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T E M O R A,

A N

ANCIENT EPIC POEM,

IN EIGHT BOOKS:

Together with several other P O E M S, composed by

OSSIAN, the Son of FINGAL.

Translated from the GALIC LANGUAGE,

By JAMES MACPHERSON.

Vultis et his mecum pariter considerare regnis?

Urbem quam statuo, vestra est.

VIRGIL.



L O N D O N:

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1941

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.

T E M O R A:

A N

E P I C P O E M.

B O O K F I R S T.

A R G U M E N T.

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 Irifh 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 Irifh 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.

T E M O R A :

A N

E P I C P O E M*.

B O O K F I R S T.

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 same 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 *minutiae*, 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 epœa. 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 in-

troduced 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 Eorbar-duthul, was descended lineally from Larthon the chief of the Firbolg, the first colony who settled in the south of Ireland. The Caél 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 finewy arms. He is like a cloud in the desert; 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 leap^s 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 Ufnoth chief of Echa, 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 liſt 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 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 Connor king of that place against his enemies. Cathmor was successful in the war, but, in the course of it, Connor 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. *Cean-uid' na dai'*, or *the point to which all the roads of the stran-*

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, pos-

sess, 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 foul. 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!

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

† *Handred* 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 feat in Connaught.

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 desert, when an angry ghost rushes through night, and takes their green heads in his hand! Morlath falls: Maronnan dies: Conachar trembles in his blood. Cairbar shrinks before Oscar's sword; 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 his-

torians 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 boaiſful 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' fe 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 fe ſealg agus creach
Do dh'ALBIN an la'r na mhaireach, &c.

Oſcar, in conſequence of his threats, begun to lay waſte Ireland ; but as he returned with the ſpoil into Ulſter, thro' the narrow paſs of Gabhra (*Caoil glen-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 Luath

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

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 re-
turned 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 hills.—Where are our fathers, O warriors! the chiefs of the times of old? They have set like stars that have shone, we only hear the sound of their praise. But they were renowned in their 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 my² 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 Moilena: 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. chief bard of Arth king of Ireland. After

† Althan, the son of Conachar, was 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 † Doira, *the woody side of a mountain* ; it is here a hill in the neighbourhood of Temora.
had made his escape from Cairbar, by the means of Cathmor, and coming to Fingal, related, as here, the death of his master Cormac. ‡ Arth, or Artho, the father of Cormac king of Ireland.

* Althan speaks.

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 Ufnoth*, 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 desert, 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

* Ufnoth chief of Etha, a district on the western coast of Scotland, had three sons, Nathos, Althos and Ardan, by Slisfama 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.—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 desert, 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 Uínoth, bard of the times of old ?

IT is not the son of Uínoth, 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 Uínoth.

† Geal lamha, *white banded*.

‡ From this expression, we understand,

that Cairbar had entered the palace of Temora, in the midst of Cormac's speech.

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 smoking 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 desert; 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 unparalleled — In short, he had no fault, but too much attachment to so bad a brother as Cairbar. His family connection with Cairbar prevails, as he expresses it, over every other consideration, and makes him engage in a war, of which he 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 lift the spear.—His face was like the plain of the sun, when it is bright: no darkness travelled over his brow. But he came with his thousands to 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 desert.—But strike thou thy shield, at times, that they may not come through night, and the fame of Morven cease.—I begin to be alone, my son, 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.

T E M O R A:

A N

E P I C P O E M.

B O O K S E C O N D.

E

A R G U M E N T.

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.

T E M O R A :

A N

E P I C P O E M.

B O O K S E C O N D.

* FATHER of heroes, Trenmor! dweller of eddy-
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 un-
known

* 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 ar-

my. 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, fullen murmurs rise: like the noise of the lake of Lego, when its waters shrink, in the days of frost, and all its bursting ice resounds. The people of Lara look to heaven, and foresee the storm.—My steps are forward on the heath: the spear of Oscar in my hand. Red stars looked from high. I gleamed, along the night.—I saw Fillan silent before me, bending forward from Mora's rock. He heard the shout of the foe; 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, com-

monly 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-Chongail, Ma.-Fergus, Mac-Fion-gàel na buai' : i. e.* Fergus the son of Arcath, the son of Congal, the son of Fergus, the son of Fingal *the victorious*. This subject is treated more at large, in the dissertation prefixed to the poem.

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

† 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 justice. Tho' the epi-

sode, 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

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 desert, with the roar of their hundred tribes. Conar was a rock before them: broken they rolled on every side. But often they returned, and the sons of 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 *Caél* 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 *Caél* must have submitted to them, had they not received succours from their mother-country, under the command of Conar.

came,

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-

* Colgar, *fierce-looking warrior*. Solin-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 Turloutho. 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.

† *Fonar, 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.

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.

† 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

‡ 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 befall a man; as his soul could not other-

wise be admitted to the *airy hall of his fathers*.

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

locks, from Lumon of the roes.—At distance rose the voice of Fornar, 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 Cæli. 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 daughter 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 darkening 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. min, *calm in battle*. Cón-lamha, *soft hand*. Turloch, *man of the quiver*. Cormul, *blue eye*.
To avoid the multiplying of notes, I shall here give the signification of the names in this episode. Drumardo, *high-ridge*. Cath-

The

The virgins wept, by the streams of Ullin. They looked to the mist of the hill, no hunter descended from its folds. Silence darkened in the land : blasts sighed lonely on grassy tombs.

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

mora. 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 rhyme. 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 speakers.—This book takes up only the space of a few hours.

it has all that variety of cadences, which * 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.

T E M O R A:

A N

E P I C P O E M.

L O O K T H I R D.

A R G U M E N T.

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

T E M O R A:

A N

E P I C P O E M.

B O O K T H I R D.

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 un-
 sheaths 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 desert, 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 bill*, 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 Coldaronnán, chief of Clutha, Gaul went to his father's tomb to take the sword. His

2d-

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, cloud, where my locks of mist spread on is the only part now remaining, of a poem the winds? Mixed with the noise of Ossian, on the subject. I shall here lay streams, why rises the voice of Gaul? 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 desert, 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 address

ses 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 Cromul'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? Follath lead my people forth. Thou art a beam of fire.”

