanar*,
Thuit fa *Chormac* na ngeúr lán,
Tri lo dhorch an Ri,
Mu n' f hear, a gh' aom an ſri na glean.
Chuinac min-bhean, an són á nceo.
Phroſnich ſud d' i ſiubhal gu ſliabh,
Thog i bogha, fos n' ioſal,
Gu dol marri laoch nan ſciath.
Do n' ainir luigh dubhra air *Atha*,
Nuair ſhuilagh á ngaiſgach gu gniomh.

O cheud ſruthan aonach na h'oicha,
Thaom ſiol *Alnecma* ſios.
Chualas ſcia' chaſmachd an Ri,
Mhoſguil a n' anam gu ſri'
Bha' an ſiubhal, a mforum nan lán,
Gu *Ullin*, talamh na ncrán.
Bhuail *Sónmór*, air uari', an ſciath
Cean-feona na mborb thriath.
Na ndeabh, lean *Sul-allin*
Air aoma na mfras,

Bu

Bu ſholus ís, air aonach,
Nuair thaom iad air gleanta glas.
Ta ceamna flathail air lóm,
Nuair thog iad, ri aghai nan tóm.
B' eagal d' i ſealla an Ri—
Dh' fhág i, 'n *Atha* na mfri'.

Nuair dh' erich forum na mbeum,
Agus thaom iad, ſa cheille, ſa chath,
Loiſg *Sonmor*, mar theina nan ſpeur,
Thanic *Sul-aluin* na mflath.
A folt ſcaoilta, ſa n' oſna,
A h'anam aig oſparn mon' Ri.
Dh' aom é an t' ſhri' mu rún nan laoich,
Theich nabhad fa' dhubhra nan ſpeur
Luigh *Cluanar* gun fhuil,
Gun fhuil, air tigh caoil gun leus.——

Ni n' d' erich fearg *Shon-mhor* nan lán,
Bha' lo gu dorcha, 's gu mál:
Ghluais *Sul-allin* mu gorm-ſru' fein,
A ſuil an reachda nan deuir.
Bu lionmhar a ſealla, gu caoin
Air gaiſgach ſabhach nach faoin.
Ach thionta i a ſuillin tla,

O ſhealla,

O ſhealla, an laoch thuatal.
Mhoſgul blair, mar ſhorum nan nial,
Ghluais doran o anam mór,
Chunas a ceamna, le aitis,
'Sa lāmh-gheal air clarſich na mſón.

NA chruai a ghluais an Ri, gun dail,
Bhuail é 'n ſciath choſach árd;
Gu árd, air darach nan ſian,
Aig *Lubhair* na n' ioma ſruth.
Seachd coppain a bh', air an ſcé,
Seachd focuil an Ri' do ſhluagh;
A thaomagh air oſna nan ſpeur,
Air finachá mór na m*Bólg*.

AIR gach copan ta reül do n'oicha;
Cean-mathon nan ros gun ſcleo',
Caol-derna, o neoil aig eri',
Ul-cicho an truſcan do cheö.
'Ta *Caon-cathlin*, air carric, a dealra
Reül-dura' ar gorm-thón on iar:
Leth-chellagh ſolus an uiſce.
Ta *Ber-thein*, las-ſhuil nan ſliabh,
Sealla ſios, o choille ſa n'aonach;

Air

Air mál ſhiūbhal, sélgair 's é triäl,
Roi ghleanan, an dubhra bhraonach,
Le faogh rua-bhuic nan leum árd.

TOMHAIL, a miän na ſcé,
'Ta laſſa *Ton-theina*, gun neoil,
An rinnac a ſheal, roi n'oicha,
Air *Lear-thon* a chuain mhoir ;
Lear-thon, cean-feona na m *Bolg*
A nceud-f hear a ſhuibhail air gaoith.

LEATHAIN ſcaoile ſeoil bhán an Ri.
Gu *Inis-fail* nan ioma ſru ?
Thaom oicha air aighai' a chuain,
Agus ceäch nan truſcan du'.
Bha' gaoith a caochla dlu' ſa nſpeur.
Leum loingheas, o thòn gu tón ;
Nuair dh' erich *Ton-theina* nan ſtuagh
Caon-ſhealla, o bhriſta' nan nial,
B' aitis do *Learthon* tein-uil na mbuaigh,
A dealra air domhan nan ſian.

FA' ſleagh *Chathmor* na ncolg ſean
Dhuiſge an guth, a dhuiſga Baird.

Thaom

Thaom iad du', o thaobh nan ſliabh,
Le clarſich ghrin 's gach lamh.
Le aitis mór, ſhés rompa an Ri,
Mar fhear-ſiubhal, ri teas la 'nglean.
Nuair chluinas é, fadda ſa nréth,
Caoin thorman ſruthan na mbean :
Sruthan a bhriſtas ſa n' fhaſich,
O charric thaobh-ghlas nan rua-bhoc.

Cur ſon chluinim guth ard an Ri—
N' ám codal, a n' oicha nan fras ?
Am facas tanais nach beo,
Meaſc t'aſlin aig aoma glas ?
Air neoil am bail an aitach fuar,
Feaghai' fón *Fhonair* na mfleagh ?
'S lionmhar an ſiubhal air réth,
Far an tog an ſiol an t' ſhleagh.
Na n' erich, ar cronan air thús,
Mu n' fhear, nach tog on t' ſhlea' gu brath ;
Fear choſcairt, air glean nan ſloigh,
O *Mhoma* nan ioma bad ?