FORTH-ISSUED the chief of Moma, like a cloud, the robe of ghosfs. 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 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 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. Harken 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*.
Móruth, *great stream*. Oichaoma, *mild maid*. Dun lora, *the hill of the n-ify stream*.
Duth-caron, *dark-brown man*.

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 Mo-ma'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 bill*; a mountain in Inis-huna, or that part of South-Britain which is over-against the Irish coast.

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, *mill and stately maid*, of Ca'du-cenglas, chief of I dronlo, one the wife of Gaul. She was the daughter of the Hebrides.

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 Caél 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 contests between the Caél and Firbolg ; and is the more valuable upon that account.

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

† Colc-ulla, *firm foot 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 Catlimul, 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-crana, the daughter of Cormac. She begins with a soliloquy, which is overheard by Fingal.

ROS-CRANA.

By night, came a dream to Ros-crana! 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 mofs, 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 desert: the light of Ros crana 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:

T E M O R A:

A N

E P I C P O E M.

B O O K F O U R T H.

A R G U M E N T.

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 Connor, king of Inis-huna, who, in the disguise of a young warrior, had followed Cathmor to the war. The sudden 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 Fonnar the bard. Cathmor returns to rest, at a distance from the army. The ghost of his brother Cairbar appears to him in a dream; and obscurely foretells the issue of the war.—The soliloquy of the king. He discovers Sul-malla. Morning comes. Her soliloquy closes the book.

T E M O R A :

A N

E P I C P O E M.

B O O K F O U R T H.

* **B**ENEATH 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.

K

I BADE

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 bos: 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-Connal*, 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. Alnecma 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 smok 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 clothed 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 Co-mac*.

’S tu fein an Ros-crána.

’ Siol Chormac 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 Connor king of Inis-huna. To his aid

* The poet changes the scene to the attitude of Cathmor, form a contrast, Irish camp. The images introduced here 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 Cair-bar, lord of Atha, the most potent chief of the Firbolg. Cairbar dispatched his brother Cathmor to the assistance of Con-mor. Cathmor, after various vicissitudes of fortune, put an end to the war, by the total defeat of the enemies of Inis huna, and returned in triumph to the residence of 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 Cenar on the Irish throne.—The wind being contrary, Cath-

mor remained, for three days, in a neighbouring bay, during which time Sul-malla disguised herself in the habit of a young warrior, and came to offer him her service, in the war. Cathmor accepted of the proposal, sailed for Ireland, and arrived in Ulster a few days before the death of Cairbar.

* 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 Connor's halls.—He remembered the daughter of strangers, and his sigh arose.—Now, when the winds awaked the wave: from the hill came a youth in arms; to lift the sword with Cathmor in his echoing fields.—It was the white-armed Sul-malla: secret she dwelt beneath her helmet. Her steps were in the path of the king; on him her blue eyes rolled with joy, when he lay by his roaring streams.—But Cathmor thought, that, on Lumon, she still pursued the roes; 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 finging 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. 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* † This speech of Malthos is, throughout, a severe reprimand to the blustering
are seldom pronounced audibly in the Gaelic language. 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

* 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 Kinfena, 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 foretells 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 desert, in a stormy night.—No bard shall be wanting at thy tomb, when thou art lowly laid. The sons of song love the valiant.—Cathmor, thy name is a pleasant gale.—The mournful sounds arise! On Lubar's field there is a voice!—Louder still ye shadowy ghosts! the dead were full of fame.—Shrilly swells the feeble sound.—The rougher blast alone is heard!—Ah, soon is Cathmor low!

ROLLED into himself he flew, wide on the bosom of 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 desert wild ; but ye retire in your blasts before our steps approach.—Go then, ye feeble race ! knowledge with you there is none. Your joys are weak, and like the dreams of our rest, or the light-winged thought that flies across the soul.—Shall Cathmor soon be low ? Darkly laid in his narrow house ? where no morning comes with her half-opened eyes.—Away, thou shade ! to fight is mine, all further thought away ! I rush forth, on eagle 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 na-

tion, 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 chase; 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 upon this occasion is more expressive of the
circumstance is well imagined, and natu- emotions of his soul, than any speech which
rally conducted. The silence of Cathmor 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 stripped 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 Sul-malla ? 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 deserts, so their journeys lay over wide and

unfrequented heaths, where, often, they were obliged to sleep in the open air, amidst the whistling of winds, and roar of water-falls. The gloominess of the scenes around them was apt to beget that melancholy disposition of mind, which most readily receives impressions of the extraordinary and supernatural kind. Falling asleep in this gloomy mood, and their dreams being disturbed by the noise of the elements around, it is no matter of wonder, that they thought they heard the *voice of the dead*. This *voice of the dead*, however, was, perhaps, no more than a shriller 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:

T E M O R A:

A N

E P I C P O E M.

B O O K F I F T H.

M

A R G U M E N T.

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.

T E M O R A:

A N

E P I C P O E M.

B O O K F I F T H.

* **T**HOU 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 rhyme, 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 rhyme which the modern bards have established among the highlanders. Having no ge-

nus themselves for the sublime and pathetic, they placed the whole beauty of poetry in the returning harmony of similar sounds. The seducing charms of rhyme 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 verses.

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 Oskar, 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-duthal.

kings

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

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 lifts, 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-roses 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 bos, 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, the seventh book, where it is called the vale of Lona, and the residence of a Fingal and Cathmor. It is described in 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 lifted 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 lift the steel. Let not Evir-choma hear it, to blush between her locks.—Fillan, the mighty behold us; let us not forget the strife. Why should they come, from their hills, to aid our flying field?

* The rock of Cormul rose on the hill of Mera, 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 re-

sult 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 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, *sift-haired*. Cull-allin, *beautiful locks*. Strutha, *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-eddy-ing 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 *Loda* or *Loden*. They seem to have differed materially, in their construction, from those Druidical monuments which remain in Britain, and the western isles. The places of worship among the Scandinavians were originally rude and unadorned. In after ages, when they opened a communication with other nations, they adopted their manners, and built temples. That at Upsal, in Sweden, was amazingly rich and magnificent. 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 Danemarck.*

* 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 similes and allusions of ancient poetry. *Mar Cbul-aluin Strutha nan fian* ; 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

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 forc-

bly 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 fullen 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 through grafs. 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 ju-

dicious 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 smoky, 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 flood, and called forth all his steel.

As meet two broad-winged eagles, in their sounding strife, 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 tra-

dition. 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 desert, on whose dark side are the trickling of waters, when the slow-falling 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 *rested 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-bolg differed from that of the Caledonians, as we never find the latter enquiring of the spirits of their deceased ancestors.

* The characters of Foldath and Malthos are well sustained. They were both dark and surly, but each in a different way. Foldath was impetuous and cruel. Mal-

thos stubborn and incredulous. Their attachment to the family of Atha was equal; their bravery in battle the same. Foldath was vain and ostentatious: Malthos undilgent 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, *parked or sandy field*. The etymology of Dardu-lena is uncertain. The daughter of Foldath was, probably, foaled,

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 *Lasi charn Cblatho* : i. e. *The harmonious hymn of Clatho*. The book ends in the afternoon of the third day, from the opening of the poem.

TEMORA:

T E M O R A:

A N

E P I C P O E M.

B O O K S I X T H.

A R G U M E N T.

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. Mallos 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.

T E M O R A :

A N

E P I C P O E M.

B O O K S I X T H.

* 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 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

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 smok, 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-Iena, 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

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 the north of Malvina, who, upon that account, Morven, in the days of Ossian. There is often called *the maid of Lutha*. Lutha signifies *swift stream*.

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 suspense 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 Bosmina the sister, of that hero.

CLATHO.

“Daughter of Fingal, arise : thou light between thy locks. Lift 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 desert 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. Lift thy wing, thou southern breeze, from Clono's darkening heath : spread the sails of Fingal towards the bays of his land.

But who is that, in his strength, darkening in the presence of war ? His arm stretches to the foe, like the beam of the sickly sun ; when his side is crusted with darkness ; and he rolls his dismal course 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 spread-
 ing of their fire on Mora; the blue-rolling of their misty wreaths.
 —Joy meet thee my brother.—But we are dark and sad. I be-
 hold 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 light-
 ning 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 thou-
 sands. 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 rusby 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 Cla-
 tho 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 founding 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 desert, and spoiled of half his wings.

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

* 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 ano-

ther, 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

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 government, of which ambitious magistrates take advantage, and raise themselves into absolute power.

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

It was but very lately that the authority of the laws extended to the Highlands. Before that time the clans were governed, in

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 *Cleobda*, 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 *Cleobda*. 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 *Mac-Areath na ceud fua*, 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.

The,

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. Darkneis 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)
feels 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 heard that Calmar fell: Calmar, who aided the race of Ullin, from Lara of the streams.—Often did he feel, with his hands, the steel which, they said, had pierced his foe. He felt it

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 Maltha, 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.—'t 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 resting 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

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 Connor, 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 *Chlére*, which is, probably, derived from the Latin *Choricus*. The *Chlére*, be their name derived from what it will, became, at last, a public nuisance; for, taking advantage of their sacred character, they went about, in great bodies, and lived, at dinner 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.

Q

CLUN-

* 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.

T E M O R A:

A N

E P I C P O E M.

B O O K S E V E N T H.

A R G U M E N T.

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.

T E M O R A:

A N

E P I C P O E M.

B O O K S E V E N T H.

* 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, inkfome and confufed. Fools can never write good poems. A warm imagination, it is true, domineers over a common portion of fenfe; and hence it is that fo few have fucceeded in the poetical way. But when an uncommon ftrengh of judgment, and a glowing fancy, are properly tempered together, they, and they only, produce genuine poetry.

The prefent book is not the leaft interefting part of Temora. The awful images, with which it opens, are calculated to prepare the mind for the folemn fcenes which are to follow. Oſſian, always, throws an air of confequence on every circumftance which relates to Fingal. The very found of his fhield produces extraordinary effects; and thefe are heightened, one above another, in a beautiful climax. The diftrefs of Sul-malla, and her conference with Cathmor, are very affecting. The defcription of his fhield 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 fhort, throughout this book, is often fublime, and always pathetic.

As a fpecimen of the harmony of Galic verfification without rhyme, I fhall lay a few lines, of the opening of this book, before thofe who underftand the original. The words are not, after the Irifh manner, brifled over with unneceffary

quiefcent confonants, fo difagreeable to the eye, and which rather embarafs than affift the reader.

O linna doir-choillé na Liego,
Air uair, eri' ceo-taobh-ghorm nan tón;
Nuair dhunus dorfa na h'oicha,
Air illuir-huil Greina na fpeur.
Tómhail mo Lara na fruth,
Thaomus du-nial, as doricha cruaim:
Marghlas-scia', roi taoma na nial,
Snamh hairis, 'ta Gellach na h'oicha.
Le fo edibh taifin o-shean
An dlu-ghléus a measc na gaoith;
'S iad leumnach, o óſſaic gu óſſaic,
Air du-aghaid' oicha na fian. &c.

Lego, fo often mentioned by Oſſian, was a lake, in Connaught, in which the river Lara emptied itfelf. On the banks of this lake dwelt Branno, the father-in-law of Oſſian, whom the poet often vifited before and after the death of Evir-allin. This circumftance, perhaps, occafioned the partiality, with which he always mentions Lego and Lara; and accounts for his drawing fo many of his images from them. The fignification of Lego, is, *the lake of difeafe*, probably fo called, on account of the moraffes which furrounded it.

As the mift, which rofe from the lake of Lego, occafioned difeafes and death, the bards feigned, as here, that it was the refidence of the ghofls 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 desert; 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 smোক. 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 de-

lighted 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 cheerfulness 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 gallantry 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-
bolomed

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 chase 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 desert, as each flew, frightened, 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 wailing 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 Kenneth Mac-Alpin, king of Scot-

R

land,

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 Pi&ts. 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 Pi&tish 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 Pi&ts. 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 Pi&ts, 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 Pi&ts 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 desert, stood Cathmor in his tears. Her voice came, a breeze, on his soul, and waked the memory of her land ; where she dwelt by her peaceful streams, before he came, to the war of Connor.

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, *Fion-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 waying locks. Sooner‡ shall the eagle of heaven be torn, from
the

* Clon-mal, *crooked eye-bruw*. 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 style.