Ni dith-chuin do m' dorcha na mblár
Chiean-fheona na mbard, o thús,

Togar cloch do aig *Lubhair* na ncárn,
Ait-coni dh' *Fholdath* 'ſdo chliu.
Ach taom m' anam, air ám nan laoich,
Air na bliaghna', ſo n d' erich iad ſuas,
Air tón *Inis-uina* na ncolg.
Ni n' aitis, do *Chathmor* a bhain,
Cuina *Lumon* inis uina na nſloi?
Lumon talamh na nſruth,
Caon-choni na mbán-bhroilach Oi.

LUMON na ſruth!
'Ta u dealra, air m' anam fein,
'Ta do ghrian, air do thaobh,
Air carric na ncràn bu tróm.

TAT' elid chear
Do dhearg bar-mhor, a meaſc na mbad
A faicin air ſliabh.
An colg-chu, a ſiubhal grad.
Màl air an réth
Ta ceamna nan Oi:
Oi lamh-gheal nan teud
'S na bogha crom, ſa mhoi;

Togmhal

Togmhail an gorm-ſhuil tlà,
On leatain bhar-bhui, air ſliabh na mflath.
Ni bail ceamna *Lear-thon* ſa bhein,
Cean *Iniſ* na ngeug *uina*.

TA ê togmhail du-dharach air tón,
A ncamis *Chluba*, nan ioma ſtua',
An du-dharach, bhuain é o *Lumon*,
Gu ſiubhal air aighai a chuain.
Thionta Oi an ſuillin tlá,
On Ri, mo ntuitagh é ſios.
Ni mfacas leö riamh an long,
Cear mharcach a chuain mhoir.

GHLAOI' anois, an Ri a ghaoith,
Meaſc ceó na marra glais.
Dh' erich *Iniſ-fail* gu gorm:
Thuit, gu dian, oicha na mfrais.
Bhuail eagal *Clan-Bholga* gu lua'
Ghlan neoil, o *Thon-theina* nan ſtua'
A ncamis *Chulbin* dh' atich an long
Far am fregra' coille do thón.
Bu chopach an ſin an ſru'

O charric *Duth-umha* na ncós,
'San dealra tannais nach beo
Le ncruith caochlach fein.

THANIC aſlin gu *Lear-thon* nan long,
Seachd Samla do nlina nach beo,
Chŭalas a nguth briſta, tróm :
Chunas an fiol an ceö.
Chunas fiol *Atha* na ncolg—
'San clán cean-uia' na m *Bolg*.
Thaom iad a mfeachda' fein,
Mar cheach a terna on bhein,
Nuair ſhiubhlas é glas, fa' oſna,
Air *Atha* nan ioma dos.

THOG *Lear-thon* talla *Shamla*,
Ri caoin f hón clarſich nan teud.
Dh' aom eilid *Erin*, o cheamna
Aig aiſra' glas nan ſruth.
Nin dith-chuin do *Lumon* uina,
Na *Flathal*, gheal-lamhach na mbua'gh
'S í comhaid, air marcach nan tón
O Thulach nan eilid ruagh.

LUMON

Lumon na ſruth
Ta ú dealra' air m' anam fein!

Mhosguil gath ſoluis on ear,
Dh' erich árd-chiean cheäich na bein.
Chunas air cladach na ngleanan
A ncróm chaochan ghlas-ſruthach fein.
Chualas ſciath *Chathmor* na ncolg,
Mhoſguil ſiol *Erin* na m *Bolg*.
Mar mhuir dhomhail, nuair ghluiſas gu geur
Fuaim aitti, air aghai' nan ſpeur:
Taoma tuin, o thaobh gu taobh,
Aig aomagh a nglas chean bao;
Gun eolas, air ſiubhal a chuain.

Trom is mál, gu *Lon* na ſruth
Ghluais *Suil-mhalla* nan roſc tlá;
Ghluais as thionta n' Oi le brón:
A gorm-ſhuil fa ſhilla blá.
Nuair thanic i gu carric chruai'
Du chromagh air gleanan an *Lón*

Sheal i, o briſtagh a ceil,
Air Ri *Atha*——dh' aom i ſios.

Puail teud, a mhic Alpain na mſón,
Ambail ſolas a nclarſich na nieöl?
Taom air *Oſſian*, agus Oſſun gu tróm,
Ta anam a ſnamh a nceö.

Chualas u, Bhaird, a m' oicha
Ach ſiubhla fón edrom uam fein!
'S aitis caoin thurra do dh' *Oſſian*
A mbliaghna chear na h' aoiſe.

Dhreun uaina thulloch nan tais:
A thaomas do chean air gaoith oicha,
Ni bail t' fhorum na mchluais fein:
Na faital tannais, na d' gheug ghlais.
'S lionmhar ceamna na marbh bu treun
Air oſna, dubh-aiſra' na bein,
Nuair ghluiſas a ghellach, an ear,
Mar ghlas-ſcia, du ſhiubhal nan ſpeur.
Ullin, a Charril, a Raono
Guith amſair a dh' aom o-ſhean:

Cluinim

Cluinim ſiobh an dorchadas *Shelma*
Agus moſglibhſe anam nan dán!

Ni ncluinim ſiobh ſhiol na mſón,
Cia an talla do neoil, 'mbail ar ſuain
Na tribuail ſiobh, clarſach nach tróm,
An truſcan ceo-madin 's cruaim.
Far an erich, gu ſuaimar a ghrian
O ſtuaigh na ncan glas?

FINIS.