‡ 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 fi-

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 panegyrics 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 farcical kind. In this they succeeded well; for, as there is no language more copious than the Gaelic, 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 exsilling, 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 Caél.

† *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 fowl. 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. Cean-mathon, *head of the bear*. Col-derna, *slant and sharp beam*. Ul-oicho, *ruler of night*. Cathlin, *beam of the wave*. Reul-durath, *star of the twilight*. Berthin, *fire of the hill*. Tonthéna, *meteor of the waves*. These etymologies, excepting that of Cean-mathon, are pretty exact. Of it I am not so certain; for it is not very probable, that the Firbolg had distinguished a constellation, so very early as the days of Larthon, by the name of the bear.

which

which his warriors received, from the wind, and marked over all their tribes.

ON each bos 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 roc.—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 dis-

tinguish 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 foam ?

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

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

NOT forgot is that cloud in war, bard of other times. High shall his tomb rise, on Moi-lena, the dwelling of renown. But, now, roll back my soul 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 Lartion, thy soul is strong.—It is careless as the wind of thy sails ; as the wave that roll 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 lifts his branchy head; for he sees, at times, the hound, on the half-covered heath. Slow, on the vale, are the steps of maids; the white-armed daughters of the bow: they lift their blue eyes to the hill, from amidst their wandering locks.—Not there is the stride of Larthon, chief of Inis-huna. He mounts the wave on his own dark oak, in Cluba's ridgy bay. That oak which he cut from Lumon, to bound along the sea. The maids turn their eyes away, lest the king should be lowly-laid; for never had they seen a ship, dark rider of the wave!

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

rious 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, *apparition*, 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 teùd, mhic Alpain nam fón
Ambail folas an clarsach na ncéol ?
Taom air Ossian, agus ossùn gu tróm ;
'Ta anam a snamh an céo.

Chualas ú, bhaird, a m'òicha.
Ach siubhla' fón edrom uaim fein, &c.

A dhreun uaina thulloch nan tais
A thaomas do chean air gaoith oicha, &c.
skirt,

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:

T E M O R A:

A N

E P I C P O E M.

B O O K E I G H T H.

A R G U M E N T.

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 valey 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.

T E M O R A:

A N

E P I C P O E M.

B O O K E I G H T H.

* **A**S 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 *epopœa* 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

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boughs and tufts of grass, which shake and whistle to the wind, over their grey seats of frost.—So silent shone to the morning the ridges of Morven's host, as each warrior looked up from his helmet towards

in the conduct of an epic poem, which, as they are natural, are, likewise, universal. In these the two poets exactly correspond. This similarity, which could not possibly proceed from imitation, is more decisive, with respect to the grand essentials of the *epopœa*, than all the precepts of Aristotle.

Ossian is now approaching to the grand catastrophe. The preparations he has made, in the preceding book, properly introduce the magnificence of description, with which the present book opens, and tend to shew that the Celtic bard had more art, in working up his fable, than some of those, who closely imitated the perfect model of Homer. The transition from the pathetic to the sublime is easy and natural. Till the mind is opened, by the first, it scarcely can have an adequate comprehension of the second. The soft and affecting scenes of the seventh book form a sort of contrast to, and consequently heighten, the features of the more grand and terrible images of the eighth.

The simile, with which this book opens, is, perhaps, the longest, and the most minutely descriptive, of any in the works of Ossian. The images of it are only familiar to those who live in a cold and mountainous country. They have often seen a lake suddenly frozen over, and strewed with

withered grass, 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 these winter-scenes to the irraguous vales of May.—*To me, says 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 those frigid scenes were not his sole delight: for he speaks, with great tenderness, of the *saklig'ied hall of the chief*; and the *strength of the shells, at night, when the course of winds is abroad.*

If the simile of a frozen lake aptly illustrates the stillness and silent 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 rearing 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 light, 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, found 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

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 Beltanna of Conachar. Thou shalt be Ferad-artho, he said, a fire before thy race.* Cairbar, soon after, died, nor did Artho long survive him. Artho was succeeded, in the Irish throne, by his son Cormac, who, in his minority, was murdered by Cairbar, the son of Borbar-duthul.—Ferad-artho, says tradition, was very young, when the expedition of Fingal, to settle him on the throne of Ireland, happened. During the short reign of young Cormac, Ferad-artho lived at the royal 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 Bosmina) 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 Moilutha, is represented as desecrying, 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 bright cheeks, is the wandering of tears. Darkness flies over my soul, as the dusky wave of the breeze, along the grass of Lutha.—Yet have not the roes failed me, when I moved between the

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-BREADED 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 Caolt, 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 echoing shield. His ridgy host bend forward, at once, with all their pointed steel.

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

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

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-comnall, and the pretended militia of Ireland.

U

MARONNAN

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 rustles 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 echoing isle !

“ Half-hid, in the grove, I sit down. Fly back, ye mists of the hill. Why should ye hide her love from the blue eyes of 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 Al-necma: the foe is rolled before me, like a wreath of smok.

THE sun looked forth from his cloud. The hundred streams of Moi-lena shone. Slow rose the blue columns of mist, against the glittering hilk—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 *minutiae* 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 desert, to the ear of Fingal.—Come to my hall 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 wholesomeness of the climate, and an active life, spent in hunting, excluded diseases.

† The hospitable disposition of Cathmor was unparalleled. 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-kindied 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 Offian, 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 achievements. 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-reùl, an croma nan speur,
A thaomas teina na h'oicha,
Dearg-fruthach, air h'aighai' fein.

* 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 rusty 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 smok, 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-artha in the Caledonian army. To pursue,

here,

EVENING came down on Moilena. Grey rolled the streams of the land. Loud came forth the voice of Fingal: the beam of oaks arose. The people gathered round with gladness; with gladness blended with shades. They sidelong looked to the king, and beheld his unfinished joy.—Pleasant, from the way of the desert, the voice of music came. It seemed, at first, the noise of a stream, far-distant on its rocks. Slow it rolled along the hill, like the ruffled wing of a breeze, when it takes the tufted beard of the rocks, in the

here, the story of the *maid of Inis-buna*, 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 *epicæa*, 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 Connor, from the fern-skirted cavern of Lona. Awake, thou sun-beam in deserts; warriors one day must fail. They move forth, like terrible lights; but, often, their cloud is near.—Go to the valley of 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 desert, over the bosom of night.

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

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. Tradi-

tion 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.—

F I N I S.

CATHLIN OF CLUTHA:

A

P O E M.

A R G U M E N T.

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 Lanül.—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.

P O E M.

* 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 *Laoi-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 Ofsian'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 *teffera* 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 desert 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 falsehood could dwell in the soul of the lovely.

Y

I STARTED.

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 smok, 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 those rain-bows of heaven are changeful*, say my authors, speaking of women, she felt the return of her

field of grafs, fo various is Cathlin's check. It was fair, within locks, that rofe on Rath-col's wind. I did not rufh, amidft his foul, with my words. I bade the fong to rife.

OSCAR of Lego, I faid, be thine the fecret hill*, to night. Strike the fhield, like Morven's kings. With day, thou fhalt lead in war. From my rock, I fhall fee thee, Oscar, a dreadful form afcending in fight, like the appearance of ghofths amidft the ftorms they raife.—Why fhould mine eyes return to the dim times of old, ere yet the fong had burfted forth, like the fudden rifing of winds?—But the years, that are paf, are marked with mighty deeds. As the nightly rider of waves looks up to Ton-thena of beams: fo 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 paffion, upon the approach of Duth-carmor's danger.—I myfelf, who think more favourably of the fex, muft attribute the agitation of Cathlin's mind to her extreme fenfibility to the injuries done her by Duth-carmor: and this opinion is favoured by the fequel of the ftory.

* This paffage alludes to the well known cuftom among the ancient kings of Scotland, to retire from their army on the night preceding a battle.—The ftory which Offian introduces in the next paragraph, concerns the fall of the Druids, of

which I gave fome account in the difertation prefixed to the former collection.—It is faid in many old poems, that the Druids, in the extremity of their affairs, had foli-cited and obtained aid from Scandinavia. Among the auxiliaries there came many pretended magicians, which circumftance Offian alludes to, in his description of the *fen of Leda*.—Magic and incantation could not, however, prevail; for Trenmor, affifted by the valour of his fon Trathal, entirely broke the power of the Druids.

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-crufted 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 enchantments 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 Offian 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 Offian 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

20 1 2 0 10 1 12 2

11 10 10 10 1

12 1 0 3

S U L - M A L L A

O F

L U M O N:

A

P O E M.

Z

A R G U M E N T.

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 Surandronlo, 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

P O E M.

* **W**HO 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 deserts, like a light thro' a cloudy field? The

* The expedition of Ossian to Inishuna 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 Inishuna, 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 Inishuna, 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 Connor'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 of kings.—Nor only, at Cona's stream, is Ossian and Oícar known. Foes trembled at our voice, and shrunk in other lands.

Nor unmarked, said the maid, by Sul-malla, is the shield of Morven's king. It hangs high, in Connor'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 his-

tory 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.

Nor 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 founding 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 Ca-

ledonians 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 disorder'd looks. 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 founding 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 Suran-
dronlo—— * * * * *

* * * * *

contemptible poet. The story is romantic, but not incredible, if we make allowances for the lively imagination of a man of genius.—Our chief sailing, 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 !

C A T H - L O D A ;

A

P O E M.

D U A N F I R S T.

A a 2

A R G U M E N T.

Fingal, in one of his voyages to the Orkney islands, was driven, by storms 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

P O E M.

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 *Duán*. 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 Inifcore. 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 pru-

dently 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 Cromacharn 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 swarthy*; 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.

* *Cean-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, disgusting 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.

Nor forgetting 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 chase*. 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.

B b

Conban-

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 sailest 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 art 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 desert wild, young light of Torcul-torno.

* * * * *

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 fimoak. 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 hum 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 viour of Fingal is always consistent with its maker, Luno of Lochlin. that generosity of spirit which belongs to a

† The helmet of Swaran. The beha- hero. He takes advantage of a foe disarmed.

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 ! ”——

* * * * *

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 Cruthloda 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, conjectured, 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 surprize, occasion-

ed 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 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 rain-
 bow on streams, came white-armed Conban-carglas.—

* * * * *

CATH-

CATH-LODA;

A

P O E M.

DUAN SECOND.

A R G U M E N T.

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 epifode of Colgorm and Strina-dona, with which the *duän* concludes.

C A T H - L O D A :

A

P O E M.

D U A N S E C O N D.

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-falling vapour.—The traveller shrinks on his journey, and knows not whither to fly.—No trembling travellers are we!—Sons

C c

of

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-croña. 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 furly 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 *Cail*, 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 *regui* 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

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 bos, Duthmaruno. 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 b'Albin*, or *Comhal of Abion*, which sufficiently demonstrates, that the allegations of Keating and O Flaherty, concerning *Fion Mac-Cemhal*, 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 fadeest 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 wra'ful 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 slew
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 chose his place, in silence, 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, burst 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, Starn-mor, 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 Cru-ruth'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 *d'ræ*, or, *goddesses of death*.—Of all the names in this episode, there is none of a Galic original, except Strina-dona, which signifies, the *friend 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 similes 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. so different from, and the ideas so unworthy of, Ossian, that I have rejected it, as

† The continuation of this episode is an interpolation by a modern bard. just now in my hands; but the language is

CATH-

CATH-LODA;

A

P O E M.

DUAN THIRD.

A R G U M E N T.

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.

C A T H - L O D A :

A

P O E M.

D U A N T H I R D.

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 slow they pass along.—Dweller be-
 tween 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
 D d 2 duän

him are the steps of his heroes, hunters of the boar.—By Tuthor'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 forefaw, 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 furly song; and heard his hair in wind. Turned *
from

dain 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-Fien*. 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 particu-

larly, 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 furly 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 Corman-trunar, 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 Corman-trunar. 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 fa-

vage, was less bloody, and somewhat tintured with generosity. It is doing injustice to Ossian, to say, that he has not a great variety of characters.

ON a rock fat tall Corman-trunar, beside his burning oak ; and, near him, beneath a tree, fat 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 in to 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 ferny 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 king's retiring, which occasions his request the Caledonian kings, had retired to a hill to Swaran, to stab him ; as he foresaw, by alone, as he himself was to resume the his art of divination, that he could not command of the army the next day. Star- overcome him in open battle.
no might have some intelligence of the

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 fet 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!

O I N A - M O R U L :

A

P O E M.

E e

THE HISTORY OF
OINAM-ARUL

A R G U M E N T.

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.

O I N A - M O R U L :

A

P O E M.

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*. 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 antients, 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* rebounds 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 rebounding 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 desert 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 ancient 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 ile, 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 Offian, 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-DONA:

A

P O E M.

F f

A R G U M E N T.

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.

C O L N A - D O N A :

A

P O E M.

* 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 fight, like ocean's heaving wave. Her soul was a stream of light.—Who, among the maids, was like the love of heroes ?

* 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 Maia-tæ, by the writers of Rome. Maia-tæ is derived from two Galic words, *Moi, a*

plain, and *Aitich, inhabitants*; so that the signification of Maia-tæ 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 founding 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, *returning*, 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 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 fenachies, who bring the Caledonians from distant countries. The bare opinion of Tacitus, (which, by-the-by, 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 Cenloch, 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 Col-na-dona.—Toícar 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*.

* * * * *

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 Toícar

* Here an episode is intirely lost ; festly, that it does not deserve a place in or, at least, is handed down so imper-

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 Toíscar, 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 Toíscar, and her love arose.

A D V E R -

A
S P E C I M E N
O F T H E
O R I G I N A L
O F
T E M O R A.
B O O K S E V E N T H.

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

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

S P E C I M E N

O F T H E

O R I G I N A L

O F

T E M O R A.

B O O K S E V E N T H.

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

Le fo edi' taifin o-shean
 An dlu'-ghleus, a meafc na gaoith,
 'S iad leamnach, o ofna gu ofna,
 Air du'-agha' oicha nan fian.
 An taobh oitaig, gu palin nan feoid,
 Taomas iad ceäch nan fpeur,
 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 *Faslan* aig *Lubbair* nan fru'
 Muladach, fuigha fo bhrón,
 Dh'aom an tais an ceach an loin.
 Thaom ofna, eflin an fein,
 Ach phil an cruth aluin, gu diän
 Phil é le chrom-shealla mál
 Le cheo-leatain, mar shuibhal nan fian.

'S doilleir fo !

Ata na sloigh na nfuain, san ám,
 An trufcan cear na h'oicha :
 Dh' ilfich teina an ri, gu ard,
 Dh' aom é na aonar, air scia'.

Thuit codál, mo shuillin a ghaifeich,

Thanic guth *Fhaolan*, na chluais.

AN codal fo, don' fhear-phofda aig *Clatho*?

Am bail coní do m' athair, an fuain?

Am bail cuina, 's mi 'ntruscan nan nial?

'S mi m' aonar an ám na h'oicha?

CUR fon ta ú, a m' ailin fein?

Thubhart *Fion-ghael*, 's é'g eri grad.

An dith-chuin, d'omfe, mo mhac,

Na shiubhal teina air Rethlan nan laoich?

Ni marfin, air anam an ri,

Thig gníomh feoid aluin na ncrui'-bheum.

Ni ndeallan iadfe, 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 fa n'oicha ard,

Bal-mofgla' do cháth nan lóit.

Air aomagh du' nan sliabh,

Air

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

BHUAIL é 'n scia, an darra cuairt,
 Ghluais coga, an aslin an t'fhluaigh :
 Bhith comh-fri nan lán glas—
 A dcalra' air anam nan feoid,
 Cicean-fheona 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', fa n' fhaích—
 Gach Ean, air ofna fein.
 Leth-erich siol *Albin* nam buaigh
 Thog iad suas gach sleagh, bu ghlas :
 Ach phíl fáchir, air an l' fhluaigh,
 Se bh' án scia' *Mborbhein* na mfras.
 Phíl codal, air fuilin na mfear :
 Bu dorchá, tróm a nglean.

Ni mo chodal, duitse é, fa nuair,
 Nion shuil-ghórm *Chonmor* na mbuaigh,—
 Chuala *Suil-mhalla* an fhuaim
 Dh' erich i, fa n' oicha, le cruaim :
 Ta ceum gu ri *Atba* na ncolg :
 Ni mofguil cunart anam borb.
 Tróm a fhéif,——a fuilin fios.
 Ta 'nspéur an losga nan reul.

CHUALAS lé fciath na ncòp.
 Ghluais ;—ghrad fhés an Oi :—
 Dh' erich a gu'—ach dh' aom é fios.——
 Chuinic is é, na fialin chruai,
 A dealra ri losga nan reul :
 Chuinic is é, na leatan thróm.
 Aig eri ri ofna nan spéur.
 Thionta i ceamna, le fiamh,
 Curfon dhuifgimfe Ri *Erin* na m *Bólg*,
 Ni n' aslin do chodal u-fein,
 A nion *Inis-uina* na ncólg.

Gu garg a mhofgul an torman ;
 On' oi thuit a cean-bhért fios :
 TA mforum, air carric nan fruth.

Plaoisga, o aclin na h'oicha,
 Ghluais *Cathmor* fa' chrán fein.
 Chuinic' é n' Oi bu tla,
 Air carric *Lubhair* nan sliabh :
 Dearg reül, a sealla fios,—
 Measc fiubhal a tróm chiabh.

CIA 'ta roi Oicha gu *Cathmor*
 An cear-amfair aclin fein ?
 Am bail fios duit, air fri na ncruai-bheum ?
 Cia uffa, 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 fiubhail dubhra mi-fhein,
 Ni nguth mi, o neol, na cruaim :
 Ach ta m' fhocul, le cunairt na h' *Erin*.
 An cualas duit coppán na fuaim ?
 Ni ntais é, Ri *Atba* nan fruth,
 A thaomas an fhuaim air oicha.

TAOMAGH an feod a ghuth fein,
 'S fon clarfich, do *Chathmor* an fhuaime,
 Ta aitis, mhic dubhra nan speur,
 Lofga air m' anam, gun ghruaim.
 Se ceoil chiean-fheona na ncrui-bheum,
 A m' oicha, air afri' nan fiän,
 Nuair lafas anam nan fön ;
 A chlän an cruadal do miän.
 Ta fiol-meata a nconi, na mfiámh,
 A ngleanan na n' ofna tlá,
 Far an aom ceo-maidin, ri sliabh,
 O ghorm-shuibhal fruthan na mblár.

NI meata, chean-uia nan fön,
 An feans'ra', on thuit mi-fein,
 Bu choni doigh dubhra nan tón,
 An tir fhadda fiol cholgach na mbeum.
 Ach ni nfolas do m' anam tlá
 Fuaim mhál a bhais on raoin,
 Thig effin nach geil gu bráth ;
 Mosguil bard focuil a scaoin.—

MAR charric, 's fruthan ri taobh,
 'M faich na mfaoin 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 *Cbonmor* na ncolg fiar.

A NION coigrich nan lán,

(Thionta i cean on d' shón)

'S fadda fa, m' fhuil, an cruai,

Cran flathal *Inis-uina* nan tón:

Ta m' anam, do thubhairt mi-fein,

An truiscan nan fian cear,

Car son a lassa an dealra so-fhein,

Gus am pil mi, an sí', on d' shliabh?

NA ghlas m' aighai', na t' fhionas, a lamh-gheal,

'S tu togmhail do m' eagal an Rí?

'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 ncuai'-bheum.

AN taobh carric chofach, air *Lona*,
 Mo chaochan, nan fruthan cróm,
 Glas, á nciabh na h' aoife,
 'Ta *Claon-mbal*, Ri clarsích nam fón.
 O s'cion ta cran-darrach na mfuaim,
 Agus siubhal nan rua-bhoc fliom,
 'Ta forum na fri' na chluais
 'S é 'g aomagh á nsmuina nach tiom:
 An sin bith do thalla, *Sbul-mballa*,
 Gus an ilíich forum na mbeum :
 Gus ám píil mi, an lása na cruai',
 O thruscan dubhra na bein :
 On cheäch do thrussas o *Lona*
 Ma choni mo ruin fein.

THUIT gath-soluis air anam na h'oi,
 Las i suas, fa' choir an Ri :
 Thionta i á h' aighai ri *Cathmor*,
 A ciabh-bhóg ans' na h' oísa á fri ?

REUPAR iulluir nan speür árd,
 O mhór-frúth gaoith na nglean ;
 Nuair chí' é na ruai-bhuic, fa' choir,
 Clán elid na mfaoin bhean,

Mu ntionta *Cathmor* na ncruai-bheum,

On d' frí mu n' erich dán.—

Faicimfe u, ghasgaich nā ngeur lán,

O thrufcan an dubhra dú',

Nuair thogas ceo mu m' choni fein,

Air *Lona* na n' ioma frú'?

Nuair 's fadda, o m' shuil, u sheoid!

Puail coppan na mfuaim árd.

Pillé folas, 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 fheur,

Com dh' aoma tu, 'nstrachda nan fian?

'S tric thionta *Cathmor* ó nbhlár

Du'-thaomagh air aighai' nan sliabh.

Mar mhellain, do m' fein, ta sleagh nan lóit,

'S iad prunagh air cóis nan sciath;

Dh'erim, mo sholluis, on d' thrí;

Mar thein-oicha, o thaoma nan niäl

Na píl, a dheo-ghreina, on ghlean

Nuair dhluthichas forum na ncolg:

Eagal teachá do nabhad o m'lamh,
 Mar theich iad, o shiean' fra' 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 fri na glean.
 Chuinac min-bhean, an són á nceo.
 Phrof nich fud d' i fiubhal gu sliabh,
 Thog i bogha, fos n' iofal,
 Gu dol marri laoch nan sciath.
 Do n' ainir luigh dubhra air *Atha*,
 Nuair shuilagh á ngaifgach gu gníomh.

O CHEUD fruthan aonach na h'oicha,
 Thaom fiol *Alnecma* fios.
 Chualas scia' chafmachd an Ri,
 Mhoisguil a n' anam gu fri'
 Bha' an fiubhal, a mforum nan lán,
 Gu *Ullin*, talamh na ncrán.
 Bhuaile *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 fiathail air lóm,
 Nuair thog iad, ri aghai nan tóm.
 B' eagal d' i fealla an Ri—
 Dh' fhág i, 'n *Atba* na mfri'.

NUAIR dh' erich forum na mbeum,
 Agus thaom iad, fa cheille, fa chath,
 Loisg *Sonmor*, mar theina nan speur,
 Thanic *Sul-aluin* na mflath.
 A folt scaoilta, fa n' osna,
 A h'anam aig osparn mon' Ri.
 Dh' aom é an t' fhri' mu rún nan laoiach,
 Theich nabhad fa' dhubhra nan speur
 Luigh *Cluanar* gun fhuil,
 Gun fhuil, air tigh caoil gun leus.—

NI n' d' erich fearg *Sbon-mhor* nan lán,
 Bha' lo gu dorcha, 's gu mál :
 Ghluais *Sul-allin* mu gorm-fru' fein,
 A fuil an reachda nan deuir.
 Bu lionmhar a fealla, gu caoin
 Air gaifgach fábhadh nach faoin.
 Ach thionta i a fuillin tla,

O shealla,

O shealla, an laoch thuatal.
 Mhofsul blair, mar fhorum nan nial,
 Ghluais doran o anam mór,
 Chunas a ceamna, le aitis,
 'Sa lamh-ghéal air clarsich na mfón.

NA chruai a ghluais an Ri, gun dail,
 Bhuail é 'n sciath chofach árd;
 Gu árd, air darach nan fian,
 Aig *Lubbair* na n' ioma fruth.
 Seachd coppain a bh', air an scé,
 Seachd focuil an Ri' do shluagh;
 A thaomagh air ofna 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-oichs an truscan do cheö.
 'Ta *Caon-cathlin*, air carric, a dealra
Reül-dura' ar gorm-thón on iar:
 Leth-chellagh folus an uisce.
 Ta *Ber-thein*, las-shuil nan sliabh,
 Sealla fios, o choille fa n'aonach;

Air mál shuibhal, sélgair 's é triäl,
 Roi ghleanan, an dubhra bhraonach,
 Le faogh rua-bhuic nan leum árd.

TOMHAIL, a miän na scé,
 'Ta laíä *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-fhear a shuibhail air gaoith.

LEATHAIN scaoile seoil bhán an Rí.
 Gu *Inis-fail* nan ioma fru ?
 Thaom oícha air aighai' a chuain,
 Agus ceäch nan truiscan du'.
 Bha' gaoith a caochla dlu' fa nspeur.
 Leum loingheas, o thón gu tón ;
 Nuair dh' erich *Ton-theina* nan stuagh
 Caon-shealla, o bhrísta' nan nial,
 B' aitis do *Learthon* tein-uil na mbuaigh,
 A dealra air domhan nan fian.

FA' fleagh *Chathmor* na ncolg fean
 Dhuifge an guth, a dhuifga Baird.

Thaom

Thaom iad du', o thaobh nan sliabh,
 Le clàrlich ghrin 's gach lamh.
 Le aitis mór, fhés rompa an Rì,
 Mar fhear-fiubhal, ri teas la 'nglean.
 Nuair chluinas é, fadda fa nréth,
 Caoin thorman fruthan na mbean :
 Sruthan a bhriftas fa n' fhaíich,
 O charric thaobh-ghlas nan rua-bhoc.

CUR fon chluinim guth ard an Rì—
 N' ám codal, a n' oicha nan fras ?
 Am facas tanais nach beo,
 Meafc t'aslin aig aoma glas ?
 Air neoil am bail an aitach fuar,
 Feaghai' fón *Fbonair* na mfleagh ?
 'S lionmhar an fiubhal air réth,
 Far an tog an siol an t' shleagh.
 Na n' erich, ar cronan air thúis,
 Mu n' fhear, nach tog on t' shlea' gu brath ;
 Fear chofcairt, air glean nan floigh,
 O *Mboma* nan ioma bad ?

Ni dith-chuin do m' dorchas na mblár
 Chiean-fheona na mbard, o thúis,

Togar cloch do aig *Lubbair* na ncárn,
 Ait-coni dh' *Fboldath* 'fdo chliu.
 Ach taom m' anam, air ám nan laoiç,
 Air na bliaghna', fo n d' erich iad fuas,
 Air tón *Inis-uina* na ncolg.
 Ni n' aitis, do *Chatbmor* a bhain,
 Cuina *Lumon* inis uina na nfloí?
Lumon talamh na nfruth,
 Caon-choni na mbán-bhroilach Oi.

LUMON na fruth!
 '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 mbað
 A faicin air sliabh.
 An colg-chu, a fiubhal grad.
 Mál air an réth
 Ta ceamna nan Oi:
 Oi lamh-gheal nan teud
 'S na bogha cróm, fa mhoi;

Togmha.1

Togmhail an gorm-shuil tlà,
 On leatain bhar-bhui, air sliabh na mflath.
 Ni bail ceamna *Lear-tbon* fa bhein,
 Cean *Inis* na ngeug *uina*.

TA è togmhail du-dharach air tòn,
 A ncamis *Chluba*, nan ioma ftua',
 An du-dharach, bhuain é o *Lumon*,
 Gu siubhal air aighai a chuain.
 Thionta Oi an fuillin tlá,
 On Ri, mo ntuitagh é fios.
 Ni mfacas leò riamh an long,
 Cear mharcach a chuain mhoir.

GHLAOI' anois, an Ri a ghaoith.
 Meafc 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 *Tbon-tbeina* nan ftua'.
 A ncamis *Chulbin* dh' atich an long
 Far am fregra' coille do thón.
 Bu chopach an fin an fru'

O charrie *Duth-umha* na ncós,

'San dealra tannais nach beo

Le ncruith caochlach fein.

THANIC ailin gu *Lear-thon* nan long,

Seachd Samla do nlina nach beo,

Chūalas a nguth brifta, tróm :

Chunas an fiol an ceö.

Chunas fiol *Atba* na ncolg—

'San clán cìean-uia' na m *Bolg*.

Thaom iad a mfeachda' fein,

Mar cheach a terna on bhein,

Nuair fhiubhlas é glas, fa' ofna,

Air *Atba* nan ioma dos.

THOG *Lear-thon* talla *Shamla*,

Ri caoin fhón clarsich nan teud.

Dh' aom eilid *Erin*, o cheamna

Aig aifra' glas nan fruth.

Nin dith-chuin do *Lumon* uina,

Na *Flatbal*, gheal-lamhach na mbua'gh

'S í comhaid, air marcach nan tón

O Thulach nan eilid ruagh.

LUMON

LUMON na fruth

Ta ú dealra' air m' anam fein !

MHOSGUIL gath foluis on ear,

Dh' erich árd-chiean cheäich na bein.

Chunas air cladach na ngleanan

A ncróm chaochan ghlas-fruthach fein.

Chualas fciath *Chatbmor* na ncolg,

Mhofguil fiol *Erin* na m *Bolg*.

Mar mhuir dhomhail, nuair ghluifas gu geur

Fuaim aitti, air aghai' nan speur :

Taoma tuin, o thaobh gu taobh,

Aig aomagh a nglas chiean bao ;

Gun colas, air fiubhal a chuain.

TROM is mál, gu *Lon* na fruth

Ghluais *Suil-mballa* nan rosc tlá ;

Ghluais as thionta n' Oi le brón :

A gorm-fhuil 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 fios.

PUAIL teud, a mhic Alpain na mfón,
Ambail folas a nclarsúch na nieöl?
Taom air *Ossian*, agus Ossun gu tróm,
Ta anam a snamh a nceö.

CHUALAS u, Bhaird, a m' oichas
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-aifra' na bein,
Nuair ghluifas a ghellach, an ear,
Mar ghlas-scia, du shiubhal nan speur.

ULLIN, a Charril, a Raono
Guith amfair a dh' aom o-shean:

Chuinim

Cluinim fiobh an dorchadas *Shelma*
 Agus mo'glibh'ic anam nan dán !

Ní ncluinim fiobh shiol na mfón,
 Cia an talla do ncoil, 'mbail ar fuain
 Na tribuail fiobh, clarsach nach tróm,
 An truscan ceo-madin 's cruaim.
 Far an erich, gu suaimar a ghrian
 .O stuaigh na ncean glas ?

F I N I S.



